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Chaos Earth® Resurrection™

A Chaos Earth® Sourcebook

By Taylor White
& Kevin Siembieda



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Special Thanks To: Bethany, Brandon A., Brandon D., and Thomas. And of course, Ricky, without whom this book would not have been the same. Thanks also to my play-testers, Brandon, Jason, Paul, and Derek.

– Taylor White, 2015

The cover, by *Charles Walton II*, depicts a NEMA Chromium Guardsman valiantly trying to hold back a zombie swarm.

Earth's defenders, the courageous men and women of NEMA face wave after wave of madness and monsters, many of which go down in the annals of history as *Demon Plagues*. This sourcebook details one such Demon Plague, a time in the very early days of the Great Cataclysm in which the dead rise to stalk the living. A menace that, unless stopped quickly, threatens to spread across all of North America.

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A Rifts® Chaos Earth® Sourcebook

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– *Kevin Siembieda, November 2015*

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Introduction by the Author

“There’s nothing on the radio when you’re dead
“There’s nothing at the movie show when you’re dead
“There’s nowhere left for you to go when you’re dead...”

– *The Cramps* “Surfin’ Dead”

I’m a massive horror geek. No shame at all, in fact I like it. I’ve been infatuated with the elements and icons of horror fiction for as long as I can remember. Some of my earliest memories are of going to the video store and checking out the horror section. I was too young to watch any of those movies, but I didn’t even need them. All I needed was the video jackets, decorated with images of monsters and demons and the hapless mortals caught in their clutches. I would read the synopsis on the back of the video jacket, letting my imagination run wild at what delightfully fiendish things were contained in that videotape.

I always had a particular taste for the living dead. Zombies, to me anyway, represent all of the fears and dread of being human. They’re *us*. Whatever creates them and sustains them is irrelevant. I never cared if they were magic zombies or viral zombies or alien death ray zombies. What makes them scary is that they are people. Regular people who have died and in doing so, answered that great mystery of what happens when we die. We come back, all rotted and gross, with nothing but murder in our minds. And they come in numbers. Not just one or two or even twenty, but hundreds or thousands of them. Breaking down your doors, coming up from the ground, wanting only to snuff out your life and make you into one of them. They are groupthink, mob mentality, and conformity at their worst, punctuated by an element of inevitability.

I’ve tried to take that gleeful fear that I remember and put it all into this book. I believe that every writer, filmmaker, or storyteller has their own zombie story waiting to get out. This is just one of mine. The nature of Chaos Earth suggests that the undead be stranger and more dangerous than regular cardboard cutout zombies. Here, you’ll find them to be more wild and over-the-top, but hopefully not so much as to be silly or humorous.

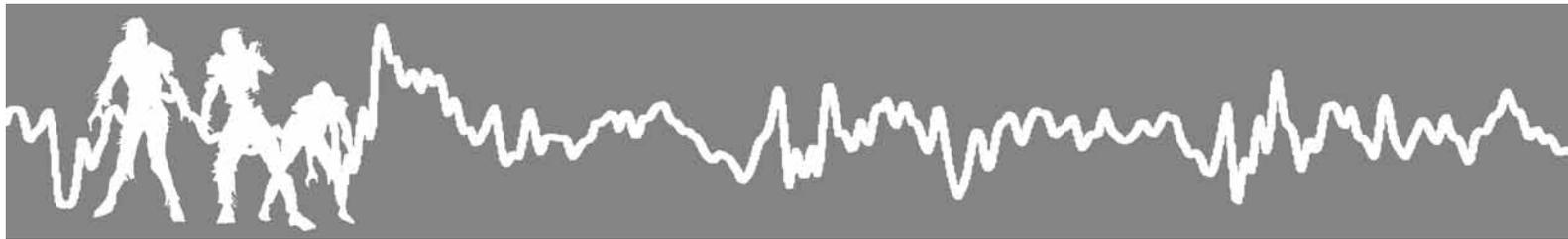
This book can be used to either supplement or provide the central focus to a Chaos Earth campaign. The characters could have already been working to save humanity, and could already have a couple of missions or full adventures under their belt. Then, just when they think they’re starting to get a handle on the situation, bam! Something new and totally different comes along and threatens to tear apart all that they’ve built. Or, new characters can be introduced with the focus on battling the cybernetic undead and shutting down whatever it is that is creating them.

The Resurrection in **Chaos Earth**® is a major epic event that, if left unchecked, could have serious repercussions on the future. This is not merely a monster book, or an adaptation of previously published material concerning the living dead. This is not **Dead Reign**®, nor is it **Rifts**® **Dark Conversions**™. The Resurrection is something special that could only exist and make sense in Chaos Earth. It is the story of an unprepared populace – already shaken and scared from the Great Cataclysm and the demon plagues that followed – and the heroes who are not afraid to fight against humankind’s worst fears and stare death right in the face without blinking. It is about the battle against a collective enemy entrenched in hate, anger, and ambition so strong that it could only have been born of a human heart.

If the players are clever enough, and their characters strong enough, they may be able to fight their way to the very point of the creation of the Resurrected, and learn why and how this is all happening. No matter what, though, the dead must be stopped.

– *Taylor White, Author*





Afraid to Die

Mike, Curtis, and Jesse were in a small unit together. It was their job to patrol the streets surrounding a NEMA evacuation center in Beloit – one of a thousand US cities laid to ruin. Beloit was located in southern Wisconsin, near a massive survivor camp in Rockford, Illinois, and not too terribly far from **NEMA Midwest Command** in Chicago, about 100 miles (160 km) away. For all the good it was doing, the camp in Beloit, Chicago could have been on the moon.

Mike had just gotten a new job working in an office a few weeks before the Cataclysm struck. It was only seven weeks later, but he couldn't remember even what his title was, or his boss's name. He just knew that he did a lot of paperwork and sent out a lot of e-mails.

Curtis had thought of himself as a young, up and coming, self-styled real estate tycoon. He owned a couple of bars and a club in Milwaukee. They had all been smashed, flooded, or burned to the ground. The strangest thing about it, he found, was that he didn't care as much as he would have thought.

Jesse was a nobody. At one point, he had dreams of becoming someone special because he ran southern Wisconsin's only streaming internet show about the paranormal, U.F.O.s, and conspiracy theories. Only it wasn't the kind of thing that went viral or made you a star unless you had new film footage of Bigfoot or an actual alien landing, so he languished in obscurity.

Those were their lives before December 22, 2008, just a little more than two months earlier. Now they were living entirely new lives and happy just to see a new day.

Like a lot of survivors, all three able-bodied men had volunteered to help NEMA, even though they had no prior training in combat or survival. Mike was angry enough to be a decent killer. He had little compunction about fighting inhuman monsters. Curtis knew CPR, which made him the medic. Jesse had convinced the recruiters that he was an expert on the supernatural and that his knowledge was unsurpassed. He did actually know a thing or two, and had theories on the rest, but somehow, experiencing the paranormal, for real, was not exciting or fun at all. At least not under these circumstances.

Despite the time of the year heading toward early spring, Beloit was still locked in winter. The landscape a frozen gray and white. The sky always dull and colorless, and when it wasn't snowing, ash was falling from the sky from the eruption of the Yellowstone super-volcano, and other volcanoes around the world. They all worried that this was the beginning of a long-lasting nuclear winter type fallout from the disaster. Today, the sun was out, though you could barely recognize it – a dim, blinking yellow disk filtered by the soot and ice crystals in the air and intermittently blocked by ash and dust swirling through the sky. With no sun, there would be no plants and the snow had not melted at all. Even the lakes and waterways were still frozen over and the ice thick enough that a company of Chromium Guardsmen or the



giant Super-Mastiff combat robot could walk across it without fear of breaking through. No one had found any new survivors in Beloit for weeks. Nevertheless, the NEMA guys in charge at the evacuation center still sent out patrols.

As the three men walked in a loose formation down the street, all was quiet around them. They could hear nothing stirring in the entire city. That is, of course, when Mike wasn't on one of his rants. There was nothing stirring in Beloit, and Mike was growing restless. This made him complain. A lot.

"It's unfair, that's what it is," Mike bellowed to an empty world. "This whole situation sucks and is only getting worse."

Curtis did his best to ignore Mike. He had heard this all before, but arguing with the man did no good. It was best to ignore him. He figured this was just how Mike dealt with the collapse of human civilization. Who could blame him? Life did suck.

Jesse, on the other hand, had not heard this particular rant, and prodded Mike to keep him talking. It reminded him of the times he used to have irate callers go off on his web show and it seemed somehow comforting and familiar.

"Mike, from Oshkosh, what's unfair this time?" he asked in the voice he used to talk to callers.

"Everything. The uncertainty of it all. I was thinking about my old life. About all those times when I was younger and all the things I planned to do, back then. I wanted to be a movie star, did you know that? Not just an actor, but a movie star."

Jesse couldn't help but snicker a bit. "A movie star? Seriously? I mean, I'm sure at some point every kid wants to be a movie star. Or a fireman or a cowboy, or a space colonist."

Mike shot him a hard look. "See, that's what everybody told me. And you know what I did? I listened to them. I was going to take acting lessons, but decided not to. I watched movies and I studied all the greats. And you know what else? You know that guy who was in those Julian Amici movies?"

"Yeah, those were really good," said Jesse.

"Well, he was from my hometown. He was a huge star, at least for a while. But not me. I let everyone tell me what to do. I gave up on that dream, took a job I hated, married a woman who hated me, and I always told myself that the future would get better. As long as I stayed on the safe and narrow, someday there would be a payoff for my sacrifice."

"Oh, I can see where this is going," said Jesse.

"So can I," Curtis chimed in. "Can we drop this? We should try to radio back to base, again. Maybe we're through the interference and we'll be able to reach base for extraction. I don't want to hoof it all the way back to camp again."

"No, let me finish," Mike persisted. "So guess what? There is no better future! The world we knew is all gone. That stupid office is gone, my wife took off in the car... god only knows what happened to her. And here we are walking through the ruins of civilization for what? Did you hear about what's happening in Detroit? Makes this hell-hole look like Disneyland. Every day, things are worse. It's a waste of time. I mean, why are we doing this? None of it matters." Out of bitter frustration, Mike kicked at some trash that had gathered on the street.

"Okay, thank you," said Curtis in an only slightly condescending tone. "If you're finished, can we try to radio the evacuation center, please? I want get back to camp."

"Attention evac center," Jesse called into his radio headset. In response, he only got white noise with brief momentary sounds of distorted voices. If he listened really closely, sometimes he thought he could hear someone whispering his name. None of the communications gear had been functioning properly for a few hours, now. No one had any idea what was causing it, or how to fix the problem, but it meant that Beloit was cut off from the rest of the world, and the patrol teams were cut off from anyone else until they could find a clear zone without interference. If there happened to be an emergency, they were completely on their own.

"Nothing," Jesse sighed.

"Let's keep moving," Curtis suggested. "Head back to the drop point, but keep trying to get somebody, Jesse."

"Will do."

"Maybe it's fate," said Curtis. "There has to be somebody alive out here. Maybe the extra time will help us find them."

"Yeah, lucky them. Welcome to the NEMA survivors' center where maybe we can help you die slower than out here on your own."

"Mike!" shouted the other two men in unison. "Please, give it a rest."

After a few minutes of quiet, Mike started up again.

"She told me she was going to leave me. Before everything went to hell. Then after we were rescued by NEMA, I thought... I don't know, maybe this would bring us together. But she drives off anyway. Like it was better to take her chances anywhere else than to be stuck with me. Can you believe that?"

"What does it matter?" grumbled Curtis diplomatically, but he was really thinking, Yes, I can believe it. I wish I could get away from you right now.

"Let it go, Mike," said Jesse. "Even if you had lived differently and you became a movie star and had a super-model wife, a kid and a dog, all of this would have still happened. So what difference does it make? Who cares?"

"I care!" Mike shot back. "I would have just done whatever I wanted if I knew the future was going to turn out like this!"

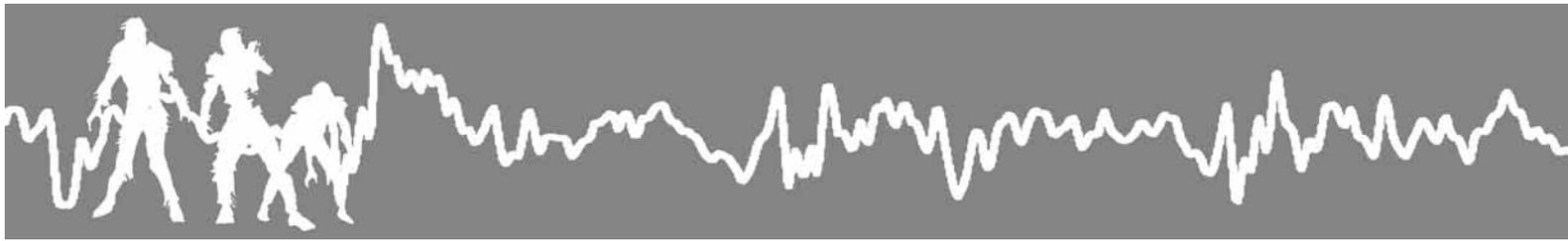
Underneath the bickering of the guys behind him, Curtis could hear something up ahead. It sounded like someone banging on something. The sound reverberated lightly off the empty streets. As they came around a wide turn in the street, he could see movement up ahead.

"Guys, shut the hell up."

"What? Screw you, man. I outrank you, I'm a Para-Arcane Specialist, you're just a militia volunteer," Jesse responded in a defensive tone.

"Well, SIR, I think you should know that if you two would shut up for a second, you'd notice that there is someone over there pounding and pulling at the hood of that car."

Now alert and cautious, the three men slowly advanced, energy rifles drawn and aimed at the source of the noise. As they got



closer, they could see a woman dressed in a dirty, blood-caked and tattered blouse and slacks. Her face covered in blood. She was tearing and ripping at the hood of a car abandoned months ago on the side of the street. It was a wonder she wasn't freezing to death in the cold Wisconsin snow.

"Hey lady! You having car trouble?" Mike called out, laughing at himself.

The woman gave no response. She continued trying to pry at the hood with her fingers.

Curtis lowered his rifle, noticing the blood, and spoke to her calmly. "Hello, ma'am? We're from NEMA. We can help you. Have you been hurt?"

As they got closer, the woman dug her fingers into the hood, and managed to bend it back on itself. In a burst of unnatural strength, she peeled it open and tore it off with her bare hands. Astonished and shocked, the three men watched as the woman tossed the hood to the side and began pulling and tearing at the car's engine. She seemed to be trying to remove it from its housing the same way she had removed the hood.

"The heck with this," snapped Mike. "She's not human. Let's get the hell out of here. Report it to our superiors and let someone with more experience deal with this."

"No. We should investigate," said Jesse, the Para-Arcane.

Apprehensively, Curtis stepped forward to once again speak with her. "Ma'am, are you okay? We can help you."

"Don't do it, Curtis," pleaded Mike. "Leave the crazy, demon-possessed woman alone. We need backup. Jesse, get someone on the comm."

"Been trying, but still nothing," bemoaned Jesse. Only his answer wasn't entirely true. He'd been quiet because he was trying to make out the voices in his head gear. Voices in a garbled message that had been telling him to kill Mike for the last several minutes.

As Curtis approached the woman, she seemed to lose interest in the car engine. She walked around the car in a stumbling, herky-jerky motion toward him.

"Curtis, please," protested Mike, his gun drawn and at the ready.

"She's hurt. Probably in shock," said Curtis as the woman shuffled toward him, her movements stiff and slow, without much balance or spatial awareness.

Curtis saw it first when she came into clear view, but now they could all see that her chest had been ripped open. Chunks of flesh were missing. Her rib cage and some dangling internal organs exposed to the cold air. The woman's face was locked in a slack-jawed moan. Her eyes, vacant and cloudy, stared off in opposite directions. They resembled little plastic orbs, dry and lifeless. And she smelled of rotting meat, like a dead animal left for too long on the side of the road.

"Holy shit! Should we shoot her?" Mike shouted.

"No shooting. I think she's diseased," said Curtis, "Like she's got some kind of flesh-eating virus."

"She's not diseased," snapped Mike. "She's dead. Look at her. She's totally dead!"

"Wow, a classic example of a zombie," added Jesse.

"No freakin' way," said Curtis as he drew his Neural Mace. "We've seen and heard a lot of weird shit, but dead people don't walk. And they don't try to steal a car."

"No. Listen, Curtis," begged Mike. "Jesse, tell him she's a goddamned zombie and to back off."

Nothing from Jesse.

"Take her head off, Curtis. Do it before she gets too close!"

"Pull it together, Mike," Curtis reasoned. "Aren't zombies supposed to eat people? She was just over there breaking into a car."

"How the hell do I know what zombies think? Jesse's the freakin' paranormal expert, and he says she's zombie. Good enough for me. Kill it. I say we shoot her, and get the hell out of here. Tell him Jesse, you're the ranking officer."

Curtis stepped forward, deliberately putting himself between the woman and the panicking Mike before he became trigger-happy. With the press of a button his Neural Mace hummed to life. He held it back like a baseball bat, and addressed the woman.

"Okay, lady. I don't want to hurt you, but we can't take any chances, so please sit down. Get down on the ground and let us determine the extent of your injuries. Nobody is going to hurt you. I promise."

The woman stepped forward undaunted. She moved her arms up, as if to embrace Mike in a hug. Her fingers splayed and taut. Despite her tight, jerky movements, she suddenly lunged with remarkable speed. Mike was surprised, but swung his Neural Mace, smacking her in the side of the head. There was a crack, like a bat hitting a baseball. For a moment, Curtis regretted having hit her so hard and worried he might have killed her. Upon impact, the Neural Mace discharged its electrical pulse, designed to stun and incapacitate even an augmented soldier. If the blow to the head didn't kill her, thought Curtis, she'd be down for the count.

Incredibly, the woman's head jerked back from the blow, but she stumbled only a few steps, looked up at Curtis with dead eyes and moaned as she reached for him.

A terror washed over Curtis as the woman grabbed him and put all her weight upon him. Balance lost, he tumbled to the snow-covered asphalt. The woman was on top of him, and wrapped her cold, dry hands around his neck, to violently bash his head into the ice covered ground.

Lost to disbelief, Curtis could only stare up at her face, searching for some kind of explanation. He marveled that the face, while bloody, was without any sign of rage. She was without emotion of any kind, just a fixed, blank stare. Beneath his helmet, he felt the ice and ground break apart and begin to concave. Each contact with the ground felt like having a car tire bounced off of his head. He could hear Mike shouting something, but everything seemed to be happening in slow motion. Curtis felt more like a witness to this attack than the victim. Concussion, he thought to



himself. I have shock and concussion. He knew he needed to do something. Push her off of him. Try to roll away, but he couldn't.

Mike fired his energy rifle at the woman and watched in horror as the blast turned half her body into a red splatter that left a mist in the air. It was a knee-jerk response to a panic moment.

The result of his blast didn't relieve his panic. Jesse had never fired a weapon at a person before. Sure, he had taken a shot at a demon a few weeks ago during an ambush, and into a pack of feral dogs just to scare them away. But never at a person. He never saw the body... God, what was it? Disintegrated? That didn't happen to the demon, and he didn't hit any of the dogs. They told him about it in training. They had trainees shoot a pumpkin or a balloon filled with water. But this? It was disgusting. He had no choice, he told himself. He did what he had to do.

The woman did not die.

The blast tore off the left side of her face and the entire left side of her upper torso – her left arm and half her body, completely GONE! Her chest a nasty, black, smoking crater with splatters of gore. She ignored it completely, looked up at Mike, and then back down at Curtis as she lifted his head up to smash it into the ground some more.

Mike heard a man scream as he fired a second blast. The shot tore her in half just below the ribs. Her remaining insides splattered all over Curtis, who wasn't moving. This time the woman's entire upper torso was severed from her body and it landed a few feet away. Her legs simply dropped away to either side of Curtis, and the blast sprayed him with black, smoldering bits of his attacker.

As Mike took a few tentative steps toward Curtis, he was surprised to realize that he had been the man screaming, and, in fact, was still screaming. He took a couple of deep breaths – his heart pounded so hard he thought it might explode – and looked down at his teammate.

"Curtis, you alive? Because I think I'm having a damn heart attack," said Mike as he gently nudged Curtis' shoulder with his boot, while he kept one eye on the zombie woman.

A groan came from Curtis as he raised trembling hands to clasp the sides of his head.

"Look," said Jesse, who had joined the two men. He pointed his rifle to where the woman's torso had landed.

"Where the hell were you!?" screamed Mike in anger. "I could have used a little help here. You're the damn officer, you fu—"

"She's still moving," said Jesse in morbid fascination.

"Aw, no," whined Mike, who sounded as if he was on the verge of tears. "What does it take to put this thing down?"

Already, the zombie was dragging herself with her right arm toward Curtis. She pulled herself through the snow with her fingers. Her dead half-face stared at the men as blank and lifeless as a Halloween mask. Charred black gore trailed from her ripped torso. There was no blood, though.

"What the hell!?" screamed Mike. "Unbelievable."

"I was right," said Jesse. "She is some kind of goddamn zombie."

"Thank God she didn't bite me," muttered Curtis as he pushed himself away from the creature with his foot to put some distance between her.

"Will one of you put her out of her misery, so we can get the hell out of here?" asked Curtis, his head throbbed and ears still rang.

"Wait! Maybe we should take it back to NEMA command," said Jesse.

"The hell with that!" said Mike flatly as he splattered what was left of the monster with another blast.

"What did you do that for!?" shouted Jesse.

"I just did what had to be done. I'm not touching that thing or taking it anywhere.

Jesse shoved Mike hard and shouted in anger, "I'm in charge! I make the calls. Not you."

"Yeah? Well, where were you, Boss, when that dead bitch was smashing Curtis' head in, huh?! Where were you? Nowhere! So get out of my face."

Mike, still high on adrenaline, dropped his gun to the ground and shoved his face into Jesse's, ready for a fistfight.

The Para-Arcanist pushed him away and aimed his rifle at his head.

"What's this?" shrieked Mike in outrage. "You're gonna a pull your gun on me, now? Are you out of your mind?"

Jesse braced his rifle, ready to shoot. "Do it," said the voice in the crackling static of his comm-link. "Kill this loudmouth. Kill him. Do it," the voice urged in a soft and inviting tone, like the whisper of a lover. "Killing him is merciful. Kill him. Just kill him."

"No. It... it's... not right," muttered Jesse aloud.

"Damn straight it's not right," snarled Mike as he pushed the rifle out of his way and walked past Jesse to tend to Curtis.

Jesse turned. Weapon still at the ready. The voice whispering in his ear to shoot.

"You alright, Curtis?" inquired Mike.

"No I'm not alright. I nearly had my head smashed in by a zombie. God, when will this end? It just keeps getting worse and worse."

"That's what I've been saying all along!"

"Ah, please no, Mike. Give it a rest. Please, give it a rest."

"Uh, sorry. You've got it."

Mike slipped his arm around Curtis to provide him support.

"Ah man, your helmet is caved in."

"I don't doubt it. I think I blacked out at one point. Wouldn't be surprised if my skull is fractured."

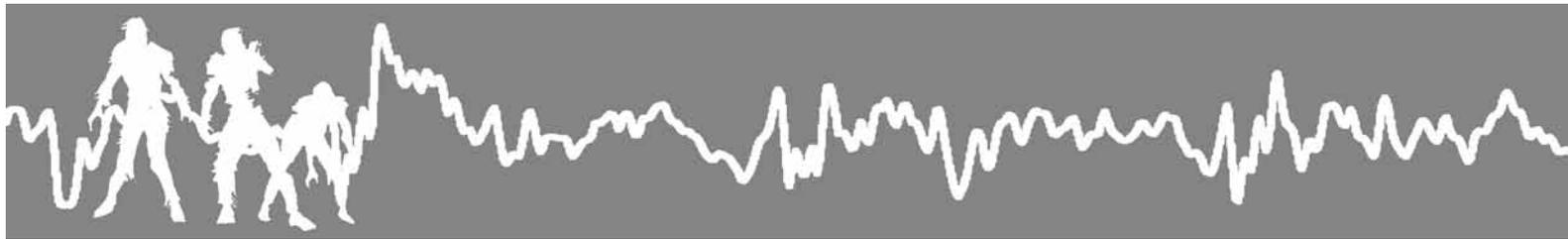
"Me either," agreed Mike. "I mean, the back or your helmet is cracked like a freakin' eggshell, man."

"I still don't get it, Mike. She's a zombie, right? Dead?"

"Oh yeah, she was a zombie alright."

"Then what did she need with the car engine?"

"Don't know. Don't care."



“No. It has to mean something. Maybe we should go back and look around.”

“Uh uhn. Not me. And you’re in no shape. End of discussion. Mr. Paranormal Expert is still back there probably gathering up samples and taking photos right now. You and me, we’re getting out of here. Let him and the Intelligence boys figure this crap out.”

“I’d try to contact base, Mike, but the radio in my helmet is dead.”

“I’d be surprised if it wasn’t. Unfortunately, mine’s been nothin’ but static for the last few hours. Hey, wait a minute. You won’t believe it, Curtis, I’ve got base camp on the comm right now!”

Jesse stood frozen like a statue, his rifle still raised but now pointing at the empty space where Mike and Curtis turned the corner. All that was in his sight now was the darkening sky.

“Death is peace. Death is good.”

“But I don’t want to die,” whimpered Jesse to the voice in the gathering darkness.

“Yes. Death is peace. Death comes and it is good. Then you will find purpose. Then you will kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill.”

The dead have come back for us

Excerpts from the audio journal of Lt. General
Lindsey Sawyer, Head of NEMA Midwest Operations

“**March 2nd, 2099, at 0600 hours.** I lost contact with the Beloit, Wisconsin outpost two days ago and I fear the worst. Gargoyle aggression is on the increase, but I have a feeling this is something else.

“Beloit is the site of a NEMA evacuee camp and a small field hospital staffed with thirty or so medical personnel plus local volunteers. They are watched over by a platoon of NEMA soldiers, three Chromium Guardsmen, a Mastiff and a Bulldog assigned to protect the estimated 3,600 civilian survivors that we know of. The plan is to move them to the larger Rockford, Illinois facility.

“Communication with the Rockford encampment has been spotty at best for the last few weeks. But just today they began to complain about unusual radio interference and indistinguishable radio chatter. Voices whispering unintelligibly, chants and pleas for help through the white noise, but unresponsive when Rockford tried to reach out to them. We’ve heard nothing of the sort on our end, here in Chicago.

“The techies chalk it up to increasing levels of interference from the **Blue Zones**, but I’m not so sure. Beloit complained of

similar chatter before we lost contact with them. I’m not taking any chances.

“I can’t point to anything specific, but I have a gut feeling that something bad is happening in Beloit. I’m sending reinforcements to the Rockford camp and a reconnaissance team, designated as *Recon Delta*, to Beloit. Recon Delta is comprised of a Silver Eagle squad, a Peacekeeper squad on hovercycles, and a medical team, all using fast-moving transports.

“On a good day before the World-Crash, they could have been in Rockford from Chicago in under two hours, but not anymore. Most roads are shattered or have been turned into debris fields buried under 5-10 feet (1.5 to 3 m) of drifting snow and ash. Ground forces need the better part of a day just to get to Rockford. And that’s assuming they don’t run into trouble on the way.

“Our fliers don’t fare much better. Gargoyle aggression is significantly increased. Visibility is seldom more than 300 yards and often less. The falling ash and snow is pretty constant, though usually light. I haven’t seen the sun since this all began. Frequent storms and high winds don’t help. I hate even sending anyone out in this, but two days with no contact from Beloit is cause for alarm.

“The plan is to send transports and armored soldiers to Rockford and Beloit to pick up as many survivors as we can, and ultimately bring them back to our main operations here in Chicago. And of course to resupply the troops stationed at the refugee outposts along the way. But our hands have been full dealing with every manner of trouble. Civil instability being the least of them.

“In addition to hostile weather and environment, we are facing unprecedented enemy forces. Creatures... monsters that defy explanation. Add them to the rest of the cataclysmic mix, and we’re barely holding our own. The weight of so many people turning to us for help... we’re... we’re doing what we can.

“I don’t imagine I should state this as an officer of NEMA, but it is bedlam. Organized chaos at best. Hundreds of people find their way to us every day and they bring with them stories that you pray are the result of mass hysteria, except we know from firsthand experience they speak the truth. God help us, monsters are real.

“I’m not sure how any of us are coping. I think half the troops under my command are in shock themselves. We all keep going by focusing on the job at hand, saving lives, and not letting ourselves think about anything else. The tremendous sense of loss we all share... it’s all been pushed down and buried. I guess I should be glad that we don’t have a moment to dwell on the fate of our own loved ones or what the future may hold for us. We press forward, determined to save lives and establish a beachhead for survivors here in the Chicago area. That’s why the Beloit, Rockford and other survivor camps are so important. We don’t know how many of us are left or, frankly, what is happening in the rest of the country. All we can do is make our corner of the United States as safe and secure as possible.

“To be honest, I’m more worried about Rockford than Beloit. Rockford is a sprawling urban city that has been, remarkably,



spared from the destruction we've seen in many other places. It is one of the largest and best-defended regions of survivors we have, and they seem to be holding the line well. I want to keep it that way.

"I spoke with *Major John King* at oh-nine-hundred. He reported no change. All is quiet. Their only complaint is sudden technical difficulties with their communications gear that I noted earlier in this report. Radios, televisions, cell phones, even radar and the helmets on power armor suits have started behaving erratically.

"I tell myself the tech guys are right, it's probably just interference from the Blue Zones or atmospheric conditions, but I don't like it. I miss satellite data. But the ash clouds and storms blanket most of the sky across the planet, in effect knocking out most satellite and global communications. We're on our own, cutoff from the world."

"March 3, 2099, ten forty. No word from Recon Delta. Still no word from Beloit or Freeport, either. I have gotten communications that the reinforcements have arrived at Rockford and the reconnaissance team is en route to Beloit."

"March 3, 2099, eighteen twenty-four. A few survivors have trickled in from Beloit and Madison. They have some pretty disturbing stories about the dead rising to fight the living. Two months ago, I would have laughed at the notion of zombies or vampires. Today... I believe just about anything. Waiting for a more comprehensive investigation and verification of these reports.

"They've told our forces in Rockford that *the dead* have been returning to life to hunt down and kill the living. According to initial reports, the dead kill humans but also the ones we have designated as *Dimensional Beings*, non-humans of unknown origins, clearly not of this Earth. What's worse, their victims re-animate after a very short time, like something out of a horror movie. Here the stories become inconsistent, some say the dead rise in a few minutes, others say 30 minutes to an hour. The newly-risen dead are just as violent as those who slew them. The people killed by these – I don't know what else to call them but *zombies* – get up and join the other walking dead to attack the living.

"There are no reports of an obvious leader or outside force controlling these dead people; at least, none that any witnesses have noticed. That doesn't mean there isn't some man of magic or demonic being out there doing this. In fact, I would have to assume that is exactly what's going on. Alternately, it could be a side-effect of the Blue Zones that we know nothing about, or an alien virus or God only knows what.

"I hope the reports are wrong. With any luck, it's a weird illusion or mass hallucination. It could be anything. At this point, all we have are a few stories from some shell-shocked survivors. Investigation is ongoing."

"March 4, 2099, at oh-five-hundred. More survivors came into Rockford last night. They claim to have come from Beloit

and their stories match up with what we heard previously, but it's worse than I feared. Yes, the dead are returning to life. Yes, they are killing the living, and those killed are also rising from death to hunt the living. But these dead people, these zombies, are more powerful than when alive. The reanimated corpses possess extraordinary strength and are violent in the extreme.

"I've watched my share of zombie movies and web shows, and as impossible as it may sound, these re-animated dead seem to follow a very basic formula. A zombie kills a person and that person soon rises as a zombie himself. It has been presumed that anyone bitten by one of these re-animated dead is infected, becomes ill, dies and reanimates as a zombie, but this is pure conjecture. There is no evidence of disease or infection. However, many assume this is the case and there has been widespread panic and anxiety throughout the Rockford community. People are asking to be evacuated to Chicago or anywhere other than where they are at. Neither is possible. Our forces struggle to maintain order.

"This leaves me with a dilemma. What if it is a virus? What if the population of Rockford has been exposed via the survivors trickling in from Madison and Beloit? Do I risk moving anyone, even if they seem healthy, to any other community?

"I'm convening with my advisory board in half an hour, but following standard procedures means we keep the potentially infectious population contained and isolated. I pray I won't be condemning the 200,000+ survivors at Rockford to their doom.

"Recon Delta has reported contact with the new enemy in Beloit. They confirm these creatures appear to be reanimated dead human beings. The zombies seem to lack any true intelligence, are strong and tough, and programmed to kill the living. If there is good news, it's that they are easily dispatched with military grade weapons, though it takes a considerable amount of punishment to destroy one. Unfortunately, a shot to the head does not stop these... uh... zombies. It appears the entire creature needs to suffer tremendous physical damage to stop it. They do not use weapons or tools, so thank God for small favors, but they do seem to exist in considerable numbers. Their exact numbers and threat level are yet to be determined.

"I think the plan has to be contain and destroy them before they spread, while trying to determine the cause before this... this... zombie plague spreads.

"Recon Delta did report one strange thing. Very strange, actually. The zombies they encountered seemed less interested in hunting people and more interested in gathering scrap. They were tearing apart vehicles and machinery and carrying away the scrap. Recon Delta followed for several miles, but the procession of junk-carrying zombies continued on well past the border of Beloit. Destination unknown. Reason unknown. But certainly not the behavior of zombies in fiction.

"I have to frequently remind the troops, as well as myself, that we do not know what these... so-called zombies are. Until now, zombies were not real. We don't know how these... things... function or what they want. And we need to remind ourselves of



that. This is an unknown enemy, no matter how familiar they may seem because they mimic monsters from our pop culture.

“I have instructed Recon Delta to send a few men to follow these scrap-carrying zombies to their destination with the junk, no matter where it leads. Though the farther away they travel, the more the risk for our troops tailing them.”

“**March 6, 2009, oh-seven-hundred.** I need to amend my last audio entry. The zombies, at least some of them, use weapons and tools, and they are out for blood. Not only that, but Recon Delta reports zombies covered in scrap metal, as if it were patchwork body armor. Some even have weapon arms like cyborgs. These arms run the gamut from scythes and picks and swords built out of metal to actual bionics and military grade weapons used to replace limbs. I have received video and it is quite disturbing: Pieces of metal bolted right to the bodies, machine parts sticking out of a shoulder socket, neck or chest. Gruesome.

“So far, these Scrap Zombies are being encountered between Beloit and Madison, but seem to be arriving from the north in ever increasing numbers. Vast numbers. These Scrap Zombies are also much more aggressive and seem to exhibit more intelligence and basic strategies and tactics. From all reports, these weaponized zombies are more aware of their surroundings, know how to use weapons and recognize human activity even when stealth and precautions to remain unseen are taken. Recon Delta insists this new undead menace uses both weapons and bionics, and uses them well. I assume they have been picking up weapons from the thousands of soldiers, law enforcement and National Guardsmen we have lost in this cataclysmic crisis, but they may be looting NEMA and military installations as well. How these Scrap Zombies possess the knowledge to use military-grade weapons and bionics, and build them into themselves remains baffling. Neither these Scrap Zombies nor the previous zombies, designated as Chaos Zombies, appear to possess the mental faculties to build or install weapons and armor, makeshift or otherwise. This suggests there remains creatures we have not yet identified. It’s the only thing that makes sense.

“It could also mean someone or something is creating and unleashing these monsters. But who would install bionics and weapons into animated corpses?

“The obvious answer is someone using them as an army – an invasion force. That’s what my gut is telling me. And if so, I fear our troubles are only beginning. I have all our forces on Red Alert and Colonel Gleba is in the process of selecting forces to send to Rockford, Illinois. If these things are originating somewhere in this area, I want to know about it, pinpoint the exact cause and make Rockford, Illinois our defensive line.

“I’m having our troops and volunteer militia form squads to go zombie hunting. I’ve already issued a mandate to destroy zombies on sight. The problem is, we don’t know how widespread this new menace is yet, or how many we may be facing. If we spread ourselves too thin here, we could lose Chicago. If we don’t

do enough, quickly enough, we could lose Rockford. Neither are acceptable outcomes.

“Worse, we have plenty to contend with here, in Chicago. Every day brings new challenges and all kinds of threats. Giant Gargoyles, for example, have been a problem for some weeks now, but since the appearance of the zombies, they have become increasingly bold and aggressive. One in four aerial patrols report some incident with Gargoyles, from being tailed, dive-bombed and games of chicken to full-scale combat engagements. It could simply be that they are taking advantage of our forces being distracted and divided by this new threat, or the Gargoyles may be somehow involved. We’re still collating data to make a determination.

“To complicate matters further, we are experiencing an escalation of what I can only describe as monsters and magic. And now some of our own people and refugees are exhibiting dramatic displays of psychic and magic proclivity.”

“**March 7, 2009, oh-six hundred.** Yesterday afternoon, Recon Delta lost contact with the team tailing the scrap-carrying zombies. Communications have been spotty, so it didn’t necessarily mean we lost our men. But five hours ago, we lost contact with Recon Delta itself. One member of the team managed to send the video image attached to this audio log before we lost the transmission. It’s half of Recon Delta... dead, and now part of the Scrap Zombies hunting the rest of the team.

“I... I... hate this.”

“**March 7, 2009, eleven fifty-two.** Search and rescue operations in and around the city of Beloit, Wisconsin report hundreds, perhaps thousands of zombies in the northern half of the city where there were few the day before. They also report malfunctions with their communications and electronic equipment. Just like previous reports, anyone entering the Zombie Plague area experiences radio interference, static, and some claim, ghostly voices talking gibberish over their radios. It is not just NEMA equipment, either. On sweeps throughout Beloit and the areas around it, civilian electronic equipment – car radios, cell phones, televisions, personal computers, anything electronic – is blasting static. Most of these devices are without power, unplugged or broken. They shouldn’t work, yet have activated themselves to broadcast streams of static and white noise. To what end, or what this may have to do with the zombies, we don’t know, but the two seem to be related. It’s as if the noise heralds the coming of the resurrected dead.

“This threat is quickly encroaching upon the Chicagoland area. It needs to be dealt with swiftly and decisively before the dead reach numbers that could seriously threaten us here. I have ordered the eradication of anything resembling a zombie, and I’m sending more platoons north on reconnaissance and zombie seek and destroy missions. Top priority, of course, is finding the source of the Zombie Plague and putting an end to it.”

– Journal Entry Ended – Lt. General Lindsey Sawyer



Madison, Wisconsin

January, 2099

Prior to December 22, 2098, Madison was a college town of about 500,000 inhabitants. When the Great Cataclysm is set off by a small nuclear exchange in South America, a wave of destruction follows a crisscrossing network of lines of blue energy that covers the planet. The initial shockwave from the exploding ley lines tears through the planet in a matter of minutes. The shift causes a chain reaction of natural disasters that devastates the surface. Most people never know what hits them.

It takes all of three minutes from the moment the Cataclysm begins for the devastation to reach southern Wisconsin and the cities of **Madison** and **Milwaukee**. Both cities are constructed on and around places where ley lines are thick and intersect frequently. These intersections, and places like them, are locations of great mystic energy where the walls between dimensions are thin to begin with. Such places suffer the greatest devastation and endure the greatest level of supernatural activity and dimensional breaches. In the case of Detroit and Windsor, the two cities might as well have been hit by a nuclear bomb. They would also be the first location for battles between demonic hordes, with human survivors caught in the middle.

Madison has a particularly large and powerful ley line nexus located in its downtown area, and two smaller ones nearby. Milwaukee has four large ley lines as well, what NEMA forces have dubbed *Blue Zones*. When dimensions collide and space and time warp, these locations explode with bursts of blue energy, weird storms and earthquakes. Entire cities collapse. Millions instantly perish from the resulting destruction. This scenario is repeated across the globe. Coastal cities and other places suffer destruction from additional destructive forces.

Most of southern Wisconsin has been covered in Blue Zones since the chaos began. Because of this, the area is in a constant state of turmoil. The towns, suburbs, and rural areas are filled with Lesser Demons, dangerous monsters, and strange alien beings. Greater Chaos Demons rule the ruins of the cities and spread death and carnage to the survivors and even to other demons and supernatural creatures. *Chaos Storms* tear through the entire region, depositing more dangerous creatures, powerful winds, blinding snowstorms, and frequent paranormal events. For any people who remain, it is a constant struggle for survival.

Fractured NEMA forces, combined with small groups of military, law enforcement, and brave First Responders and volunteers, do the best they can to save lives and stem the waves of chaos. The few safe places have been turned into evacuation centers where NEMA troops work diligently to maintain contact with the main NEMA forces that have gathered to make a stand in **Chicago**. The evacuation centers are able to ship survivors by transport, escorted by power armor and robot troops, to Chica-

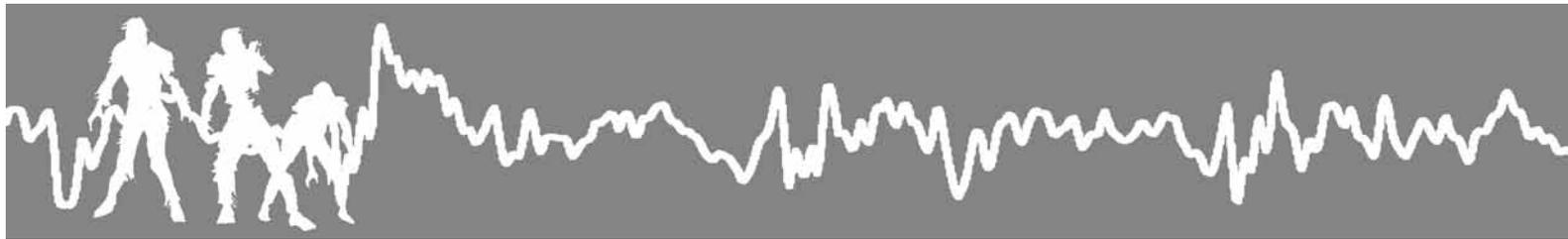
go and receive supplies in return. Some of these encampments are small, where as few as 100 survivors are looked after by a skeleton crew of five or so NEMA soldiers. Others number into the thousands, and places such as **Rockford** and **Freeport** are miracles, comparatively untouched by the Great Cataclysm, and remain home to hundreds of thousands of frightened people in the ensuing aftermath. For them, there is still hope. And NEMA is the face of that hope. Nobody yet realizes that the government is gone and is not coming back. Or that human civilization, at least as we know it, is on the quick slide toward oblivion.

There are no evacuation centers in the larger cities such as **Milwaukee** and **Madison**. The situation in these places is pure anarchy after the opening minutes of the Great Cataclysm. Powerful demons, commanding small armies of monsters and unholy creatures, wage war against each other over the right to kill the people left in the shattered cities. The suburbs and farmlands crawl with demonic beasts who hunt and feed upon human flesh. Escape is impossible. The roads are clogged with cars or smashed to rubble, or washed away by storms and floods. What's left is being covered by the great clouds of ash and rock pumped into the atmosphere by volcanoes around the world. From orbit, Earth is shrouded in ash and soot.

It is said that no one got out of Madison or Milwaukee alive. And anyone who goes in, for any reason, never returns. Communications with anyone in cities around the world is generally limited to civilian ham radio. The Internet and other networked communications systems are the first to fall. After a few weeks, even ham radios fall silent.

Future generations will tell of how **Milwaukee** became a living Hell on Earth where demons and Deevils turned the city into a depraved orgy of blood and fire. How the city burned and the fires never stopped raging for years. The stories will tell how demons hunted down survivors, one by one, and brought them into the dark underbelly of the city to be tortured by unimaginable means and then thrown into the flames to feed the inferno. Eventually, as the story will go, the demons turned Milwaukee into a city of skeletal skyscrapers surrounded by a mile (1.6 km) wide pile of ash and bones. In time, the demons would leave the city and spread across the continent, sowing death and chaos wherever they went. Such is the magnitude of this first Demon Plague. It is a story yet to be written. At this moment in time, Milwaukee is bedlam, but there are survivors being rescued by NEMA patrols who dare to face the mounting demonic forces.

No one will ever be quite sure what happened in **Madison**. The legends of the future will speak of a hundred different horrors and tragic events. But two things are known for certain: One, in the first few months following the initial Cataclysm, a strange obelisk would tower above the cityscape, appearing from a "hole in the sky," and then land in downtown Madison. And two, the dead would rise to challenge the living. Tens of thousands would perish by their cold hands while the heroes of the day (NEMA) would fight valiantly and sacrifice much to prevent the dead from inheriting the Earth.



... And Not One Shall Survive

Without warning or reason, the dead of Madison animate and converge on those who had been spared the initial destruction. Those who fight against the newly risen dead are quickly overwhelmed. The corpses have become tougher and stronger upon their strange resurrection, able to withstand massive amounts of damage from conventional weapons. And for every one one put back down, there are thousands more to take its place.

Most people flee and hide as best they can, taking refuge in tunnels, churches, tall buildings (those that are still standing), or anywhere they think the dead cannot reach them. They soon find that there is no place they can hide from the dead. Sooner or later, they are found by the zombie hordes and assimilated. Many are grabbed and dragged screaming and flailing out into the open where dozens more zombies await in grisly anticipation.

Major riots break out all over the already-battered city. It is total anarchy as panicked survivors run screaming from the arms of the living dead into the streets filled with more of them. There is nowhere to run. No escape. Bodies rise and join the already risen dead to kill more of the living. The ensuing chaos touches off fires which burn out of control. Random gun battles echo throughout the city in flames... at least for a little while. Panicked survivors and bands of people who think they can fight the dead as a group are overwhelmed. Those who flee early on have a chance of escaping, as do those who wait until there are few left alive. The rest fall to the growing army of zombies. The living are slaughtered by the dead with methodical relentlessness. The victims are not eaten, just killed. Often brutally. Soon they too rise.

As the days drag on, the few survivors who remain in Madison witness a strange occurrence. Half of the zombies begin to scavenge for metal scraps and electronic equipment. Mobs of “zombie looters” remove metal and electronics from stores, factories, malls, junkyards, auto and hovercraft dealerships, anywhere there are technological devices and electronics. They dismantle and strip vehicles on the street, wander off with broken computers, stereo equipment and kitchen appliances, and even start tearing down entire industrial complexes.

The zombies take their armfuls of scrap and wiring into the Black Obelisk and exit in search of more. Tons of scrap metal, weapons and electronics disappear inside the alien slab. Those who still can, try to contact the world outside Madison, but no transmissions are coming in or going out. Satellites, Internet, television and radio are all down. The only thing anyone can hear is the strange static and the occasional words within it. The Black Obelisk has taken over every frequency.

Over time, some zombies are “called” into the Black Obelisk, where their cold, dead bodies are augmented by armor and weapons bolted right to their bones. Some are completely dismantled – arms, legs, heads, completely removed and *reassembled* into something even more deadly and menacing to the living – smarter than the other zombies. Smarter and given jobs to protect the undead legion and to spread the contagion. Mobs of bizarre, twisted

creatures composed of metal and flesh are emerging from the Black Obelisk. Their visage frightful to behold. The growing legion of zombies now have “soldiers” and “protectors” with armor bolted directly to their bodies. Instead of arms, some have wicked blades or recycled industrial equipment like chainsaws and drills. Some lug carts of spare mechanical and fleshy “parts,” or barrels full of god-knows-what, on their backs. These new zombies made of scrap resemble *zombie cyborgs* or perhaps something worse. The dark forces inside the Black Obelisk take the scrap metal and tangles of wire and electronics, weaponize them, and meld them to the dead. The zombies are reconstructed into some sort of undead cyborgs with the single purpose of causing more death and destruction on a massive scale. Creatures that NEMA soon dub **Scrap Zombies**. Still, the monsters’ real advantage is their sheer numbers and savage attacks.

The handful of daring and brave human souls who manage to stay one step ahead of the zombies in Madison bear witness to it all. They help anyone they can, take notes about what they observe, and pray that one day soon, their knowledge and information might be useful in bringing the horror to an end.

NEMA has little idea what is going on. With the complete global collapse of governments, civilization and communications, they and the surviving military have their hands full. There are a dozen different crises to deal with or a battle to fight on every street corner across their jurisdiction. Though well equipped, their numbers and supplies dwindle with every passing day, and the impossible happens at every turn. Invading aliens, demons, dragons, monsters, magic, and now zombies – the remnants of NEMA and the military are overwhelmed. Half the time they do not know what new menace has appeared down the street, let alone in the next city or state. They respond to each new menace as it appears, and prioritize the worst of them as the danger is revealed. The zombie menace is yet to be identified, but when it is, it will become the Top Priority of NEMA and designated for utter annihilation. It is the job of the survivors in Madison to get the word out and sound the warning. If they can.

Now – March, 2099

Only a few months after the beginning of the Great Cataclysm, the world is still suffering its onslaught and trying to find a way to cope and survive. **The Blue Zones** continue to surge and rage, causing heavy storms and destruction. Survivors must fend off aliens from other worlds and actual monsters and demons. It is worse along the lines of blue energy, and where two or more lines cross, dimensional doorways open and close at random intervals to unleash new horrors onto the Earth. These Rifts in space and time lead to alien worlds and other dimensions. Places you dare not visit. Places filled with nightmarish creatures that use *the Rifts* to access our world, and stay to reap mayhem.

The death toll is staggering and beyond measure. The reasons for it are as diverse as they are terrible. Aside from the initial cataclysmic exploding of the ley lines, there have been earth-



quakes, volcanoes, floods, tidal waves, storms of unparalleled magnitudes, widespread fires, panic, looting, mass suicides, starvation, exposure to the elements, disease, mass murder, attacks from alien and demonic beings, and the list goes on and on. Around the globe, people are dying. Every day, every hour, every minute, someone becomes a victim of the Cataclysm. If they aren't killed by nature's upheaval or weather turned deadly, they perish from what people are calling magic from the Blue Zones, or at the hands of aliens and monsters. There is no controlling government. Civilization is in tatters and slipping away fast, and even the very fabric of reality seems malleable and changing into something unknown.

Fear and paranoia grip the heart and mind of nearly every survivor. They are scared, tired, hungry and helpless, facing an uncertain future. The world has spun completely out of control, and no one has any idea of what to do about it. In many places, hopelessness reigns. Those who have something to hold onto, whether it be a sense of duty, loved ones, technology or even a safe place to hide out, look to the heavens to pray and beg for deliverance. No one on Earth is untouched by the Great Cataclysm.

In the American Midwest, cities lay in ruins and their populations dwindle. Most people have perished. Survivors have learned to stay quiet and hidden. If there is a noise, it is usually from bandits, looters, Doomsday cultists, wild animals, or demonic beasts searching for victims. Occasionally, one can hear the sounds of gunfire, explosions, or the screams of an unfortunate soul meeting a gruesome ending. The verdict is still out on whether those who have banded together and lean on the high-tech shoulders of soldiers and NEMA protectors, are any better off than those on their own. Large encampments, weapons and technology become targets for cutthroats, monsters and, well, everything bad in the world.

Spring is on the horizon, but you would never know it. The ash and snow is thick in most places, up to 5-8 feet (1.2 or 2.4 m) deep at most locations. Much more in others. Buildings, bridges, and elevated highways, already weakened and damaged from the initial destruction, are collapsing from the weight of ash and snow. The sun has only been glimpsed a few times since Christmas, and only through a dark, gray haze of swirling ash and debris particles. Without sunlight and normal wind patterns, temperatures are freezing and there is no sign of winter coming to an end. As a result, the plants and animals are also struggling to survive. Many are dying. Some have turned to feeding on scrap and carrion, others now see humans as prey and hunt people and the alien invaders who are vulnerable and edible. Life is beyond hard and terrifying.

It is worse in the West. According to rumors, the entire Western Seaboard has been eradicated. Storms of wind, rain and snow continue to pound the land. Those living in and near the Rocky Mountains report flashes and waves of colored light and of lightning that travels horizontally across the sky without the accompaniment of thunder. This light show can be seen for miles and has

persisted since the Cataclysm began. There has been no communications with survivors west of the Rockies. Aircraft trying to fly into the area drop out of the sky or vanish, never to be seen again.

NEMA continues the struggle for the survival of mankind.

Although their forces are limited and the outlook bleak, they fight against the chaos because they are the only ones who can. The Demon Plague and appearance of all manner of monsters has been a constant uphill battle that shows little sign of abating. As if this were not bad enough, mortal men, women, and most of all, children, have been exhibiting marvelous powers of the mind and spirit. Magical and psychic abilities are manifesting in people more with every passing day, seemingly at random. Some of these "transformed" and "enchanted" fight alongside NEMA and other heroes to rescue and protect fellow survivors. Others have their own selfish ambitions during these trying times, and still others have fallen in league with demonic forces to prolong their own lives, fuel the chaos and subjugate their fellow humans.

When NEMA gets word from their scouts and the survivors that mobs of animated dead are hunting and attacking the living, the first people they talk to are the spell casters. Especially the self-proclaimed "Necromancers." Up until this point, these so-called Necromancers have been mostly seen as a benefit. They can command the dead to clear debris, engage in rescue operations in places too dangerous for living people, and can even use them to dig mass graves or make large funeral pyres. So when reports of zombies start coming in, NEMA turns to their fledgling Necromancers and mages for answers.

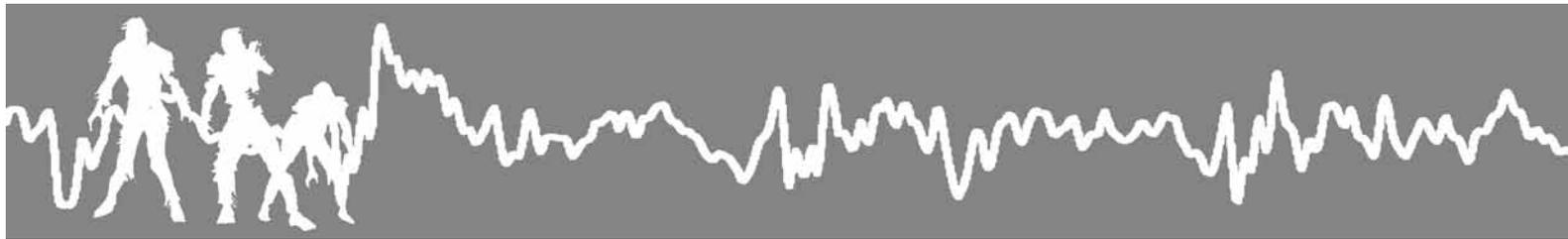
They have none.

No Necromancer known to NEMA has the kind of experience or power to influence the dead in such large numbers and over such a wide area. Moreover, all human practitioners of magic are new to the concept and only have a passing idea of what is and is not possible.

Things get even more confusing when NEMA and their magic consultants learn that these animated dead have been converted into varying types of cyborg-like warriors with weapon limbs and armor bolted right to them. This is the most troubling turn of events, as it makes these **Scrap Zombies** a very real danger to NEMA's own armored troops, especially where zombies gather in large numbers.

The reports of the dead coming back to life and being turned into "Scrap Zombies," as NEMA dubs them, have been growing rapidly. The heads of Midwest Command in Chicago are no longer able to dismiss the problem as a rumor or isolated event. This is not a passing thing. The situation is only getting worse, and NEMA must figure out a way to stop it.

Whatever they do, they need to do it quickly. If the reports coming in are true, the dead will soon be at the doorstep of Chicago, with millions of corpses that can be animated and turned into Scrap Zombies. After all the headway and the lives they have saved, they cannot – no, they will not – let their Chicago base and survivor refuge be swallowed up and regurgitated into something rotten and evil.



Invasion Overview

WARNING to Players: The following overview may be best left *unread by players* as it contains information that, as a player, your character may need to uncover and learn through the course of the adventure campaign. Don't ruin the fun by reading ahead. If you do, you will have to play as if your character does NOT know any of the following until your character(s) makes the appropriate discoveries.



The Zombie Invasion

Make no doubt about it, this is an invasion that is using the resurrected dead as a conquering army. As dangerous as the Chaos Zombies are, the Scrap Zombies are even more dangerous.

The Transmission originates from the **Black Obelisk**, but functions rather like a virus that magically infects communications equipment and electronic devices. It is the Transmission that transforms the recent dead into *Chaos Zombies*. Stop it and you put an end to the zombie plague. Well, most of it. The majority of the zombies die/go inert when the Transmission stops.

Only those zombies functioning within a 20 mile (32 km) radius of the Black Obelisk remain active and unaffected. Of course, they continue to cause chaos and death, and all zombies created via the Transmission can sense the current range limitations of the Transmission and do not go past it. **Note:** The 20 mile (32 km) radius is also the initial range of effect when the Black Obelisk first starts to broadcast. As these areas become overrun and dominated by zombies, the broadcast range can be extended out an additional 10 miles (16 km). As the zombie swarm grows and



dominates that new area, *the radius* is extended by 10 miles (16 km) over and over again.

If the Transmission can be shut down, no new zombies can be created beyond the initial 20 mile (32 km) radius. The Black Obelisk can, however, continue to modify and improve the ones it has around it. Moreover, anyone who dies while within the 20 mile (16 km) radius of the Black Obelisk is reborn as a **Chaos Zombie** and is a candidate for **Scrap Zombie** reconstruction and augmentation.

Steps to the Zombie Invasion and Conquest:

Step One of the Resurrection invasion is the Transmission. The Transmission is heard over all electronic devices, even broken electronics, and it is the source of the dead being reanimated. Anyone who has died in the last 60 days rises as a *Chaos Zombie*.

Step Two: Chaos Zombies kill the living, and those slain rise again, 4D6+10 minutes later, as *Chaos Zombies* under the control of the Black Obelisk. These zombies are “programmed” by *the Transmission* and become part of a larger army of dead for the Black Obelisk. The *Chaos Zombies* continue to kill all living humans and human-like D-Bees they encounter – making more and more zombies.

Step Three: Gather materials and bring them inside the Black Obelisk. When there are no longer living people who are easy to find (survivors who hide well or manage to avoid detection), the *Chaos Zombies*’ priority changes. The creatures now begin to gather up computers, electronics, wiring, weapons, bionics, armor, scrap metal, and other machine parts. This is all part of the zombies’ programming by the Transmission which controls the *Chaos Zombies* (and the *Scrap Zombies*, which come later) as if they were remote control robots. They work to dismantle and tear down vehicles, tanks, power armor, cyborgs and all things made of metal and M.D.C. materials. This creates more manageable pieces of scrap, electronics and component parts to bring back to the Black Obelisk.

Think of them as *scavenging ants* carrying stuff back to the anthill. In this case, the anthill is the Black Obelisk and the stuff is the materials to build better, more deadly, M.D.C., *Scrap Zombies* (the soldier ants to better carry on the invasion and protect the Black Obelisk/hive center). Any living beings seen by the scavenging zombies along the way will be ignored unless they are a large group of the living or the people attack the zombies, in which case the animated dead respond with lethal force. Scavenging *Chaos Zombies* swarm over vehicles, robots and machines to literally tear them to pieces. When they get to the people inside, they are slain so that they rise to join the ranks of the *Chaos Zombies*. And like ants, especially large or heavy “salvage” such as a Chromium Guardsman (Glitter Boy), cyborg or an entire vehicle, is either cut into more manageable pieces, or carried or dragged by several to dozens of *Chaos Zombies*.

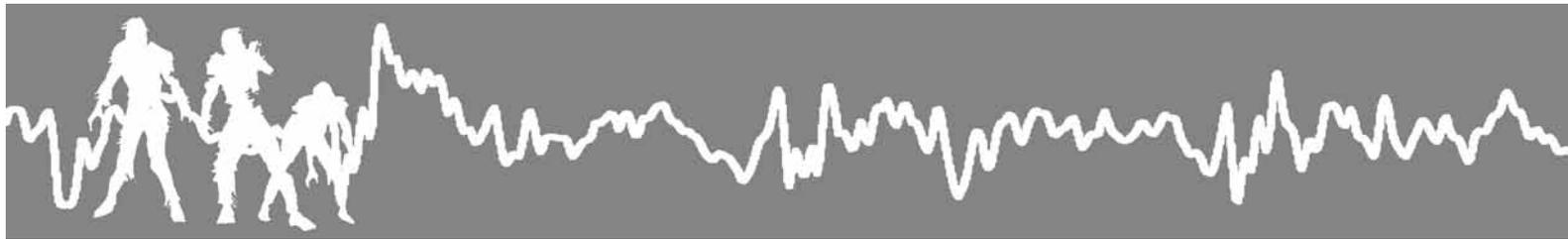
Step Four: When they arrive at the Obelisk, some of the *Chaos Zombies* are sent inside for dismemberment and *reconstruction*, their bodies drawn and quartered in a massive, factory-like operation. The severed limbs, heads and bodies (all of which remain “undead” and active/moving) are reassembled and augmented with weapons and armor to become the weaponized **Scrap Zombies**.

The Black Obelisk is an automated zombie factory that uses Necromancy magic and machinery to disassemble *Chaos Zombies* and reassemble their “parts” to create a variety of monstrous **Scrap Zombies**. These patchwork zombies have been armored and weaponized into zombie soldiers – hunter-killers to stalk and slay humans or perform very specialized tasks. All **Scrap Zombies** have some sort of armor and/or weapons and electronics/wiring/machine parts built into them, and possess some amount of M.D.C. and Mega-Damage weaponry, as well as Supernatural P.S. enabling them to inflict Mega-Damage. Some are more machine than human, others combine humans with D-Bees, and some have multiple limbs or weapon limbs, bionics and armor.

Step Five: The purpose of the Scrap Zombies. If *Chaos Zombies* are the worker ants, then *Scrap Zombies* are the specialized warriors. They are the undead shock troops that go forth to battle and destroy living soldiers, NEMA defenders, power armor troops, robots and “mechanized” opponents, as well as kill people in general. As always, anyone slain by *Scrap Zombies* comes back to life as a *Chaos Zombie* (S.D.C. zombies), provided they are in an area where the Transmission is being broadcasted. *Chaos Zombies* can be made into *Scrap Zombies* only via reconstruction inside the Black Obelisk. The Obelisk and the Transmission are the root cause of the zombie invasion.

These rebuilt Frankenstein nightmares are more powerful, have M.D.C. bodies, Supernatural P.S. and M.D. weapons to inflict serious damage. Any **Scrap Zombies** in the area respond to gunfire, hunting down the source and slaying all humanoids they encounter. Likewise, when a mob or herd of *Chaos Zombies* is attacked, the *Scrap Zombies* among them are quick to advance and fight whatever enemy is attacking them. They are programmed to protect and defend the assets of the Black Obelisk, including the Obelisk itself, the force behind it, *Chaos Zombies*, and other *Scrap Zombies*, particularly the *Stitcher* and *Garbage Man*. This also means that the *Scrap Zombies* target living soldiers and defenders clad in armor, power armor or piloting robots and vehicles. Any opponent who is well-equipped and combat oriented is the primary target of the *Scrap Zombie*, with civilians usually left for the *Chaos Zombies* to deal with. When there are no soldiers or fighters of the *Scrap Zombies* to engage, they turn their attention to ordinary people.

Here is the really important and secret part of Step Five: **Scrap Zombies** function as *mobile relay stations* that extend the range of the Transmission. When the zombies outnumber the living in a particular area by three to one (75%), the Transmission can be sent farther out, relayed through the *Scrap Zombies*, another 10 miles (16 km). (Starting range is 20 miles/32 km around the



Black Obelisk.) Those who die within the radius of the Transmission, and those who have died in the last 60 days, rise as *Chaos Zombies* and begin killing the living.

This is how the zombies spread. It is also how they can be slowed down or stopped from spreading. Contain the number of zombies resurrected, stop them from spreading and killing, and their invasion is held in check, at least for the moment. The only way to stop the zombie invasion entirely is to stop the Transmission *and/or* destroy the Black Obelisk – or force it to abandon this world and leave. This means the zombie invasion can be brought to an end if contained and the key targets (the source of the Transmission and the Scrap Zombies that relay its broadcast) are destroyed early on. If not, the zombie horde spreads out too far and increases to such numbers as to become unstoppable.

The Transmission

The Transmission is the animating force that turns regular corpses into the living dead.

To put it simply, it is an invisible, electromagnetic signal created from Necromantic energy. By *Necromantic*, we mean that this energy is *magical in origin* and a magic that is specific to the nature of death and decay. Spell casters who tap into this energy are routinely known as *Necromancers*. How the Transmission works, exactly, is anyone's guess, as it is not a magic or technology known to anyone on Chaos Earth (or *Rifts Earth*, *Phase World* or the *Three Galaxies*, for that matter).

The Transmission sounds like static or white noise to most living beings. However, people who are sensitive to magic or the supernatural, including mages and psychics, can hear sounds and voices in the static. The least fortunate may be driven mad by the voices and emotions that are part of the Transmission.

Because it is a manifestation of both radio waves and dark magic energy, even broken monitors, TVs, speakers and audio systems can receive, play and transmit the Transmission. Like a mundane radio signal, the Transmission is aired out by a broadcast tower, in this case, the **Black Obelisk**, and the signal is relayed and bounced off of the rebuilt Scrap Zombies to increase its range. It can be picked up by conventional communications equipment, radios, cell phones, televisions, monitors and computers capable of picking up a broadband radio or Internet signal. This includes portable computers, cybernetic listening systems/implants, headsets in helmets and vehicles, and all manner of audio/visual communications and listening devices.

The primary aim of the Transmission is to reactivate specific parts of the brains of dead people. Coincidentally, living people are affected by the Transmission on a *subliminal level*, particularly those susceptible to magic and psionics. They can hear bits of the Transmission, such as portions of the chants used in the magic, and “feel” its evil intent. They are the ones who, if ex-

posed long enough to the Transmission, suffer nightmares, delusions, hallucinations, and madness.

Psychics with sensory abilities, and anyone “tuned in” to the supernatural or magic, can *feel the Transmission* all around them. It is an oppressive feeling, like being out on an especially hot and muggy day. But instead of moist heat, the psychics and mages feel a cold darkness permeate them to the core. It is almost as if the cold were the icy fingers of a shadowy entity trying to rob them of life, constantly nudging them and lurking in the shadows.

The invisible, intangible nature of its blended electromagnetic and magical signal makes **the Transmission** ever-present within its range of transmission. It permeates solid objects like walls and floors, the wreckage of fallen buildings and underground, to resurrect the dead wherever they may be found. It is constantly broadcasting, because if the Transmission were to be cut, even for just a few seconds, every Chaos and Scrap Zombie more than 20 miles (32 km) away from the Black Obelisk would drop to the ground lifeless and inert. Of course, as soon as the Transmission resumed, the dead would immediately rise again. That's just the way it works.

The Transmission has a limited range in which it can affect the dead. The signal sent from the Black Obelisk has a **starting range of 20 miles (32 km)** in all directions. This means that every corpse within that area rises up as a Chaos Zombie and is magically empowered to seek out and murder the living. The Transmission affects most mortal, humanoid life forms, including humans and *human-like* Dimensional Beings (D-Bees) such as *Phlebus*, *Elves*, *Dwarves*, *Ogres*, *Orcs*, *Goblins*, *True Atlanteans*, *Trimadore*, *Tirrvol Sword Fists*, *Squibbs*, *Psi-Stalkers*, *Quick-Flex Aliens*, *Noli Bushmen*, *Vanguard Brawlers*, *Roane Pipers*, *Posluznik*, *Cyber-Horsemen*, *Kremin Cyborgs*, *D'Norr Devilmen*, *Fingertooth*, *Vintex Warriors*, *Yhabbayar*, and even *Grackle Tooth*, *N'mbyr Gorilla Men*, *Sasquatch*, *Simvan* and *Mastadonoids*. Even *Full Conversion Cyborgs* can be affected by the Transmission. Their robotic bodies are no protection, and with their Mega-Damage armor, enhanced strength, and integrated weapon systems, *cyborg zombies* can become some of the most dangerous of the Scrap Zombies. Only creatures of magic (e.g. dragons, unicorns, Faerie Folk, etc.), and supernatural beings (e.g. demons, Deevils, Elementals, Entities, spirits and deities) are immune, as are most D-Bees of a reptilian, insect, plant or energy nature. (**Note:** See the section on **Who Can Become a Zombie** on page 30).

Although the Transmission has a finite range, the signal can be boosted by transmitting it through its **Scrap Zombies!** When Chaos and Scrap Zombies dominate an area (75%+ of the population is zombies), the Transmission's range extends an additional 10 miles (16 km) beyond the area they currently dominate. This causes the Transmission to animate dead in an ever-widening area to spread the zombie plague.

The Blue Zones have no apparent effect on the Transmission itself, but the explosion of magic energy across the globe does



boost the strength of the Scrap Zombies, which is why they are *Mega-Damage creatures* with Supernatural Strength that inflict M.D. to their targets.

When Death Summons

The Transmission is designed to project Necromantic energy to raise an unstoppable army of dead shock troops. In order to achieve this, it takes a massive amount of magic energy, beaming outward for miles around. This energy must continue to broadcast. Magic makes it possible to broadcast on any device designed with audio and/or transmission capabilities: computers, monitors, radar, sonar, motion detectors, dosimeters, cell phones, televisions, radios, headsets, and speakers of any kind, including those built into helmets, power armor, robots and cyborgs. They can all be infected with the magic of the Transmission and corrupted like a computer virus. Worse, they too begin to broadcast the signal that animates the dead. And because the Transmission is magical, it can transmit through functioning devices and those that are *broken, unplugged or stowed away* in a box, trunk or closet!

The Transmission distorts and piggybacks on the electronic signals used by these devices and is perceived as the *sound of static* to most people or as an intermittent buzz, crackle or clicking. It's not loud or very alarming. When a working radio gets an audio message/call, the message is received as usual, accompanied by a bit of static and crackle from the Transmission heard softly in the background. Aside from being annoying and perhaps creepy, this interference with communication devices means that anyone inside the listening range of the Transmission is under its influence. If they should die, they rise as a Chaos Zombie. And those already dead, should start to rise within 24 hours of the Transmission reaching that area. Nothing can be done to reduce or block the static of the Transmission. All electronic devices are vulnerable, even those that are turned off, unplugged, or broken. This includes military-grade equipment used by NEMA, the armed forces and police. Unfortunately, this represents a problem in locating the source of the Transmission. Although NEMA leaders have an idea of where to look, they are unable to trace the Transmission directly to its source as it appears to be everywhere within a particular zone.

The Transmission is designed to make contact with, and animate the recent dead, be it corpses dead for a half an hour or several weeks. In the event that a person dies within the range of active transmission, they rise as a **Chaos Zombie** 4D6+10 minutes later. Likewise, the Transmission might animate a fallen comrade weeks or months later when it spreads that far and reaches the remains.

Note: The Transmission cannot extend its broadcast range an additional 10 miles (16 km) until the population within the current area is predominantly zombies (75% or greater) and there are Scrap Zombies present.

The sound of evil

How the Transmission affects live people

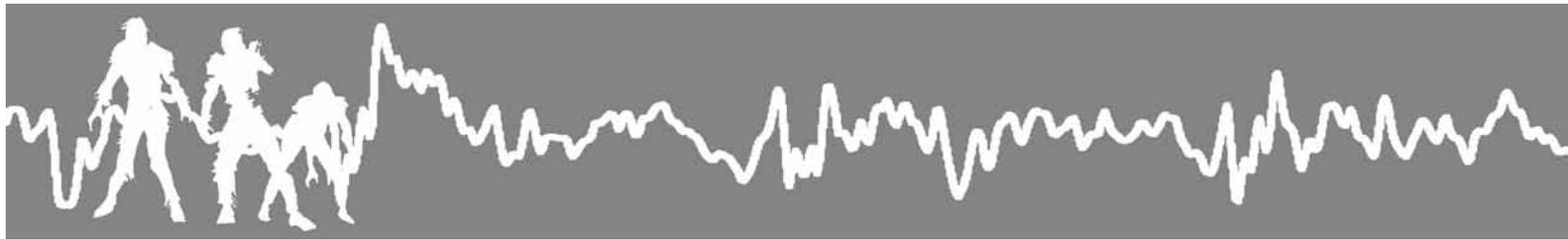
People are, for the most part, not directly affected by the Transmission while they live. The exceptions are those with a natural sensitivity to magic, psionics and the supernatural. Such individuals are likely to exhibit symptoms of psychological trauma after being exposed to the Transmission for a prolonged period of time (days or weeks). Even then, it is only people who have a natural proclivity for *magic* and/or possess *psychic abilities* who are affected by the Transmission in the most profound and frightening ways. Characters with a P.P.E. of 8 points or more, latent and active psychics, mages, witches and the like may all hear much more than static and be affected by the Transmission in different ways.

Among the modern people who have survived the initial wave of destruction caused by the Great Cataclysm are those who can learn magic and develop their psychic "Sixth Sense." However, at this stage in the apocalyptic time-line, such individuals are likely to be *latent psychics* completely unaware that they are the small percentage who have special abilities or an aptitude for magic they can develop in the burgeoning world of *Rifts Earth*. It is these individuals who hear and sense more in the crackle of the Transmission.

I feel death is coming. For people with psychic and/or magic potential, the volume of the Transmission is twice as loud. Worse, it makes them feel agitated, worried, and filled with an unshakable sense of dread. The hairs on the back of their necks and arms rise on end, and they feel like they and everyone in the area of transmission is in danger and should leave, immediately. This heightened sense of danger and anxiety grants these individuals a **bonus** of +1 to Perception Rolls and +1 on initiative against all zombies and any other demonic or monstrous being, because they cannot relax and expect an attack or trouble at any moment. While that may sound good, and it is in the short term, the side effect is that those sensitive to the Transmission are jumpy, increasingly paranoid, and cannot relax or rest even if they should manage to fall asleep for few minutes. Worse, prolonged exposure to the Transmission can lead to emotional instability and insanity.

Nightmares and Bad Thoughts. People sensitive to magic or the psychic world hear words and chanting imbedded in the Transmission. It's usually only bits and pieces that randomly pop out from the static, but they are loud and clear. Things like, "rise," "kill," "spill blood," "join me in death," "death is not the end, it is a new beginning," "gather," "bring me the pieces," "destroy the machines," "tear them apart," "come to me," and similar. Words or phrases that drone on in the background and repeat over and over again. ("Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill.") Some also experience a kind of chanting like what you might expect to hear in a ritual, but cannot quite make out the words.

The voices, spoken words and static only stop when a person leaves the zone of transmission. The change is immediate and



the individual feels calmer, though physically and emotionally drained from the experience. The sense of dread and urgency remains, however, and many *feel driven to find and stop the Transmission* and whatever controls it.

Those who have heard the words are haunted by them. They remain filled with anxiety and have trouble sleeping. Nightmares occur every night. The nightmare can be of just about anything, but is always related to danger, death and darkness coming soon. They may dream of being buried alive, or being torn apart by corpses, or subjected to verbal abuse and criticism by dead relatives. Sometimes the dreams are more abstract, filled with shapes and visions that defy description, but instill feelings of terror and impending doom. Away from the Transmission, the haunted individuals are unable to get more than 1D6 hours of sleep a night.

Those who can hear spoken words or chanting in the Transmission have it the worst. The longer they are exposed to the Transmission, the greater the possibility they are driven to violence and insanity. For them, after 1D4 days of exposure, dread turns into a sense that something dark and terrible is scratching away the surface of their very soul. Something wicked and hungry wants to consume it and replace their soul with darkness and evil. After sufficient exposure, they know – just know – that they and the living are under assault by a dark power that could bring about the end of all human life. What tears at their heart at this point is they don't know anything about what's causing all this, where to find it, or how to stop it. That said, they are driven to find the answers and do something about it!

Transmission Anxiety & Insanity Table

Most human and D-Bee characters who are exposed to the Transmission but only hear static (the majority) need to roll an 11 or higher to save vs magic every 72 hours.

Characters who have magic or psychic potential (P.P.E. of 8 or greater), or already wield magic or possess psionic abilities, must roll to save vs magic for *every 24 hours* of exposure. They need a 16 or higher to save vs magic because they are more attuned to the magic and supernatural elements of the Transmission and, therefore, are much more susceptible to its influence.

Those who successfully save are not affected, for the moment. Roll again in 72 or 24 hours as the case may be.

A failed roll requires the player to roll percentile dice on the table below to determine how the Transmission is subliminally affecting the character.

Once an effect is determined, the character is plagued with those symptoms, bonuses and penalties until the Transmission stops or the zombie threat is averted.

Most people suffer only one of the following maladies. Roll for a second only if exposed to the Transmission for more than 14 days.

01-05% On Edge: The character becomes shaky and nervous, jumping at every little noise. He is fast to react, but is also easily spooked. +1 on Perception Rolls, +1 on initiative, -1 to save vs Horror Factor, -5% to all skills.

06-10% Paranoid: The character feels that there is something or someone unseen “out there” that is actively working to harm him and impede his progress. Anyone who tries to tell the character otherwise is probably “in on it.” Best to keep a close eye on everybody and trust no one. +2 on Perception Rolls, +1 on initiative and +1 to dodge, but -10% to all skills involving social interaction and communication. Keeps to himself and trusts only those closest to him.

11-15% Depressed: Seemingly for no reason at all, the character is extremely sad and unmotivated. He is constantly reminded of times in his life in which he failed at something important or disappointed someone he cared about. He tends to take the blame for everything that goes wrong, berating himself for “not being strong enough.” May turn to alcohol or drugs to alleviate his sadness and sleep through the nightmares. -2 on Perception Rolls, -1 on initiative, -10% on skill performance and skills take twice as long to finish. Has a feeling of dread concerning trouble in Wisconsin.

16-20% Suicidal Ideation: The character is either despondent or suffers moments of unspecified terror to the point he feels that taking his own life would be the only clear solution. He may try to justify suicide by saying his comrades would be better off without his drain on their resources. Most characters only talk about suicide, but the victim of this condition is likely to take crazy risks in combat and dangerously daring action to save others, and lingers too long when watching or dealing with zombies. In fact, he seems attracted to danger and death like a moth drawn to a flame. +4 to save vs pain, +2 to save vs Horror Factor, but -1 to save vs insanity, psychic attack and mind control/possession. It is best to keep an eye on this character to make sure he doesn't do something stupid or reckless to get himself killed. If the character tries to kill himself, he will do so in a way that guarantees he does not return from the dead.

21-24% Negative Attitude: The character knows, not feels, he *knows*, that the mission is going to fail. There are too many zombies. Mankind is doomed. People are too weak to survive. This is the End of the World as decreed by Fate. Despite any evidence to the contrary, this character is low on morale and does little to help himself or others, unless it is to suggest that they all run off together and try to find a safe place where the zombies cannot get them. -1 on Perception Rolls, -1 on initiative, and whenever he faces zombies, the undead or Necromancy, he is -1 on all combat rolls and -5% to the performance of skills. Especially dreads any missions to Wisconsin.

25-28% Short-Tempered Optimist: Anything can set this character off. In combat, he fights with unrestrained anger and takes everything very personally. Outside of combat, he is quick to lose control by overreacting (especially to criticism or talk of doom), and may argue, shout, throw things, punch the wall, and



start fistfights with anyone who irks or displeases him. Not completely lost to rage, the character stops once he or the one who set him off has had a good butt-kicking.

Oddly enough, this character insists he is *not doomed*. That there must be a way to stop the zombies and the Transmission. It is people who say otherwise that anger him the most. +3 on Perception Rolls involving finding the source of the zombies and stopping them, as well as finding ways to rescue people, +1 to all other Perception Rolls, +1 to strike, +4 to damage in hand to hand combat, and +2 to save vs Horror Factor, but gets lost in his anger and wants to stop it all so badly that he is prone to bad judgement and is -2 to parry, dodge and pull punch.

29-32% Sadistic: The character has come to enjoy the suffering of others. He finds the fears of his comrades fun and may make fun of them or taunt them with their fears, has no compassion for those who die, and often pokes fun at, and makes jokes to, the zombies he kills. He may even name them and pose the ones he slays in ways that are amusing, if only to him. The sadist also finds it amusing to say and do things to scare and upset frightened survivors, and he is likely to engage in cruel practical jokes, as well as desecrating the bodies of his enemies. The character doesn't see anything wrong with his behavior; after all, he's just releasing stress. -1 on Perception Rolls, -1 to pull punch. +1 to parry and +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

33-36% Death Fetish: This character insists he's not afraid of zombies and proves it by wearing body parts like zombie ears, fingers, teeth, etc., and decorates his vehicle and possessions (weapons, armor, etc.) with skulls, bones, and scrawlings done in blood. The character may start to collect such mementos from fallen enemies as macabre trophies or souvenirs. Reduce this character's M.A. and P.B. attributes by one third while in this state of mind; +1 to Perception Rolls regarding zombies and dead things (says he understands how they think), +4 to save vs Horror Factor and is starting to enjoy fighting zombies.

37-40% Compelled to Torture and Murder: This character wants to hurt and kill things. Not just in combat, where the stakes are more even and his opponents can fight back, but also against prisoners and any suspicious person regardless of their innocence. This character wants to feel power over living creatures, as it makes him feel like he has some measure of control over the chaos all around him. Torture and punishing attacks/beatings help him feel in control and like the one with the power. They also unleash his frustrations and anger. If the character gives in to these dark emotions, he is likely to volunteer to "do whatever it takes" to get information out of prisoners and suspects. He is happy to "beat the information out of" anyone, and if denied, he may engage in such activities on his own, in which case he'll be secretive and subtle about it. "Huh, I guess someone got to this piece of garbage before we could. I'd say he got what he deserved." +10% to intimidate, +10% to Interrogation skill, -20% to evoke trust and confidence, and -3 to M.A. attribute.

41-44% Cannibalism: This character feels compelled to eat the flesh of members of his own species. It doesn't matter if the

character is hungry or not. It's about engaging in revolting and twisted behavior, not about satisfying a physical need. The more mangled and freshly deceased the body is, the better. He doesn't want to cook it or clean it, just consume it; reduce M.A. attribute by half while afflicted with cannibalism.

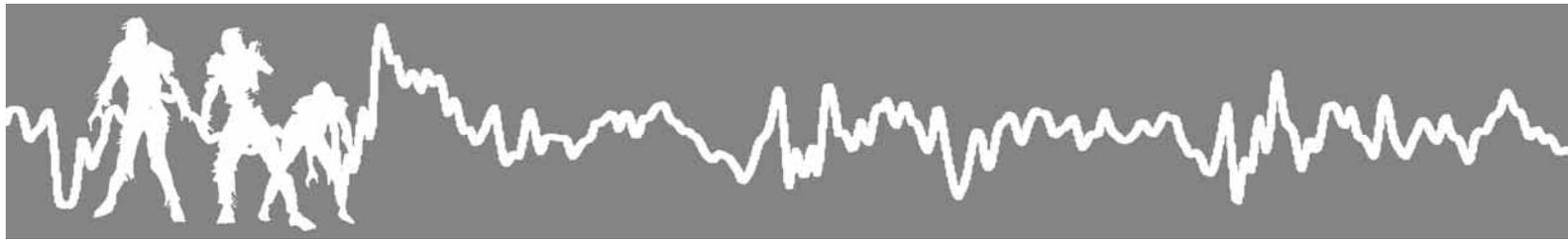
45-48% Compelled to Commit Acts of Self-Harm: This character either starts to hate himself and seeks atonement through self-mutilation, or has a psychological need to feel physical pain. The character becomes reckless in combat and bull-headed. May try to start fights just to get beat up; he volunteers for missions where he is likely to suffer physical discomfort, and he challenges captors to "do their worst" (he will die before talking and revealing secrets). +3 to save vs pain, +2D6+4 to S.D.C., -1 on Perception Rolls and -1 to all combat moves (strike, parry, dodge, etc.).

49-52% Compelled to Steal/Hoard Technology: Technology is power! The zombies are trying to steal it from us, so we must hoard it all for ourselves (better yet, for himself)! This character becomes very obsessive and paranoid over technology. He won't share weapons or ammunition with comrades. If he is a power armor or vehicle/robot pilot, he feels naked and vulnerable outside of his armor or vehicle, and may refuse to come out at all! -5% on the performance of skills that do not involve technology, but +5% on those that do.

53-56% Hypochondriac: This character is convinced the "zombie plague" is caused by a virus, not the Transmission, and they are all vulnerable. He hates coming into contact with zombies, corpses or anything that could be "contaminated." He also believes he is either physically ill, or about to become so, and fears he may become a zombie at any time. Any physical affliction he might have, even something as mild as allergies, is perceived to be much more serious. +2 on Perception Rolls involving zombies, disease and decay. If sent to Wisconsin he senses he is "near the heart of the plague" and recognizes the Black Obelisk as the source the moment he sees it.

57-60% Mild Visual Hallucination: For just a second, the character thinks he sees something that is not really there. It could be just about anything, but it's probably something creepy, like a zombie, shadow people, a corpse, or a mass of spiders. Whatever it is, he is the only one who can see it, and it disappears a moment after it appeared. All such hallucinations have a Horror Factor of 10, and if he succumbs to H.F. he may momentarily freeze (as per H.F.), and he always loses one melee action/attack whenever a hallucination occurs. This character also has nightmares about a giant, Black Obelisk from which the zombies come and go, and he knows it is the source of the Transmission. He also senses it is in Wisconsin. However, since he knows he's seeing things, he is afraid to tell people about his dreams and gut instinct about the zombies.

61-64% Severe Visual Hallucination: The character experiences an intense hallucination that takes him temporarily out of the real world and into a horrifying fantasy. He thinks he sees a dozen ghosts, zombies, or angry metal monsters climb out of the



shadows, and they are coming to get him or a friend! The character absolutely believes the situation is real! Horror Factor of 15. In the alternative, the character may see a deceased or missing friend or loved one and be momentarily frozen, awash with warm and fuzzy feelings (or an overwhelming sense of loss). This is especially bad if he sees approaching zombies or other threats as loved ones. Awe Factor of 15. In his dreams he sees a trail of blood leading to a black skyscraper from which Chaos Zombies and Scrap Zombies come and go like ants. A voice whispers, "Join us. We await your arrival in Madison, Wisconsin."

The closer he gets to the Black Obelisk, the more certain he is of it being the source of the zombies and the Transmission, and then he senses its exact location. Moreover, the zombies in Wisconsin see him as *one of them* and do not attack him unless he attacks first. This means the character can walk right inside the Black Obelisk without them making a move to stop him or restrict him access inside. That only changes the moment he attacks a zombie, machinery or the dark lord (Marcel LeMerchand) inside the Black Obelisk.

65-68% Mild Auditory Hallucination: Did I just hear something? What was that? There it is again! The character thinks he hears something moving around in the darkness, or behind him where he can't see. He also hears one or more voices in the Transmission that seem to be speaking directly to him. They even say his name. The voice often warns him about when the zombies are coming or are nearby, telling him to get out, or where to find a particular type of zombie, or that they are around the next corner, or coming from a particular direction, or hiding here or there, or that he's heading right for a swarm of them. *The warnings are always accurate.* When the voice(s) is speaking, the character is distracted; -1 on Perception Rolls, -2 on initiative, and skills are performed at -5%. But he is +1 on initiative and +1 to parry and dodge zombie attacks.

69-72% Severe Auditory Hallucination: The character is overloaded with a cacophony of noise, seemingly coming from all directions at once. He hears insane chuckles, screaming otherworldly creatures, the whines and screeching of heavy machinery, sobbing, and other distracting and unwanted sounds. A voice also tells him when large zombie forces are heading his way, and that soon, he will become one of them. That he will be transformed into a zombie by the Black Obelisk in Madison, Wisconsin, where he'll become a servant of Death. He also "hears" the orders/missions of specialized Scrap Zombies such as Stitchers and Boogeymen, and knows the voice and name of Marcel LeMerchand, but does not know who that is.

When the sounds and voices are going off (which is half the time, and always in combat and stressful situations), the character is disoriented: -1 on Perception Rolls, -1 attack per melee round, -1 to strike, and skills are performed at -10%. But he is +2 to parry and dodge zombie attacks.

73-76% Open to the Supernatural: The natural defenses that humans have against supernatural influence are not working right now for this character. He is able to see invisible Entities/

ghosts/spirits as luminescent mists and orbs and can communicate openly with them. In fact, he can see all invisible creatures and senses the supernatural, including the presence and general location of *Chaos Zombies* and *Scrap Zombies* of every variety. He also senses there is "someone" controlling them. A mad man and would-be conqueror from... can this be right, another dimension? No, a parallel Earth?!

When dealing with Entities and demons, the monsters recognize the character is open to them and sees them, and they may try to speak with him, corrupt and tempt him, or do harm to him. He can also sense the presence of supernatural evil and the direction from which the Transmission originates. The closer he gets, the louder the static and the more chatty the voices in his head. This character or his descendants may, over time, evolve (devolve?) into *Psi-Stalkers* (mutant humans of Rifts Earth). He is -1 to save vs magic and psychic attacks, and -3 to save vs Horror Factor, but is +2 to save vs mind control, possession, and insanity, and is +1 to save vs magic.

77-80% Rambling: He may not even be aware of it, but this character cannot stop talking, or perhaps mumbling, to himself. Not only that, but whatever he is talking about doesn't often make any sense. He skips from one topic to another without warning, talks to himself, and babbles about nothing in particular. Depending on the character, he either doesn't realize that he's doing it, or actually thinks that his ramblings are important information and everyone had better listen up!

At times, he repeats the chanting from the Transmission or, semi-entranced, repeats the words and phrases and other bits he's hearing at the moment or floating through his addled mind. ("Kill. Kill. Kill. Gather. Come to me. Soon. Come soon. This is the end. No. Beginning. Join death. No, no. Death bad. Stop the death. I'm not afraid. Zombies. Kill. Stop Transmission. Come to the Black Obelisk. The Black Obelisk. The Black Obelisk. Our home. LeMerchand. Master. LeMerchand. Death. LeMerchand. Come. Death. Gather and come. He waits. Kill. Kill. Kill. Marcel. Stop. Him. Stop. Must stop. Death.")

This character is seldom aware of what he is saying, he's just muttering while his mind wanders elsewhere or tries to focus on the task at hand. If his words are recorded and played back to him, he is as puzzled by them as anyone else. Ironically, though he talks in his sleep, he remembers nothing, and claims he doesn't dream. -2 on Perception Rolls, -1 on initiative and -10% on skill performance; double the penalty when using skills involving communication or speech. +2 to save vs Horror Factor and +2 to save vs possession and mind control.

81-84% Mild Delusion: Quite simply, the character is under the impression that something is true when it is, in fact, not. This could include just about anything, but is likely to pertain to the mission the characters have been sent on, the zombies, or about the current situation. Whatever the delusion is, it is not likely to help. However, the character is able to push the delusion away to deal with matters at hand, and may even laugh about his "strange way of seeing things." -1 on Perception Rolls and -5% on skill performance.



85-88% Severe Delusion: The character has a particularly strong belief about something going on, and he is not at all willing to let it go. In fact, the character may grow angry and violent if his belief is called into question. The delusion itself is also much more serious. The character may believe that he is a god, the personal savior of all humanity, or he may believe that he is a zombie and the living must be killed and eaten! Or that he alone can stop the zombie plague provided others are willing to follow him to Wisconsin.

Ironically, if he should ever get near the Black Obelisk (within 20 miles/32 km), he'll somehow know things about it, how to get inside and to the various floors and locations inside, as well as what the factory is doing, how it works and the jobs of all the different types of Scrap Zombies. He also knows where the Transmission originates within the edifice, how to turn it off (and back on), that Marcel LeMerchand is the architect behind all this, and similar information. But does anyone believe him by this point?

89-92% Dependency: The character really, really needs to be around other people. He becomes helpless, frightened and child-like when there are fewer than three living people around (the equivalent of a frightened, five-year-old child). He craves attention from everyone in the group even when there are people around, and throws a fit when he does not get it. If he has companions around, the character can function reasonably well, but if left alone, even for a few minutes, he becomes paralyzed with fear; unable to fight or defend himself, and only able to run away, crying and screaming for help. When alone and terrified, the individual performs skills at -50%, is -3 on all combat moves (strike, parry, etc.), and -5 to save vs Horror Factor. When with five or more people, he feels safe, bold and filled with childlike optimism: +1 on Perception Rolls, +1 to strike and +5% on all skills when in this good state of mind surrounded by people.

93-94% Shadow of Doom: The character feels as though there is a dark cloud over his head. As if he is *marked for death*. And not just a regular death, but a gruesome, agonizing death. He knows it. The voices in the Transmission keep whispering it to him and how there is no escape. He starts to feel as though he is "bad luck" and may be jeopardizing the lives of his comrades. If anything goes wrong, he blames himself. -2 on initiative, -10% to the performance of all skills, -1 to strike and parry, -1 to all saving throws, but +2 on Perception Rolls, +2 to dodge and +1 to save vs Horror Factor when facing zombies, demons and life and death situations.

95-96% Panic Attack: The character seems fine until placed in a stressful situation. Then, he starts hyperventilating, and is overcome with feelings of extreme fear. He may start to tremble or shake, complain of chest pains, and may even temporarily be taken out of himself and placed in a catatonic state. These panic attacks can be caused by anything that stresses the character, such as being attacked by demons or zombies, failing a Horror Factor roll, or having to perform a task during a critical moment. The character just freezes, and is barely conscious. The panic and penalties last for 1D4 melee rounds, after which time the character recovers.

Panic Penalties: Roll percentile dice to determine the severity:

01-33% Collapses into a catatonic state and is helpless. Strangely, he is aware of what's happening around him when he is in a catatonic state, as if his consciousness is floating outside his body. Zombies do NOT attack him while in this state, because they mistake him for being dead. Even stranger, he does not feel panic when inside the Black Obelisk, rather he experiences an odd sense of calm and functions at full capacity. Duration: 1D6 melee rounds, after which time the character recovers.

34-00% Panic Stricken: -30% on skill performance, reduce Spd by half, reduce the number of attacks/actions and combat bonuses by half. Good luck. Duration: 1D4 melee rounds, after which time the character recovers.

97% Emotional Breakdown: For some reason, the character stops in his tracks and just starts crying. He is totally overwhelmed by feelings of despair and mental anguish. The character is aware of everything that is going on around him, it's just that his ability to emotionally process the stress of the situation has temporarily disappeared. As a result, the blubbling mess can barely fight, talk or perform skills. All he wants to do is crawl into a dark corner and wait to be rescued or die. The breakdown lasts for 1D6+2 melee rounds, during which time the character suffers the following penalties: -6 on Perception Rolls, last on initiative, -60% on skill performance, reduce Spd by 1D6x10%, reduce number of attacks by half, no combat bonuses (all dice rolls are unmodified). Must roll 1D20 and get a 16 or higher to save vs Emotional Breakdown every time he encounters a new, high-stress situation, such as life and death decisions, being surrounded by zombies, feeling trapped, enduring a beating or torture, facing overwhelming odds, seeing a friend or loved one injured or killed (or go missing), and when he is required to save the day or rescue someone. Duration: 1D6+4 melee rounds, after which time the character recovers. **Note:** When this emotionally damaged character rolls a 16 or higher to save vs breakdown, the character is focused and driven to succeed (this time), and enjoys the following bonuses: +1 on Perception Rolls, +5% on skill performance, +1 to strike and parry, +3 to save vs Horror Factor and +2 to all other saving throws! Duration: 1D6+6 melee rounds, after which time the character returns to normal and can scarcely believe his own actions.

98% Total Paralytic Shutdown: Emotionally, the character seems to be okay. Physically, he becomes stiff as a board. Unable to keep his balance, he falls over flat on his face. His body has betrayed him as a fear response, and he is unable to move at all. He may start to panic, especially if danger is nearby. The paralyzation lasts for 1D6+2 melee rounds and he may have to be carried away or left behind. Upon recovering his wits, the character is able to move again. Being placed in a new, stressful situation (same as #97 above) may cause him to be paralyzed again. Must roll 1D20 and get a 17 or higher to save vs Shutdown. A successful save means he functions as normal. **Note:** While in "shutdown," there is only a 01-20% chance zombies will notice him and attack.



However, during the paralytic shutdown, the character also has a vision, which always pertains to one of the following (roll percentile for a random determination or the G.M. may pick one): *01-20%* The safety or peril of a friend, loved one or ally at the moment or in the near future. *21-40%* A vision about an important mission (it may be the mission they are currently tasked with) and insight about a danger to avoid or something to do to improve the odds of the mission's success. *41-60%* A vision of the Black Obelisk and the internal operations inside, showing the zombie factory and manufacture of Scrap Zombies in real time; but the location remains unknown. *61-80%* He sees the face of Marcel, knows his name and knows he's the person responsible for the zombie plague. *81-90%* The vision shows that the Transmission creates the zombies and drives people mad. The next time he has this same vision, he knows it comes from the Black Obelisk and sees the room and panel that controls the Transmission – even a hand that controls the switch that turns it off and on. *91-00%* A vision that provides a warning, clues or information about things happening now or soon, but someplace else, and it may pertain to people he does not know, or is yet to meet (people trapped someplace, people in trouble, in need of help, a NEMA officer issuing an order, bandits waiting to attack or being attacked, etc.).

99% Psychotic Break: The character simply snaps. The turmoil of the Great Cataclysm and the dark whispers of the Transmission have caused him to temporarily turn homicidal when placed under life and death situations or forced to endure extreme pain or terror. The character is totally out of his head, and tries to kill zombies or anyone he perceives as a threat or the source of his distress. During such episodes, he does not have the mental capacity to operate machines, computers or radios, or perform any but the most simple of skills (running, jumping, swimming, climbing, etc.) and combat. He can use guns and melee weapons, as well as his bare hands, but is too frenzied to engage in anything that requires finesse or a cool head or complex skills. He is focused on taking down the threat. This psychotic episode lasts for 1D4+4 melee rounds, or until all obvious and immediate threats are eliminated. The character is not suicidal, but will take crazy chances and fight until the last possible moment before retreating. After his homicidal rage ends, the individual returns to normal, and does not remember what just happened or what role he played in it. During a Psychotic Break, the character is +1 on initiative, +2 to strike, impervious to mind control, possession and Horror Factor, and his P.S. and P.E. attributes are temporarily increased by 30% (use any applicable bonuses to damage). Duration is 1D4+4 melee rounds.

00% Temporary Insanity: Roll once for a random result on the *Affective Disorders Table* (*Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 333). This affliction lasts for 1D4 days, but the penalties are half as severe. The dark power in the Transmission has deeply touched this character, and leaves its mark. That also means he has nightmares that make him know the Transmission must be stopped to stop the spread of the zombie plague, and he knows how to turn

it off. His dreams reveal that stopping the Transmission will shut down most of the zombies, except for those within a 20 mile (32 km) radius from the point of transmission. He also sees a shadowy, faceless figure pulling the strings behind all of this.

The nightmare continues ...

Meanwhile, the Transmission is out there. Streaming continuously, raising new **Chaos Zombies** and making and commanding **Scrap Zombies** to expand into new territory. The Transmission emanates for 10 miles (16 km) beyond the location currently controlled by its zombies. The more *Scrap Zombies* created, the stronger its undead legions and the more territory they can conquer and hold. With each new region that falls under the domination of the zombies, the Transmission travels with them, pushing ever farther and farther out from the Black Obelisk. When the human population under siege falls to less than 25% percent, and zombies outnumber the living by at least 3 to 1, the region becomes the domain of the dead and the Transmission is able to extend its current range of transmission another 10 miles (16 km) to raise more dead. Chaos Zombies play a role in this, but it is the Scrap Zombies that actually function as mobile relay stations from which the Transmission is bounced.

Zombie Overview

Game Master Note: The undead horrors presented here all share a set of traits that are intrinsic to their nature. Some of these traits are vulnerabilities that NEMA (and the player characters) need to *uncover* and *learn* to successfully battle the onslaught of zombies. Although similar to the animated dead and zombies in *Rifts®* and other *Palladium RPGs*, these monsters are truly unique and specific to *Chaos Earth* during the early days and weeks of the Great Cataclysm. Over time, myth and legend will refer to it as one of the “Demon Plagues.”

At this junction, NEMA and other human survivors are entirely unprepared for a rapidly expanding legion of zombies, let alone zombies that have armor bolted into their bodies or are cyborg-like and half machine. Just the horror of seeing the dead rise is a nightmare. As survivors are learning to do against the Demon Plagues, NEMA has to study the enemy, discover the inner workings of the new enemy on their own, mostly through direct contact, and quickly determine measures to fight and destroy them. Or die.

Chaos Zombies are the immediate threat of the zombie invasion. Their campaign of slaughter creates more and more of them. Every death means a new Chaos Zombie. And though they are S.D.C. creatures, Chaos Zombies are quickly turned into the M.D.C. armored Scrap Zombies.

Chaos Zombies are, for lack of a better word, “ordinary” zombies, as if there is such a thing. They are *animated corpses*





that kill the living. However, they are controlled by their creator, Marcel LeMerchand and his Black Obelisk. Chaos Zombies have only two specific purposes: One, killing the living, and two, gathering M.D.C. parts, weapons, and scrap for the creation of Scrap Zombies.

Scrap Zombies, by comparison, are even more nightmarish creatures than Chaos Zombies. They are animated corpses that have been *reconstructed* – rebuilt – with armor bolted right into their dead bodies, many with mechanical limbs, or limbs replaced with machine parts, weapons or shards of scrap that can be used as weapons.

Scrap Zombies are the greater, long-term threat for the fact that they spread the range of the Transmission and because they are armored, weaponized and harder to kill. The Chaos Zombies, who kill the living and gather scrap metal and electronics to bring to the Black Obelisk, are the chassis for making Scrap Zombies. The more Scrap Zombies created – and in time, the majority of Chaos Zombies may be made into Scrap Zombies – the more resilient and powerful the zombie invasion force. That’s why when the zombies expand into a new area, they kill the living as quickly as possible.

Each slain individual rises a short time later as a Chaos Zombie and joins the ranks to kill more people. When it becomes difficult to find more people, it means the zombies dominate a new area. At that point, some continue to hunt and kill the living, and battle defenders, while other Chaos Zombies (and any Scrap Zombies in the area) start tearing apart metal and gathering electronics. When their arms are full, they go to the **Black Obelisk** where Chaos Zombies are disassembled, rebuilt, armored and weaponized to become *Scrap Zombies*.

Both are the creation of Necromancy magic that few species have ever taken this far. Thankfully, it is a form of magic that not even the Splugorth or demons of Hades know about. Another reason to destroy Marcel LeMerchand and the Black Obelisk completely, lest the dark secrets within be deciphered and used by others.

Many Scrap Zombies are completely scrambled with *mismatched bodies*, arms, legs and heads. The end result is a “*weaponized*” *M.D.C. zombie soldier* that is more powerful and deadly than the S.D.C. Chaos Zombies. Scrap Zombies are a Mega-Damage nemesis that can fight toe to toe against NEMA soldiers in M.D.C. armor and power armor. Even Chromium Guardsmen and Silver Eagles can be swarmed, overwhelmed and taken down by Scrap Zombies.

Note: Only *Chaos Zombies* can be turned into *Scrap Zombies*. Not the living, and not other types of zombies, vampires or animated dead. However, there are several types of **Scrap Zombies**. Some look more like cyborgs whose living body parts have died yet still function as killing machines. Others look more human except for the mismatched body parts and/or weird weapon limbs and armor bolted right to them, making them resemble the fictional Frankenstein’s monster, only they also have a little or a lot

of armor and/or machine parts attached to their misshapen bodies; sometimes with multiple limbs.

Dealing with misconceptions and fallacies about zombies. A major problem among the panicking survivors is that a lifetime of popular culture about zombies and the undead has led some people to think they know about zombies. Absorbing pure fiction like a training program in dealing with the undead and the Zombie Apocalypse. They believe what they have seen in movies and on the Internet or read in novels and comic books, and respond accordingly. Which, in many cases, only creates more panic, costs more lives and makes matters worse for everyone. These misconceptions get in the way of rescue operations and place people in increased danger. Many of these misinformed civilians want to help, but they lack the training and hardware of NEMA soldiers as well as the common sense to recognize the line between fact and fiction (as ironic as that seems).

Even NEMA soldiers must unlearn what they think they know, unshackle themselves from the fallacies they bring with them onto the battlefield, and deal with the reality of this specific threat. As the truth is uncovered, correct information is distributed throughout NEMA forces and among survivors as quickly as possible. Player characters are either instructed on the reality of this zombie plague or have learned the truth on their own, often the hard way.

Fact and fiction about Chaos and Scrap Zombies

A bite will turn you into a zombie. Wrong! This may be the case with some zombies, but it is NOT true of Chaos and Scrap Zombies. Packaged together with the belief that zombies eat the living for food or to satisfy a primal feeding instinct is the mistaken belief that being bitten, scratched or directly killed by a zombie causes a person to turn into one.

A bite or scratch by a Chaos or Scrap Zombie does NOT “infect” or “turn” a person into a zombie. There is no *zombie virus*. No *infection* that creates zombies. It’s the *magic* imbedded in the Transmission that animates and commands the dead. Stop the Transmission and you stop most of the spread of zombies!

This fallacy is one of the most difficult to dispel because the Transmission does, in fact, make the dead rise wherever it is heard. NEMA must battle against endless eyewitness accounts of someone bitten by a Chaos or Scrap Zombie, dying from the wound or loss of blood, and *rising from the dead* to become a zombie themselves. However, it has nothing to do with having been injured or slain by one of these zombies. If a person dies within range of the Transmission imbedded with its Necromancy magic, they are reanimated by it to become a Chaos Zombie. It matters not how they died, only that they are no longer alive. *Everyone who dies comes back – if –* they are in range of the Transmission and have been dead for at least 15 minutes. This misunderstanding and evidence that seems to contradict what



NEMA is saying (few people know about the Transmission, especially at the onset of the zombie outbreak) leads to the perpetuation of the myth about a *zombie virus* and that people who are bitten or scratched turn into man-eating zombies who feed upon the living.

This misconception results in additional and unnecessary deaths. People bitten by a zombie are often abandoned, exiled and even killed, or commit suicide on their own, because it is believed they will soon turn into zombie from the bite. The real tragedy is that many of the people injured by a Chaos or Scrap Zombie, and left for dead or “the inevitable fate of becoming a zombie themselves,” would survive if given proper medical care. In other cases, the remains of people who die without ever coming in contact with a zombie are considered safe and not properly disposed of or locked up. When the corpse(s) unexpectedly rises as a Chaos Zombie due to the Transmission, it tries to kill everyone it encounters, creating more new zombies in its wake.

All zombies do carry diseases. Dead and rotting flesh is a breeding ground for bacteria and microorganisms, some of which are harmful to the health of the living. Being bitten by a dead person can give someone a bacterial infection that can, if left untreated, result in death. But most bacterial infections can be cured with antibiotics and proper cleaning of the wound.

Daylight hurts zombies. This is another fallacy. Some zombie stories have people believing the monsters are most active at night. While it is true that some so-called *undead* such as vampires and certain demons are nocturnal predators and can be harmed by sunlight, this is NOT the case with zombies. Chaos and Scrap Zombies are unaffected by sunlight. The Globe of Daylight spell has no effect.

Decomposition and stench will let you know a zombie is coming a mile away, so don't worry. Wrong again. Yes, dead bodies rot and reek as they deteriorate, especially in the first few weeks of decomposition. When there are large numbers of dead after a natural disaster or on a battlefield, the putrid stench of decomposing corpses can be smelled for miles around. That's why it is best to gather and bury or burn the remains. Festering corpses also become a breeding place for disease, attract vermin and scavengers, and can even contaminate the water supply. The stench occurs because the corpses become a hotbed of bacteria and other microorganisms that break down the organic components of the bodies. But this is not the case for the magically animated Chaos and Scrap Zombies.

Chaos and Scrap Zombies do NOT stink the way un-resurrected bodies do. They don't smell pleasant up close, that's for sure, but the magic energy used to create the zombies suspends decomposition. They look rotted and damaged, especially if their organic components were a couple of weeks old prior to reconstruction by the Black Obelisk. However, the same Necromancy magic energy that animates them and turns them into the walking dead, keeps them from rotting away. Otherwise, all Chaos Zombies would be falling apart in a matter of months. As it stands,

Chaos and Scrap Zombies can exist indefinitely, as long as they are animated and controlled by the Transmission of the Black Obelisk.

Fearless and Relentless! All too true. Be they Chaos Zombies or Scrap Zombies, the risen dead feel no pain, and do not need their internal organs for anything. Shooting them, stabbing them, burning them, punching and kicking at them, splashing them in the face with hot coffee, none of it does anything. It may slow them down for a second or two, maybe just long enough to get away, but they still know where you are, and they will not stop coming for you until destroyed.

Feeding upon the living. Another common misconception is that all zombies eat people, or their brains, or drink their blood. This is NOT true of Chaos or Scrap Zombies. They have no need or desire to eat anything, and certainly not people. They are animated and compelled to kill by the dark Necromancy magic imbedded in the Transmission. **The Living Nightmare** is one notable exception to this rule, as it consumes living people, sometimes whole. That said, all of these zombies fight with tooth and claw, biting their victims like wild animals, which may make them appear to be trying to eat people.

Healing. Not possible. Zombies are dead, so their bodies do *not* heal themselves. The functions that allow a body to recover from damage simply do not exist anymore. As a result, they continue on their assigned task as usual, even if they are down to one M.D.C. point, until the head or main body is completely destroyed. Since Chaos and Scrap Zombies are too dumb to realize when they need repair, there is a Scrap Zombie known as a **Stitcher** that wanders through the ranks of the zombie hordes making repairs to fellow Scrap Zombies. Only on occasion does it repair Chaos Zombies. Of course, Chaos and Scrap Zombies that return to the **Black Obelisk** may be pulled aside for repairs, upgrades or complete reconstruction with fresh body parts and/or metal and mechanical replacements. Also see Limited Invulnerability.

Holy symbols don't work. It is an unnatural and unholy thing when the dead rise and attack the living. It is a defiance of the natural order. When the dead rise and demons and magic become commonplace, many people turn to their faith and trust in a higher power. Ironically, faith and focused mental powers can have an effect on some supernatural beings. Vampires, werebeasts, many demons and certain spirits can be held at bay by holy symbols. But Chaos and Scrap Zombies are animated corpses raised and controlled by foul magic, and they are NOT affected by faith or holy symbols. Against them, and many other monsters, faith and religious conviction are meaningless. Holy symbols are nothing to the walking dead. The monsters break down the doors of a church just as readily as they may the doors of an office building or home. A preacher or minister holding out a cross, trying desperately to rebuke the zombies, has no effect on them and is likely to fall as their first new victim.



This perceived relation between demonic and undead beings and the ancient religions of the world has many people hiding in churches or behind holy symbols. They believe that such symbols of the divine have real power to protect them from the supernatural horrors unleashed upon them. And for some of those horrors, this is true. Against the zombies of the Black Obelisk, it is certain doom.

Special senses – or – “They know you’re in there, and they are coming to get you.” Most undead, Chaos and Scrap Zombies included, have little use for the five senses possessed by the living. Their eyes do not work. They do not take air into their lungs. They cannot smell or taste anything, have no need to eat or drink water, and their sense of touch is half of what it was when alive, though they can still use tools and fight in melee combat.

Chaos and Scrap Zombies see the world in very black and white terms and do as the Transmission tells them. Things around them are either alive or they are not. Humanoids are to be slain, animals ignored unless they attack, and most other items, except as specified by the Transmission, have little meaning or value.

The dark magic that gives life to the animated dead provides the zombies with a supernatural awareness of their surroundings. This awareness constantly extends from them, outward in all directions, and can even sense large numbers of people through walls, doors, and floors, but can be mostly blocked by thick earth, rock, concrete, and M.D.C. materials, as well as basements, sewers, tunnels and bunkers.

The range for this awareness and pseudo-sight (sees blurred shapes, light and movement) is roughly the same as human senses, only blurred and unfocused. The level of awareness also varies depending on ambient sound and motion. Zombies are attracted to (and distracted by) sound, light and movement. They key in on sounds, motion and changes in light, and can tell the difference between a human groan and a cat’s meow or the purr of an engine. They also know that where there is the sound of engines and machinery, there are likely to be humanoid prey. Likewise, the zombies can tell the difference between an object and a living being, particularly people.

Programmed to kill. Remember, part of the Chaos and Scrap Zombies’ programming is to find and target all humanoid life forms for slaughter. The exception is when a Chaos Zombie is ordered to collect salvage and bring it to the Black Obelisk. Under those conditions, unless there is a very large or threatening group of people, the Chaos Zombies ignore them. That is not true of Scrap Zombies. The armored and weapon-equipped Scrap Zombies may ignore the living at times, but as a rule, they are programmed to hunt and kill humanoids. If they don’t engage in killing, there is a reason for it. The monsters may be laying a trap, following a few humans to their hideout in the hopes of finding a location with many more humans, etc.

All Black Obelisk zombies become aggressive when they see/sense humans and human-like D-Bees, and usually stalk them with the intention of killing. Once they are on the trail of human prey, zombies do not give up the hunt easily and may pursue until

the monsters are destroyed. This makes them relentless hunters devoid of mercy. After all, they are literally killing machines. Many survivors discover that the best course of action is to run and never stop running.

Salvage mode. When the Chaos Zombies’ programming is switched from killing to *salvage* (Scrap Zombies can do both, hunt and salvage, but Chaos Zombies can only do one or the other depending on the Transmission), they are able to recognize metal and materials suitable for making armor and simple melee weapons, as well as body armor, power armor, robots, weapons, cybernetics and electronics. Yes, they can tell the difference between computers and weapons. They know that a boulder is different from a car, but that does not mean that they know how to operate technological devices. These items are “salvage” – raw materials to be retrieved and taken to the Black Obelisk. It’s as if the Transmission tells them what things laying around are important and what are not.

The zombie moan. The zombie moan might be thought of as a barking or howling dog. The moan alerts other zombies to the presence of prey and calls all others in the area to join the chase and participate in the kill. And like a pack of wild dogs, they join the howling pack, increasing the volume of the moan and attracting even more zombies to gather and form what NEMA calls a Dead Mob. Not only that, but the moan puts all zombies who can hear it into a heightened state of aggression. Like a hungry pack of wolves, the Dead Mob converges, growing in number and strength as it chases down its prey. Numbers that often increase on an exponential level. Ten zombies become 20. Twenty become 40. Forty quickly multiplies to 80, and so on, and so on.

Speed. Slow zombies or fast zombies? First of all, dead people shouldn’t be moving at all. The very nature of death is that it ceases life, and therefore, movement or any activity at all. When the Great Cataclysm comes and the world is in chaos, sometimes the dead walk and all manner of strange things abound. Most of the walking dead are not as fast as they were in life. This is a result of their decaying bodies and death-like state with slow mental processing and unnatural existence. The process of zombie reconstruction is not a perfect art either, and even most Scrap Zombies are limited in their movement.

All **Chaos Zombies** are slow, with an average speed of 7 and two attacks per melee round.

Not all **Scrap Zombies** are slow-movers, however. While the majority have a speed of 8 or 9, and four attacks per melee, some have been *reconstructed* for faster speed and nimble movement. The majority of these fast-movers use salvaged bionic limbs or other mechanical constructs like wheels or hover jets. However, even these fast zombies are limited, their movements less fluid than people and jerky and clumsy, as if their minds and bodies are out of sync with each other.

Who can become a Chaos Zombie? Only *humans and humanlike mortal, S.D.C. humanoids* can become Chaos and Scrap zombies.



Aliens and D-Bees (Dimensional Beings) are two very broad terms. D-Bees are intelligent humanoid creatures that have emerged from the Rifts, but are not supernatural or magical in nature. Many of these beings have no idea where they are, how they got here, nor what is going on. They too are victims, scared and alone. Many have an even tougher time surviving the Great Cataclysm than humans native to Earth. As living beings, they are often targeted by Scrap Zombies for destruction, but much less likely to become zombies.

The more *humanlike* in physiology and appearance the D-Bees are, the more likely they too can be turned into Chaos Zombies (10-60% chance, depending). **Note:** D-Bees that are not mammalian – such as plant and mineral beings, insectoids, and cold-blooded fish, reptilian, and amphibious beings, for example – are completely incompatible for the zombie transformation process, as are supernatural beings and creatures of magic. The zombies of the Black Obelisk still attack and kill them, but their remains are left where they fall and do not animate.

The Transmission, however, sometimes has trouble identifying exactly what is human. It permeates the brains of any creature within range and has the possibility of animating dead humanoids who closely resemble humans. For example, there is a 60% chance that Dwarves, Elves and Ogres might become Chaos or Scrap Zombies, 40% chance of affecting a Quick-Flex Alien or D’Norr Devilman, 20% or less for other humanlike beings; the more human, the more likely. It is interesting to note that these nonhumans are much more likely to be *Weeper zombies*, presumably because their inhuman physiology interferes with the resurrection process and they retain more of their pre-zombie identity. Still, the vast majority of Chaos and Scrap Zombies (90%+) are created from humans. Sometimes, however, the dismembered parts of so-called “D-Bees” (short for “dimensional beings”) find their ways into the reconstruction process and are attached to an otherwise human body. The more human-like and human-looking the D-Bee, the more likely it can be turned into a zombie and mixed up with necrotic parts for reassembly into a Scrap Zombie.

Supernatural beings and creatures of magic cannot be reanimated by the Transmission. It is simply not attuned to their superhuman natures. For example, demons seldom really die. Depleting their M.D.C. simply destroys their mortal shell, and banishes their essence to the dimension of their origin. Creatures of magic, such as dragons and Faerie Folk, are long-lived and much too strongly tied to the nature of magic to be transformed into the living dead. Although they are mortal beings, their nature is far too exotic to be reanimated by the Transmission. This is not to say that undead dragons and the like do not exist on Chaos Earth or in other areas of the Megaverse; but they are not turned into zombies by the Transmission of the Black Obelisk.

Animals are not affected, either. The zombies of the Black Obelisk only kill animals and monsters when they are threatening, block their path, or attack first. Such creatures are killed and their bodies left where they fall.

Zombie Attacks:

How Chaos and Scrap Zombies fight

Intelligence and Mobility. Chaos and Scrap Zombies are, in effect, monstrous robotic drones that lack true intelligence and imagination. Aside from animating the dead, the Transmission programs each type of zombie and controls their actions similar to a person playing a real-time strategy video game. It gives them commands, but the dead can only follow very simple instructions. Zombies have very little mental prowess and even less cognitive awareness. In short, they are “meat puppets” or robots that follow very basic programming and orders. Too much information fed into them at once only confuses the monsters and makes them inefficient (reduce number of attacks/actions and speed by half). Therefore, their orders are usually simple commands like, “find and kill the living,” and “acquire salvageable weapons and scrap and bring it to the Black Obelisk.”

For the most part, zombies are slow and dumb, have poor spatial recognition abilities, and are utterly lacking multi-layered cognitive processes. When something catches their attention, they shuffle toward it, stumbling across rubble, rocks and whatever happens to be in their path. They do not pay much attention to things like walls or doors until they get right up on top of them.

When a Chaos or Scrap Zombie encounters something large and unliving blocking its way, its first reaction is to tear it down or go around it. If tearing it or knocking it down proves unsuccessful, the zombies usually give up after 4D6 minutes and try to find a way around it or move off in some other direction. That is, unless the creatures know there are living people on the other side of the barrier. If the zombies can see, hear or sense living survivors within 100 feet (30.5 m), they continue to tear and hammer at the obstacle, or try to push it or climb over it until the living people leave or perish, or manage to slip away or destroy the zombies. If more than one zombie is present (remember, they tend to move in large mobs), there could be a huge group of them pounding or pulling on the barrier, forever if they have to. And eventually, more will come. The best bet for any survivor is to keep moving and stay hidden. All zombies recognize when their kin are agitated, on the hunt or have the living cornered, and that attracts them like sharks to blood.

It should be made clear that while a horde of zombies may knock down a door, pull down a fence or smash through a window, Chaos Zombies and many Scrap Zombies do not have the wherewithal to try turning a doorknob to see if the door opens or to try to raise the window to crawl through it. They are that simpleminded and direct. (**Weapon Note:** This also means most zombies cannot operate machinery, drive a vehicle, use a tool or even turn on a light switch. When it comes to weapons, even most Scrap Zombies use the weapons built into them instinctively, slashing and stabbing with a sword arm or firing a bionic-style arm weapon. That said, there are a few specially designed and programmed Scrap Zombies that know how to use handheld



weapons and/or wield a unique variety of weapons unique to that subset of Scrappers.)

Bodies of water, such as lakes and rivers, confuse many zombies of the Black Obelisk. It does not appear to them that there is a physical object in their way, but for some reason they have trouble moving through it. Most Chaos and Scrap Zombies will *not* cross bodies of water wider than 500 feet (152 m) or deeper than their shoulders, and turn back when deep water is encountered. However, the more intelligent Scrap Zombies may find another way around or over it, including using rowboats, rafts and similar basic watercraft, especially if they see humans doing so.

Smart Scrap Zombies – those with an I.Q. higher than 8 – may sometimes attempt to cross the water by walking on the bottom of it. The majority of those zombies end up getting swept away by the current, or stuck in the mud at the bottom, or attacked by some monstrous sea creatures also from the Rifts. Very few can actually make it to the other side. If there is an easy way around the water, however, the zombies will find it eventually, and continue their pursuit.

All **Scrap Zombies** are programmed with specialized goals and the skills and instincts needed to perform their tasks when they are created. This is a more complex process of creation and specialization than the simple Chaos Zombies, and it is what makes the Scrap Zombies so diverse and dangerous. In this way, the Transmission (and the driving force behind it) can send out specially designed Scrap Zombies with unique capabilities and a certain amount of autonomy without having to micro-manage each separate, individual zombie robot. However, even the most sophisticated Scrap Zombie cannot make many decisions or choices beyond its fundamental programming. That means when push comes to shove, the Scrap Zombie is likely to either try to escape and flee to fight another day, or fight to its utter destruction, especially if it is cornered or trapped.

There are times when **Scrap Zombies** encounter something that they are totally unequipped to deal with. A very good example would be a large body of water. They cannot swim, and most are so heavily-laden down with weapons and armor plating that they would simply sink to the bottom and be forced to walk across the muddy lake floor. Thus, unless commanded to go into the water (or designed for it), the zombies will look for a way around or across the water. If there is no way around, they are stalled, because zombies, by definition, lack true human intelligence and ingenuity. This applies to Scrap Zombies and, especially the more simple-minded Chaos Zombies. If these zombies are part of a mob of fewer than 100, the Transmission is likely to not notice them being stalled, and the creatures meander around with nothing to do until something of interest, such as a NEMA scouting party or group of survivors, catches their attention. At which point they follow their default programming and attack. If, however, the mob is large, several hundred, the Transmission is likely to take notice of their plight and *send assistance* or redirect them to a different position or even back to the Black Obelisk.

When a large outpost, fortified location or army of living survivors is located, the Transmission might (but not always) send a **Boogeyman** or **Living Dead Girl** to gather reconnaissance. Whatever the zombie see is sent back to the Black Obelisk, the situation is assessed, and more Scrap Zombies or Chaos Zombies are dispatched to deal with it. Again, this is likely to be a straightforward siege as zombies lack the intelligence and finesse to engage in espionage and covert operations. That said, just as a general might call upon certain troops depending on the forces that oppose him, the Transmission will send different combinations of Scrap Zombies along with Chaos Zombies (sheer force of numbers) to deal with the obstacle. If there is a strong presence of fighters and NEMA troops, heavier supporters are used. If not, local Chaos and Scrap Zombies are sent in to kill everyone.

Zombie Battle Tactics: As noted, Chaos and Scrap Zombies tend to be slow and direct in their methods of attack. With few exceptions, subterfuge and stealth are not zombie qualities. Rather, they use brute force and swarming tactics to overwhelm their opponents.

Attacks per Melee:

Chaos Zombie: 2

Scrap Zombies: 4, sometimes more.

Swarming Attacks: Chaos Zombies tend to use mob tactics in combat. They grab or grapple their victims, pummel, bite, or try to crush or choke them to death. They are smart enough to push them into sharp objects or throw them off a roof or ledge (and there are plenty in the ruin and debris fields in Chaos Earth), or hold them while other zombies converge on the victim. The converging zombies punch, bite, rip, and tear at the victim until he dies (loses all Hit Points) or is rescued. A truly brutal death and a horrific fate. **A chance to survive:** If a person is seriously injured or rendered unconscious, Chaos Zombies are likely to drop the body and move on to a new target, leaving the person to die from the injuries and wounds (blood loss, organ failure, etc.). This may provide a window for a quick rescue, provided the victim is less hurt than he appears and proper medical help is available; if he can even be reached. Any rescue attempt will attract any zombies within eyeshot, and some Scrap Zombies use injured people as bait. Playing dead only works 20% of the time, and only after taking a severe beating. Roll Percentile: 01-20% is a success, for the moment. The second the individual playing possum moves, even a little, or very slowly, any zombies nearby will notice and attack. And remember, zombies can sense life, so it's not easy to trick these creatures.

Grabbing and Grappling. **Chaos Zombies**, in particular, are slow and fight as unarmed assailants flailing with hammering fists, biting, and kicking; two attacks per melee round. They instinctively reach out and grab hold of the living by their clothes, arms, ankles, hair, or whatever they can snag. Even a Chaos Zombie's grip is like a vise, and Scrap Zombies are even stronger. Pulling free of a zombie's grasp requires the victim to use equal



or greater P.S. Allies rushing over to help their comrade pull free is often necessary. If several people are trying to pull the victim from the zombie's (or zombies') grasp, they must have a combined P.S. number that is greater than the zombie(s) holding on.

Chopping or shooting the zombie's arm off is another fast, effective way to break free.

Grabbing and holding, or grappling and pinning living prey is extremely effective for zombies, because the sound of the struggle and the zombie's incessant moaning attracts other zombies. As the mob gathers, the live victim is stuck and quickly overwhelmed. Remember, zombies travel in swarms, so getting grabbed and held even by one or two of them could see the victim pulled into the swarm/herd/mob a few moments later, and ripped apart or carried away.

Scrap Zombies have four attacks per melee round, and are more likely to stand and engage in one-on-one combat. These augmented nightmares are the soldiers and specialists of the invading zombie horde, and have greater muscle elasticity, strength, and skills, as well as weapons and armor attached right to them, making them much more lethal. Any weapon system built into a Scrap Zombie can be utilized by it. Scrap Zombies are also more aware and intelligent, and can command other zombies to attack a specific target or stand their ground, utilizing their strength in numbers. Some number of Scrap Zombies (10-20%) are always scattered among hordes of Chaos Zombies, their presence concealed by the masses until a survivor or NEMA soldier finds himself standing face to face with it.

Despite the power and capabilities of Scrap Zombies, they too fight in a straightforward manner, using weight of numbers and relentless brutality to compensate for whatever they lack in skill and intelligence.

Weight of Numbers: It's difficult to fight a swarming enemy that is all around you and piles on top of you. In most cases, the average **Chaos Zombie** is a minimal threat to an armored and armed, combat-trained NEMA operative. In one-on-one combat, the NEMA soldier has the advantage. He should have no problem outmaneuvering and even pushing the slow creature to the ground to hack it up with a Vibro-Blade, or smashing its head in with the butt of his rifle. It's when that same soldier is surrounded by ten, twenty, fifty, a hundred, or a thousand Chaos Zombies that the situation becomes grim, and people start to die. Should the Transmission reach large cities, like Chicago, it will resurrect millions of the dead.

Retention of Skills: Chaos Zombies have little or nothing in the way of skills. For one thing, they do very little thinking on their own. The Transmission from the Black Obelisk tells them what to do like a robot under remote control. But the Black Obelisk cannot calculate specifics for every single zombie. It simply *programs* the dead with the fundamental knowledge they will need for the very simple tasks they are charged with. If their job is to kill, the Transmission gives them basic instructions on what

to do. If their job is to infiltrate survivor camps and shelters, or to gather salvage, it tells them that as well.

Only the specialized **Scrap Zombies** possess some specialized skills. This process also means they *may* retain a few memories they had in life, but only the most important of those remain. For instance, if the zombie was in life a guitar player on an expert level (Play Musical Instrument at 90% or higher), the creature will retain some knowledge of how to play the instrument, and some basics of music theory (equal to a skill of 35%). This does not mean that player characters are likely to find zombies playing music, or dancing, or writing books, or cooking Christmas dinner. They may possess a few skills to do these things, but they lack the inclination and imagination to do use them, unless it happens to tie into their duty via the Transmission.

Likewise, zombies who retain some memories of their loved ones (less than 15% of them) may choose not to kill their friends and loved ones, by simply turning away and picking another target. However, the zombie cannot communicate with them or perform any other act of kindness. If the loved one in question reacts to them in abject fear or with violence, the zombie may simply continue to ignore them (01-50%) or strike back with deadly force (51-00%).

In any case, Scrap Zombies, regardless of type, will only possess one or two skills that they had in life, and only a handful of other skills programmed into them during their reconstruction.

Fighting Chaos and Scrap Zombies

Weaponized Scrap Zombies may have arms that can range from normal to limbs with armored plating, some spikes or clawed fingers on the hand or arm, to complete makeovers with limbs that look more like a cyborg arm with weapons built into the forearm or replacing the hands, to skeleton limbs that end with a clawed hand, blade or energy weapon. Regardless of the form and degree the weaponization takes, the hand, or hand and forearm, will have been replaced with some sort of weapon system. Fingers might be replaced with knife blades and knuckles spiked. Or the entire hand, or hand and forearm, may be replaced with a machete or sword, axe, pick-head, spike or saw blade, or with a functioning electric drill, chainsaw, jackhammer, or energy weapon converted from a pistol, rifle or piece torn from a suit of military power armor or robot.

As a result, **Scrap Zombies** have armor and/or mechanical, robot-like limbs and parts that do not match in size, shape, or purpose. A few may even have two left hands, or arms that are of completely different sizes, sex, race or lengths; a metal reinforced head or dead man's head with a helmet bolted onto it may be reattached onto a woman's or D-Bee's body, and so on. Likewise, armor physically attached to the torso, arms and legs of Scrap Zombies may vary considerably. Depending on the materi-



als available at the time, the torso may have a lot of armor bolted to it, of just a little attached at strategic locations. Since the head and limbs are usually removed first for reconstruction and then reattached to the torso, the armor on the head and limbs may not match that of the body. There is no need to put the original head and limbs onto the original torso, so extremities are removed first, and seldom reattached to the same body. This suggests the Black Obelisk originates from a different dimension and has no real knowledge of human anatomy and symmetry, or just doesn't care.

Chaos Zombies are simply animated dead. If the zombie is in a suit of armor or has had armor and/or weapons bolted into it, the creature is a *Scrap Zombie* and a greater threat. While some Scrap Zombies are lone hunters or scouts, and others may travel in groups, most are mixed among Chaos Zombies, fortifying the zombie horde and providing an unpleasant surprise for survivors and NEMA soldiers.

Most Scrap Zombies have metal plates attached to strategic locations on their bodies, such as the chest, back, arms, and legs. This includes *the head*, which may have a helmet or part of a helmet, skull cap or bands and plates of metal, coils and other scrap bolted right to the skull or face.

Legs and arms might be partially or completely plated to look like those of an armored soldier or even a cyborg or robot. Many have a half-man, half-machine appearance as arms and legs may be replaced with metal and even bionic and robotic limbs. Such scrap metal limbs may have a metal skeleton appearance, especially when the scrap is used to create a metal armature that replaces an arm with a sword, pick, axe or other weapon. Likewise, fingers and toes may be replaced with metal claws or knife blades. Caution and fast elimination of such targets is highly recommended.

Scrap Zombies may have Cybernetics or advanced, energy weapons built into them! Cybernetics and bionics (military grade cybernetics and cyber-weapons) can be acquired by zombies by removing them from the dead, looting from medical facilities and military bases, and even back-alley "Body Chop Shops," where one can buy cybernetics without the legal hassles. These looted systems are installed in the Scrap Zombies and activated through dark magic.

Moreover, the Black Obelisk has the capacity to build machine limbs and attach weapons to the Scrap Zombies' limbs, making them, in effect, crude cybernetic or bionic augmentation for the animated dead. Thus, some zombies may see through cybernetic eyes or use weapons and other cybernetic systems implanted into their rotten bodies.

The reconstruction process that attaches metal weapons, armor and cybernetic systems to a zombie is what separates Scrap Zombies from the more conventional Chaos Zombies. During reconstruction, armor plates and weapons are bolted to the body. Anything from melee types to energy weapons and mechanical devices are fused onto the Scrap Zombie to make it a more deadly

and efficient killing machine. All Scrap Zombies are a nightmarish amalgam of dead flesh and twisted metal. The intelligence behind the Obelisk's zombie factory can find a use for almost any technological device, whether it be an old computer, optics system or energy rifle. Of course, this makes Scrap Zombies all the more deformed and terrifying.

Cybernetics, weapons and armor plating attached to these strange monsters are considered part of the zombies' bodies. Between being undead and the machine parts being a part of them, Scrap Zombies and their machine parts *are impervious to all forms of Telematics, Object Read, Negate Mechanics*, and other powers and abilities specifically aimed at controlling machines. **Note:** On Rifts Earth, a Cyber-Knight's ability to sense machines does not warn him of Scrap Zombies until the monster is within 10 feet (3 m) and probably ready to attack.

Limited Invulnerability of Zombies: Both Chaos and Scrap Zombies are impervious to alcohol, drugs, disease, poison, gases, fear, fire (only Mega-Damage and magic fire do full damage), cold (magic cold does full damage), drowning, mind control, insanity, pain, and possession. They have no need or desire to eat, drink, sleep, or breathe. They are impervious to nearly all S.D.C. weapons, but if you can inflict enough physical damage (S.D.C. to Chaos Zombies and M.D. to Scrap Zombies), you can completely destroy that body part. As noted previously, destroy the head (all S.D.C. or M.D.C.) and you stop the zombie — at least until its body is dragged back to the Black Obelisk and a new head is attached!

Chaos Zombies are S.D.C. creatures, and vulnerable to S.D.C. weapons.

Scrap Zombies are M.D.C. monsters that are impervious to most S.D.C. weapons, but take damage from M.D. weapons. Of course, they have additional M.D.C. protection via the armor bolted to them, so some are the equivalent of fighting a Combat Cyborg or a power armor-clad warrior.

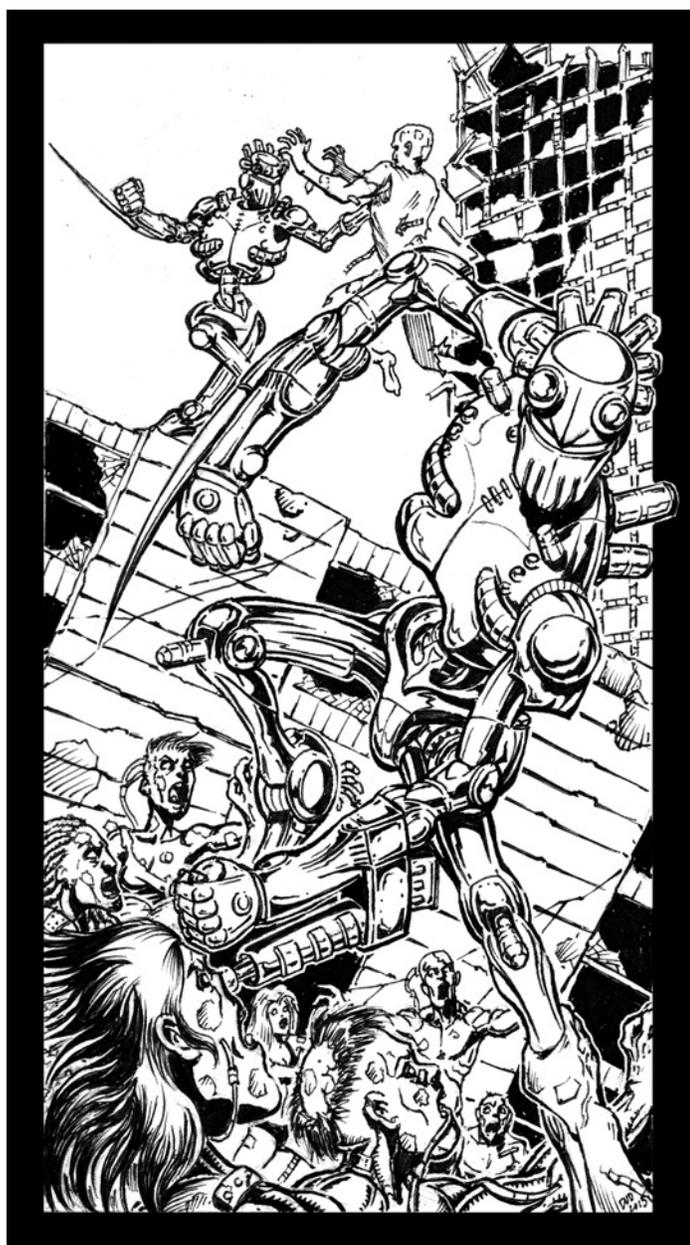
Silver and Magic: Against Scrap Zombies, normal weapons made of silver, Holy Weapons, Rune Weapons and other magical weapons and spells inflict their normal damage in M.D.C. Even in the case of silver weapons that normally do just S.D.C. damage, such as a silver-plated weapon against a Scrap Zombie, the damage die roll is the same as usual, but the weapon does the equivalent of Mega-Damage to the M.D.C. zombie. Thus, a silver-coated sword or Holy Weapon that normally does 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage inflicts 2D6 M.D. to the Scrap Zombie.

Regular M.D.C. Weapons: Whether a blast from a laser, energy weapon, rail gun, missile, explosive device, or the punch of a robot or power armor or the teeth and claws of a creature of magic (dragons) or supernatural being (demons), the attack does full damage to *Scrap Zombies* and **DOUBLE DAMAGE** to *Chaos Zombies*.



Killing Chaos and Scrap Zombies!

Chaos and Scrap Zombies keep fighting at full strength until the head of the monstrosity (or main body) is completely destroyed (S.D.C./M.D.C. is reduced to zero). If there is even one M.D.C. point left, the creature keeps fighting. When you attack a zombie, all you're really doing is hacking up or blasting at a corpse that has been re-animated. It doesn't stop attacking until its head or main body has been completely destroyed (zero S.D.C. or M.D.C., as the case may be). Blasting away at the extremities is a good way to slow down and incapacitate a zombie, but nothing short of total destruction of the head is enough to sever its connection with the Transmission.



NEMA soldiers differ on the best tactic for taking down Scrap Zombies, in particular. Some prefer to take the time to aim properly and make a Called Shot for the corpse's head, one at a time, picking them off like a shooting gallery. Others want to cut the fighting short by leveling as many hits into the largest target on the zombie, i.e. the main body, and then finishing them off at a more relaxed pace.

Destroy the Head: Shooting the head at close range – within 40 feet (12.2 m) or closer (including melee combat) – simply requires the attacker to state his intention to target the head and roll a successful strike on a D20.

At greater distances, attackers shooting with ranged weapons must make a “Called Shot” and are -3 to strike. -6 if the zombie or the shooter is running, dodging, jumping, is on/in a vehicle or riding animal, or coming in and out from behind cover. The shooter has to stop and take careful aim to make an accurate Called Shot. Smoke, fog, rain, and darkness can inflict even greater penalties. -10 to strike when shooting blind. ALL S.D.C. of a Chaos Zombie or M.D.C. of a Scrap Zombie's head must be reduced to zero, to drop the creature in its tracks.

Destroying the Main Body is another way to kill Chaos and Scrap Zombies: Depleting the M.D.C. of the Main Body always destroys the creature and inflicts so much damage that there is nothing left for other zombies to salvage.

Smart characters always want to dispose of the body, because it is only a matter of time before another zombie finds it and salvages the remains for the creation of more zombies. **Garbage-men** and **Stitcher Scrap Zombies** are always on the lookout for fresh (and not so fresh) parts they can use to repair other zombies. This includes severed body parts and headless corpses as well as weapons, scrap and limbs recycled from fallen zombies. Burning the body with M.D. flames will take care of it, as will blasting it to atoms with Mega-Damage energy weapons. **Note:** The Scrap Zombie's body remains an M.D.C. structure for 1D4 days after the zombie is killed. After that time, it reverts to a regular S.D.C. corpse. Naturally, any Mega-Damage inorganic material that was implanted or attached to the zombie retains its original structural damage capacity.

Head Shots. Aiming for the head is highly recommended for skilled combatants, but a single head shot *may not* be an instant kill. “Shoot ‘em in the head! It's the only way to kill them.” This common belief is not entirely true. There are several ways to kill these particular zombies. According to urban myth and pop culture, causing any kind of trauma to the head of a zombie severs it from whatever drives the creature, terminating its existence and returning it to a lifeless corpse. In movies and stories, that means putting a bullet through the monster's brain, even if the bullet was not of sufficient force or placement to damage the zombie's motor sections (or reptilian functions depending on one's mythology). The simple act of “shooting it in the head” was enough. But that was the movies and fiction. This is real life and an alien invader raising the dead with magic.



To be fair, shooting just about anything in the brain should kill it, or at least cause it so much neural trauma as to sentence it to a slow death. Anything alive, that is.

The animated dead function on a different level.

Chaos and Scrap Zombies have their rotting brains reanimated by Necromantic magic energies riding on the electromagnetic waves of **the Transmission**. The brainpower of the creatures themselves is extremely limited. Primal at best. Functioning purely through dark magic, it is the Transmission that guides their actions and gives them the processing power to follow simple commands and make some basic decisions. By that token, Chaos and Scrap Zombies *can* be stopped by destroying the brain or head, but a single bullet is not going to do the job. The caliber or energy level of a laser or other energy blast, must be sufficient to penetrate the hard skull or armor/helmet and do significant damage to the head (must reduce the S.D.C. or M.D.C. of the head to zero!).

A Chromium Guardsman's Boom Gun is devastating, as are most rail guns, military grade energy weapons, shotguns, machine-guns and explosive rounds. However, few civilian survivors are going to have access to such weapons. It can be a surprise when a character fires what should be a lethal shot with a revolver or light laser pistol at a zombie's skull, and blows off a large chunk of it, only to find that the creature is still moving, undaunted.

Note: In order to stop Chaos and Scrap Zombies for good, *the total S.D.C. or M.D.C. of the head must be depleted; reduced to zero*. Anything less, even just one point of S.D.C./M.D.C., and the monster is still up, and fully functional! Destroying the head – reducing it to zero points – stops it, dead in its tracks. However, other Chaos or Scrap Zombies may drag the body away and salvage it for parts to make a new zombie and even just attach a new zombie activated head to it. Thankfully, this is beyond the scope of the Stitcher Scrap Zombie, and requires the body being taken back to the Black Obelisk.

Battling Dead Mobs. Since zombies gather in mobs and swarm, combat is seldom against one or even as few as a dozen zombies, but rather against large groups of the enemy called **“Dead Mobs”** by NEMA forces. Even a small Dead Mob is 2D6x10 zombies, with 10-20% being Scrap Zombies. The tactic of the Dead Mob, to overwhelm its living opponents. For that reason, NEMA squads use hit-and-run tactics, working around the Dead Mob until they can whittle it down to nothing. NEMA also uses explosives to clear a path and fast-moving skirmish-style attacks whenever they can. Aerial support from Silver Eagles (SAMAS) and helicopters can make all the difference in clearing a path through zombie hordes and extracting civilians and troops hemmed in by two or more advancing Dead Mobs.

Sometimes NEMA troops have an objective to reach on the other side of a Dead Mob or in the center of an area infested with the monsters. In these instances, even without aerial support, it may be possible to move through the Dead Mob, especially if

the members of the group are not close together. Fast-moving humans can bob and weave through a loosely packed Dead Mob, provided they move through the mob quickly without stopping to take the time to properly destroy the zombies, and knocking down or blasting the ones that get too close. This is a dangerous proposition, as the creatures converge and attack any living humanoid target. Stop for any reason and that pack tightens and the majority converge, swarming on the nonmoving target. Game Masters should adjust numbers as they see fit and seems appropriate to the situation. Use common sense and think about how the Black Obelisk zombies function.

Moving through Dead Mobs is dangerous business, and often relatively slow going no matter what you do. Characters are limited to moving at only *half their Spd attribute*, with every zombie they get near reaching out to grab or attack them. The hero has to use all but one of his actions dodging the constant flailing arms reaching out to pull him down.

Parrying and dodging zombie attacks in a Dead Mob is done with a -3 penalty since the many zombies will try to grab his arm and whatever the character is parrying with, and dodging is like dancing through a minefield.

A character may use *simultaneous attacks* to try to get through a zombie mob, either by trying to destroy the zombie with head shots, or slowing it down by shooting off a leg or knocking it down.

Knocking down one zombie often takes down 2D4 others with it, giving the character(s) a bit of breathing room or an opening to continue moving through.

Combatants using firearms or energy weapons while trying to move through the mob are usually firing at close range, sometimes point-blank range, so they do not suffer penalties to strike, despite the desperateness of the situation.

Chaos Zombies can be knocked down and bowled over pretty easily. Though they tend to be stronger than living people, they have slow speed and poor balance. Scrap Zombies are heavier and armed, making them more difficult to fight, but knocking down Chaos Zombies in front of them can slow them down, as even they have trouble wading through a thick mob of fellow zombies.

A single Chaos Zombie can be pushed and knocked down by anyone with a P.S. of 17 or above (or a combined P.S. by two or more live attackers). Roll to strike as normal. Any roll above a 10 is a successful knockdown. Whether successful or not, the knockdown attack/push counts as one melee attack.

A combined P.S. of 26 or greater is necessary to knock down the typical **Scrap Zombie**, such as a Soldier Boy, as these armored horrors are both heavier and more agile, and able to stand their ground better than the average Chaos Zombie. The largest Scrap Zombies may require twice as much force.

If the zombie is knocked down, it loses initiative, if it had it, and two melee attacks/actions as it climbs back to its feet.



However, in a tightly packed Dead Mob, knockdown may not be possible, instead only pushing the zombie and 1D4 others stumbling backward 1D4 feet (0.3 to 1.2 m), rather than down onto the ground; the rest of the crowd holding the pushed zombies on their feet. Those affected only lose one melee attack.

Using fire against zombies is tricky. Fire is an excellent deterrent against the living. The intense heat and the ease at which fire can spread and consume an entire person is terrifying. All mortal creatures fear fire, and even some supernatural beings as well. Zombies, not so much.

Chaos and Scrap Zombies do burn, albeit very slowly, but feel no pain nor fear. Normal fires do nothing to them except burn off their hair, clothing, and a layer of dead skin. Even an M.D.C. or magical fire takes time to consume them entirely (1D4+1 melee rounds).

Living creatures, when set ablaze, become panicked. Running around and screaming; the pain and terror they feel is beyond imagination. Not zombies. They are dead automatons – robots under the direction of the Transmission. They feel no pain and don't know fear of any kind. So while they may burn, it does not stop them from continuing to attack and kill. Setting ablaze everything they touch. While on fire, any flammable materials with which they come in contact are likely to catch on fire too (01-80%). All it takes is one flaming zombie blundering into a gas station to touch off a blaze that burns down an entire neighborhood.

As a result, NEMA almost never uses fire to battle zombies, learning early on that it is a recipe for disaster. Some survivors, however, without fully considering the consequences, may try to use fire (Molotov cocktails or other homemade fire devices) against the encroaching zombie hordes, and in the end, only cause more damage and loss of life. NEMA advises everyone against using pyrotechnic devices.

NEMA does use controlled fire to destroy corpses before they can become zombies. This is actually one of the major ways of fighting animated dead. It is discussed in more detail later.

There is hope. Limit the geometric growth of the Scrap Zombies, and you contain the spread of the Transmission. Targeting and destroying Scrap Zombies and taking down as many Chaos Zombies as possible can, for a while, contain and even push back the advancing zombie hordes. Of course, ultimately, the Black Obelisk must be determined to be the source of the plague and dealt with accordingly. The problem is, the Transmission always radiates in all directions 10 miles (16 km) ahead of the main zombie force, creating newly raised dead that soldiers must battle first, in order to get to the more powerful Scrap Zombies and then to the Black Obelisk.

To reach the Black Obelisk itself, NEMA forces may need to be airdropped into "Zombie Central," make their way inside the Obelisk, find the broadcast room of the Transmission and turn it off or, better yet, destroy the Transmission mechanism within. The trick will be getting inside. Covert stealth missions might

work, as defenses inside the Black Obelisk are minimal, provided they can find their way to the Transmission. (Marcel does not expect anyone to be able to get close enough to get inside.)

For heroes and defenders like NEMA, it's worse, because when comrades fall to the zombies, they rise within the hour to join the battle against them as something dark, irrational and already clad in armor and wielding weapons of terrible destruction. The situation is a horror that weighs heavy on everyone caught within the Transmission's range.

As the apocalyptic events of Chaos Earth continue, the dead will continue to pile up. The Transmission sent from the Black Obelisk will spread farther out, and every corpse within its range will pay heed to its dark whispers and rise again as a Chaos Zombie. Unless the Transmission is stopped and the Black Obelisk and/or *Marcel LeMerchand* destroyed, there can be no end to the horror of the zombie resurrection.

Chaos Zombies

A **Chaos Zombie** is the basic, reanimated human raised from the dead and controlled by the dark magic of *the Transmission*. In that regard, they are more like an army of robot drones than human troops or even advanced artificial intelligences (A.I.s). Chaos Zombies have no built-in weapons, no armor, and no physical modifications of any kind. They are simple-minded drones that fight tooth and nail, biting, clawing, and striking out at the living (humans and D-Bees). Anyone slain or who dies, for any reason, within range of the Transmission, rises again 4D6+10 minutes later as a Chaos Zombie.

The motivation for the Chaos Zombie is very simple. After being raised from the dead, the Transmission programs them to kill any living humanoid they encounter. The purpose for killing the living is, 1) to reduce opposition, and 2) to create more Chaos Zombies. The more people slain, the larger the zombie invasion force. This fighting all takes place within the current range of the Transmission. When the zombies dominate the active zone of transmission (meaning that more than 75% of the population within the zone have become zombies), most of the **Chaos Zombies** stop their killing spree and begin a salvage operation, stripping down vehicles, robots, buildings, etc., for their wiring, electronics, scrap metal, armor, and weapons. At this point, only *Scrap Zombies* are likely to continue to slay any humanoids they spot. (**Note:** During the first few days of the zombie invasion there are no Scrap Zombies. Sadly, NEMA does not realize the threat until there are. Generally, 10-20% of a zombie dead mob, swarm, herd or horde are the armored and weaponized Scrap Zombies.)

Once salvage has been gathered, the Chaos Zombies carry it to the Black Obelisk. Salvage is taken inside to a completely automated factory operation where it is sorted, stowed and put into production. The salvage is used to create weapons, armor and



new limbs for the deadlier, M.D.C. *Scrap Zombies!* This is done by dismembering a small percentage of Chaos Zombies (10-20% in the first few months of the resurrection invasion) and reconstructing them.

Note: Zombies raised by the Black Obelisk can only function within the current (and ever expanding) zone of the *Transmission*. They cannot function outside the range of the *Transmission*, but as the number of zombies grows and new regions are taken over and dominated by the swarm, the *Transmission*'s range extends outward an additional 10 miles (16 km) with each expansion. All Chaos and Scrap Zombies sense where the point of *Transmission* ends and do not even attempt to step outside of it. Going beyond range sends Chaos Zombies and most (not all) Scrap Zombies into an inert, non-functioning state. A reminder that the *Transmission* is the key to stopping the invasion.

For the zombie factory that is the Black Obelisk, it matters not the condition of these animated corpses as long as they can walk or crawl to the factory. The ones that are missing limbs either get replacements taken from other zombies, or they are *rebuilt* into **Scrap Zombies** with mechanical limbs or weapon arms. Be it a severed limb or mechanical construct, it is all the same to the Black Obelisk. They are all just parts and raw materials with which to build an army of the dead. This *reconstruction process* takes place inside the Black Obelisk, though once turned into a Chaos Zombie or rebuilt into a Scrap Zombie, the *Stitchers* can repair zombies in need of fixing or replacement parts. The *Stitchers*' comrade in arms is the *Garbage man*, A large, powerfully built Scrap Zombie that wanders the streets and battlefields collecting and gathering severed body parts, zombie torsos, scrap and machine parts for *Stitchers* to make repairs or to send back to the Black Obelisk on the backs of Chaos Zombies. This invader puts all its zombies to their best use.

Never Underestimate Chaos Zombies

"Mayday. Mayday. Lieutenant James A. Marsden requesting immediate extraction. I'm transmitting the coordinates now."

Labored breathing and coughing follows.

"This is ... I don't know how many attempted calls for help without response, so I imagine I'm actually making what will be my final log entry. It has been three days since I've been separated from my mobile cavalry unit. The communications system must have been the first to go when I went down, or you would have extracted me by now.

"Food ran out two days ago; water, yesterday. Still can't move under their weight. Just too many of them. Haven't seen the sunlight since they dragged me down and piled on top. I must look like a piece of meat covered in ants. The constant jostling, moaning and pounding is relentless. Sleep is impossible. Muscles cramping. Back spasms are worse.

"And now I can feel the armor of my Chromium Guardsman starting to buckle and cave in on me. I'm amazed the air circula-

tion system has been able to supply me with breathable air this long. Probably because I'm not exerting myself.

"God, breathable? Barely, and not for much longer. The stench of my own waste is horrible. CO2 levels way in the red zone. It's almost more than I can take. I want to pop the armor open so bad. You know, just to catch a breath of fresh air. But if I open the armor, I'm dead. If I stay sealed up, I'm dead. I ... fear I am forsaken. All I can do is pray someone finds me while I still have time."

– Recorded message and attempted transmission from Lieutenant James A. Marsden, NEMA, Chicago 10th Division

Chaos Zombies are S.D.C. animated dead that can be taken down with conventional weapons. A shotgun, rifle, pistol, sword, or baseball bat can do the job.

To a NEMA soldier in M.D.C. body armor, that may not sound like much of a threat. One blast from a Mega-Damage weapon and half of the monster is vaporized. But that way of thinking is a fast track to doom. Chaos Zombies are a very real and deadly threat. First, they are tough. One blow to the head is not likely to be enough to kill one. To slay a Chaos Zombie, the attacker must either destroy the head completely (reduce S.D.C. to zero points or below) or inflict a lot of S.D.C. damage to the main body (again, reduce Main Body S.D.C. to zero or below).

Moreover, Chaos Zombies are a lot tougher than zombies created by magic rituals or what might be considered ordinary Necromancy. They possess *Augmented Strength* and can even inflict minor M.D.C. with a *power punch* (counts as two attacks). But even those with human level Physical Strength (P.S.) are dangerous. A few Chaos Zombies can grapple and pin a soldier in power armor, trapping him, dragging him away to an uncertain fate, or hanging on until a Mega-Damage Scrap Zombie arrives to finish him off.

Being overwhelmed by a horde of Chaos Zombies can lead to one's armor being literally peeled away, or the soldier inside his armor being battered and crushed to death, or held in place, buried under the weight of a dozen or more zombies until he dies of thirst or from lack of breathable air. Increase that number from a several dozen to a few hundred, or a thousand or tens of thousands of "ordinary" S.D.C. Chaos Zombies, and NEMA soldiers are in a world of hurt. Their ammunition gone before they know it and the soldiers carried away like a floater in a mosh pit at a concert. Being pulled into the zombie horde and crushed under the weight of many is not a pleasant way to die. Nor is watching helplessly as body armor is torn away. Factor in any percentage of the weaponized Scrap Zombies that can inflict Mega-Damage, and even combat cyborgs, power armor, tank drivers and robot pilots are in real trouble. And Chaos Zombies are spawned by the tens of thousands as soon as the *Transmission* reaches them.

Chaos Zombies are able to cause mass slaughter and destruction because the *Transmission* from the Black Obelisk raises every corpse that has died in recent weeks. There are already so



many people dead from the events of the Great Cataclysm and subsequent chaos that the Chaos Zombies are raised by the tens of thousands, not in small groups or as individuals. No one was prepared for the Great Cataclysm itself, much less for an army of the dead to go on a rampage through the streets. And as the Chaos Zombies slaughter all humanoid they encounter, those they slay soon join the ranks of the resurrected to overwhelm the living and any who oppose them. It's a strategy that works. And that's even without the addition of the M.D.C. Scrap Zombies, clad in M.D.C. armor and wielding M.D. weapons.



The Chaos Zombie

Killing Machine & Tech Scavenger

All Chaos Zombies really only have two jobs, and generally only perform one or the other at any given time: **1)** kill all living humanoids, or **2)** collect electronics and M.D.C. scrap, armor, weapons and cybernetics, and bring them to the Black Obelisk. Exactly which job they are currently conducting changes with their environment and commands from the Transmission.

When on a killing spree, Chaos Zombies ignore scrap in favor of hunting and slaying the living. This massacre continues until there are few people left to kill (fewer than 25% of the starting population), or until the Transmission tells the zombies to switch their goals. As noted previously, Chaos Zombies are the newly risen dead. Most are ordinary humans (and some D-Bees) with S.D.C. bodies. Only those rare individuals still clad in Mega-Damage body armor or power armor have any M.D.C. Such *armored Chaos Zombies* are designated for reconstruction as *Scrap Zombies*. Even though they already wear M.D.C. armor and may possess other weapons and technology on their person, armor-clad Chaos Zombies still require some rebuilding and modification to make them true Scrap Zombies with Supernatural Strength.

Relentless hunter-killers, Chaos Zombies gather in what NEMA troops designate as Dead Mobs, herds, swarms and hordes (basically big, bigger numbers, even bigger numbers and biggest, numbering into the tens of thousands). When a Chaos Zombie sees even one living person it begins to moan loudly and shamble toward that individual. The moan functions like a dog's howl and alerts other zombies to form a mob and join the pursuit like baying hounds. Put on high alert, all zombies within earshot of the moaning respond, so lone zombies, pairs and small groups may converge from all directions and form large groups. Getting "treed" without an avenue of escape, or NEMA troops staying too long at any one location, is almost certain to result in getting surrounded by a sea of moaning Chaos Zombies. Pushing through even a loose Dead Mob clutching out to grab the living is difficult enough. A tightly packed mob of hundreds or thousands is likely to be impassable for armored soldiers and even difficult to impossible for heavy power armor like the Chromium Guardsman and robots, as Chaos Zombies grab legs and arms, climb on their backs and hold on like a vise. The horde then claws and pummels and yanks at the living caught within the mob. The analogy to *the sea* is a good one, because it's like being cast adrift at sea and left to the mercy of the tide, only in this case, it is a tide of the dead and their clutching, pulling hands.

In a region taken over and dominated by zombies, the creatures may be more spread out and scattered, with wide spaces between the wandering, shuffling, hunting machines. Still, running and dodging between them can be risky, and when the moaning starts it can bring out unseen zombies from inside buildings, lurking in alleys and shadows, behind vehicles and rubble, etc., to join the hunt. Soldiers and people trying to be stealthy may find their cover blown and location revealed when even one or a few Chaos Zombies appear from around a corner and attack. The sound and motion of the scuffle, as well as the zombie's moan, may reveal them to enemies as well as attract additional zombies. In places where zombies are plentiful, like the ruins of cities that have been taken over by zombies (or are well into the process of being taken over), the number of zombies (10-20% of which are likely to be Scrap Zombies) **DOUBLES** every two melee rounds (30 seconds). Two becomes 4, four becomes 8, eight becomes 16, sixteen becomes 32, and so on in a matter of minutes.

However, if an attacking zombie or zombies can be dispatched quickly and quietly, within the initial 30 seconds of their attack, they barely get a chance to moan and do not attract other zombies in the area. The Game Master will have to use his or her judgement to determine if the scuffle was noticed by other living beings, survivors or enemies in close proximity.

Even a brief scuffle can be a problem. Precious seconds to minutes can be lost, an enemy takes notice, more zombies arrive, an innocent civilian is injured, supplies lost, equipment damaged, and so on. If the heroes were tailing an enemy, he might have slipped away and out of sight. This might occur even if he remained unaware that he was being followed, simply because



his pursuers were delayed and he kept going, entering a building or turning a corner unseen by those tailing him. Likewise, in combat, seconds can be the difference between life and death. Fighting off even one Chaos Zombie could be a tipping point for disaster.

Scavenging for tech and M.D.C. materials. The default setting for Chaos Zombies, when there are no more easy to find humanoids remaining in their present invasion zone, is to gather electronics, wiring and M.D.C. scrap, armor, weapons, etc. and carry it to the Black Obelisk. They do so in large groups or long caravans rather like a line of ants bringing food back to their nest.

When in scavenging mode, Chaos Zombies only attack when there is a large group of 10 or more people within range for easy pursuit, or when the living attack or interfere with the scavenging and cargo transport. Otherwise, scavenging Chaos Zombies ignore signs of movement and the possible presence of people in the area until they either deliver their wares to the Obelisk or are attacked by humans first. Even when under attack, most of the Chaos Zombies transporting scrap continue to trek toward the Obelisk to deliver their cargo, ignoring combat. Only when directly attacked by an obvious foe, or when told to fight by the Transmission or a Scrap Zombie, do scavenging Chaos Zombie in salvage retrieval mode stop to fight.

Combat Note: In most groups of zombies, regardless of size (dozens to thousands), 10-20% are *Scrap Zombies* that are quick to engage attackers and other apparent threats. Scrap Zombies have a more flexible range of parameters and are, by design, *the soldiers* and *special forces* of this invasion force. So while the Chaos Zombies may ignore a few humans, or even a large band of humans hanging back and trailing them or taking potshots at them, *Scrap Zombies* immediately respond to defend the caravan. When the danger has been addressed, the Scrap Zombies return to collect their cargo and rejoin the caravan on its way to the Obelisk.

It is always the Scrap Zombies among any group of Chaos Zombies that are the first to respond to potential threats and with deadly force. Only some of the “specialized” Scrap Zombies may engage in much different behavior or specific types of combat operations. While the armored zombie fighters engage in combat, the Chaos Zombies tend to keep moving. However, if a caravan falls under heavy attack, the salvage is put on the ground and ALL join the combat.

Game Note: Long lines of Chaos Zombies and/or large groups of them, arms full of weapons or scrap, are constantly returning to the Black Obelisk. That means observant NEMA forces in the field near the Illinois/Wisconsin border always see them traveling north, and if careful, a small stealth team or aerial forces can follow this line of Chaos Zombie porters back to the Black Obelisk. A massive structure clearly not of terrestrial origin.

Back from the Dead Note: No person, not even a Player Character, can be resurrected by any means, or life restored once he has died and been resurrected as a Chaos or Scrap Zombie – at

least not while he is under the effects of *the Transmission*. If his connection to the Transmission were to be cut, and the character has most of his original body intact, he could be resurrected through powerful magic as per the normal rules for those spells. The character will not remember being a zombie at all. A character on life support or in a coma is NOT dead and cannot be turned into a Chaos Zombie by the Transmission, until he actually dies. Most life support systems in hospitals can keep the body alive for years.

Chaos Zombie Stats

Also Known As: The Resurrected, Walking Dead, Risen Dead, and just zombies.

Alignment: Considered Diabolic, because they are deployed as the hunters and destroyers of human life. Really just drones.

Attribute of Chaos Zombies (it doesn't matter what they were when alive): I.Q. 1D4 (not really applicable; follows programming and simple commands from the Transmission and some Scrap Zombies), M.A. not applicable, M.E. not applicable, P.S. 1D4+20 (equivalent to *Augmented Strength* and inflicts 1 M.D. from power punch attacks), P.E. not applicable, P.P. 1D4+5, P.B. 1D6, Spd 1D4+4. **Note:** See *Optional Zombie Modifier Tables*, below, for some alternative appearances and behavior of Chaos Zombies.

S.D.C. by Location:

Head – 1D6+20

Arms and Hands (2) – 1D6+10 each

Legs and Feet (2) – 1D6+20 each

Main Body – 1D4x10+25 S.D.C.

Horror Factor (H.F.): 9 for 1-4 Chaos Zombies. 10 for a small group of 5-18 Chaos Zombies, H.F. 12 for several dozen. H.F. 14 for 100 or more, or if a Dead Mob is a combination of Chaos and Scrap Zombies. H.F. 15 for a Dead Mob of a few hundred (1D4x100+100). H.F. 16 for a Dead Mob of several hundred (2D4x100+300), and H.F. 17 for thousands of Chaos Zombies. **Note:** Whenever there are more than a couple dozen zombies, 10-20% are likely to be Scrap Zombies.

Size: Human. Can be of any height or weight of a human, but usually between 5-7 feet (1.5 and 2.1 m) and 100-300 pounds (45 to 135 kg).

Weight: Varies depending on size as is typical for human beings; 90-130 pounds (40.5 to 58.5 kg) for small and thin people, 150-300 pounds (67.5 to 135 kg) for most typical humans, sometimes more; people come in all shapes and sizes.

Average Life Span: Chaos Zombies exist until destroyed or as long as the Transmission keeps playing. Through dark magic and constant repair by Stitcher Scrap Zombies and the Black Obelisk, this threat can keep going indefinitely.

Level of Experience: Not applicable. Zombies do not learn nor grow with experience; they are drones.

P.P.E.: None, they are dead.



Natural Abilities: Standard as per Black Obelisk Zombies. Impervious to disease, poison, gases, alcohol, regular fire (M.D. and magic fire do full damage), cold (magic cold does full damage), heat, drowning, mind control, pain, fear, and possession. They also have no need to eat, drink, sleep, or breathe.

Impervious to all forms of Telemechanics and other abilities that target machines due to the magic.

Programmed to hunt living humans and humanoids, kill them and leave their bodies where they fall so they can rise 4D6+10 minutes later as a Chaos Zombie.

Tracking skill of 20% when trying to follow the trail of human prey, otherwise wanders off when prey is not apparent.

Alternately programmed for salvage recovery, during which the creature can identify and recover electronics, wiring, cybernetics, bionics, weapons (all types), M.D.C. armor, scrap metal and M.D.C. materials, and bring them to the Obelisk.

Vulnerabilities: S.D.C. weapons do their normal damage, while S.D.C. weapons made of silver inflict double damage to Chaos Zombies and their usual S.D.C. damage as equivalent Mega-Damage to Scrap Zombies (e.g. a silver-plated dagger that does 1D6 S.D.C. does 1D6 M.D. to Scrap Zombies).

Holy Weapons, Rune Weapons and other magic weapons and spells do their regular damage. Ancient S.D.C. weapons reputed to be *magical*, *Demon Slayers* or *Holy Weapons* function the same as silver weapons and inflict double damage to Chaos Zombies and their usual S.D.C. damage as M.D. +1D6 M.D. additional when it comes to Scrap Zombies and demons. In high-magic environments (i.e. in the Blue Zones/along ley lines and at nexus points), those weapons inflict double their usual damage as M.D. to the zombies, demons and most supernatural beings.

Magic spells and all other types of magic inflict their usual damage.

Note: Chaos and Scrap Zombies *do not heal* or Bio-Regenerate on their own. They do, however, continue to function until the Head or Main Body is reduced to zero (or less) S.D.C./M.D.C. They need the help of a Stitcher or to return to the Black Obelisk to get repairs.

Skills of Note (Combat and Salvage Programming): Programmed as hunter-killers with the most rudimentary of skills: Climbing 20%, Salvage 50%, Tailing 40% and Tracking 20%. Chaos Zombies may, on occasion, pick up and use any melee weapon, including a piece of pipe or wood to use as a club, but does so without benefit of bonuses other than those listed below. Never uses a weapon to parry. No W.P. skills as such. If a pistol or rifle is picked up by a Chaos Zombie, it uses the weapon as a club. Skills do not increase with experience.

When necessary, the Transmission may order Chaos Zombies to collect electronics, weapons, and scrap, as described above under Natural Abilities.

Attacks per Melee: Two.

Damage: As per Augmented P.S.; a punch or claw strike does 1D6 S.D.C. plus P.S. bonus (if any). Crush/Squeeze after grabbing a victim in a bear hug inflicts 1D6 plus P.S. damage bonus. Bite does 1D6 S.D.C. damage (P.S. bonus does not apply to bites). *Power Punch* does 1 M.D. but uses both of its attacks for that melee round.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 to strike, +3 to grab and grapple, never tries to parry, dodge, disarm, pull punch, or roll with impact. Impervious to Horror Factor and mind-affecting magic and psionic powers. Otherwise, +2 to save vs magic and psionics.

Psionics: None.

Magic: None.

Cybernetics and Bionics: None, unless the person that died had them in life, and then the items are likely to be harvested for use in a Scrap Zombie.

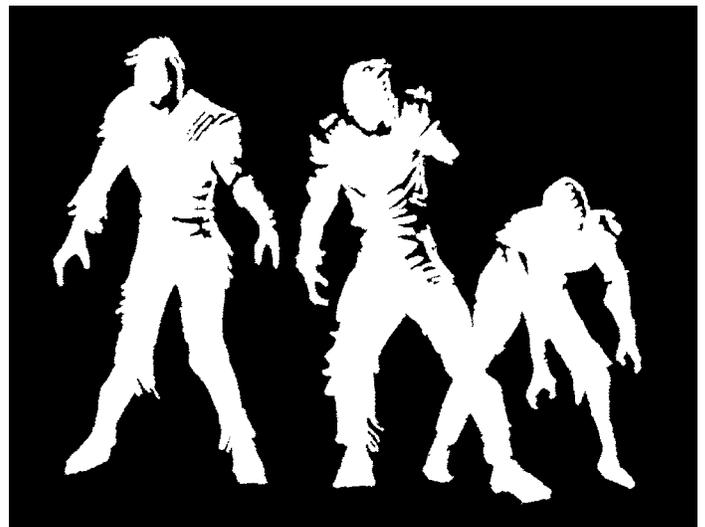
Weapons: Typically none, but sometimes picks up blunt objects like a length of pipe, a rock, club/piece of wood, hammer, shovel, rifle (used as a club), or even a knife, axe or sword if it is handy to use as weapons. Never uses guns or firearms of any kind except as a blunt weapon. Doesn't know how to use, load or fire a gun. Most blunt weapons and common blade weapons do 1D6 or 2D4 S.D.C. damage depending on their size and weight, with the largest and heaviest doing the most damage (2D6 S.D.C.). Cannot operate machinery, cannot drive a vehicle or fire a weapon, or even turn a knob to open a door.

Armor: None.

Enemies: The living.

Allies: None per se. Recognizes other Chaos Zombies as non-combatants and Scrap Zombies as quasi-leaders that a Chaos Zombie will follow if commanded to do so.

Habitat: Can exist anywhere, but can only function within range of the Transmission. Point of origin is Madison, Wisconsin, where the Black Obelisk is located and the invasion began.





Optional Zombie Modifier Tables

Physical Quirk Table (Optional)

People come in all shapes and sizes, and so do zombies. This optional table presents Chaos Zombie variants. Some are stronger or weaker, others are more gruesome or weird, but only have some slight bonuses or other modifiers as a result. Game Masters, select the variant you desire – if any – or roll percentile dice for a random determination.

01-10% Child Zombie. Same stats as the standard Chaos Zombie but with the following modifications: Half the size and one third the weight, +1 to Horror Factor and +1D6 to P.B. attribute, but reduce P.S. by 30%.

11-20% Funny-Looking Zombie. As dark as it is to think about, unfortunately some people died in compromising positions or had an accident after they became a zombie, and now they are funny because they look silly. This may include zombie clowns, mimes and those in strange outfits like a chicken or pizza costume. Some may wear odd or partial clothing, look funny naked, or be like the zombie who can't give chase because it has its pants down around its ankles; that sort of thing. -2 to Horror Factor, +1 on initiative because their humorous appearance is disarming and people tend not to consider them as dangerous as other zombies, but they are!

21-30% Diseased Zombie. This person likely died of the flu, pneumonia, an infected wound, disease or an Apocalypse Plague. It still acts as if it were sick and even coughs, wheezes, walks with a limp or shuffle, and drools blood or goo. Physically, it looks like it has suffered a long, debilitating illness. The face has dark circles under its eyes, the cheeks are sunken, hair is a tangled mess, and the body has a white or gray pallor to the skin and is likely to be covered in an ugly red rash, blisters, boils, warts, open sores, etc. +3 to Horror Factor and +1 to strike (it is faster and deadlier than its frail appearance suggests).

31-40% Cannibal Zombie. This zombie likes to kill with biting attacks and eats part of its victim, usually the belly and entrails. It tries to kill living victims by tearing out large chunks of their flesh, and usually swallowing them. The zombie does not need to feed, it simply prefers to kill in this manner for some reason. Because of that, it moves on to another living victim after the one it has been chewing on has died. These zombies are usually covered in the blood of those they have “fed” on, and can be easily recognized.

Same stats as the standard Chaos Zombie but with the following bonuses: +2 damage from bite attacks, +2 to Horror Factor, and +10% to track and tail the living.

41-50% Athletic Zombie. In life, this person enjoyed sports, or hiking, walking or running. As a result, the zombie's body is lean and in good to excellent physical condition; +2 to P.B. attribute, +4 to Spd, and +8 to S.D.C.

51-60% Muscled Zombie: In life, this person was a body-builder or athlete. +6 to Augmented P.S., +1D6 to P.B., and +20 to Main Body S.D.C.

61-70% Obese Zombie. These guys put the “morbid” in morbidly obese. -2 to Spd attribute, +36 to Main Body S.D.C.

71-80% Mutilated Zombie. The zombie is horribly disfigured in some way – covered in scars or open wounds, part of its flesh is torn away in big hunks with entrails dangling, has a big gash or body wound, is impaled with shrapnel, a long section of its arm(s) or leg(s) has the flesh torn away down to the bone, half its face is gone, flesh is burned and charred, or may practically be a walking skeleton, and so on. +4 to Horror Factor.

81-90% Rotting Zombie. This zombie is seriously deteriorated and looks half rotted and as if it just crawled out of a grave (which it probably has); +3 to Horror Factor.

91-00% Beautiful in Death: This reanimated corpse was once a very attractive male or female and even in death, appears to be fresh, alive and attractive. The stunning good looks of this zombie are distracting and unnerving. +15 to P.B. attribute and +4 to Awe/Horror Factor. A failed roll means the character hesitates to react to it, because it is so “alive” looking and beautiful/handsome. Failure to save vs Awe Factor is the same as H.F. reaction (-1 melee attack, -3 on initiative, and is -3 on all Perception Rolls for one melee round). This also gives the zombie a +1 to strike.

Emotional Quirks Table (Optional)

Both Chaos Zombies and Scrap Zombies are the physical remains of people who have died; remains that are animated by an external magical force. They exist for the sole purpose of conquest. They are not people under the influence of a viral epidemic, nor are they possessed and forced to serve an evil force. They are dead. Empty husks. Corpses of people who perished in the Great Cataclysm. Whatever life force, soul and mind once inhabited that body is long gone. These zombies are just the empty shells – meat puppets – animated and controlled by dark magic. Their dead bodies pirated and turned into robot-like drones. That concept of death and the undead is important if one is to understand how these zombies operate. They are not motivated by emotion or desire. They are simply bodies that can be turned into robotic weapons to slay living people.

Chaos and Scrap Zombies are NOT alive. They do not think. They do not feel. They do not create anything but more zombies. They have no morals, no ethics, no values at all. They have no hopes, no dreams. They suffer no sadness, no pain, and no sorrow. They are robots with only a tenuous connection to the world, and see it through a distorted lens. **Everything around them is one of three things:** something that needs to be killed, something that needs to be collected, or something of no importance at all.



A few Chaos and Scrap Zombies have the capacity for greater thought and basic strategic planning. Intelligence and programming built into the monsters by the Black Obelisk. The zombies are not “thinking for themselves,” they have been programmed with certain goals and responses. They function without emotion, desire or creativity. The computer-like programming is quite capable of calculating expected “human responses” and creates electrical impulses which direct the zombie’s actions.

Mistakes and strange quirks. All that being said, there are exceptions. The process of creating Chaos and Scrap Zombies is not perfect. There are many variables in working with decaying brains that cannot always be accounted for, even with magic.

Although Chaos and Scrap Zombies are simply dead flesh and bones magically empowered to walk around and follow simple commands, their decomposing brains are active – though in a way different than when alive. The Transmission provides them with animating energy, breathing a sort of un-life into otherwise inert matter. The brain, like a digital file not completely wiped clean, may retain some fragments of memories written into it during the life of the person it once belonged to. Most of these memories were destroyed when the person died, and what little may have remained is usually written-over by the Transmission. But in some brains, tiny fragments of memory about the person it once was still remain active. This is not the person, but more like a recorded moment of the person’s life. The person is gone, but that recording from the past remains. It is without the intellect, personality and soul that once commanded it, but it’s there.

These tiny recorded fragments from a life now gone, manifest themselves in different ways within the zombies. Rather like a bug or virus in a computer program, it may cause the program to hiccup or behave in a way it should not. Such as stopping to smell a flower or enjoy a sunset, or to look at a photograph or a building, or to leave a particular item (even if tech) untouched.

Those tiny flashes of memory can apply to people or places that the deceased person loved when alive. It is rare, but it does happen occasionally, for one of these zombies to see or hear something that was very important to them while they were alive, and to interact with it favorably. A zombie who sees the face of a former lover, child, or parent, *may* (but not necessarily) spare that person’s life, or at least hesitate a few critical seconds, even minutes, before attacking or moving off without aggression, as if it forgot what it was going to do. The zombie that walks by a billboard for a place or product that it once enjoyed may stop for a moment (1D4 melee rounds) to look at it. It may not even know why this image, item or place has caused it to pause or has distracted it from its duties, but it does. Even more curiously, it is possible every once in a while to find a lone Chaos or Scrap Zombie performing a task that it was fond of doing, and skilled at, while it was alive.

Again, any such responses are more of a distraction to the zombie than a feeling. They catch its attention for a fleeting moment or cause it to stay its hand, but the zombie does not feel love

or joy attached to those old memory fragments. And it has no idea why it has reacted in the manner it has. It simply stops, stares, and tries to remember, but it cannot do anything with it even if a memory bubbles up. In any case, the memory is fleeting and does not remain in the zombie’s consciousness for long (1D4+1 melee rounds) before the memory fades and the monster goes back to what it was doing. Still, that momentary memory distraction (a sort of temporary blackout) might give a human survivor the extra few seconds he needs to slip away, hide, grab something or to launch an attack while the creature is distracted.

01-05% Angry. This zombie is always scowling and looks angry or enraged. It fights with additional ferocity and gets +1 attack per melee round.

06-10% Animal Lover. This zombie is always chasing cats, small dogs and other small animals to hold and pet them. Of course, animals flee from this monster. However, its pursuit of cuddly critters may lure it into places where one does not expect to find a zombie, including human compounds where such animals may be kept.

11-15% Artist or Art Afficionado. This Chaos Zombie may make a simple drawing using the blood of its victims, or pile scrap into a freeform sculpture. It is also likely to stand and seemingly admire a painting, sculpture or other work of art.

16-20% Boozer. This zombie is attracted to bars, taverns and nightclubs where alcohol was served, and lingers there waiting for live victims to kill. May carry around a bottle of booze in one hand.

21-25% Care Giver. This zombie will not attack anyone who is bandaged, using a crutch or sling, looks sick, bedridden or laying in a hospital bed. The zombie might even walk over to look at them, smile, pat their head or squeeze their hand in kindness, before shuffling off. Doctors, nurses and other healthy people are fair game, and this ex-care-giver is attracted to hospitals, clinics and nursing homes.

26-30% Cruel/Sadistic. This zombie likes to toy with potential victims, cat-and-mouse-style, and kills slowly; does half damage with its attacks to prolong the fear and suffering of its victims.

31-35% Dazed. This zombie looks and behaves as if it is drugged out or dazed and confused; reduce the number of attacks by half.

36-40% Delinquent/Anti-Authority. This zombie seems to have a hatred for authority figures – teachers, doctors, police officers, soldiers and other people in uniforms of authority; +1 attack per melee and +1 to strike when fighting such an authoritarian figure. However, avoids places of authority and will NOT enter a police station, prison, courtroom, school or hospital.

41-45% Freaked Out by Magic. This zombie doesn’t understand and hates or fears magic. As a result, it always attacks people wielding magic first and doesn’t stop until it or they are destroyed.



46-50% Frightened Zombie. This zombie looks scared and behaves in a timid, frightened manner. It avoids combat with groups of the living, preferring to follow along behind or off to the side of Dead Mobs, herds and swarms. Frightened Zombies often shamble off on their own or with a few other zombies to hide in the shadows and in unlikely places. Still compelled to hunt and slay the living, the zombie hides and waits to attack a lone individual or injured stragglers from its hiding place. Its first surprise attack in a melee round does double damage if it is unexpected.

51-55% Happy. This zombie is always smiling and seems to have a bit of a more lively step in its walk; +1 to P.B. and +2 to Spd attribute.

56-60% Homicidal Maniac. This zombie uses blade weapons to kill; knives, swords, hatchets, axe, shovel, or perhaps a Vibro-Blade. This “slasher” exhibits psychotic and extreme violence, stabbing its victims repeatedly, even after they are dead, and may dismember 1D4 limbs. It acts as if it may have had strong homicidal tendencies in life. +1 on initiative and +1 to strike.

61-65% Hostile/Violent Zombie. This zombie is extremely aggressive in combat and inflicts overkill upon its victims, pounding on its kill long after it has died or smashing objects for no reason.

66-70% Loves Flowers. This zombie will stop to smell the roses and admire a garden or blossoming tree or plant. 01-50% chance it will not pursue prey if they are hiding in a garden to avoid damaging the flowers.

71-75% Loving Parent. This zombie NEVER attacks children and may even lure other zombies away from children.

76-80% Loving Child. This zombie NEVER attacks anyone who appears to be a parent, especially if protecting their child or children, and may even lure other zombies away from them.

81-85% Loving Grandchild. This zombie NEVER attacks the elderly or people with white hair, and may even lure other zombies away from people who look like aging grandparents (60 and older).

86-90% Music Lover. This zombie will stop to listen to music and may even tap its foot, move its head or walk to the beat of a song or instrumental piece; maybe even dance (as best as a zombie can).

91-95% Screamer. This zombie looks sad and forlorn, as if it loathes its existence and does not want to kill. But appearances can be deceiving and it does not hesitate to kill. Worse, it screams and wails all the time, particularly when people are killed (even by its own hand), as it wanders along scenes of recent destruction and combat, and may follow the living, from a distance, screaming or howling like a banshee warning of coming danger and death.

96-00% Warrior/Protector. This zombie only attacks other soldiers, police and combat personnel, including civilians armed with one or more obvious weapons. However, it will not attack unarmed civilians.

Weeper Zombies

An aberration found among Chaos and Scrap Zombies

Weepers are a strange abomination. They are not a type of zombie themselves, but more of a condition that sometimes affects Chaos and Scrap Zombies. An aberration within the dead brains retains a tiny portion of personality and a sense of horror at what the once living person has become, and so it weeps.

Weepers shamble along weeping. They behave in a confused or reluctant manner and are hesitant to kill or obey orders from the Transmission. The question remains, however, is this a zombie that holds onto a tiny bit of its humanity, or is it a cruel trick by the Black Obelisk used to make humans hesitate at killing the monster and other zombies? Or is the Weeper an intimidation tactic to shock and horrify the living?

Although Weeper Zombies are almost constantly sobbing and may plead for death (“Puhleese kill me. End now. Kill me.”), they are unable to kill themselves nor truly resist the commands from the Transmission. That means as the Weeper is pleading to be slain, it is attacking and trying to kill the very people it is pleading with! If the Transmission from the Black Obelisk requires a Weeper to kill or collect salvage, it does so, slaughtering the living or doing what it is told. Its actions may make the tortured creature even sadder and sob harder, but the zombie complies with the commands of the Transmission. Many never stop weeping, and sob and cry constantly with varying degrees of intensity.

When they encounter survivors, and especially soldiers or police, and NEMA troops, they cry all the harder and plead to be slain. Most living beings are only too willing to put the terrifying thing out of its misery; however, such an encounter is startling and horrific to the point that some people momentarily freeze up (roll to save vs Horror Factor), and may be distracted from a more immediate danger if focused on the Weeper. Some of the more foolish people may try to capture it, or think it can be questioned, except a Weeper can’t say much more than what has been noted above. Worse, it is programmed to kill, so anyone who tries to approach it is likely to get himself killed and make the Weeper cry harder for its deed.

A Chaos Zombie and most Scrap Zombies can be a Weeper, the only exceptions being the Living Dead Girls, Brain Melters, and Boogeymen. Other than weeping and begging to be slain, a Weeper has all the same stats common to that type of zombie. **Weeper Bonuses:** The strange duality of the Weeper gives it a bonus of +2 to its Horror Factor, +1 on initiative and +1 to strike as its sobbing and pleas for destruction are distracting and misleading as it attacks at full force; it cannot hold back despite its sorrow for its murderous conduct.

Weepers are not good at communicating with the living (or Player Characters). Mostly, they just cry, repeat things like: “Kill me.” “Run.” “Death comes.” “Kill now.” “Sorry.” “No.” “Must kill.” They are aware that they are monsters that do terrible things,



but cannot stop themselves, hence the weeping. Other than that, they have no information to share. They don't know anything about the Black Obelisk or Marcel LeMerchand, let alone where it is located. They don't know how they became a monster or who is responsible. They cannot identify other types of zombies, don't know goals or the next target or anything except that they want to die. As for the Transmission, all they know is that a buzzing inside their head makes them kill.

Notes & Warnings About Coma & Death

Chaos and Scrap Zombies are NOT available as Player Characters, because they are simpleminded drones – puppets, not the puppet master. They are NPCs (Non-Player Characters) that function as monsters and villains our heroes must battle or avoid.

If a player character dies within range of the Transmission and is not quickly revived, he turns into a *Chaos Zombie* within 4D6+10 minutes. Game Masters may want to increase the time in which the character is transformed by double, triple or quadruple the usual amount because this is an exceptional individual (i.e. player character), especially if medical, life-saving procedures and devices are available that could revive the character even if they place him or her in a coma. If attempts are being made to resuscitate the character, the clock for becoming a zombie should not start until the measures to bring him back are stopped and he is pronounced deceased.

As previously stated, anyone who dies within receiving range of the Transmission rises from the dead to become a Chaos Zombie. There is no saving throw or anything that can prevent it, short of completely destroying the dead person's skull and brain or placing the body in a state of magical suspended animation/stasis.

Destroying the head/skull *before the character turns* into a zombie requires inflicting sufficient damage to completely destroy the head (at least 30 S.D.C. to be sure). Often there is barely enough time to say goodbye, much less offer the dead

the dignity of a proper burial. There is simply no time for any kind of ritual pleasantries. The head of the corpse *must be destroyed*, or it will rise up to kill and dismember the living.

A character that is in a coma is not dead. But the zombies will also sense that and may attack his helpless body to try to kill him. A comatose or unconscious character needs the protection of others!

The trick is getting to a “dead” character and bringing him back from death *before* the Necromancy takes hold and he becomes one of the risen dead. There are magic spells that can restore and even resurrect the dead, but they must be cast before the time elapses. Note that the countdown to becoming a zombie stops the moment a magic spell or ritual begins and only resumes if the magic doesn't work.

Killing a friend or loved one: Horror Factor 14. Most characters are likely to find it very difficult to smash or vaporize the head of a friend, lover, family member, or comrade – equal to a *Horror Factor of 14*. A failed save means the character cannot bring himself to destroy this person, even if he is dead and will soon rise again as a monster. That character can try to muster the will to do so again, when the deceased rises as a zombie, provided he or she is there to witness the “rebirth.” This second save vs Horror Factor roll is lower, H.F. 11, because the realization of the loved one's horrible fate is a strong motivator. If the second attempt to save fails, all the person can do is flee or let himself fall under attack.

Scrap Zombies

Scrap Zombie Creation Process

Unknown to NEMA, at least at first, the creation of **Scrap Zombies** is a bizarre blend of magic and technology. A process that rolls out M.D.C. zombies in much the same way Detroit factories roll out automobiles on the assembly line.

The animated corpses start out as the *S.D.C. Chaos Zombies* before being turned into the M.D.C. Scrap Zombies. Assembled from dismembered S.D.C. **Chaos Zombies**, “reassembled” and “rebuilt” with plates of armor bolted to their bones, and/or arms and legs replaced with mechanical limbs or by weapon limbs. Some of these replacement parts and weapons are simple and crude, while others can be advanced technology depending on what is available and sheer luck of the draw. A missing leg might be replaced with a metal framework armature as easily as an advanced bionic or robot leg depending on what’s on hand. A forearm might be replaced with an M.D. chainsaw, Vibro-Blade, or energy weapon, or it could be nothing but a hunk of sharpened M.D.C. metal swung like a sword, axe or pick. The supernatural P.S. and magical nature of Scrap Zombies makes damage from even a simple melee weapon inflict Mega-Damage (M.D.).

For the purposes of the Black Obelisk, the condition of the animated corpses is largely unimportant, as zombies are augmented with salvaged armor, recovered or repaired technology, and a wide assortment of biological parts.

Like the grotesque factory itself, Scrap Zombies are examples of efficiency without care for aesthetic. Many Scrap Zombies have mismatched body parts, machine limbs, patchwork armor, and weird, clockwork appendages for arms and legs – whatever works. As long as the *zombie factory* inside the Black Obelisk has the raw materials (electronics, cybernetics, bionics, recovered weapons, and M.D.C. scrap materials), it can build, armor and weaponize its zombie army.

The longer it takes NEMA to contain the growing zombie population (or better yet, stop the Transmission or shut down the Black Obelisk), the more both types of zombie will increase. And even if contained, the Black Obelisk will continue to turn Chaos Zombies into the more powerful Scrap Zombies. At the moment, only 10-20% of the risen dead in a zombie mob, herd or horde are Scrap Zombies. That percentage increases over time, and probably does not stop until one third to half have been armored and weaponized.

The Necromantic magic involved in this process also turns Scrap Zombies into supernatural constructs, giving the zombies *Supernatural P.S. and Endurance*, and the ability to inflict Mega-Damage with their punches and bites or with any melee weapon built into them.

Making the pieces fit – A zombie factory

A constant flow of Chaos Zombies streams in and out of the Black Obelisk. They carry raw supplies for the assembly line, body parts from humans or D-Bees and whatever metal and tech-

nology they find. Black Obelisk uses these components to turn ordinary Chaos Zombies into Scrap Zombies, often the very ones bringing in new supplies. Their heads and limbs are removed from their torsos, armored and weaponized as separate components, and then reassembled (sometimes the same head and limbs are re-attached to the original body but often not) to create a walking M.D.C. “weapon” of destruction.

Scrap Zombies are made to fill the role of armored divisions within the undead horde. Equipped as they are with robotic limbs, blades, pry bars, energy weapons, bionics and so on, Scrap Zombies are better able to take on armored troops, cyborgs, power armor, robots and combat vehicles. When not on the hunt, they and Chaos Zombies pick up scrap metal, S.D.C. weapons, gear, and common electronic equipment (such as communications devices, computers, or even just wiring). They also strip down vehicles, structures, and other machines, breaking them down into smaller, more manageable pieces for Chaos Zombies to haul back to the Black Obelisk. There it is identified, sorted, and either immediately incorporated into a Scrap Zombie, or stocked for later use. This provides for the construction of different types of Scrap Zombies designed for specific tasks.

The primary purpose of most **Scrap Zombies** is to hunt and kill the living, with a focus on military targets, bases, fortifications, and combat forces. Scrap Zombies target tanks, robots, power armor and armored troops, leaving the Chaos Zombies to handle the living whenever possible. But they will still attack anything to cross their path - only the Garbagegeman and Stitcher do not aggressively hunt and kill the living.

Once assembled, the new Scrap Zombie goes forth following the programming and orders of the Transmission like an undead robot. In most cases, those orders are five simple imperatives:

1. Kill all humanoids within the current range of the Transmission. (Remember, anyone killed within range of the Transmission will rise as an undead Chaos Zombie.)
2. Find and gather the necessary components for making more Scrap Zombies and return to the Black Obelisk.
3. Protect the other zombies.
4. Protect the Black Obelisk.
5. Kill anything that tries to stop the Scrap Zombie from fulfilling its mission.

Before any mission to destroy it can be possible, NEMA must find out that the **Black Obelisk** even exists, and that it is the source of the zombies. Inside its obsidian walls is the massive factory complex and warehouse/storage bays for both organic and mechanical parts and scrap. A cross between an automotive factory and a meat-packing plant where mechanical arms and machinery on rails carry zombies and body parts waiting to be used to create the augmented Scrap Zombies. The machines and robots within the Black Obelisk pick parts, matching them to other pieces, before attaching them with welding torches, giant staplers, bolt guns and precision sewing tools. Floor after floor of factory assembly lines work without pause to reassemble body parts, replace appendages with weapon limbs and bolt strips and plates of scrap metal armor to rotted flesh and dead bone. There are liter-



ally hundreds of conveyor belts and robotic systems assembling Scrap Zombies throughout the interior of the Black Obelisk.

Other than the massive storage bays which contain M.D.C. scrap and other necessary components, much of the upper levels of the Black Obelisk are mostly hollow inside. There are no live workers, it's all automated. The long lines of zombies shuffling about on the ground floor and the lower levels above it are either delivering scrap metal and parts, or are themselves components waiting to be disassembled and reassembled into something different and deadly; often both. Eliminating the space needed for living workers, the Obelisk has more area available to maximize its output of Scrap Zombies.

Once it has sufficient building materials and is operating at full power, the Black Obelisk is capable of cranking out Scrap Zombies around the clock. And on Chaos Earth, the Obelisk has a decided advantage of potentially billions of dead bodies and plenty of scrap metal and materials to strip from combat vehicles and the ruins of M.D.C. cities toppled during the early days of the Cataclysm. If left unchecked, these reconstructed zombies could spread ever outward, creating an expanding radius of the Transmission's influence and ever-increasing numbers of Chaos and Scrap Zombies. Being dead they can function without rest, food or water, and never stop until destroyed.

Zombie Identification

Alphabetical List of Scrap Zombies

Amped Zombie – 3%
Boogeyman – 5%
Brain Melter – 3%
Garbageman – 13%
Headbanger – 5%
Living Dead Girl – 5%
Reaper – 8%
Scorcher – 5%
Soldier Boy – 30%
Stitcher – 14%
Toxic Vomitous – 5%
Walking Nightmare – 4%

Most Numerous Scrap Zombies

Soldier Boys – 30%
Stitchers – 14%
Garbagemen – 13%
Reapers – 8%

Note: Chaos Zombies outnumber Scrap Zombies eight to one, but are S.D.C. animated dead as described in the previous section.

M.D.C. by Location always takes into consideration the type of zombie, its purpose and the amount of armor grafted and bolted onto the Scrap Zombie's body.

Within the *Scrap Zombie* category there are a dozen variations. Each entry here represents a broad category made up of many unique combinations of parts reconstructed with a formula that has proven agreeable and successful by the forces at work inside the Black Obelisk. Most are better at killing regular survivors than battling well-armed NEMA forces, but a few can give even the toughest soldier something to fear. All are detrimental to the survival of mankind during the Great Cataclysm.

The name listed for each type of Scrap Zombie is the nickname given to them by NEMA. Whatever is responsible for creating Scrap Zombies is not communicating with the living (at least, not in a way anyone can understand). As these monsters engage NEMA forces, the combatants recognize these templates and in order to differentiate one Scrap Zombie from another, NEMA forces have labeled the zombies with *nicknames* for easy identification and reference.

Doing this enables NEMA to formulate better strategies, tactics, and responses to a zombie attack depending on which ones they are forced to deal with. The nicknames are generally based on a recognizable and defining aspect of each monster, such as the weapons or attacks it uses, or its behavior. Even the term "Scrap Zombie" is a nickname used to label the zombies that are part machine or have armor and weapons bolted to them.

Note: Though NEMA uses these names to identify a particular zombie, other monsters, demons, undead, survivors, and even the zombie's creator are not likely to know these nicknames or have any idea what they mean.

Amped Zombie

The nicknames "Amped Zombie" and "Death Juicer" were given to these undead powerhouses, because they are made from resurrected Juicers. The slang describes their size, physical power, speed and twitchy behavior.

Pre-Cataclysm Juicers are usually current or ex-soldiers who volunteered to be exposed to a system of chemicals and nanotechnology which makes them incredibly strong, fast, and agile. Unfortunately, the Juicer augmentation process is very dangerous and still imperfect when the Great Cataclysm strikes.

At the time of the Great Cataclysm, Juicers filled roles worldwide as Special Forces operatives, corporate spies, assassins, and mercenary soldiers. They are more prevalent in Third World countries and those headed by tyrants and dictators - leaders who don't care what happens to their soldiers. Among the NEMA nations, only the United States has Juicers in its military, but there are none within the ranks of NEMA itself.

It is unknown from where the force behind the zombie invasion acquired Juicer technology. It is assumed that it/they discovered a secret base or research facility near Madison, possibly the same place that M.O.M. (Mind Over Matter) technology was recovered and corrupted. It is also possible that the Black Obelisk brought the means to make such abominations with it and Juicers



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simply make the perfect vehicle for the Amped Zombie creation process.

Dead flesh, even if it is animated, does not metabolize chemicals in the same way living tissue does, so Amped Zombies have a different substance running through their dead bodies. It is a synthesized alchemical mixture derived from dark Necromantic rituals that give these zombies enhanced speed and strength. This makes them stronger, faster, and tougher than any other Scrap Zombie.

Note: If a living person were to attempt to metabolize the alchemical mixture from an Amped Zombie, it would kill him - even if that person is or was a Juicer. Of course, if the victim (or any slain Juicer) is within range of the Transmission he would rise up as a normal Chaos Zombie. He would only become an Amped Zombie once reconstructed by the Black Obelisk.

Compared to most undead, Amped Zombies are extremely fast and nimble. They are still slower than live Juicers and lack some of the Juicer's other abilities. Nor can nano-bot knitters repair the bodies of the dead Amped Zombies; the nano-bots' programming tells them the subject is nothing but dead flesh and the nano-bots shut down and become inactive.

Amped Zombies lack the full flexibility and response time of the Juicer, but their Automatic Dodge is preserved. It is controlled by a Combat Computer that does all the processing needed to move the Amped Zombie out of harm's way. However, this makes them look strange when they attempt defensive maneuvers. They jerk and bounce out of the way of an attack as if pulled by invisible marionette strings. And even when standing still or walking, their bodies constantly twitch and jerk, especially around the head, shoulders, arms and upper body.

NEMA is finding that Amped Zombies are some of the most devastating foes that the Black Obelisk is throwing at them. These Death Juicers can go toe-to-toe with any power armor except the Chromium Guardsman, and can peel open tanks, APCs, and giant robot vehicles like a can of soup. They're also one of the few zombies that use energy weapons and heavy weaponry. Thankfully, they seem to prefer melee combat, where NEMA robots and armor have a better chance of blasting these creatures into pieces.

Amped Zombies are easy to recognize because they wear the telltale Juicer harness, and many wear the distinctive shoulder pad armor popular among living Juicers. Also, the Necromancy magic used in the conversion process rapidly dehydrates the body. As a result, the Death Juicers look like emaciated and withered corpses with hard, dark, leathery (M.D.C.) flesh, reminiscent of mummification. They also usually wield a bulky heavy weapon and several Vibro-Blades.

Rifts® Note: A little over 200 years from now, antiquated accounts of these undead Juicers will give inspiration to the creation of the **Murder Wraith**. The creation of the Murder Wraith is a very similar process to that which creates the Scrap Zombies in this book. It is as close as anyone on Earth is ever likely to get to recreating the magic used to create Amped Zombies.

Amped Scrap Zombie Stats

Also Known As: Juicer Zombies, Death Juicers, Twitchers, and O.J.s.

Alignment: Considered Diabolic.

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D4+4, P.S. 1D4+30 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D4+15, P.E. 1D4+15 (Supernatural, never tires), P.B.

1D6, Spd 2D6+50 (on average 40 mph/64 km); all other attributes not applicable.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 1D4x10+30 M.D.C.

Arms (2) – 3D6+30 M.D.C. each

Legs (2) – 6D6+40 M.D.C. each

Main Body – 1D6x10+70 M.D.C.

(Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the zombie has S.D.C. and S.D.C. Armor at the point value listed above. No Hit Points as it is dead.)

Horror Factor (H.F.): Horror Factor of 13 for 1-6 Amped Zombies. H.F. 15 for a small group of 7-15 Death Juicers. H.F. 16 for 16-50 Amped Zombies or a Dead Mob of a few hundred 1D4x100+100 Chaos Zombies of which 5-10% are Amped zombies (another 5% are other Scrap Zombies). Amped Juicers are comparatively rare and have yet to be seen in larger groups. If they were, H.F. is 17.

Size: Human; 5-7 feet (1.5 and 2.1 m).

Weight: Varies depending on size and the amount of armor and augmentation. Typically 250-400 pounds (112 to 180 kg) of withered but dense muscle, armor and weapons.

Average Life Span: Scrap Zombies exist until destroyed or as long as the Transmission keeps playing. Through dark magic and constant repair by Stitchers and the Black Obelisk, this threat can keep going indefinitely.

Level of Experience: Not applicable. Zombies do not learn nor grow with experience; they are drones.

P.P.E.: None; they are dead.

Natural Abilities: Standard, same as the Chaos Zombie (albeit with greatly enhanced physical attributes) but with the following exceptions:

Automatic Dodge (special): Amped Zombies may attempt an automatic dodge in place of a normal dodge or parry against any attack, even those from behind or surprise. An *Automatic Dodge* works like a dodge in that the character can bob, weave or roll out of danger quickly and be back on his feet and ready to strike, but the act of dodging does NOT use up a melee attack. Normal dodge bonuses do not apply, but P.P. bonuses and those listed specifically as automatic dodge bonuses do.

Leap (special): Can leap 30 feet (9.1 m) across and 20 feet (6.1 m) high after a short run; half that distance from a dead stop.

Vulnerabilities: In addition to the usual vulnerabilities common to Chaos Zombies, Amped Zombies cannot be repaired by Stitchers or the Black Obelisk.

Unrepairable (special): The Necromancy used to make the Amped Zombies' superior M.D.C. bodies means they cannot be healed via magic nor can they be rebuilt with replacement limbs and new body parts like other Scrap Zombies. At best, the main body and their limbs can be patched with M.D.C. scrap metal (maximum equal to 30% of Main Body and 20% of limbs). Moreover, if more than a third of their bodies are covered in armor, they suffer -2 melee attacks and reduce their Spd by 20%.

Destroying an Amped Zombie's arm or leg means the limb is permanently destroyed and cannot be replaced, not even with a weapon limb! Destroy the head or Main Body and it is finished; its remaining body parts cannot be reused. In fact, the remains crumble when touched, leaving nothing behind but the inorganic material.

Boogeyman

Skills of Note (Combat Programming): Programmed as hunter-killers with the following skills: Gymnastics 60%, Climbing 60%, Land Navigation 40%, Tracking skill of 40% when trying to follow the trail of human prey, Weapon Systems 50% (restricted to the simplest systems), and the equivalent of Hand to Hand Combat: Expert (equal to 5th level). Amped Zombie can use any melee and handheld weapon, but without benefit of bonuses other than those from Hand to Hand: Expert and listed below. No W.P. skills as such.

Attacks per Melee: Six!

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. or weapons. Punches do 4D6 M.D., Power Punch does 1D4x10 M.D. but counts as two attacks, kicks do 2D6 M.D., and bites inflict 1D6 M.D.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 to strike with any type of weapon, +2 to parry, +3 Automatic Dodge, but never tries to disarm, pull punch, or roll with impact. Impervious to Horror Factor, mind-affecting magic and psionics, drugs, disease, and toxins.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Bionics/Cybernetics and Weapon Limb: None.

Weapons: Any melee or handheld weapons may be used by the Amped Zombie, however . . .

Heavy Weapons: Death Juicers are programmed to prefer heavy weapons such as rail guns, ion blasters, and plasma and particle beam weapons. They typically have only one and 1D6+1 extra E-Clips for it. Unlike most zombies, which abandon a weapon when it runs out of ammo, Amped Zombies know how to replace Energy Clips, ammo-belts, and drums. They hold on to a heavy weapon until new ammunition or a new, loaded heavy weapon can be acquired.

Vibro-Blades: All Amped Zombies also wield either two Vibro-Blades (5D6+2 M.D. in their hands; includes damage from Supernatural P.S.), or one *Vibro-Saber* (5D6+2 M.D.), *Vibro-Fire Axe* (6D6+2 M.D. in their hands), or *Vibro-Sword* (large; 6D6 M.D. in their hands).

Armor: Amped zombies generally have minimal armor, rarely more than the Juicer shoulder pads and a helmet or some plates and spikes bolted to their head, since the Necromancy involved makes their dead bodies tough M.D.C. structures. M.D.C. by Location above takes into consideration the type and amount of armor grafted and bolted onto the Scrap Zombie's body.

Enemies: The living, with a preference for combat against live Juicers, Crazies, cyborgs, power armor, robots and other tough, armored opponents.

Allies: None per se. Recognizes Chaos Zombies and other Scrap Zombies as non-combatants and sees Reapers, Soldier Boys, and Headbangers as allies. Amped Zombies usually gather with fellow Death Juicers and those other heavy-hitters. Unlike many Scrap Zombies, they do not try to protect Stickers or defend other zombies. They are all about combat. Of course their creator, Marcel LeMerchand, can command any number of Death Juicers and other Scrap Zombies.

Habitat: Point of origin is Madison, Wisconsin, where the Black Obelisk is located and the invasion originates. All Scrap Zombies are created inside the Black Obelisk and extend outward into the world to the edge of the Transmission's current broadcast range.

Boogeymen are very thin, lightly armored zombies that very much look like corpses. They can prowl and scout ahead of the zombie swarm to gather reconnaissance and/or to hunt the living. They have been dubbed Boogeymen because this zombie is stealthy, capable of hiding and lays in ambush to pick off the living one by one. Boogeyman can Prowl and Climb very well and exhibit acrobatic skills, scaling walls and walking narrow ledges, fence post and heavy cables.

The Boogeymen's programming has taken advantage of the fact that most humans are ground-dwellers who have a bad habit of not looking upward. As a result, Boogeymen often ambush their victims by laying in wait up in trees and towers, on rooftops, scaffolding, dark corners of the ceiling, and other locations overhead. They also like dark places and may go low rather than high, prowling through service tunnels, air ducts, and spaces between floors, and can be found lurking under porches, in attics or basements, under the stairs, in dark corners, and even under a bed.

While many other Scrap Zombies gather in large groups and shuffle along with other zombies, moaning loudly when humanoid prey is spotted and slaughtering them as they come across them, Boogeymen prefer to hunt alone, in pairs or in very small groups. And they do so in silence. Boogeymen don't moan, they hiss; and they don't shuffle and make noise, they prowl silently like a spider.

Unlike the hordes of Chaos and Scrap Zombies which become agitated and highly aggressive when human prey is spotted, Boogeymen are able to control their bloodlust and exhibit considerable patience and restraint in stalking prey. Most use the cover of darkness and watch their intended victim(s), waiting until their target is alone and vulnerable. Boogeymen often Prowl on all fours, like an animal, and may lurk under beds, hide in closets, under stairs and porches, and crawl among the dead and debris on the battlefield. They move slowly, deliberately and in silence when climbing, running along a rooftop, tailing or stalking prey, but can move with decent speed and surprising balance (for a zombie) when they need to. No other zombie can scale walls or walk along a ledge. If they could do it at all, they'd almost certainly make considerable noise.

The Boogeymen and the Living Dead Girl are among the few discriminating hunters among Scrap Zombies. They stalk prey and murder in a way reminiscent to a serial killer – first observing and mapping out their hunting territory (i.e. the community), then selecting prey to target, and waiting to strike when their victim is alone and least expects it. Both may also attack and kill *targets of opportunity*, meaning if they come across someone who is alone, injured, and otherwise vulnerable, they may take advantage of the situation and strike. After the kill(s), the Boogeyman (and Living Dead Girl) hide and may wait hours or even days before striking again. In the case of the Boogeyman, such hiding spots are likely to be places where humans are not going to look, and where the zombie has the advantage over those who may, indeed, come looking for it. This is unusual behavior for zombies. Chaos Zombies and most Scrap Zombies are indiscriminate killers – mindless drones that wander over the landscape in swarms, slaying everyone they encounter.

The Boogeyman prefers to hunt alone and at night to help conceal its presence, but will also take advantage of panic situations



where one or more are able to strike and disappear in the chaos. In any situation, the Boogeyman stays in the background, stepping out to strike and pick off victims one or two at a time before slinking silently back into the shadows. These tactics have a chilling psychological impact on humans – the constant threat keeps them on edge, unable to rest properly, and requires constant vigilance. When the monster strikes, it always tries to do so as quietly as possible and without witnesses (it will attempt to hunt down any witnesses before they can warn others).

If a Boogeyman comes across a swarm of zombies locked in a pitched battle with humans, it first sneaks around to the rear or flanks of the enemy. There it can attack fighters who are off by themselves, separated from their teammates, injured or distracted. When chased or outnumbered, the Boogeyman tries to run away and find a place to hide and regroup later, fighting only long enough to escape, run, and hide. Even then it tries to find a temporary place where it can set up an ambush or surprise attack, inflicting some damage and running away again.

The use of shadows, elevation, and hit and run tactics is extremely effective, wearing down its pursuers whereas the zombies never tire. There is a reason for the Boogeyman to drag the chase out: The longer the pursuit goes on, the greater the odds that the humans will begin to get sloppy and make mistakes, so that the Boogeyman can eventually elude those after it or even

lure them into a group of zombies. Should the monster get the upper hand, it may turn the table and start to hunt the hunters, dividing the group whenever possible and, again, picking them off one and two at a time until they are all dead or retreat.

Favored places to elude attackers are those with a great many places to hide. Factories, warehouses, shipping yards, and parking structures are places the Boogeyman selects whenever possible. Each has many corners, rafters, shadows and nooks and crannies to hide among, both high and low. Humans should expect the Boogeyman to Climb and Prowl along the top of pallets, machinery and the rafters of the high ceilings in warehouses and factories.

Boogeymen are animated dead, so their muscles don't resist nor cramp up when forced and locked into an awkward position for hours at a time, nor do they feel pain or discomfort, or require breathable air. A Boogeyman can hide in places that would be too small, too tight, too hot, too cold, too toxic or completely uninhabitable for humans. Thus, the gaunt Boogeyman is able to flatten and fold its body up into tight packages to hide in small places, curling up in rafters and catwalks, squeezing into cramped spaces between or under machinery, laying flat and unmoving under floorboards, in service tunnels, closets and other cramped places. *Rooftops* are likely to be the monster's ultimate haven. To Boogeymen who can scale most brick and concrete walls and

prowl along ledges to get up to an open window (or to smash one out and climb inside), or to reach the rooftop, height is salvation. If it thinks it can hide out in the open, standing or laying flat and still on a ledge (not likely to be seen unless someone is actively looking for it there), it will do so. And if the creature does reach a rooftop, it may have the chance to leap from one building to another to make good its escape, hide there or set up an ambush for anyone who follows.

People who have encountered one and lived to tell the tale insist the Boogeyman Scrap Zombie has an insect quality to its movements, each step and gesture eerily precise. A silent hunter, it seldom makes a sound except a hiss when it is about to attack or is cornered. When among other zombies, the Boogeyman stays along the edges or back of a Dead Mob or swarm, vigilant of potential prey and enemies as it moves among its slower, more primitive brethren. When it is ready, it silently loses itself in the mob or around a corner, or down into a sewer, vanishing from sight. No doubt hiding in the shadows, waiting to strike. You never know when one could pop out of a sewer grate, come down from the ceiling, or crawl out from under the rubble to drag you to a dark and violent death.

Designed to be an advanced scout as much as a killing machine, Boogeymen are able to locate weaknesses and points of entry into base camps and buildings. Since they look for such things, it is the Boogeyman that is likely to find a place in the fence line where it can squeeze through, an unguarded hole in a wall or barricade, an accessible air duct, an open window, or an opening on the roof to get inside. And since Boogeymen watch, wait, and target their victims, it may (01-60%) recognize a pattern in which a door or bay door is left open and unsecured for just long enough for it to silently slip inside and start hunting.

Intelligence gathering is likely to include things like how many soldiers are present, where are their supplies/ammo/armor kept, morale and state of mind, location of doors and sentries, and similar. The Boogeyman needs to return to the Black Obelisk to share this info. Unlike the **Living Dead Girl** described later, the Boogeyman cannot understand written words; it doesn't have the higher level brain functions. Any information gathered is very basic.

Boogeyman Scrap Zombie

Also Known As: Creepers, Climbers and Night Zombies.

Alignment: Considered Diabolic.

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D4+6, P.S. 1D4+16 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D4+9 P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D6+6 (half that speed or less to Prowl or perform Acrobatics); other attributes not applicable.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 4D6+30 M.D.C.

Arms (2) – 1D6+12 M.D.C. each

Legs (2) – 2D6+20 each

Main Body: Light Armor – 1D6x10+30

(**Note:** On S.D.C. worlds, the zombie has S.D.C. and S.D.C. Armor at the point value listed above. No Hit Points as it is dead.)

Horror Factor (H.F.): 12 for 1-2 Boogeymen. H.F. 14 for a small group of 3-8 Boogeymen. H.F. 16 when that number is part of a Dead Mob with 1D4x100+100 Chaos Zombies mixed in with other Scrap Zombies.

Size: Human. Boogeymen have long, lanky bodies, but can be of any height, usually between 5-7 feet (1.5 and 2.1 m).

Weight: Varies, typically 100-200 pounds (45 kg to 90 kg).

Level of Experience: Not applicable. Zombies do not learn nor grow with experience; they are combat drones.

Average Life Span: Scrap Zombies exist until destroyed or as long as the Transmission keeps playing. Through dark magic and constant repair by Stitchers and the Black Obelisk, this threat can keep going indefinitely.

P.P.E.: None; they are dead.

Natural Abilities: Standard, same as the Chaos Zombie with the following exceptions: Smarter and more aware than most, and able to Prowl, Climb, and ambush as described above.

Travel Beyond the Transmission (Special): The Boogeyman, along with the Garbage Man and Living Dead Girl, is one of the few Scrap Zombies that can travel up to 10 miles (16 km) beyond the range of the Transmission to infiltrate and gather intelligence or engage in murder.

Vulnerabilities: Standard. Scrap Zombies do not heal or Bio-Regenerate on their own. They need the help of a Stitcher or to return to the Black Obelisk for repairs.

Skills of Note (Combat Programming): Programmed as a silent hunter-killer/assassin and scout, Boogeymen have the following skills: Acrobatics 80%, Climbing 88, Intelligence 40%, Land Navigation 60%, Prowl 72%, Tailing 70% (a subset of the Surveillance skill, used to follow someone from a distance), and the equivalent of Hand to Hand Combat: Expert (equal to 5th level). Boogeymen can use any melee weapon, but favor blade weapons and tend to avoid guns. Weapons are used without benefit of bonuses other than those from Hand to Hand: Expert. No W.P. skills as such.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. or weapons. Punches and kicks do 1D6 M.D., power punch does 2D6 M.D. but counts as two attacks, and bites inflict 1D6 S.D.C. or 1D4 M.D. for a power bite.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 on initiative, +1 to strike in hand to hand combat or with any type of melee weapon, inflicts double damage with attacks from behind or surprise attacks, and does double damage on the roll of a Natural (unmodified) 19 or 20. Impervious to Horror Factor, mind-affecting magic and psionics, drugs, disease, and toxins.

Pounce Attack (special): The Boogeyman can pounce by dropping down on a target from above. The pounce attack does 1D6 S.D.C. or by weapon (double damage if a surprise attack), but also has a 01-80% likelihood of knocking down human-sized targets. (Not applicable to power armor, robots, or large creatures.) The victim of knockdown loses initiative and two melee actions. The Boogeyman has initiative after a pounce, whether the victim was knocked down by the pounce or not.

If the Boogeyman is in a position to sneak attack a victim, it can also body block/tackle with the same results.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Bionic Weapons and Cybernetics: None.

Weapons: May use any type of melee weapon or pistol, otherwise fights tooth and claw. Boogeymen can use any simple melee weapons it may find, from scissors and a length of pipe to knives and Vibro-Swords, whatever is readily available. It may also use pistols, but most do not, and when this zombie does use a handgun, it discards the weapon when it runs out

of ammunition. It never reloads. A Boogeyman usually leaves its blood covered weapon of the moment at the scene of the crime, however it may have one or two melee weapons, usually blades, that become favorites and are kept on its person.

Armor: Light armor. M.D.C. by Location above takes into consideration the type and amount of armor grafted and bolted onto the Scrap Zombie's body.

Enemies: The living.

Allies: Though the Boogeyman may engage in actions that help other zombies to attack, and may be dispatched on scouting and reconnaissance missions, they prefer to scout and hunt alone. When it does work alongside other zombies, it is usually with fellow Boogeymen or Living Dead Girls, sometimes Reapers and Soldier Boys. Boogeymen do not command other zombies, and when in a large group, still usually attack from the shadows.

Habitat: Point of origin is Madison, Wisconsin, where the Black Obelisk is located and the invasion originates. All Scrap Zombies are created inside the Black Obelisk and extend outward into the world to the edge of the Transmission's current broadcast range. Boogeymen can travel 10 miles (16 km) beyond the range of the Transmission as advance scouts and assassins.

Brain Melter

Brain Melters are drooling, lobotomized monstrosities whose M.O.M. (Mind Over Matter) implants still keep the brain fired up and active even in death. While alive, these men and women were soldiers, mercenaries or volunteers who submitted themselves to M.O.M. experimentation. Now they are little more than primal killing machines which shuffle along with other zombies, using their psionic abilities to impair and kill the living.

The Great Lakes area, particularly Michigan and Illinois, was a hotbed of M.O.M. research and development similar to the Silicon Valley of the early 21st Century. NEMA had agreed to formally participate in the augmentation program and allowed "mind enhanced" subjects within its organization. Like Juicer technology, M.O.M. was intended to boost the physical abilities of the volunteer by stimulating and "awakening" different parts of the brain. An unexpected side effect was that a percentage of volunteers seemed to exhibit E.S.P. – extra-sensory perception. Rather than look at this as a negative, volunteers exhibiting E.S.P. were made part of NEMA First Responders, where they could use their powers of Telepathy, Empathy, and body reading Bio-Mechanics to locate, calm and diagnose civilians in disaster scenarios. It should also be pointed out that E.S.P. abilities were rare and usually minor before the Coming of the Rifts and the appearance of the Blue Zones.

Even before the Great Cataclysm, M.O.M. technology was considered dangerous and highly experimental, and its recipients prone to emotional instability. Since the Coming of the Rifts, M.O.M. recipients are overwhelmed with sensory overload and strange stimulation in their brains. Minor E.S.P. traits and rare occurrences are magnified a hundredfold. (**Timeline Note:** And indeed, much more than it is on Rifts Earth, during the age of the Post-Apocalyptic Calendar!)

M.O.M. enhanced soldiers who have died or are slain are resurrected as particularly dangerous Scrap Zombies, usually clad in NEMA body armor (or otherwise armored in M.D.C. scrap by the

Obelisk), with mind powers to assail the living. Ironically, while psionic powers are amplified, the mental capacity of the M.O.M. zombies, dubbed Brain Melters or Brain Blasters, is minimal. Brain Melters are very much dull-witted, shambling monsters that seek and kill the living and nothing more.

Regrettably, Brain Melters can sense the living, even behind closed doors, and search for them until found or they manage to flee outside the Brain Melters' sensory range. What's worse is that Brain Melters that sense the living moan loudly like howling bloodhounds on the trail of prey, attracting dozens (2D4x10) to hundreds (2D4x100) of Chaos Zombies, 10-20% of whose numbers include Scrap Zombies of various kinds. The more intelligent Scrap Zombies realize that when a Brain Melter is agitated and moaning it means that humanoid life is nearby, and they will drive the Dead Mob in that direction.

Brain Melters represent a very special challenge for NEMA for a couple of reasons. One, psychic abilities are still a poorly-understood science. To put it bluntly, psychics have always been part of the realm of the supernatural, not something that NEMA has been trained to deal with (just like they haven't been trained to deal with demons, zombies, alien invaders, or magic). Second, Brain Melters are an X-factor and all the more terrifying in their own right because they always seem to be accompanied by several zombies, with one or more Dead Mobs of Chaos Zombies and other Scrap Zombies not far away. They follow Brain Melters because they can lead them to prey, and because the monster emits a telepathic burst letting all zombies within a one mile radius know that prey has been found!

Brain Melters are unmistakable from other zombies, as they often wear the remnants of NEMA body armor with a "Psi" designation painted somewhere (if not, they have patchwork armor like the Soldier Boys). And if their skull is visible there are distinctive metal knobs poking out – although the best M.O.M. implants are only the size of a pinhead, the Black Obelisk must reinforce them and make them larger during the conversion process. In addition, Brain Melters drool and slobber some sort of black ichor, walk off-kilter with their arms stiffly at their sides, and have a crazy look in their eyes as if they are lobotomized yet agitated and out to kill (which they are). In combat they usually attack only with psionics.

Rifts® Note: Centuries later, M.O.M. technology will be re-discovered to create physically augmented warriors known as *Crazies*. Crazy because they possess minor psychic abilities and develop a range of mental illness and odd behavior. The Polish cybernetics company Mindwerks will someday create Mind Over Matter technology that instills powers that even surpass those wielded by the Brain Melter zombies. During the Two Hundred Years Dark Age, there are many stories about "M.O.M. Madness" and "Crazies" who ran the gamut from heroes to murderous madmen. This is especially true of the early decades when the original implants gave their recipient visions, nightmares and drove many truly insane.

Brain Melter Scrap Zombie

Also Known As: Droolers and Psi-Zombies.

Alignment: Considered Diabolic.

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D4+2, P.S. 1D4+16 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D4+4, P.E. 1D4+14 (Supernatural, never tires), P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D4+4; all other attributes not applicable.



M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 4D6+30 M.D.C. (+20 extra for a full faceplate)

Arms (2) – 1D6+15 M.D.C. each

Legs (2) – 2D6+20 each

Main Body – 1D6x10+35

Horror Factor (H.F.): Horror Factor of 12 for 1-4 Brain Melters. H.F. 15 for a group of 7-15 or when there is a group of 50-100 Chaos Zombies accompanying the Brain Melters; and H.F. 16 for more than 20 or when they are combined with a Dead Mob of 1D4x100+100 Chaos Zombies of which 10-20% are Scrap Zombies.

Size: Human; 5-7 feet (1.5 and 2.1 m).

Weight: 150-300 pounds (67.5 to 135 kg) depending on size and the amount of armor.

Average Life Span: Scrap Zombies exist until destroyed or as long as the Transmission keeps playing. Through dark magic and constant repair by Stitchers and the Black Obelisk, this threat can keep going indefinitely.

Level of Experience: Not applicable. Zombies do not learn nor grow with experience; they are drones.

P.P.E.: None; they are dead.

Natural Abilities: Standard; same as Chaos Zombies but with the addition of psionic powers. See Psionics, below.

Vulnerabilities: Standard. Remember, Scrap Zombies do not heal or Bio-Regenerate on their own. They need the help of a Stitcher or to return to the Black Obelisk for repairs.

Skills of Note (Combat Programming): Programmed as hunter-killers with limited psionic powers. Climbing 20%, Land Navigation 20%, Salvage 50%, Tracking skill of 40% when trying to follow the trail of human prey, Brain Melters rarely use a weapon of any kind; rely upon their psychic ability(s). No W.P. skills.

When necessary, the Transmission may order Brain Melters to recover electronics, wiring, weapons, cybernetic, bionics, weapons (all), M.D.C. armor, scrap metal and other M.D.C. materials and bring them to the Obelisk.

Attacks per Melee: Four via psionic powers, but only two when it engages in physical combat.

Damage: Via psionics. The dull-witted Brain Melters seldom engage in physical combat and never use weapons even if one is sitting out in the open. When they do engage in physical combat, they are slow and inflict minimal damage, as follows: Bite does 1D4 M.D., Punch or kick does 1D6 M.D., no power punch is possible and never engages in body blocks or crush/squeeze, but may reach out to grab and hold onto a victim. Its loud moans attract other zombies.

Bonuses (in addition to any attribute bonuses): +1 strike, +3 to strike by grabbing or grappling, never parry, dodge, pull punch, or roll with impact. Impervious to Horror Factor, mind-affecting magic and psionics, drugs, disease, and toxins. +4 to save vs magic, and +8 to save vs psionics otherwise.

Magic: None.

Psionics: I.S.P.: 1D6x100. ALL Brain Melters possess *Presence Sense* (4; geared specifically to sensing humanoid life and large animals, usual range). Abilities are equal to a 4th level psychic.

Roll on the **Brain Melter's Psionic Weapons Table** below to determine which psionic powers are possessed by an individual zombie and used as its primary weapon(s). This table

and description of psychic abilities as they pertain to Brain Melters at the end this stat block.

Cybernetics and Bionics: None.

Weapons: None. Brain Melters *never* use weapons and seldom even use their hands or teeth; they rely entirely on psychic powers whenever possible.

Armor: Varies, but often NEMA body armor. M.D.C. by Location above takes into consideration the type and amount of armor grafted and bolted onto the Scrap Zombie's body.

Enemies: The living.

Allies: None per se. Recognizes Chaos Zombies and other Scrap Zombies as non-combatants. Brain Melters can be found mixed in groups of Chaos Zombies and other Scrap Zombies, or sometimes in small groups of 2D4 by themselves, and occasionally as lone monsters.

Habitat: Point of origin is Madison, Wisconsin, where the Black Obelisk is located and the invasion originates. All Scrap Zombies are created inside the Black Obelisk and extend outward into the world to the edge of the Transmission's current broadcast range.

Brain Melter Psionic Weapons Table

Roll percentile to determine the zombie's powers or select one. The number in parentheses is the I.S.P. cost to use that power. All are equal to 4th level in power and potency.

01-10% Brain Burner: Empathic Transmission (6) and Radiate Horror Factor (8).

11-20% Body Burner. Bio-Manipulation (10) and Mind Bolt (6-40).

21-30% Communicator: Telepathy (4; triple the usual range, but can only broadcast messages from the Transmission or messages and taunts from Marcel LeMerchand while he is tucked safely away inside the Black Obelisk), Empathy (4), Empathic Transmission (6), Sense Magic (3), and Sense Time (3).

31-40% Energy Blaster: Fire. Pyrokinesis (varies) and Impervious to Fire (4).

41-50% Energy Blaster: Electricity. Electrokinetic (varies), Sense Magic (3), and electricity and lightning do no damage (magic lightning and electrical blasts do half damage).

51-60% Fighter. Intuitive Combat (10), Psi-Sword (30), +1 attack per melee round and +2 to strike.

61-70% Life Tracker. Empathy (4; used to sense emotions to know people are nearby), Mind Bolt (6-40 I.S.P. and its psi-weapon), Presence Sense (4; at double the usual range and keyed specifically for humanoid life and large animals), See the Invisible (4), and Sense Magic (3).

71-80% Slayer: Levitation (varies), Mind Bolt (6-40), Psionic Invisibility (10), Psychic Surgery (14; used as a weapon does 3D6 damage direct to Hit Points per attack; not effective against armored opponents or robots), and +1 attack per melee round and +1 to strike

81-90% Telekinesis. Telekinesis (varies; hurls rocks and debris), Telekinetic Leap (8), Telekinetic Punch (6), Telekinetic Push (5) and Presence Sense (4).

91-00% Water Weaver: Hydrokinesis (varies), Sixth Sense (2), and the ability to walk across bodies of water.

Psionics Descriptions

Note: Only psionic abilities available to the Brain Melter are presented, starting with the two “special” or modified psionic abilities (as well as the original description). We have printed the FULL description of the abilities as they apply to the living. For the Brain Melter zombie, personal choice, alignment and bonuses for experience levels do NOT apply, but are equal to a 4th level psychic.

Presence Sense/Sense Humanoids (special): I.S.P. Cost: None, always on. All Brain Melter zombies created by the Black Obelisk possess Presence Sense used to specifically sense the presence of humans/humanoids and large animals. Range is 120 feet (36.6 m). This enables them to sense human life even behind closed doors and underground. Thankfully, none of the zombies, other than the rare Boogeyman or Living Dead Girl, are likely to figure out where a basement or attic is located let alone a hidden door, access tunnels and passageways between walls and such. However, if human life is sensed but cannot be found, the Brain Melter and its Dead Mob are likely (01-75%) to stay in the area for days until the life signals move, leave or vanish (the people die).

Telepathic Burst Communication (special): Brain Melters emit a telepathic burst that informs all zombies within a one mile (1.6 km) radius that prey has been located! The burst is automatic for Brain Melters and happens the moment the zombie recognizes via visual observation or psionics that human prey is in the immediate area. The Telepathic Burst is instinctive and does NOT use up a melee attack. It is an autonomic response, like an adrenaline burst. A new Telepathic Burst is unleashed at the start of every new melee round, urging any zombies in the area to join the fight.

This makes Brain Melters Dead Mob organizers! Brain Melters are always accompanied by no less than 3D6 Chaos Zombies and/or 1D6+1 Scrap Zombies. Worse, a Dead Mob of 4D6x10 Chaos Zombies (10% of which are Scrap Zombies) usually trails behind a few city blocks away (a quarter of mile/0.4 km or less). That means once a Brain Melter starts to moan or releases a telepathic burst announcing prey having been spotted, dozens if not hundreds of Chaos Zombies and Scrap Zombies soon answer the psychic zombie’s call, converging at the location of the Brain Melter within 1D4 minutes. Killing the monster quickly (within two melee rounds/30 seconds) is a must to avoid being quickly swarmed. Even if a quick kill is successful, Chaos and Scrap Zombies slowly (2D4+2 minutes) head toward the last location that was broadcasted to them. Fast moving Scrap Zombies are, of course, the first to arrive at the Brain Melter’s location.

Note: Unless Mind Blocked, all Master Psychics, Psychic Sensitives and people with M.O.M. implants also receive the Telepathic Bursts and know that human lives are in danger as well as their general location. They are also able to pick up messages sent to and from Brain Melters with the Communicator powers, but they are more susceptible to being tormented and being driven insane by the Transmission.

Bio-Manipulation

Range: 160 feet (48.8 m).

Duration: 4-16 minutes (roll 4D4).

I.S.P.: 10

Saving Throw: Standard; if a character successfully saves against the attack he is *not* affected at all. This applies to all seven bio-manipulative attacks.

The psychic is able to induce physical trauma to the nervous system of others by sheer force of will and conveyance of psychic energy. This psi-power is also known as the *Evil Eye*, especially in rural areas where magic and folklore rule the day.

There are seven types of Bio-Manipulation effects, *all* of which are available to those with this power. Each affects only one person per attack and can be used in any combination. Intended victims must be within line of vision or their exact location known to the psychic. Each costs 10 I.S.P. to inflict.

This psychic power enables the psychic to temporarily manipulate specific biological functions or conditions in human and animal life forms. The duration can be extended 4-16 (4D4) minutes per additional 6 I.S.P.

Blind: Temporarily knocks out the victim’s optic nerves, rendering that person quite helpless. Victims are -10 to strike, parry and dodge.

Deafness: Can be caused by manipulating the eardrum. Victims can not hear anything, and are -6 to parry or dodge attacks from behind. In addition, the shock of suddenly becoming deaf makes them -3 to strike, parry or dodge any other attacks, and they automatically lose the initiative on all attacks while deaf.

Mute: Impairs the victim’s vocal cords, making speech impossible. Victims are likely to be shocked and panic, making them -2 to strike, parry and dodge for the first melee ONLY.

Pain: By manipulating the nerve centers, the psionic can induce terrible pain, shooting throughout the body. Victims are -6 to strike, parry, and dodge, and take one point of damage off their Hit Points (not S.D.C.) per each minute affected.

Paralysis: Immobilizes the motor part of the brain, causing legs and arms to stop functioning. Victims are completely incapacitated for the duration. **Note:** A paralyzed character can still use psionics but only if he has line of sight on his intended target. Spell casters need to speak, so they cannot cast spells while paralyzed.

Stun: This attack disorients and confuses its victims. Victims forfeit one attack per melee, speed is cut by half, and the character is -4 to strike, parry, dodge, disarm, and all combat moves.

Tissue Manipulation: Affects the tissue’s connecting nerve fibers which can cause a variety of effects. By irritating the nerve fibers, a victim will suddenly feel itchy, as if breaking out in a severe rash. Through endothermic manipulation, the victim can also be made to suddenly feel cold or hot while everyone around him feels fine. ALL three conditions are more annoying or frightening than physically impairing. In each case the victims are -1 to strike, parry and dodge.

Note: Bio-Manipulation will affect an opponent inside M.D.C. environmental body armor and light power armor (under 220 M.D.C.), but not heavy power armor, giant robots or armored, military vehicles.

Deaden Senses

Range: 160 feet (48.8 m); line of sight.

Duration: 2D6 minutes; roll for random determination of duration.

I.S.P.: 4

Saving Throw: -1 to save.

A form of bio-manipulation that is so subtle that its victims seldom realize they have fallen under the influence of this psionic attack. The psychic is able to induce a physical influence on a single character to make him or her momentarily less alert and attentive to the things around him. Small sounds, odors, movements, and details go unnoticed (+10% to the psychic on the following skills when used against this *befuddled* character: Camouflage, Prowl, Concealment, Palming, Pick Pockets, Cardsharp, Forgery, Seduction, Disguise and Impersonation). And the deadened character is also slow to react; reduce Spd by 10%, -1 on initiative, and -5% on skill performance. This power is typically used on guards, sentries, and investigators to make them miss something in a search, not notice the psychic, etc.

Electrokinesis

Range: Varies.

Duration: Varies.

I.S.P.: Varies.

Electrokinesis is a psychic power that allows the psychic to exert amazing physical control over electricity.

1. Electrical Resistance. The psychic can manipulate his body to become resistant to electricity. Up to 60,000 volts will inflict no damage or ill effect. Currents greater than 60,000 volts, including lightning and magic electricity, do half damage. **Range:** Self. **Duration:** 3 minutes per level of experience. **I.S.P.:** 4.

2. Electrical Discharge. The character can cause static electricity within a six foot (1.8 m) area, as well as emit an electrical discharge by touch. The discharge can be a little jolt or inflict up to 1D6 S.D.C. damage as often as once per melee. **Range:** Touch or 2 feet (0.6 m) distance. **Duration:** Instant. **I.S.P.:** 2 per each discharge.

3. Electrical M.D. Attack. The psychic can fire a light M.D. electrical blast. **Range:** Touch or 10 feet (0.3 m) per level of experience. **Mega-Damage:** 1D6 M.D. to 3D6 M.D. **Duration:** Instant. **I.S.P.:** 6 I.S.P. to inflict 1D6 M.D., 12 I.S.P. to inflict a 2D6 M.D. blast, 18 I.S.P. to do a 3D6 M.D. blast.

4. Manipulate Electrical Devices. Through focused thought, the psychic can enforce a limited control over electrical devices, such as turn off and on light switches, computers, televisions, radios, blenders, microwave ovens, flashlights, toys (battery and plug types), windshield wipers, and all types of electrically operated appliances, toys and devices. He can also manipulate the controls of the device, such as volume, channel selection, tuners, speakers, change speed, dim lights, and so on. A dozen different electrical functions can be manipulated each melee. This can mean flicking the light off and on six times (12 functions/6 off, 6 on) or turn on the T.V., turn its volume up to the max. and turn on 10 other appliances (12 functions in all). **Range:** 45 feet (13.7 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience. **Duration:** 2 minutes per level of experience. **I.S.P.:** 4. **Note:** The character does not need to see the devices to manipulate them. He can feel their presence.

5. Sense Electricity. The psychic can sense or feel electricity and pinpoint its exact location with fair expertise. **Range:** 45 feet (13.7 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience. **Duration:** 2 minutes of extreme sensitivity when he can pinpoint every source of electricity in the area. **I.S.P.:** 2 per every two minutes. **Base Skill:** 55% +5% per each additional level of experience. A failed roll means only 1D6x10% of all the electrical devices/sources of electricity could be sensed.

Empathic Transmission

Range: 60 feet (18.3 m).

Duration: 2D6 minutes.

I.S.P.: 6

Attacks per Melee: Equal to the individual's psychic abilities.

Saving Throw: Standard.

This incredible ability enables the psychic to instill a powerful emotion into another living creature; person, animal or supernatural being. Each psychic attack/transmission can only affect one creature at a time. Several supernatural creatures have this ability or some aspect of it.

Despair or Sorrow: Invokes great emotional upheaval, deep sorrow and a sense of loss. There is a 50% chance of the victim surrendering or leaving without a battle; furthermore, victims are -2 to parry and dodge.

Confusion: Disorients the person so badly that he has no sense of direction, time, or of what is exactly going on. Victims are -3 to strike, parry and dodge, and lose initiative in any combat.

Fear: Invokes unreasoning terror in all those affected. Victims are -3 to strike, parry and dodge, plus there is a 66% chance that those affected will turn and run.

Hate or Anger: Will prompt those affected to act rashly, charge, attack, argue violently, etc. Victims are likely (60% chance) to attack, kill, harm, or betray those they dislike; +1 (yes, that's plus) to strike, -1 to parry and dodge.

Love or Peacefulness: Will induce a deep feeling of serenity, dispelling anger, hatred, sorrow, and so on. Hostile opponents are likely (60% chance) to reconsider their actions, deciding not to attack, show mercy, leave without being overtly cruel or destructive, halt a rampage, and so on. It does NOT make its victims docile sheep, but curbs hostility.

Trust: Will make its victims believe everything the psionic tells them, but only while under the empathic influence. Life-threatening suggestions that go against deep-seated fears, morals or ideals provide an additional saving throw against the suggested action; with a bonus of +3 to save.

Impervious to Fire

Range: Self.

Duration: 3 minutes per level of experience.

Length of Trance: 2D4 melees for preparatory meditation.

I.S.P.: 4

A mind over matter discipline enabling the psychic to endure intense heat, fire, boiling water, hot coals, and so on, without suffering pain, damage, injury or scarring. Magic fires inflict half damage.

Empathy

Range: 100 foot (30.5 m) area.

Duration: Two minutes (8 melees) per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4

Saving Throw: Standard; a save vs Empathy means the psychic can not get a clear sense of the emotions of that particular person. To save vs Empathy the person must roll to save once each melee that the psychic is using Empathy. Mind Block will prevent any empathic emanations from the blocked person.

Empathy is a psi-ability that makes the psychic aware of, or feel, the emotions of other people, animals and supernatural creatures. The strongest emotions are easiest to sense: hate, anger, terror, love. Feeling for emotions can often be used to establish that somebody or something is nearby, but can NOT be used to pinpoint an invisible or hiding person/creature. Empathy can be especially helpful in recognizing and communicating with ghosts and other supernatural creatures.

In the case of Brain Melters, they use the reading of emotions to help locate human prey, and feelings of fear, dread and sorrow make the zombies more aggressive.

Hydrokinesis

Range: Varies.

Duration: Varies.

I.S.P.: Varies.

This ability enables the character to use psychic energy to sense and influence water.

1. Sense Chemical Impurities. The psychic can sense whether or not water is polluted or contains other substances. The exact nature of the additive or pollutant may be unknown, but he will know that it is not completely natural. When sensing water, first roll to determine: 1) Pure or Drinkable (nonhazardous/tap water) 70% +5% per each additional level of experience. 2) Roll for general nature of the pollutant; this identifies whether it is a chemical/drug (not deadly, but will cause a reaction if drunk) or poison/toxin (deadly or harmful if swallowed). Success ratio in identifying the general nature of the pollutant is 35% +5% per each additional level of experience. **Range:** Self/six inches (0.15 m). **Duration:** One minute (4 melees). **I.S.P.:** 2 per minute.

2. Boil Water. The psychic can increase the temperature of water, raising it to boiling level within one minute (four melees). Up to one gallon (3.8 liters) can be affected. Once set a boiling, it will take the usual amount of time to cool. This power can not be made to boil the water or blood in a living creature. **Range:** 8 feet (2.4 m) +2 feet (0.6 m) per level of experience. **Duration:** One minute (4 melees). **I.S.P.:** 3 per gallon of water.

3. Water Spout. An ability that enables the psychic to control and hurl water. The effect can be used to make water bubble (but not heated), shoot straight up like a geyser or a water blast hurling across a room like a short, powerful spray from a garden hose. Up to one gallon of water per level of experience can be manipulated and hurled up to a distance of 20 feet (6 m). **Note:** The fluid must be 75% water to be controlled, such as punch, hot coffee, chicken soup, tea, lemonade, etc. Forget about hurling ice (frozen does not count), paint, gasoline, or cake batter.

Making water leap with a life of its own can be startling to others and can make a great distraction if handled right. Hurling normal water or a cool drink into somebody's face/eyes will

momentarily blind and surprise the individual, causing him/her to lose initiative and one attack that melee. Hurling hot or boiling water on the body (especially the crotch) will have the same results. Hurling boiling water in the face is horribly painful, causing 2D4 damage, loss of initiative, loss of all attacks for 1D6 melees and temporary blindness for 3D6 melees (-10 to strike, parry and dodge). Characters of a good alignment will not hurl boiling water in the face unless under an absolutely life and death circumstance

Hurling Range: 20 feet (6.1 m). **Duration:** Instant. **I.S.P.:** 5. **Bonus:** +1 to strike. Making water bubble or rise up like a fountain can be maintained for up to 30 seconds (2 melees). **Note:** The psychic can influence up to one gallon (3.8 liters) of water per level of experience up to 20 feet (6.1 m) away, whether he can see it or only feel its presence.

4. Sense Water. The character can sense the presence of any water exposed to the open air automatically at no cost of I.S.P. **Range:** 20 feet (6 m). **Duration:** Permanent. **I.S.P.:** None. **Note:** Underground rivers, airtight containers, etc. cannot be sensed.

Intuitive Combat

Range: Self.

Duration: Two melee rounds per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 10

This is a form of telepathy geared to give the psychic an advantage in melee combat. To put this ability in place, the psychic must concentrate for one melee round (15 seconds), putting himself in a Zen-like state of awareness. For the next two melee rounds, the Intuitive Combat sense makes the character one with his body and weapon, reacting quickly and efficiently with amazing reflex action, balance and grace. **Note:** The psychic is unable to use any other psionic power, including Mind Block, while this power is in use. He can cancel it with a thought.

Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +1 to strike, +1 to parry, +4 to dodge, +4 to pull punch, +2 to roll with punch, fall or impact, and +2 to disarm.

- Cannot be caught by surprise, even by attacks from behind or from long-range, which means he can *try* to parry or dodge all attacks leveled at him.

- +10% to abilities (balance, etc.) provided by the Acrobatics and/or Gymnastic skills, as well as +10% to Climb and Swim skills. (Not generally applicable to zombies.)

Levitation

Range: Up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away.

Duration: 2 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: Small: 2, medium: 6, large: 6 plus 1 per every 10 lbs (4.5 kg) over 20 lbs (9 kg).

Saving Throw: None.

Levitation is a limited form of Telekinesis that can raise an object or a person straight up into the air and suspend it there, hovering in the air. Sideways movement is NOT possible.

Small objects weighing two pounds (0.9 kg) or less are the easiest to levitate. Maximum height is 8 feet (2.4 m) plus one foot (0.3 m) per each level of experience. Medium-sized objects weighing 3 to 20 pounds (1.4 to 9 kg) are more difficult, requiring greater concentration. Maximum height is 6 feet (1.8 m) plus one foot (0.3 m) per level of experience. Large objects or people

weighing over 20 lbs (9 kg) cost 6 I.S.P. plus one I.S.P. for every 10 lbs (4.5 kg) beyond 20 (9 kg). Thus, a 125 pound (56.2 kg) weight would require 17 I.S.P. to raise it into the air. Maximum height is 4 feet (1.2 m) plus one foot (0.3 m) per level of experience. Or the psychic can levitate himself 10 feet (3 m) +2 feet (0.6 m) per level of his experience.

Psi-Sword

Range: Self.

Duration: 5 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 30

A Psi-Sword is a Mega-Damage energy weapon that the psychic can mentally will into existence! The sword appears out of thin air, as a shimmering blade of energy that resembles a glowing sword. The sword's actual appearance will generally reflect its creator. A character who is impressed by strength and power creates a huge Claymore sword-like weapon. A character who prides himself on speed and agility is likely to create a rapier or saber type blade, while a hero who enjoys cunning and subterfuge may create a short sword. Each is equally powerful regardless of its form and size. **Zombie Note:** In the case of Brain Melter zombies, the weapon is almost always a large sword shape and most of the details, below, regarding choice and experience levels do not apply.

The creation of the Psi-Sword is a very personal thing and requires years of mastery and great psionic power. Like the Cyber-Knight, the Mind Melter can change the shape and even the color of the sword to fit his current mood, but unlike the Knight, he can do so from day one.

The Mind Melter can create the Psi-Sword after only a few moments of concentration (about 15 seconds/one melee) and maintain it for five minutes per level of experience. This means a fifth level Mind Melter can create and maintain a Psi-Sword for 25 minutes at the cost of 30 I.S.P., while a third level character must expend the same 30 I.S.P. but can maintain the weapon for 15 minutes. If the psychic is knocked unconscious, the weapon disappears. Likewise, the character can willingly dispel the weapon with a thought.

Psi-Sword damage: 4D6 M.D. at level three (one can not select this power until level three). Add 2D6 at levels four, seven, nine, twelve, and fifteen.

The Psi-Sword is incredibly powerful, but can be adjusted to inflict a minimum of 2D6 Mega-Damage (M.D.) or increased by increments of 1D6 up to the character's current maximum. **For Example:** A fourth level Mind Melter can inflict a maximum of 6D6 M.D., but the character decides, for whatever reason, to decrease the power to the minimum of 2D6 M.D.; he can, at will, increase the damage capability of the sword by increments of 1D6 M.D. up to the maximum of 6D6 M.D. (3D6, 4D6, 5D6, and 6D6).

Pyrokinesis

Range: Varies.

Duration: Varies.

I.S.P.: Varies.

Pyrokinesis is a psychic power that gives a character the power to manipulate fire.

1. Fire Resistant: The psychic can endure great heat and fire with minimal ill effect. Damage is reduced by half. Magic fires

do full damage. **Range:** Self. **Duration:** 5 minutes per level of experience. **I.S.P.:** 2.

2. Spontaneous Combustion: The ability to create a spark that will ignite combustible material, such as paper, old rags, dry grass, gasoline, etc. **Note:** Human hair should not be considered a combustible material. This is a slow fire, starting with a tiny spark and growing. Initially, it is not a roaring blaze. **Range:** Can be ignited up to 30 feet away (9 m). **Duration:** Instant; fire will last and spread until it is put out or there is nothing to burn. **I.S.P.:** 2.

3. Fuel Flame: The character can feed the fire with psychic energy, doubling it in size. Affects a 10 foot (3 m) area. **Range:** Up to 30 feet (9 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) for each additional level of experience. **Duration:** Instant. **I.S.P.:** 4.

4. Extinguish Flames: The power to instantly put out an area of fire. Affects a 15 foot (4.6 m) radius of fire. **Range:** Up to 30 feet (9 m) away +5 feet (1.5 m) per each additional level of experience. **Duration:** Permanent until set on fire again. **I.S.P.:** 4.

5. Create Flame: The incredible ability to create fire out of thin air. Can be an 8 foot (2.4 m) pillar of fire affecting a 4 foot (1.2 m) diameter or a 6 foot (1.8 m) high wall of fire stretching six feet (1.8 m) long +1 foot (0.3 m) per each additional level of experience. **Damage:** 4D6 M.D. from the pillar, 6D6 M.D. from the wall, plus both have a 72% likelihood of setting any combustibles they touch ablaze (including cloth, rugs, curtains, furniture, etc.). **Range:** Cast up to 30 feet (9 m) +2 feet (0.6 m) per additional level of experience. **Duration:** 2 minutes per level of experience; longer if it sets other things on fire. **I.S.P.:** 20.

6. Fire Ball: Another fire creation ability is the hurling of a fire ball. **Damage:** 1D6x10 S.D.C. or 6D6 M.D., **Range:** 30 feet (9 m) +2 feet (0.6 m) per each additional level of experience. **Duration:** Instant. **Bonus:** +2 to strike. **I.S.P.:** 25.

7. Sense Fire: The psychic can sense or feel the presence of fire and pinpoint its exact location. **Range:** 100 feet (30.5 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience. **Duration:** 2 minutes of extreme sensitivity when he/she can pinpoint the exact location of every fire in the area. **Base Skill:** 90% success ratio. A failed roll means only 2D4x10% of the fires can be located by sensing. **I.S.P.:** 2 per every two minutes.

Psychic Surgery

Range: Touch.

Duration: Varies with injury.

Length of Trance: 2D6 minutes of preparatory meditation, plus the duration of the surgery (which is half the time of conventional modern medicine).

I.S.P.: 14

Ordinarily, Psychic Surgery is used to repair broken bones, and internal injuries, and for the removal of foreign objects (bullets, arrows, etc.) using only one's bare hands; no tools or instruments. Can also be used to heal a character who has suffered so much damage that he or she has lapsed into a coma (zero Hit Points or less). Psychic Surgery is the equivalent of "professional hospital" treatment. The recovery from a coma (near death) is equal to treatment from a hospital, 1-66%. Note that there is minimal bleeding and pain, and absolutely no scarring from Psychic Surgery (*no pain* if the Deaden Pain ability is used). A Psychic Diagnosis must be made before surgery is possible.

Brain Melter Zombie Note: Zombies care nothing about healing, so this power is used to inflict damage and kill. The

Brain Melter zombie is able to literally punch its hand directly into its victim's body, inflicting internal damage. Damage is 3D6 direct to Hit Points (Supernatural P.S. does not apply). Body armor, bionic armor, power armor, and any sort of full body armor, all protect against this attack. So does being enclosed in a vehicle or behind a door. The zombie must be able to touch the person; does go through clothes. It has no effect on robots or automatons, but can hurt the flesh parts of a cyborg if accessible. Damage against creatures of magic and supernatural beings (demons, etc.) is 1D6+3 M.D. and bypasses any natural shell or armor; the hand of the zombie pushes right through the flesh.

Radiate Horror Factor

Range: Self; affects all who come within 100 feet (30.5 m) of the psychic.

Duration: 5 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 8

Saving Throw: -1 to save vs Horror Factor.

The psychic can channel his psionic powers, alignment and emotions to radiate as an aura of power that is frightening. This aura is equal to a Horror Factor and perceived on a subconscious level by all who see the psychic or come within range. The usual H.F. reaction and penalties apply. See the combat section of this book for details on Horror Factor.

The level of horror varies as follows:

- Horror Factor 10 if the character is of a *good or Unprincipled alignment*.
- Horror Factor 10 +1 per every three levels of experience if the character is *Anarchist*.
- Horror Factor 12 +1 per every three levels of experience if the character is of an *evil alignment*. Zombies are considered evil.
- Add one Horror Factor point to any of the above if the character is *also insane or enraged beyond reason*.

In the case of Brain Melter zombies, Horror Factor is 16 even for one lone, M.O.M. resurrected dead.

See the Invisible

Range: 120 feet (36.6 m); double on a ley line.

Duration: 1 minute per each level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4

Saving Throw: None.

The character can see entities, beings, forces, objects and creatures which can turn invisible or are naturally invisible. Even if the creature has no form per se, the psychic will be able to discern the vaporous image or energy sphere which is the being. This includes ghosts, Entities, Elementals and Astral Beings.

Sense Magic

Range: 120 feet (36.6 m) area.

Duration: 2 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 3

Saving Throw: None.

The ability to sense magic enables the psychic to feel magic energy, tell whether it is near (within 20 feet/6.1 m) or far (up to 120 feet/36.6 m away) and follow the emanations to pinpoint their source as a particular place, room, person or object. **Note:** Invisible, magical or supernatural creatures or objects can only be traced to a general area, like a specific room or area. The psychic

will also be able to sense whether or not an object has magic powers, if a person or item is enchanted/under a magic spell (this does not include psionic influences), when magic is being used within the area (120 feet/36.6 m) and when a person is casting a spell (human users of magic do not radiate magic energies until they call upon them).

Sense Time

Range: Self.

Duration: 15 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 2

The psychic is able to accurately measure the passage of time, down to within 1D4 seconds. This can be useful when in an environment where the passage of time can be lost, and especially when the character must meet with or do something at a precise moment in time, like gauging exactly when a bomb will detonate, when a switch must be turned on or off, and so on.

Sixth Sense

Range: 90 feet (27.4 m).

Duration: Until the danger passes or happens. Bonuses apply only to the first melee round of the attack from the source of the sensed danger.

I.S.P.: 2

Saving Throw: None.

The Sixth Sense is a power that gives the psychic a precognitive flash of imminent danger to himself or somebody near him (within 90 feet/27.4 m). The character will not know what the danger is or where it will come from, nor who it will be directed at when in a group. All he knows is that something life threatening will happen within the next 60 seconds (4 melees)! The Sixth Sense is triggered automatically, without the consent of the psychic, whenever his life is in great peril or the life of somebody he greatly cares about (friend, partner, loved one, etc.). The Sixth Sense is only triggered by an unexpected, life threatening event (a trap or ambush is within 90 feet/27.4 m or a flash flood is rushing his way) which is already set into motion and will happen any second. The power can not be called upon at will to sense for traps or ambush. Instead, it works like an automatic reflex. If the character has used all his I.S.P. the Sixth Sense is temporarily rendered inoperative.

Bonuses: The sudden flash of insight provides the following bonuses. All bonuses apply only to the first, *initial* melee (15 seconds) when the attack/danger occurs. Bonuses are lost in subsequent melee rounds after the danger is revealed. +6 on initiative roll, +2 to parry, +3 to dodge and the character can not be surprised by a sneak attack from behind.

Telekinesis

Range: Up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away.

Duration: 2 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: Small: 3, medium: 8, large (over 20 lbs/9 kg): 8 +1 per every 10 lbs (4.5 kg) of weight.

Telekinesis is the ability to move objects without any other means than directed psychic energy. The character can make an object hop, fall, roll, rise into the air, suspend it there (hover) or make it fly across the room.

In order to move an object by Telekinesis, the item must be clearly visible, within the psychic's range (60 feet/18.3 m) and the point of focus. As usual, the psychic must concentrate on what he is doing; thus, each telekinetic feat counts as one of the character's physical attacks. The total number of telekinetic attacks is equal to the character's number of physical attacks per melee; usually 4 or 5. One can attack with Telekinesis by hurling an object as if thrown or causing it to buzz about a room, swinging and hitting like a club controlled by an invisible hand. Several objects can be telekinetically thrown around within the same melee round, but not simultaneously. The psychic can only concentrate on one item at a time. For example: A physical psychic with four, normal, hand to hand attacks per melee can perform four attacks with Telekinesis. First, he makes a flower vase fly from the table, aiming it at his opponent's head. Second, he makes the lamp hurl at the guard at the door. Third, the table is suddenly flipped up on end and, fourth, the doorknob is turned and the door flung open. Four attacks or actions using Telekinesis.

As the example illustrates, Telekinesis can be used to do more than making objects fly around (though not by Brain Melter zombies). The Telekinetic power can be used to open doors, flick switches, press buttons, turn knobs and dials, open windows, make a rocking chair rock and so on. The range of possibilities is extensive when you stop and think about it. Remember, each action counts as one of the character's physical actions/attacks per melee.

It is easiest to move or hurl small objects weighing *two pounds* (0.9 kg or less). Maximum height or distance is 60 feet (18.3 m). Medium-sized objects weighing 3 to 20 pounds (1.35 to 9 kg) are more difficult to manipulate. Maximum height or distance is reduced by half; 30 feet (9.1 m). Large or heavy objects weighing over 20 lbs (9 kg) are the most difficult to maneuver, reducing maximum height and distance to 15 feet (4.6 m). I.S.P. cost for large, heavy objects is 8 I.S.P. for the first 20 lbs (9 kg) plus one I.S.P. for each additional 10 lbs (4.5 kg) of weight. This means it would cost 19 I.S.P. to move a 125 lb (56.2 kg) weight (8 I.S.P. for the first 20 lbs (9 kg) +11 I.S.P. for the remaining 105 lbs). Remember, the height and distance of effect is limited to 15 feet (4.6 m) for such a heavy object.

Telekinesis Combat Bonuses:

- +3 to strike with Telekinesis; physical/skill bonuses to strike do not apply when Telekinesis is used.
- +4 to parry with Telekinesis by using a controlled object to parry or sheer telekinetic force to block an attack. Counts as a medium heavy object; costs 8 I.S.P. **Note:** Only these two bonuses apply to TK combat.
- *S.D.C. Damage from Hurled Objects:* Very Small: 6 ounces to 1 pound (0.17 to 0.45 kg): 1D4. Small: 1.5 to 2 lbs (0.6 to 0.9 kg): 1D6. Medium Small: 2-4 lbs (0.9 to 1.8 kg): 2D4. Medium: 5 to 10 lbs (2.25 to 4.5 kg): 3D4. Medium Large: 11 to 25 lbs (4.95 to 11.2 kg): 3D6. Large: 26 to 40 lbs (11.7 to 18 kg): 4D6. Add 1D6 damage for each additional 20 lbs (9 kg).

Note: This form of Telekinesis is not a force field, thus, while it can be used to parry/block a punch, kick, club, knife or even sword, it cannot stop bullets, arrows, gas, flying tackles, and similar attacks. Furthermore, a failed roll to make a telekinetic parry means the psychic did not parry and is struck by his opponent.

Telekinesis moves, lifts and throws physical objects with the power of the mind, so it may be used to hurl a victim into some-

thing as a slam attack but NOT as a crushing or thrusting attack in and of itself. Objects thrown would be equivalent to objects thrown by a physical hand. Telekinesis does not allow psychics to levitate themselves or fly, due to the weight limitation (see Super Telekinesis).

Telekinetic Leap

Range: Self.

Duration: One melee attack/action; in this case, a leap.

I.S.P.: 8

This telekinetic application boosts the person's leaping ability, propelling the psychic an additional two feet (0.6 m) when leaping upwards, and three feet (0.9 m) when leaping across or lengthwise, per level of experience. This power can be used in conjunction with a Leap Kick attack (damage: 6D6+6 plus P.S. bonuses), but the character will take 2D6 S.D.C. points of damage himself from the hard impact. A die roll with impact may be needed to land safely after one of these leaps.

Telekinetic Punch

Range: By touch or one foot (0.3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Instant.

I.S.P.: 6

Saving Throw: Dodge or parry as usual.

This telekinetic power enables the psychic to deliver a powerful punch or kick-like force through telekinetic energy. The character must actually make a physical punch or kick, but a successful strike delivers a telekinetically enhanced blow. A Telekinetic Punch will inflict 3D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage plus P.S. bonus (if any), and a kick will do 4D6 S.D.C. plus P.S. bonus. The I.S.P. is spent whether or not the punch or kick actually hits the target (roll to strike as normal). The power is used in conjunction with a normal, physical attack that can be parried or dodged by the enemy. Every time the power is used, the psychic must make a save of 14 or higher or he will take 1D6 points of damage himself as a result of wrenched muscles or a dislocated joint from the extra strain on his body.

Telekinetic Push

Range: By touch or one foot (0.3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Instant.

I.S.P.: 4

Saving Throw: None.

The psychic can effectively create a telekinetic force that pushes away an attacker or anything within range (a door, chair, cart, statue, etc.). The pushing force has the rough equivalent of a P.S. 16 +1 per level of the psychic. The Telekinetic Push is roughly equal to a body block and does 1D4 S.D.C. or Hit Point damage, will knock most ordinary humans back two yards/meters and has a 01-60% chance of knocking the person off his feet (if so, that character loses initiative and one melee action). Characters weighing more than 200 pounds (90 kg) or who possess Robotic P.S. or Supernatural P.S. are only shoved a foot or two and there is only a 01-12% chance of being knocked off their feet. Inanimate objects weighing under 50 pounds (22.5 kg) are "pushed" or slid across the ground twice as far, roughly four yards/meters (12 feet/3.6 m).

Garbagegeman Scrap Zombie



Of all the Scrap Zombies, the ones nicknamed “Garbagemen” may be the most subtly dangerous to the living. They seldom directly attack humans, though they will defend themselves. Often they will wait like vultures for injured but still dangerous targets to succumb to their wounds and die, staying just outside the range of any weapons.

You see, the function of the Garbageman Scrap Zombie is to gather up body parts as well as bionics and scrap for the construction of more Scrap Zombies. They are the gatherers, salvagers, and quartermasters of the zombie army whereas most of the others are hunter-killers. Garbagemen salvage destroyed Scrap Zombies to recover armor-covered bodies and limbs, weapon limbs that are still intact, as well as cybernetic or bionic limbs and components, robot weapons, and other machinery that the Black Obelisk can use.

Thus, these ghoulish zombies stalk battlefields, the sites of disasters, other scenes of battle, hospitals, morgues, mass graves, and other places of death. They collect any heads, hands, feet, or other body parts they come across. For bionics, armor, robotics, and weapons, they may break into warehouses, factories, military depots, or scrapyards; but most items are salvaged from the dead.

If a Garbageman sees NEMA forces or large groups of soldiers loading up a truck with dead bodies, weapons, or salvage (especially if the humans are recovering technology it is interested in), the creature will try to follow it or even hitch a ride on the vehicle, perhaps clinging to the side or underneath if the vehicle is high enough off the ground like a hovercraft. Some have been known to climb inside and pretend to be one of the dead. Once the vehicle’s destination is known, the Garbageman loads up on premium salvage and runs off with the loot. However, the zombie makes note of the location so it can come back for more.

As soon as it runs into some Chaos Zombies, it hands off the load to a few of them with instructions to take it to the Black Obelisk. The Garbageman then commandeers a small group of 2D4 Chaos Zombies or even Soldier Boy Scrap Zombies to go back with it for more bodies and parts. This process is repeated until the zombies are caught and destroyed, or all the corpses, bionics and desired pieces of salvage are stolen and hauled away. Chasing a Garbageman away is only a temporary solution, as it will return over and over again to any place there are human bodies, bionics, robotics, weapons, armor, and salvage to acquire.

Garbagemen are not used in combat situations except to extract useful salvage left behind in battle. They wander the fields of combat, streets, alleys, ruins and dark places where fighting is recent. They usually have chains with hooks for attaching body parts slung across their bodies, and several large sacks filled with arms, legs and bionic limbs slung over their shoulders like a demonic Santa Claus.

When there are a lot of bodies or parts to be gathered, a Garbageman may command as many as eight Chaos Zombies to carry more. When they depart, laden down with their gruesome cargo, the Garbageman will try to find and command another group to haul away more. The Chaos Zombies strictly fill the role of porters. It is the Garbageman that selects the bodies and pieces, bags or bundles them, and has the Chaos Zombies take them away. If no “porters” are available, the creature gathers and bundles human and mechanical salvage and hides them in the ruins, or wherever it can come back for them later. Garbagemen also create hidden supply caches for their partners in crime – Stitchers, Scrap Zombies that repair other zombies. If you find a stack, pile,

or tied bundle of body parts, bionics or other salvage, you probably just stumbled across a Garbageman’s secret stash.

When humans approach, a Garbageman usually hides or runs away, fighting only long enough to escape and send any nearby Chaos Zombies or other Scrap Zombies to try and overwhelm the enemy. When there is no one to do its fighting for it, the Garbageman may try to hide, lying perfectly still among the dead bodies and debris, often covering itself in bodies, gore, and rubble (a ploy that works more often than you might expect). However, as time goes by, NEMA soldiers and first responders should come to realize that if they find a stack, bundle or bag of armor clad bodies, body parts, cybernetics or weapons, one or more zombie Garbagemen and/or Stitchers are lurking nearby.

Garbagemen Scrap Zombies tend to be lone scavengers or work in small groups of 2-8, with another 2-8 Chaos Zombies for each one to use as pack mules. However, there is one Scrap Zombie they work hand and hand with, **Stitchers**. Garbagemen help replenish Stitchers who need a constant supply of spare parts and scrap at all times. If a Stitcher is looking for a specific type of body part, armor or component, it is the Garbageman who is dispatched to find and deliver it. A Garbageman will also fight to the death to protect a Stitcher (as do Chaos Zombies and most Scrap Zombies). When done with its assignment for the Stitcher, the Garbageman goes back out to look for more.

It is a never-ending process, and as the animated dead grow in numbers and the hordes move further and further out from the Black Obelisk, more scrap and supplies are needed. Even if the zombie advance is stalled, Garbagemen continue their search for salvage because it means the Black Obelisk’s factories can churn out more of the armored and deadly, M.D.C. Scrap Zombies. Garbagemen are tireless in their duty, pausing only for repairs, to kill a lone survivor, or to wait for the sick or injured to die.

Garbagemen always have big, husky bodies, broad shoulders, barrel chests, muscular arms and legs and a well-armored head. Whatever magic is at work, it makes them 50% larger and more massive than ordinary humans, and sometimes D-Bee bodies are used. Their hands are usually large and strong as well. Most carry a collection of meat hooks, Vibro-Blades, axes, cleavers, and hatchets.

Their skills include Rope Works, and the creature is deft when bundling parts for transport. In addition, the zombie always has several large sacks. Makeshift sacks can be made from blankets, quilts, bed sheets, drapes, tarps, and bolts of fabric. Small sacks can include pillowcases, capes and clothing. Stitchers are happy to cobble together sacks for Garbagemen, joined as they are in shared purpose under the Transmission.

Garbageman Scrap Zombie

Also Known As: Zombie Ghoul and Gravedigger.

Alignment: Considered Diabolic.

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D4+4, P.S. 1D4+25 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D4+6, P.E. 1D4+14 (Supernatural, never tires), P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D4+6; all other attributes not applicable.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 4D6+60 M.D.C.

Arms (2) – 2D6+20 M.D.C. each

Legs (2) – 4D6+40 each

Main Body – 2D4x10+60

(**Note:** On S.D.C. worlds, the zombie has S.D.C. and S.D.C. Armor at the point value listed above. No Hit Points as it is dead.)

Horror Factor (H.F.): Horror Factor of 12 for 1-4 Garbagemen. H.F. 14 when the Garbagemen are accompanied by 2D4 Chaos or Scrap Zombies. H.F. 16 when combined with a Dead Mob of 1D4x100+100 Chaos Zombies of which 10-20% are Scrap Zombies.

Size: Oversized and muscular human; 8-10 feet (2.4 to 3 m).

Weight: Varies depending on size and the amount of armor and augmentation. Typically 300-500 pounds (135 to 225 kg).

Average Life Span: Scrap Zombies exist until destroyed or as long as the Transmission keeps playing. Through dark magic and constant repair by Stitchers and the Black Obelisk, this threat can keep going indefinitely.

Level of Experience: Not applicable. Zombies do not learn nor grow with experience; they are drones.

P.P.E.: None; they are dead.

Natural Abilities: Has the greatest Supernatural P.S. along with the Headbanger and Living Nightmare. Otherwise standard, same as the Chaos Zombie with the following exceptions:

Travel Beyond the Transmission (Special): The Garbage-man is one of the few Scrap Zombies that can travel 10 miles (16 km) beyond the range of the Transmission to find and gather spare parts.

Vulnerabilities: Standard. Remember, Scrap Zombies do not heal or Bio-Regenerate on their own. They need the help of a Stitcher or to return to the Black Obelisk for repairs.

Skills of Note (Scavenger Programming): Programmed as a specialized scavenger, Garbagemen Scrap Zombies have the following skills: Climbing 50%, Land Navigation 70%, Recognize Weapon Quality 50%, Rope Works 80%, Salvage 80%, Recycle 75%, and Tailing 70% (a subset skill of Surveillance Systems). Garbagemen zombies can use any melee weapon or blunt object, but without benefit of bonuses other than those below. No W.P. skills as such, nor any real hand to hand combat abilities.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. or weapons. Punches do 3D6 M.D., Power Punch does 6D6 M.D. but counts as two attacks, kicks do 3D6 M.D. Crush/Squeeze after grabbing a victim in a bear hug does 4D6+6 S.D.C. damage, and bites inflict 1D6 M.D.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 to strike with any blunt object or blade weapon, +1 to grab and grappling, but never tries to parry, dodge, disarm, pull punch, or roll with impact. Impervious to Horror Factor, mind-affecting magic and psionics, drugs, disease, and toxins.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Bionics/Cybernetics and Weapon Limb: None.

Weapons: None per se, though the Garbage-man may use any of its "tools" or any melee weapon or object, or hunk of scrap, nearby, even body parts, as blunt weapons.

Armor: Usually medium to heavy. M.D.C. by Location always takes into consideration the type and amount of armor grafted and bolted onto the Scrap Zombie's body.

Equipment (Special): 1D6 twenty foot (6.1 m) lengths of rope or cord, 1D4 ten foot (3 m) lengths of chain, 1D6 large sacks, 1D4 large tarps, a backpack or satchel with the following tools: a sledgehammer (does 2D4 M.D. in addition to the Supernatural P.S. of a Garbage-man), crowbar (1D6 M.D.), a pry bar, bolt cutter, meat hook (1D4 M.D.), one large screwdriver, one

Vibro-Knife (1D6 M.D.) and one Vibro-Sword (3D6 M.D.; giant-size). Most have several chains with meat hooks hung or tied around their upper body on which to hook body parts.

Enemies: The living. Never kills humanoid prey except when cornered, but may kidnap those sick and dying, and sometimes even a living person from time to time. Ties them up and carries them off, usually for a Stitcher who wants a "live" person for parts. Likewise, a Garbage-man will wait, like a vulture or banshee, for people on the battlefield or in sick wards to die before taking them for parts.

Allies: Can command as many as 8 Chaos Zombies to carry salvage and transport it back to the Black Obelisk. It recognizes other Scrap Zombies as non-combatants, Chaos Zombies as pack mules, and Reapers, Stitchers, Soldier Boys, and Living Dead Girls as allies.

Garbagemen usually travel alone or in small groups out of the way of larger Dead Mobs and zombie swarms. By following behind a zombie swarm, the Garbagemen can gather salvage from the carnage and death they leave in their wake. Garbagemen are usually encountered as a lone individual or a pair. If there are more than two, it is almost always as a group of Scrap Zombies with 4-8 Garbagemen, one or more Stitchers, 1D6 Soldier Boys defending the Stitcher(s), plus 1D4 other Scrap Zombies (one of which is almost certainly a Reaper).

Habitat: Point of origin is Madison, Wisconsin, where the Black Obelisk is located and the invasion originates. All Scrap Zombies are created inside the Black Obelisk and extend outward into the world to the edge of the Transmission's current broadcast range.

Garbage-man Salvage Table

Roll or choose twice on the following table for random determination of what a Garbage-man maybe be carrying. Often it is an array of body parts, but there might also be supplies the living can use, such as weapons, tools, E-Clips and bionic components. It is also good to know what the enemy wants so can you deprive them of it and take down their supply lines. G.M.s should feel free to decide on any particular combination of items they desire from the list below or otherwise.

01-05% Helmets and Cyborg Heads: 4D4 helmets, half still have the heads inside of them. There are also 1D4 cyborg or robot heads or bionic weapon limbs.

06-10% Human Legs: 2D6+4 humanoid legs of various sizes and in various states of decomposition.

11-15% Human Arms: 2D6+6 human limbs of various sizes and in various states of decomposition.

16-20% Human Bodies: 1D4 mostly whole human bodies in various states of decomposition.

21-25% Human Torsos: 1D6+2 human torsos without heads, arms and legs (or only stubs for limbs). They are caked in blood, torn, and battered.

26-30% Bionic Limbs and Parts: A mixture of 2D6 cyborg or robot arms, 1D6 legs, and 2D6 cybernetic parts covered in blood and still attached to hunks of flesh or bone as if they were hacked out of a body.

31-35% Armored Limbs: 1D4 armored torsos with arms attached, probably NEMA. Plus 2D4 loose arms and 1D4+1 legs all wearing armor, and an additional 1D6 CDS Soldier Robot arms or D-Bee arms, or two mostly whole NEMA Soldier robots.

36-40% Armor Clad Human Torsos: 1D4+1 human torsos with heads, but no arms and legs, still wearing M.D.C. body armor and 1D6 bloodstained helmets. In the alternative, there are 1D4+2 suits of NEMA body armor inside the sack, all are caked in blood and gore.

41-45% Scrap: Bloody sheets and shards of metal, along with pieces of pipes and other metal components such as gears, pistons, motors, nuts and bolts, screws, levers, wiring, circuit boards, etc. Characters who can Salvage or Recycle are sure to find something good.

46-50% Mega-Damage Weapons and Ammo: 3D6 NEMA or military grade rifles and 3D6+6 E-Clips. In the alternative, the weapons could be 2D6 pistols, 2D6 Vibro-Blades, and 2D6 E-Clips, or 2D4 rail guns, 1D4 ammo drums and 1D6 E-Clips, or a similar combination of M.D. weapons.

51-60% S.D.C. Weapons and Ammo: 2D6+6 NEMA or military grade assault rifles and/or shotguns, 2D6x100 rounds of ammunition and 1D6 E-Clips. In the alternative, there could be twice as many civilian rifles, or a couple of medium or heavy machine-guns and 1D6 rifles or shotguns and 3D6x100 rounds of machine-gun ammunition.

61-65% Batteries: 3D6 large batteries probably taken from a car, truck, or other vehicle and 1D6 E-Clips. Or there may be 1D6 small NEMA robots or their fusion power supplies. Any could be jury-rigged to power a generator, lights or a hot water heater.

66-70% Electronics: Wiring, circuit boards, cell phones, computers, computer parts, monitors, camera/surveillance systems, radios, microchips, receivers and transmitters, etc. 1D4 bloodstained arms or legs are also inside the sack.

71-75% Cybernetics or Robot Components: A few bionic or robot arms and legs, and components like bionic/robotic weapons, radios, computer, radar systems, monitors, data jacks, gyrocompasses, and so on, ripped out of its original owner's body. Many are splattered or caked in blood.

76-80% D-Bee Body Parts: 1D4 D-Bee torsos, 2D6 muscular arms, 2D4 legs, and 1D6 D-Bee heads; or 1D4 mostly whole bodies. Only one or two have blood splattered armor. 1D4 bloodstained arms or legs are also inside the sack. All items are caked in blood and gore.

81-85% Explosive Ordnance: 5D6+6 hand grenades, 1D6 Fusion Blocks (or 5D6 lbs of M.D. plastique explosive), 2D6 mini-missiles (or 1D6 short-range missiles) and 1D6 E-Clips. 1D6 bloodstained arms and legs are also inside the sack. All items are caked in blood and gore.

86-90% Chemicals: Containers of dangerous chemicals such as gasoline, napalm, acids, machine grease, toxic waste, etc.

91-95% Radioactive Material: 1D4 power supplies salvaged from power armor or military vehicles. It will register on any sensor as being emitting harmful radiation. Who knows what the zombies want it for.

96-00% Live Prisoners: A Stitcher must want fresh body parts for some purpose, because there are one or two live people bound and stuffed inside a sack. Such prisoners are likely to be in shock or scared out of their minds. If children or teens, and female, one or both could be a *Living Dead Girl* intended for infiltration and sabotage of the local survivors' camp or NEMA operations.

Headbanger

The Headbanger is a monstrosity on par with the Walking Nightmare in its frightful appearance, and much worse when it comes to its capacity to kill and wreak havoc. It is a gruesome juggernaut of destruction which functions primarily as an armored shock trooper. When in a mixed group of *Soldier Boys*, *Reapers*, and other *Scrap Zombies*, the presence of one or more Headbangers ups the ante several fold. Headbangers seldom travel among the slow and vulnerable Chaos Zombies, but frequently fight alongside other combat Scrap Zombies. Like the Soldier Boys, Reapers, and Scorchers, Headbangers are anti-armor units that focus their attacks on armored troops, power armor forces, cyborgs, robots, and armored vehicles. That said, they are still programmed to hunt and kill the living - when armored opponents are not available, Headbangers slaughter ordinary people and do so with terrifying efficiency.

The body of the Headbanger is always that of a large D-Bee such as a Tirrvol (9-13 feet/2.7 to 4 m tall) or utilizes two human bodies fused together and enlarged by 10-30% via dark magic. The massive body is always heavily armored, so much so that at first glance you might think the monstrosity is a strange variety of robot or cyborg. Closer inspection reveals a great amount of the clockwork construction is made of scrap, right down to armored shoulder pads spiked with shards of metal or even support bars from M.D.C. concrete which are the length of short swords. Only a tiny percentage incorporates actual bionics or mechanical body parts, the rest a clever hodgepodge of armor covering the massive corpse. Everything about the Headbanger is designed to invoke terror, from its horrifying appearance and size to its array of weapons to the sounds it makes and the music it plays.

Built into the ribs are speakers that blast pounding or ominous music whenever the Headbanger engages in combat or when it is in hot pursuit of a particular target. Although the Black Obelisk preloads many with salvaged music popular before the Great Cataclysm, which is disturbing in the dissonance it creates against the shattered ruins of that world, often the sounds are alien and maddeningly strange. Sometimes its formidable weapons are fired to the beat of the music, or the creature moves with the music. Both create a surreal vision that is unnerving and terrifying. Blaring music as other zombies try to tear through defensive walls, or the music getting louder and louder as the zombie horde gets closer are both psychological torture. So is the music blaring around the clock while zombie hordes have humans penned in or surrounded. Sleep for the living is often impossible and nerves become raw under relentless psychological assault. Civilians may panic and riot in an attempt to flee and in the process leave doors and gates open or strategic locations unprotected, endangering the very people the soldiers are trying to protect. Likewise, even hardened soldiers may break under the persistent assault, leave their posts, or make mistakes.

The most dangerous feature of the Headbanger is the cluster of four armored heads: one mounted on a neck and three other, human-sized heads mounted in housings on the chest. To stop this behemoth, you must destroy ALL four heads (or the massive amount of M.D.C. of its Main Body). Moreover, when any of the heads are destroyed, they can be replaced by a Stitcher or a Garbageman! Yes, even the Garbageman can tear away the remains



of a destroyed head from the chest of a Headbanger and push a new, severed head and neck into its place. As long as the head comes from an active zombie, it magically fuses to the body and becomes a new functioning head. The Headbanger often selects the head it wants, cutting it off the head of a Chaos Zombie or even a Scrap Zombie.

The primary head is in the typical spot for humanoids, atop the torso and between the shoulders. If the body is that of a D-Bee, the head may match the body, but not necessarily. Below it, in the chest, are three additional heads, all armored, snarling, and screaming for blood. Anyone who gets too close or tries to grapple with the monster is assailed by the gnashing heads as well as the ear-piercing noise coming from the speakers located below them. All three heads are constantly chattering, biting at the air, moaning, or even screaming (especially during combat). At quieter moments, they growl, grumble and softly moan.

Integrated into the primary head is a heavy or long-range weapon. Perhaps for no reason other than availability, the most common weapon used is the laser from the *NEMA HX-288 Street Tornado hovercycle*. Located on both sides of the laser are small, short-range lasers such as those found on the *NEMA Combat Hound robot* to provide additional firepower. Destroying this head also destroys all energy weapons attached to it.

The left hand and forearm is always a giant mechanical pincer or chainsaw used to tear down fences and barricades, breach defensive walls, chop through doors, and tear through the thick armor of vehicles, robots, and power armor to get to the people inside. The right hand is usually replaced by 6-9 lengths of heavy chains used like a whip or flail which does devastating damage in close combat.

Like most Chaos and Scrap Zombies, the Headbanger is a hunter-killer drone assigned to slaughter all humanoid life. It has the same simple and direct combat program as the *Soldier Boy* and most of the zombies, focusing on armored prey first before it moves on to softer targets.

Headbanger Scrap Zombie

Also Known As: Behemoth, Chains, and Pincer Zombie.

Alignment: Considered Diabolic.

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D4+4, P.S. 1D4+25 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D4+9, P.E. 1D4+14 (Supernatural, never tires), P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D4+6 (double Spd if legs are bionic, a rarity); all other attributes not applicable.

M.D.C. by Location:

- ** Main Head & Laser (1, top) – 1D6x10+30
- * Additional Heads (3, chest) – 4D6+30 each
- * Speakers (4) – 1D4 each
- * Shoulder Spikes (2D6+10 per shoulder) – 4 each
- * Armored Arms (2) – 1D6x10+60 each
- * Weapon Hand (Right): Chains (or Weapon Arm) – 1D6x10+60
- * Weapon Hand (Left): Mechanical Pincer (or chainsaw) – 1D6x10+40
- Armored Legs (2) – 1D6x10+80 each
- ** Main Body (Heavy Armor) – 2D6x10+90
- * A single asterisk indicates a small or difficult target to strike, and requires a “Called Shot” to hit. Even then the shooter strikes with a penalty of -3 to strike.
- ** Destroy the main head and you also destroy all of the lasers. However, until the other three heads or Main Body is

reduced to zero, the Headbanger continues to attack without penalty. Every time one head is destroyed, one of the others takes control of the body to keep going.

(**Note:** On S.D.C. worlds, the zombie has S.D.C. and S.D.C. Armor at the point value listed above. No Hit Points as it is dead.)

Horror Factor (H.F.): Horror Factor of 14 for 1-4 Headbangers. H.F. 16 for a small group of 6-12 Headbangers. H.F. 17 when facing 16-42 of them or that number mixed with another 100-240 Scrap Zombies or a Dead Mob of several hundred zombies (mixed group).

Size: 9-13 feet (2.7 to 4 m) and constructed from a large D-Bee like a Tirrvol or Grackle Tooth, or two human bodies fused together and enlarged via the magic of the Black Obelisk.

Weight: Varies depending on size and the amount of armor and augmentation. Typically 400-1,000 pounds (180 to 450 kg).

Average Life Span: Scrap Zombies exist until destroyed or as long as the Transmission keeps playing. Through dark magic and constant repair by Stitchers and the Black Obelisk, this threat can keep going indefinitely.

Level of Experience: Not applicable. Zombies do not learn nor grow with experience; they are drones.

P.P.E.: None, they are dead.

Natural Abilities: Standard, same as the Chaos Zombie with the following exceptions: Immense size, great strength and an array of built-in weapons. See Weapons for details.

Vulnerabilities: Standard. Remember, Scrap Zombies do not heal or Bio-Regenerate on their own. They need the help of a Stitcher or to return to the Black Obelisk for repairs.

Skills of Note (Combat Programming): Programmed as hunter-killers with the following skills: Climbing 10%, Land Navigation 60%, Recognize Weapon Quality 60%, Salvage 50%, Tracking skill of 40% when trying to follow the trail of human prey, Weapon Systems 40%, and the equivalent of Hand to Hand Combat: Basic. Headbangers don’t usually have hands with fingers or thumbs and can NOT use any melee weapons or guns, only the weapons built into them, biting and pummeling attacks. No W.P. skills as such.

When necessary, the Transmission may order its zombies to recover electronics, wiring, weapons, cybernetic, bionics, weapons (all), M.D.C. armor, scrap metal and other M.D.C. materials and bring them to the Obelisk. In the case of the Headbanger, it is most likely to tear armor and components out of power armor, robots and vehicles for other zombies to take back to the Black Obelisk while it waits for more targets to kill or destroy. Headbangers only return to the Obelisk when commanded to do so or when it needs new weapon limbs.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. or weapons. Punches do 3D6 M.D., Power Punch does 6D6 M.D. but counts as two attacks, kicks do 2D6 M.D., and bites inflict 1D6 M.D. *Also see Weapons, below.*

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 to strike with any of its built-in melee weapons or guns, +1 to parry, but never tries to dodge, pull punch, or roll with impact. Impervious to Horror Factor, mind-affecting magic and psionics, drugs, disease, and toxins.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Weapons:

1. LHX-288 Rapid-Fire Pulse Laser (1; main head): Built into the well armored helmet of the main head is the laser from the NEMA HX-288 *Street Tornado hovercycle*. Wherever the Headbanger looks/turns its head, it can shoot. The LHX-288 Rapid-Fire Pulse Laser is a single-barreled laser with good range and is capable of inflicting serious damage, especially from pulse attacks. **Note:** The zombie has a basic understanding of how of all built-in weapons work. Destroy the main head, and you destroy the laser.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Armor and Anti-Personnel.

Range: 2,000 feet (610 m).

Mega-Damage: 2D6 per single blast, 6D6 per triple pulse. Each counts as one melee attack.

Bonus: +1 to strike with lasers. An additional +1 to strike at close range (within 100 feet/30.5 m).

Rate of Fire: May fire a single blast or pulse (three triple blasts for greater damage); each shot or pulse counts as one melee attack.

Payload: 120 single blasts AND 40 rapid-fire pulse blasts. Magically regenerates at a rate of 20 single blasts and 10 pulse blasts per hour; double when in a Blue Zone.

2. Short-Range Lasers (4; two on each side of main head): Pirated from the NEMA *Combat Hound* robot and located on each side of the main head laser (described above) sit a pair of small, short-range lasers for use against humanoid troops and close combat. They can fire wherever the Headbanger looks. **Note:** The zombie has a basic understanding of how of all built-in weapons work. Destroy the main head, and you destroy these lasers.

Primary Purpose: Assault and defense.

Range: Laser: 300 feet (91.4 m).

Mega-Damage: 2D4 M.D. from a dual blast from one pair or 4D4 per simultaneous blast firing at the same target from both pairs of lasers (4 lasers firing).

Rate of Fire: Single shot or dual blast counts as one melee attack.

Payload: 120 single dual blasts (2D4 M.D.) or 60 quadruple blasts. Magically regenerates at a rate of 20 single blasts and 10 pulse blasts per hour; double when in a Blue Zone.

3. Pincer Hand (1): The left hand and forearm is always a giant mechanical *pincer* or *chainsaw* used to tear down fences and barricades, breach defensive walls, chop through doors and tear through the armor of vehicles, robots and power armor to get to the people inside.

Range: Melee combat with a reach of 7 or 8 feet (2.1 or 2.4 m).

Mega-Damage (includes Supernatural P.S.): 3D6 M.D. from a blunt strike. 6D6 M.D. from a scissor cut, slashing or stabbing attack, always 6D6 M.D. if a chainsaw. If the hand is destroyed, it must be rebuilt at the Black Obelisk.

4. Chain or Weapon Hand (1; right): Half of the time, the right hand is replaced with 6-9 lengths of heavy chains used like a whip or flail. The impact of the incredibly heavy chains do devastating damage (see 01-50% on the table, below). If the hand is destroyed, it must be rebuilt at the Black Obelisk.

The rest of the time the right weapon arm is some sort of weapon limb (see *Table below*) built right into the arm and may be a simple melee weapon (see *Soldier Boy*) or a modern weapon (use table below) with its own power supply and/or payload for weapons. In the case of rail guns, an ammo belt leads from a drum on the Headbanger's back. A Stitcher or Garbagegeman may reload expended weapon payloads, E-Clips and ammo drums, but the Headbanger cannot do this for itself. (When out of ammo,

it will attempt to seek out a Garbagegeman or return to the Black Obelisk.)

Headbanger Weapon Limb Table: Roll Percentile once or pick one of the following to determine the monster's weapon arm.

01-50% Heavy Chains (6-9): Chain or Weapon Hand (1): The right hand is often made of 6-9 heavy chains used like a whip or flail. The incredibly heavy chains do devastating damage. Range: Melee combat with a reach of 8 or 9 feet (2.4 or 2.7 m). Mega-Damage (includes Supernatural P.S.): 1D6 M.D. for each chain. Six Chains = 6D6+6 M.D. per strike, seven = 1D4x10+6, eight = 1D4x10+10 M.D. and nine chains = 1D6x10+6 M.D.

51-60% NEMA PR-470 "Hot Seat" Plasma Rifle: Mega-Damage: 6D6 M.D. Range: 1,600 feet (488 m). Payload: 120 single blasts or 60 bursts.

61-65% NEMA PR-476 "Incinerator": Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D. or 1D6x10 M.D. Range: 1,800 feet (549 m). Payload: 100 single blasts or 49 bursts.

66-70% NEMA R-660 "Striker" Rail Gun: Mega-Damage: 2D6 M.D. or 4D6 M.D., Range: 3,000 feet (914 m), Payload: 120 light bursts or 60 heavy bursts.

71-75% NEMA R-670 "Lightning": Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D. or 1D4x10 M.D. Range: 3,000 feet (914 m). Payload: 100 single shots or 50 bursts.

76-80% NEMA MX-422 Laser Cannon (a pair): Mega-Damage: 1D4x10+2 M.D., Range: 4,000 feet (1,219 m). Payload: 40

81-85% USA-40R Rail Gun: Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D. or 1D6x10 M.D. Range: 4,000 feet (1,219 m). Payload: 100 short bursts or 50 heavy bursts, Bonus: Not applicable.

86-90% Mini-Missile Launcher: Mega-Damage: 1D4x10 M.D. (armor piercing is standard, but any can be fired). Range: one mile (1.6 m). Rate of Fire: One at a time. Payload: 12.

91-95% NEMA ML-557 "Destroyer": Mega-Damage: 1D6x10 M.D. (plasma mini-missile is standard payload, but can fire any). Range: one mile (1.6 m). Payload: 24.

96-00% RG-14 "Boom Gun": Mega-Damage: 3D6x10 M.D. per blast. Range: 11,000 feet (3,352 m or about 2 miles/3.2 km). Payload: 1D4x100+300 rounds/blasts. Side-Effect: Each blast counts as three melee attacks because it either knocks the zombie down or backward 1D4x10 yards (meters). **Note:** All Scrap Zombies are impervious to the effects of the Sonic Boom.

Armor: Always heavily armored. M.D.C. by Location takes into consideration the type and amount of armor grafted and bolted onto the Scrap Zombie's body.

Enemies: The living.

Allies: None per se. Recognizes Chaos Zombies as non-combatants and most other Scrap Zombies as allies, particularly *Amped Zombies*, *Reapers*, *Scorchers*, *Soldier Boys*, *Toxic Vomitous*, *Walking Nightmares*, *Stitchers*, and *Garbagegemen*. Encountering 1D4+2 Headbangers together, or 1D6 Headbangers with 1D6 Soldier Boys and/or 1D4 Reaper or other specialized Scrap Zombies listed above, becomes increasingly common the longer it takes to knock out the Black Obelisk. Programmed as soldier drones, Headbangers automatically fight to protect the Black Obelisk, their creator, Marcel Le-Merchand, as well as Stitchers and Garbagegemen.

Habitat: Point of origin is Madison, Wisconsin, where the Black Obelisk is located and the invasion originates. All Scrap Zombies are created inside the Black Obelisk and extend outward into the world to the edge of the Transmission's current broadcast range.



Living Dead Girl

It wasn't until the discovery of these cleverly-designed creatures that NEMA officers realized that the zombies were coming from an intelligent source. The concept is so devious that it simply could not have come about on its own, or even as an accidental byproduct of the Blue Zones. No, wherever the resurrected were coming from, it had to be by the design of an intelligent creator, something of incredible power, but also possessing knowledge of human intellect and empathy.

Living Dead Girls look and act like normal, regular, living people – usually a child (5-10 years old), preteen (11-12), or teenager (12-19 years). They are used for the purposes of deception, infiltration, ambush, and murder. A common ploy is for the zombie to pose as a shell-shocked or frightened civilian survivor, staring out with glazed (dead) eyes, crying or babbling in terror, or acting grateful and relieved at being rescued, or any other number of responses rescuers would expect from trauma. The Living Dead Girl's behavior is pre-programmed and totally false. Despite its name, the creature is not actually alive, and is not actually thinking or feeling anything. It is designed to look "alive" and it pretends to be a traumatized victim.

During the reconstruction process inside the Black Obelisk, only the most undamaged, attractive, and life-like Chaos Zombies are candidates for utilization as Living Dead Girls. Necromancy magic is used to preserve their human features and the appearance of life. Most are children or teens because adults of both sexes tend to be paternal and protective of the young and weak in need of help. Though not very common, sometimes an

elderly woman who could be anyone's dear old grandmother is used as a Living Dead Girl.

These zombies have the most well-preserved and active brains in order to give them the most human-like behavior and thinking capacity of any Scrap Zombie. Living Dead Girls can formulate good deceptions and fairly complicated plans (at least for a zombie), and have a greater range of skills. Even so, they are little more than robots mimicking humans and lack imagination, creativity, and empathy. Still, they can pull off a façade of humanity and often successfully infiltrate human encampments. A ploy helped along by the fact that they are programmed to behave as if they are in shock, traumatized and in need of help. Nobody looks too closely at a frightened child or traumatized civilian. They don't question when the zombie dully responds to them with phrases like "I don't remember," "I don't know," "it happened so fast," "I want my Mommy. Where's my Mommy?" or "please help me," "don't let them get me," and "I'm so scared," followed by tears and/or a rocking motion common to psychological trauma.

Tears and an emotional breakdown are always an excellent deterrent to answering questions, as nobody wants to harass a child or shell-shocked survivor. Likewise, blank stares, poor communication, repetition of the same phrase are all common to shock and trauma. ("I don't remember." "I'm sorry, I ... I don't know." "I don't know." "I don't know.") Worse, even soldiers let their guard down around children, especially when the youngster seems innocent, frightened and polite. ("Thank you for saving

me.” “Thank you for the blanket.” “Thank you, yes.” “I’m sorry, no.” “You’re really nice.” “I was so scared.”) Those not acquainted with Living Dead Girls frequently let their guard down, holster their weapons so as to not scare the poor ‘person,’ and may even try to comfort the child with a hug – leaving themselves open to attack.

Planning and subterfuge remains very limited, but the Living Dead Girl only needs to pretend to be human and helpless long enough to get herself inside barricades, behind the walls of defense, and into refugee camps and military outposts. Once inside, the innocent looking monster does its dirty work. That may include gathering basic intelligence, acts of murder, and sabotage from within.

Intelligence gathering is likely to include things like how many soldiers are present, where their supplies/ammo/armor are located, morale and state of mind, location of doors and sentries, etc.

Acts of murder are usually directed at specific targets and personnel such as sentries, medical staff, communications officers, leaders, and so on. Murder may coincide with sabotage – e.g. kill the guard and unlock the door or gate, or kill the radio operator and destroy the radio, and so on.

Sabotage may be something as simple as unlocking the backdoor or gate so other zombies can gain easy access, hiding an obviously important object (radio, keys, notebook, gun, etc.), trashing important machines (computers, water filters, refrigerators, weapons, vehicles, etc.), contaminating medical supplies, and so on.

Living Dead Girls may even kidnap children and leave them in dangerous places or where rescuers can be ambushed by Scrap Zombies or other monsters. A similar trick involves leading a group of rescuers (soldiers or first responders/medics) to an area where there are allegedly other survivors - only to ambush them with other zombies. They may also be the advanced scouts for a large swarm of Scrap Zombies trying to locate survivors to attack en masse.

The most terrible and devastating act of sabotage and murder is creating a zombie outbreak from inside a compound or secure location that is inside the range of the Transmission. This always undermines operations, creates panic, and with a little luck and cunning on the part of the Living Dead Girl, can actually wipe out the encampment or military base.

When it’s time for this tactic, the Living Dead Girl usually targets the easiest victims first – killing other children, injured and sick people, the elderly, the unsuspecting doctors, nurses and first responders, followed by civilians in general, before starting to pick off armed personnel. Since the plan is to create a zombie outbreak from within, it first kills people who are not likely to be missed or found dead quickly, as it takes 4D6+10 minutes for the corpse of a slain individual to be resurrected as a *Chaos Zombie*. If one or two zombies are discovered too soon, they and the threat are easily dispatched. A dozen or several dozen zombies appearing unexpectedly at different locations causes serious trouble, as they are likely to slay many other people, creating more zombies with every kill.

Living Dead Girls are experts at these types of operations. They usually wait to attack when others are not around or looking. Once their victim is dead, the zombie girl slips away and hides until it can find its next opportunity to kill. If it is prudent to hide the dead body, the monster does that first.

These zombie assassin-infiltrators can determine fairly obvious escape routes, find many hiding places (helped by their small size), and formulate strategies to pick off the living one by one. Living Dead Girls are able to recognize and use keys and keycards, know how to open doors and access (but not drive) vehicles and weapons lockers. They also recognizes *key words* on signs and documents, and know the importance and meaning of words such as “Danger,” “Keep Out,” “Confidential,” “Employees Only,” “Entrance,” “Exit,” “Communications,” “Radio,” “Hospital,” “Pharmacy,” “Laboratory,” “Munitions,” “Closet,” “Storage” and similar.

They are excellent at *hide and seek* and *hit and run tactics*, as well as pretending confusion, injury or hysteria to throw suspicion off of themselves. When a traumatized child says “I’m sorry, I’m lost,” to explain why she is someplace she doesn’t belong, most people accept it. When the monster is found covered in the blood of its latest victim(s), feigned shock and hysteria works like a dream. In between sobs the creature may sob – “It... it... was horrible. In the lab... it’s still there. Killed the nice man. This is his blood. Oh, God! This is his blood!!” If the person who finds the blood splattered child is alone and goes to pick her up to carry her to safety, it attacks, probably by biting and ripping out his throat or using a concealed weapon! It is a Scrap Zombie, after all. If the person is kneeling and looks away, the zombie child lunges forward to rip out his throat or bite a hand, wrist or any area of exposed flesh, or knock him down and beat him to death with tiny fists powered by Supernatural Strength.

Again, pretending to be traumatized or frightened is an excellent deception that can help the murdering zombie escape (“Here, take the girl to the sick bay or the shelter.”) It may also help it find its next victim(s). In an empty hallway on the way to wherever it is being taken, the Living Dead Girl attacks and kills the person escorting it to safety. Or not. Being taken to sick bay or a shelter may be exactly what the monster wants: to be placed among civilians it can slaughter!

Nobody thinks twice about placing an innocent, terrified or traumatized child in a hospital ward, ambulance or truck with other injured refugees or other children — all of whom are now potential victims. If there are no guards, soldiers or personnel near enough to hear the screams, the Living Dead Girl could slaughter them all. It might start in the back and quietly start killing as it works its way forward, or it may launch into a killing spree, slaying everyone who comes within its deadly reach.

It’s always careful to cut off the exits whenever possible, to maximize the number of people it can kill. Unless people rush the door and push past it to escape, some dying in the process, it will try to take them all down, one and two at a time. Rushing the Living Dead Girl gives the majority their best hope of survival. If NEMA personnel return soon enough, they might find a truck or room full of dead bodies. If they return 4D6+10 minutes later, they find a truck or room full of Chaos Zombies that immediately attack.

And where is the Living Dead Girl? It may be among the zombies, but if it can slip away before being discovered, it will. That’s what these infiltrating pretenders do. And it’s smart enough to toss away the bloody clothing, clean itself up and find new clothes to wear, or concoct a story about how it played dead and escaped when the zombie wasn’t looking. Of course it conveniently ‘doesn’t know’ how the zombie got in or where it went.

Even when the monster is revealed, a Living Dead Girl that manages to escape is likely to hide, wait awhile and continue to stalk people in the community like a serial killer, staying close to its prey and picking them off. As a zombie, a Living Dead Girl doesn't know fear or loneliness, nor does it need any sleep, food or breathable air. The monster is likely to do most of its killing at night when few people are awake and kill others while they sleep. The killing continues until it is cornered or tracked down and destroyed. A task that is easier said than done, as the diminutive killing machines can crawl through air ducts and hide in places adults can not fit, as well as places uninhabitable for humans (too hot, too cold, toxic, etc.).

Remember, even Living Dead Girls who are small children possess Supernatural Strength, so their punches and bites do serious damage (2D6 S.D.C./Hit Points from a bite, 4D6 S.D.C. from a punch and 1D4 M.D. on a power punch!). And most Living Dead Girls have one or more concealed melee weapons they use to fight and kill, or grab a melee weapon, a pair of scissors or a tool to use as a weapon.

All of this is performed on a skill level roughly equivalent to a twisted and sadistic nine year old, regardless of the zombie's apparent age or size. Anything more complicated or with too many steps is beyond them, but it doesn't need to be complicated - just diabolically simple and effective.

The outward appearance of the Living Dead Girl is a normal youngster. Though these Scrap Zombies look a bit pale and thin, many survivors look the same since the Great Cataclysm started. No one is eating well, and those left to the mercy of the elements and the throngs of monsters and aliens that have entered our world often look pale and gaunt. Many also suffer from shock, exposure, malnutrition and other maladies that make people look sickly. In short, Living Dead Girls easily pass for survivors lost in the ruins.

Living Dead Girls are chosen from among only the youngest and prettiest resurrected corpses. Most tend to look between 10-20 years of age. They are seldom younger or older than this and are always female. Living Dead Girls are not visibly stitched together or reconstructed in any obvious way.

NEMA troops have been regularly caught off-guard by this infiltration zombie and are slowly discovering that Living Dead Girls are among the most dangerous of all Scrap Zombies. Psychics, spell casters and Demon & Witch Hunters have the best shot at rooting out Living Dead Girls from among the living.

Living Dead Girl Scrap Zombie Stats

Also Known As: Pretender Zombie, Infiltrators, Zombie Girls and Bitch Saboteur.

Alignment: Considered Diabolic.

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D4+6, P.S. 1D4+10 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D4+10, P.E. 1D6+10 (Supernatural, never tires), P.B. 1D6+14, Spd 1D4+8; all other attributes not applicable.

M.D.C. by Location: Takes into consideration the type of zombie and lack of armor for Living Dead Girls.

Head - 1D6+16

Arms and Hands (2) - 1D4+9 each

Legs and Feet (2) - 1D6+15 each

Concealed Blade Weapon (varies, 1-3) - 25 each

Bionic Mechanism (typically 1) - 50

Main Body - 1D4x10+10 (add +20 to those older than 16).

(**Note:** On S.D.C. worlds, the zombie has S.D.C. and S.D.C. Armor at the point value listed above. No Hit Points as it is dead.)

Horror Factor: None, until one realizes they are facing a Scrap Zombie, then H.F. 12.

Size: Varies with age and the individual; generally 3-5 feet (0.9 to 1.5 m), but as tall as 6 feet (1.8 m) for some older teens and adult females.

Weight: 50-100 lbs (22.5 to 45 kg) for children and young teens. Up to 150 pounds (67.5 kg) for older teens and adult females. The contents of their stomachs and possible concealed bionics may add to their weight, which may seem strange to anyone who notices.

Average Life Span: Scrap Zombies exist until destroyed or as long as the Transmission keeps playing. Through dark magic and constant repair by Stitchers and the Black Obelisk, this threat can keep going indefinitely.

Level of Experience: Not applicable. Zombies do not learn nor grow with experience; they are combat drones.

P.P.E.: None, they are dead.

Natural Abilities: Standard, same as the Chaos Zombie with the following exceptions: Smart and more aware than most, able to deceive, hide and ambush as described above.

Travel Beyond the Transmission (Special): The Living Dead Girl is one of the few Scrap Zombies that can travel 10 miles (16 km) beyond the range of the Transmission to infiltrate and gather intelligence or engage in sabotage.

Vulnerabilities: Standard. Remember, Scrap Zombies do not heal or Bio-Regenerate on their own. They need the help of a Stitcher or to return to the Black Obelisk for repairs.

Skills of Note (Infiltration and Combat Programming): Programmed as an infiltrator, saboteur and assassin, Living Dead Girls have the following skills: Climbing 40%, Disguise 50%, Hide 72% (a sub-skill of Prowl), Impersonation (of a living person and innocent victim only) 70%, Intelligence 40%, Land Navigation 60%, Literacy: Native 40%, Prowl 66%, Recognize Weapon Quality 60%, Tracking 40% when trying to follow the trail of human prey (+10% to follow blood trail), Wardrobe and Grooming 60%, and the equivalent of Hand to Hand Combat: Expert (5th level). Living Dead Girls can use any melee weapon and handguns, but without benefit of bonuses other than those from Hand to Hand: Expert. No W.P. skills as such.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. or weapons. Punches and kicks do 4D6 S.D.C., power punch does 1D4 M.D. but counts as two attacks, and bites inflict 1D6 S.D.C. or one M.D. for a power bite.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 to strike with any type of weapon, +1 to parry and dodge, but never tries to roll with impact. Impervious to Horror Factor, mind-affecting magic and psionics, drugs, disease and toxins.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Bionic Weapons and Cybernetics: No cybernetics with the possible exception of cosmetic cybernetic enhancements or cyber-disguise, but half of the Living Dead Girls have a simple, concealed bionic melee weapon in one or both arms, or one in the back.

The most common is a concealed, extendible blade weapon in each arm and/or hand. The weapon tears through the dead flesh of fingertips, knuckles or the arms to reveal blade-like **finger claws** (adds 1D6 S.D.C. damage or an additional 1 M.D. to a power punch), **knuckle spikes** (adds 2D4 S.D.C. damage or an additional 2 M.D. to a power punch), or a **forearm blade** (adds 2D6 S.D.C. damage or an additional 1D4 M.D. to a power punch). The weapons may be made of M.D.C. material or be a Vibro-Blade.

Of those which have bionic weapons, 20% have a large, bionic killing mechanism that functions like a stinger or third arm. It extends from the back to unexpectedly slice through the clothing (and skin if concealed under the flesh) to cut and stab unsuspecting victims. It inflicts 2D6 M.D. This lethal Living Dead Girl is also likely to have one forearm or hand weapon as well.

Weapons: See bionics, above, for possible bionic weapons, but all have two daggers or a dagger and an ice pick stowed inside their bellies! The weapons are inserted inside their dead stomachs before being dispatched for duty. The little darling gains access to the weapons by cutting herself open or poking a small hole in its stomach large enough to stick its hand inside, feel around and remove the weapon! The Living Dead Girl is strong enough to push its hand, or punch, through its flesh to reach the weapons. Since it is dead, the girl feels no pain and there is little to no blood, but it is a gruesome sight to witness (H.F. 15). These weapons are never discovered unless the child is X-rayed or carefully examined, but by that point, it is probably too late, it is armed and attacking.

Living Dead Girls can use any simple melee weapons from scissors and hammers to swords and guns they find handy. Though this zombie can fire guns, it discards the weapon when it runs out of ammunition, never reloads. For whatever reason, Living Dead Girls seem to prefer blade weapons.

Armor: None! Always dressed in ordinary civilian clothing.

Enemies: The living.

Allies: Though the Living Dead Girl may engage in actions that allow other zombies to attack, and may fight alongside of them from time to time, it almost always works alone or with one to three other Living Dead Girls or a couple of Boogeymen or a Brain Melter. Such groups are referred to as “sororities.” That said, a Living Dead Girl can get up to 2D6 Chaos Zombies, usually those newly risen victims of its killings, to follow it, go where it points, attack on command, stay like a dog when commanded to do so, and to stay at a particular location until it calls them or the living arrive (at which point the Chaos Zombies attack them).

Habitat: Anywhere, including hiding in plain sight among the living, usually survivors in ruins or refugee camps.



Reaper

Reapers cut a swath of death through the survivors of Chaos Earth. Whether they are dead cyborgs reanimated under the Transmission’s influence or just armored in such a way that they look like one is uncertain. All Reapers are constructed along similar lines, one hand replaced by a large, scythe-like hooked blade, the other with long, straight knives for fingers. Their entire bodies are covered in a series of contoured plates which make them look as if they are mostly machine, but underneath the heavy plates is a human torso, neck and head. Most of one arm is also usually present.

Reapers need very little complex programming, as they are savage hunter-killers unleashed to wreak mayhem and deliver death to the living. They spill out of the Black Obelisk in large numbers, used as heavy combat troops eager to separate heads from living bodies and carve open power armor, vehicles, and fortifications.

Reapers may be considered the equivalent of cyborgs or power armor among the Scrap Zombies. They are often seen among Soldier Boys and leading the charge against armored enemies. Reapers are programmed to specifically target and take down power armor, robots, and armored combat vehicles and are always on the lookout for such units. It is not uncommon to see a squad of 1D6+4 Reapers bound right past regular NEMA soldiers or a mob of civilians to lay into Chromium Guardsmen and even tanks. They are even known to scale the sides of buildings and leap haphazardly off rooftops to try and snatch Silver Eagles out of the sky or cripple their flight capabilities and drag them to the ground. They target wings, thrusters and weapon systems to cripple the enemy before finishing off the armored units.

Built for speed and combat, Reapers are usually seen running and leaping over debris and obstructions. Fast and deadly, they behave almost like mad dogs or berserkers hellbent on destruction. They rush forward without pause or concern for their own existence, cutting down anything that gets in their way. *Soldier Boys* with long-range attacks follow close behind, Chaos Zombies and others behind them, with Garbagemen bringing up the rear and stopping to gather, bundle, and direct Chaos Zombies to haul away material for the Black Obelisk.

When faced with a giant robot, several Reapers attack like a pack of wolves. Some leap atop the behemoth to slash away at it, while others attack the legs, belly and sides. They are superb at taking down robot vehicles in this fashion, first taking out the robot’s legs (or a vehicle’s tires, treads, hover jets), and can topple the great machines in a minute or two. They use similar tactics to cripple and then cut open tanks and military vehicles. Reapers are equally adept at chopping holes through the barbed fences, walls and fortifications of military bases, research labs, etc. to create openings for other zombies to get inside anywhere the living may be hiding. The moment a robot is down or a hole has been carved to create an opening, the Reaper is as likely to bound away looking for more armored targets.

Reaper Scrap Zombie

Also Known As: ‘Borg Zombie and Zombie Berserker.

Alignment: Considered Diabolic.

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D4+2, P.S. 1D4+20 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D4+8, P.E. 1D4+20 (Supernatural, never tires), P.B.



1D4, Spd 2D6+30 (25 mph/40 km on average); all other attributes not applicable.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 4D6+30 M.D.C. (+20 extra for a full faceplate or helmet)

* Arms (2; armored) – 3D6+40 M.D.C. each

Blade Hand (1) – 35

Scythe (1) – 75

Legs (2) – 1D6x10+50 each

Main Body – 2D6x10+80

(**Note:** On S.D.C. worlds, the zombie has S.D.C. and S.D.C. Armor at the point value listed above. No Hit Points as it is dead.)

* All Reapers have one arm with a Vibro-Scythe and one hand with finger blades. 20% also have one forearm energy weapon.

Horror Factor (H.F.): Horror Factor of 13 for a pack of 1-6 Reapers. H.F. 15 for a small group of 7-20 Reapers, H.F. 16 for 21-50, H.F. 17 for more than 50 or when combined with a Dead Mob with a few to several hundred Chaos Zombies (10-20% of which are Scrap Zombies).

Size: Human; 5-7 feet (1.5 and 2.1 m).

Weight: Varies depending on the size and the amount of armor and augmentation, but typically 300-500 pounds (135 to 225 kg).

Average Life Span: Scrap Zombies exist until destroyed or as long as the Transmission keeps playing. Through dark magic and constant repair by Stitchers and the Black Obelisk, this threat can keep going indefinitely.

Level of Experience: Not applicable. Zombies do not learn nor grow with experience; they are drones.

P.P.E.: None, they are dead.

Natural Abilities: Standard, same as the Chaos Zombie with the following exceptions:

Running (special): Reapers are *fast zombies* which run at a speed of 25-30 mph (40 to 48 km) and never tire. They can be seen sprinting and leaping across the battlefield. Climbing is performed at half speed.

Leaping (special): Reapers can leap 12 feet (3.6 m) high and 18 feet (5.5 m) across from a standing position, or 18 feet (5.5 m) high and 22 feet (6.7 m) lengthwise with a running start.

Also see Weapons, below.

Vulnerabilities: Standard. Remember, Scrap Zombies do not heal or Bio-Regenerate on their own. They need the help of a Stitcher or to return to the Black Obelisk for repairs.

Skills of Note (Combat Programming): Programmed as hunter-killers with the following skills: Climbing 75%, Land Navigation 50%, Tracking skill of 40% when trying to follow the trail of human prey (+15% to follow power armor, robots and heavy combat vehicles), and the equivalent of Hand to Hand Combat: Expert equal to 4th level. Reapers can use any melee and handheld weapon, but without benefit of bonuses other than those from Hand to Hand: Expert (equivalent to 3rd level proficiency) and those listed below. No W.P. skills as such.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. or weapons. Punches do 2D6 M.D. and a Power Punch does 4D6 M.D. but counts as two melee attacks.

Scythe strike does 3D6+3 M.D., and a power Scythe strike does 6D6+5 M.D. but counts as two melee attacks.

Blade Hand strike does 4D6 M.D. (no power punch with this attack).

Elbow strike (right arm) does 3D6 M.D.

Kicks do 2D8 M.D.

Bites inflict 2D4 M.D.

Can also do a Body Block/Tackle that does 2D4 M.D. and has a 01-70% chance of knocking opponents 9 feet (2.7 m) tall or smaller down. Victim of knockdown lose initiative and one melee action.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 to strike with built-in weapons, +3 to parry, and +2 to dodge while running. Never tries to pull punch, disarm or roll with impact. Impervious to Horror Factor, mind-affecting magic and psionics, drugs, disease and toxins.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Bionics: Bionic legs for running and leaping (see Natural Abilities).

Weapons:

Scythe Arm (1): This is a simple melee weapon that does a considerable amount of damage in the hands of a Reaper: 3D6+3 M.D. (6D6+5 M.D. from a power strike). The scythe and weapon hand are also used to scale the sides of buildings and leap upon and impaling flying power armor and slow-moving aircraft.

Blade Hand (1): The other hand has fingers tipped with long, lethal blades that do 1D4 M.D. from a single finger slash or 4D6 M.D. from a full claw strike (power punch is not possible).

Arm and Leg Blades: Anyone grabbing the right armor or upper leg suffers 1D6+2 M.D. damage from one or more of the blades that line the appendage. An elbow strike inflicts 3D6 M.D. (a power strike is not possible).

Forearm Blaster (1): Twenty percent of Reapers also have a laser or ion blaster built into one of the forearms. Lasers inflict 2D6 M.D. and have a range of 800 feet (244 m). Ion blasters inflict 3D6 M.D. and have a range of 600 feet (183 m).

Armor: Always medium or heavy armor. M.D.C. by Location takes into consideration the type and amount of armor grafted and bolted onto the Scrap Zombie's body.

Enemies: The living.

Allies: None per se. Recognizes Chaos Zombies as non-combatants and Soldier Boys, Headbangers, Stitchers, and Garbage-men as allies. They can interact with and defend other Scrap Zombies, but they are programmed to seek out and destroy power armor, robots and other armored targets. They automatically fight to protect the Black Obelisk, their creator, Marcel LeMerchand, and Stitchers. Reapers gather and travel in small squads of 2D6 and may be accompanied by 1D6 other Scrap Zombies of various types, 1D4 Reapers may travel with a squad of 3D4 Soldier Boys (or Chaos Zombies). Seldom accompany any other zombies per se, but may be among Dead Mobs and zombie swarms. However, when Reapers are off and running, few other Scrap Zombies can keep pace.

Habitat: Point of origin is Madison, Wisconsin, where the Black Obelisk is located and the invasion originates. All Scrap Zombies are created inside the Black Obelisk and extend outward into the world to the edge of the Transmission's current broadcast range. Found wherever the Transmission broadcasts.

Scorcher

The Scorcher is a simple Scrap Zombie with minimal to no armor. In fact, they may be mistaken for a Chaos Zombie until it's too late.

The concept for this zombie is simple. Shove a few mini-missiles, a short-range missile or other explosives into it, wire them to explode on contact, and BOOM – it's a walking time bomb. Exactly how the explosives are wired and how the zombie or sensor system knows when to explode is unclear, but detonation seems to happen when the Scorcher comes in close proximity to power armor, robots, armored vehicles, and NEMA troops – but not civilians. Scorchers are also used to blow holes in the walls of buildings, fences and fortifications for other zombies to pour through.

A Scorcher can be forced to detonate when its *Main Body M.D.C.* is reduced to zero or more. However, they seem to be able to detonate at will. Only zombies don't exactly have a *will*, so it remains a mystery how the sensor or detonation system works or exactly when it will go off. In many cases, the creature just shambles towards its target and either grabs hold with supernatural strength or simply gets close enough to cause damage with its explosive detonation (generally a 12 foot/3.7 m blast radius). Scorchers seldom explode among civilians, except when the zombie takes sufficient damage. It attacks ordinary people and fighters without body armor with tooth and claw, or any available melee weapon, pipe, club, a sharp piece of scrap to use as a knife or sword, etc. Energy weapons, bionics, superior armor and weapon limbs are *never* wasted on these walking bombs.

For obvious reasons, it is best to identify and take out a Scorcher from a distance, where its pre-mature detonation only inflicts damage to other zombies. That's problematic, however, because Scorchers are typically found in the middle of a Dead Mob with dozens or hundreds of other zombies. That makes it difficult to I.D. one until the horrible thing is practically on top of you. That's especially true of combat with zombies on city streets and among the ruins of buildings where there are many hiding places, twists and turns, and you don't know what lurks around the next corner or grabbing at you from behind. If a Scorcher detonates in close combat, its blast radius could kill you and your teammates, or innocent survivors, so care and caution are necessary. Likewise, one or more exploding Scorchers could damage and collapse part of a building, destroy a staircase (and a way out), wreck a vehicle, destroy valuable supplies, and so on.

NEMA forces on the offensive and pushing back against a zombie horde may suddenly find themselves forced to make a tactical retreat when faced with several Scorchers whose detonation may do great harm to them, other troops, civilians or valuable resources. An alternative to retreat may force those fighting the zombies to take risky action to cripple, take down with a headshot, lure away or isolate a pack of Scorchers in a way that avoids or minimizes casualties, but puts their own lives in danger. Another devious tactic and another clue to the sinister intelligence driving this invasion.

Scorcher Scrap Zombie

Also Known As: Boomers and Bomb Zombies.

Alignment: Considered Diabolic.

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D4+4, P.S. 1D4+16 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D4+8, P.E. 1D4+14 (Supernatural, never tires), P.B.

1D4, Spd 1D4+6 (double Spd if legs are bionic); all other attributes not applicable.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 3D6+20

Arms (2) – 1D6+12 each

Legs (2) – 2D6+14 each

* Main Body – 5D6+18

(**Note:** On S.D.C. worlds, the zombie has S.D.C. and S.D.C. Armor at the point value listed above. No Hit Points as it is dead.)

* Destroy the main body and the zombie explodes, inflicting damage to everything around it, typically within a 12 foot (3.6 m) radius. As a rule, the main body and head of the Scorcher are destroyed in the explosion, but if there are any salvageable limbs, a Boogeyman or Stitcher may come along and collect them up for future use.

Horror Factor (H.F.): Horror Factor of 7 from a distance and away from people or anything of value. Horror Factor of 16 when you, your teammates or innocent civilians or valuable supplies are in jeopardy of being wiped out!

Size: Human; 5-7 feet (1.5 and 2.1 m).

Weight: Varies depending on size and the amount of explosive ordnance. Typically 150-300 pounds (67.5 to 135 kg).

Average Life Span: Scrap Zombies exist until destroyed or as long as the Transmission keeps playing. Through dark magic and constant repair by Stitchers and the Black Obelisk, this threat can keep going indefinitely.

Level of Experience: Not applicable. Zombies do not learn nor grow with experience; they are drones.

P.P.E.: None; they are dead.

Natural Abilities: Standard, same as the Chaos Zombie.

Vulnerabilities: Standard. Remember, Scrap Zombies do not heal or Bio-Regenerate on their own. They need the help of a Stitcher or to return to the Black Obelisk for repairs.

Skills of Note (Combat Programming): Programmed as hunter-killers that target armored troops, combat vehicles, power armor and robots. Climbing 30%, Land Navigation 60%, Recognize Weapon Quality 60%, Salvage 50%, and Tracking skill of 40% when trying to follow the trail of human prey. Scorchers can use any melee and handheld weapon they find laying around, but without benefit of bonuses. No W.P. skills as such.

When necessary, the Transmission may order Scorcher Zombies to recover electronics, wiring, weapons, cybernetic, bionics, weapons (all), M.D.C. armor, scrap metal and other M.D.C. materials and bring them to the Obelisk.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. or weapons. Punches do 1D6 M.D., Power Punch does 2D6 M.D. but counts as two attacks, kicks do 2D4 M.D. Crush/Squeeze after grabbing a victim in a bear hug does 2D6+6 S.D.C. damage, and bites inflict 1D6 M.D.

Explosive Self-Destruction (special): Roll percentile (or 1D4) to determine the damage and size of the blast radius caused by the exploding zombie.

01-25% Light, 5D6 M.D. to a 12 foot (3.6 m) blast radius, but even 1 M.D. kills any civilians and animals caught in the blast.

26-50% Medium, 1D6x10 M.D. to a 12 foot (3.6 m) blast radius, but even 1 M.D. kills any civilians and animals caught in the blast.



51-75% Heavy, 2D6x10 M.D. to a 12 foot (3.6 m) blast radius, but even 1 M.D. kills any civilians and animals caught in the blast.

76-00% Devastating, 3D6x10+60 M.D. to a 20 foot (6.1 m) blast radius, but even 1 M.D. kills any civilians and animals caught in the blast.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 to grab and grappling, but never tries to parry, dodge, pull punch, or roll with impact. Impervious to Horror Factor, mind-affecting magic and psionics, drugs, disease and toxins.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Bionics/Cybernetics: None.

Armor: None or hardly any. Why waste armor on something that goes boom? M.D.C. by Location takes into consideration whatever armor is grafted and bolted onto the Scrap Zombie's body.

Enemies: The living.

Allies: None per se. But Scorchers are like rats: where there is one, there are always other Scorchers (and other zombies) nearby. Scorchers tend to travel in small, loosely spread out bands of 2D4+1 Scorchers. Scorchers also follow simple orders from the likes of a Soldier Boy, Stitcher, Reaper, or Living Dead Girl.

Habitat: Point of origin is Madison, Wisconsin, where the Black Obelisk is located and the invasion originates. All Scrap Zombies are created inside the Black Obelisk and extend outward into the world to the edge of the Transmission's current broadcast range.

Soldier Boy

The "classic" Scrap Zombie

The Soldier Boy is the most common of all Scrap Zombies (30%). Their reconstruction is exceedingly simple. Take a Chaos Zombie, bolt on some Mega-Damage plates for armor, replace one hand with a sharp object or weapon limb of some sort, and you've got a Soldier Boy ready for combat.

Almost all Soldier Boys have at least one mechanical weapon limb. Half of them have a ranged weapon, which is either a Death Bolt blaster or energy weapon, and many have one or two other weapons at their disposal if not built directly into them. However, one hand is always articulated so that it can open doors, climb, grab and operate weapons.

Other "Soldier Boys" are slain NEMA troops who were wearing armor when they died, and are resurrected as zombie soldiers. In fact, some Soldier Boys look exactly like NEMA troops still clad in NEMA body armor – the only giveaway being their slow, herky-jerky gait or a strange piece of armor or strange-looking arm. Most Soldier Boys, however, wear a Frankenstein hodge-podge of reconstructed armor (and perhaps a reconstructed body) made from scrap metal and salvaged parts. Many look like they have bionic limbs or robot appendages, but even those only wearing body armor tend to look cyborg-like or robotic. Many Soldier Boys have robotic-looking face plates bolted to their heads, making the cyborg illusion all the more compelling. This is because

the style of armor created by the Black Obelisk skews towards an obviously mechanical appearance. That said, armor may be literally bolted right to the zombie's body and normal arms replaced by weapon limbs or mechanical appendages optimized for combat.

The uncomplicated nature of these zombies allows them to be created very quickly. They pour out of the Black Obelisk in droves, eager to slay the living. Many of the weapons they use are military and industrial-grade, items gathered from the battlefield. A few may even have weapons that are unheard of on the Rifts Earth of the future, or the Chaos Earth of the present, via alien technology from the Rifts.

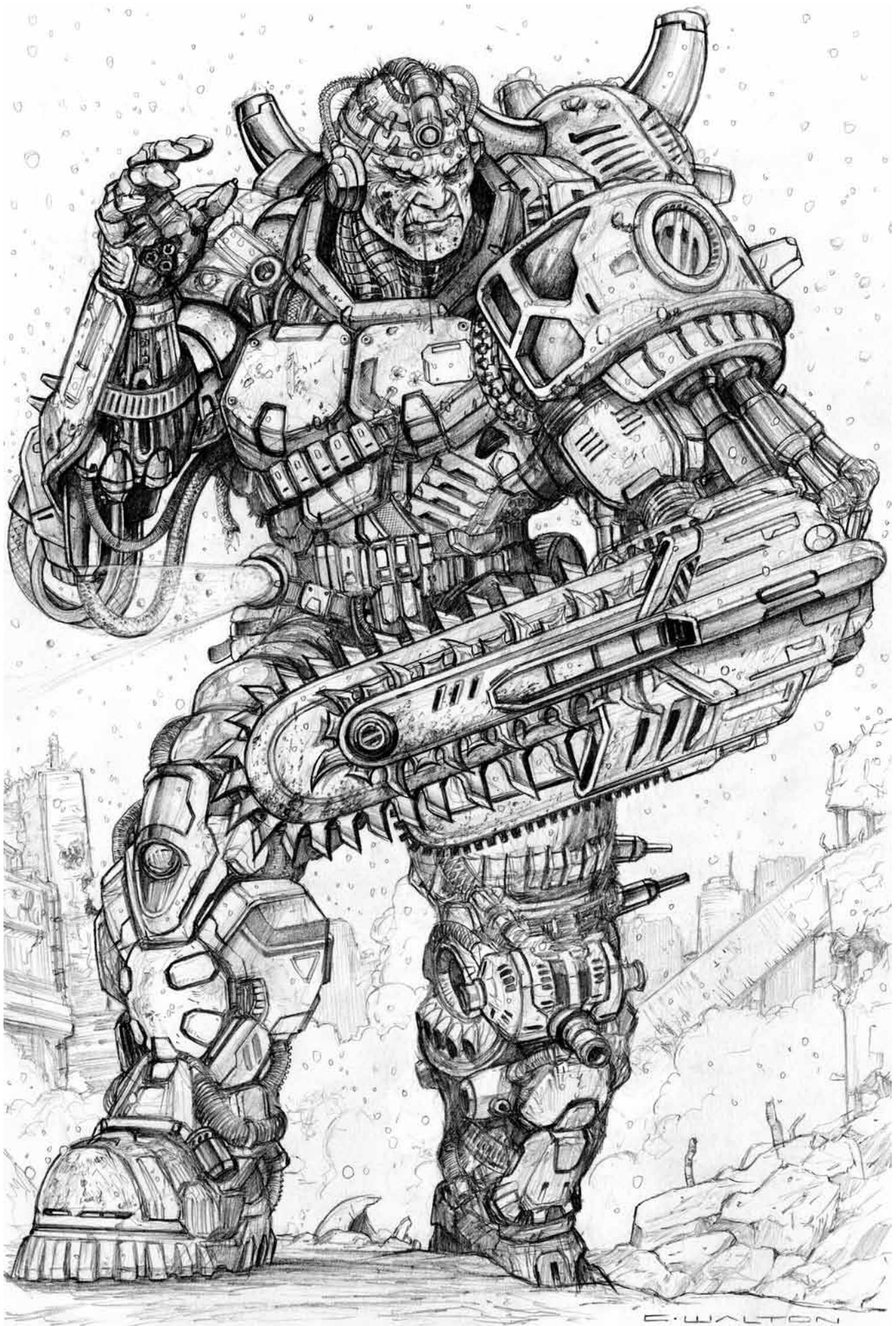
Soldier Boy programming is simple and straightforward. They are aggressive and relentless, charging forward without fear, guns blazing or melee weapons flailing. However, they do not act like soldiers, insofar as they employ few tactics. Their usual combat strategy is simply marching slowly at living targets, firing or swinging at everything that moves. Despite the limited nature of their tactics, Soldier Boys can use melee weapons and guns. They may take time to aim, they can make Called Shots, and stand their ground as a defensive line against enemy forces. This, however, should not be mistaken for teamwork. One Soldier Boy or a thousand, they all tend to fight as individual zombies, unaware of anything but their job to find, target and kill the living.

As a result, Soldier Boys are usually interspersed among the wandering Chaos Zombie hordes, though they do seem to gather in small groups or squads of 1D6+4. The members of such squads generally stay together, but if one or a few get separated from the rest, they just shuffle onward fighting alone or until they come upon some other Soldier Boys or Reapers. Soldier Boys and Reapers often gather and travel together.

Though Soldier Boys, like most zombies, fight as lone individuals programmed to attack the living, they are also programmed to protect Stitchers and Garbagemen, and to fight alongside other Soldier Boys, Reapers and Chaos Zombies. Somehow, they are able to recognize other zombies, including Living Dead Girls, and know not to fire upon them.

NEMA troops hate fighting Soldier Boys more than any other Scrap Zombie. Not simply because they are the most numerous of the Scrap Zombies, armed and armored, but because many Soldier Boys represent one of their own: a soldier or NEMA trooper who has died in the line of duty since the Great Cataclysm began. Instead of being allowed to rest in peace, they are forced into the service of darkness and evil. They are resurrected into twisted mockeries of their former selves, and made to fight once more. This time against the very people and nations they laid down their lives to protect. It is a tragic irony, one that gives NEMA forces added resolve to stop the undead menace and destroy whatever is creating the zombies.

Since the Soldier Boys are designed to hunt and kill the living, these Scrap Zombies spend a great deal of their time conducting raids against places where the living are hiding out. These raids are chaotic and completely unorganized, as is the nature of the living dead. Although other types of Scrap Zombies may accompany them on these search and destroy missions, the majority of attackers will be Soldier Boys, Reapers, and Chaos Zombies. They also are programmed to seek out and raid weapon depots and military bases. Once they wipe out all living creatures from the area, they loot the place of all technological devices, weapons and cybernetics especially, and have the newly resurrected dead



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of those they have slain carry the supplies to the Black Obelisk, where some percentage will be remade into Scrap Zombies.

Soldier Boys are able to use almost any melee or modern hand-held weapon with a basic amount of skill. Pistols, rifles, energy weapons, even heavy weapons like rocket launchers and rail guns are all common. Twenty-five percent are issued a magic energy rifle or forearm blaster that fires bolts of black energy known to Necromancers as Death Bolts. These weapons, a specially-constructed rifle and pistol set, have been altered by a unique form of magic that combines technology with Necromancy. Instead of projectiles or conventional energy beams, they fire blasts of death energy. The beam, magical in nature, can penetrate light armor to strike at the living person inside. This is ideal for the creation of zombies, because the blast kills, but leaves the body intact. Undamaged bodies inside armor are preferred for the creation of Soldier Boys. Women and girls unscathed by damage make perfect Living Dead Girls, but any can be used to create all sorts of Scrap Zombies.

Soldier Boy Scrap Zombie

Also Known As: Scappers and Fighter Zombies.

Alignment: Considered Diabolic.

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D4+4, P.S. 1D4+16 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D4+8, P.E. 1D4+14 (Supernatural, never tires), P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D4+6 (quadruple Spd if legs are bionic); all other attributes not applicable.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 4D6+30 (+20 extra for a full faceplate)

Normal Armored Arms (2) – 1D6+12 M.D.C. each

* Weapon/Mechanical Forearm (when applicable) – 5D6+20 each

Normal Armored Legs (2) – 2D6+20 each

** Mechanical/Bionic Legs (when applicable) – 1D6x10+40 each

Main Body – Roll or pick the most appropriate *Main Body* for Soldier Boy Scrap Zombies (below). Light and medium armor are most common.

Main Body Random Roll Results:

01-40% Main Body: Light Armor – 1D4x10+25 (common)

01-90% Main Body: Medium Armor – 1D6x10+35 (common)

91-00% Main Body: Heavy Armor – 2D6x10+50 (uncommon)

(**Note:** On S.D.C. worlds, the zombie has S.D.C. and S.D.C. Armor at the point value listed above. No Hit Points as it is dead.)

* 90% have one weapon limb, almost always a melee weapon of some sort (sword, axe, etc.). Half also carry an energy weapon or Death Bolt weapon that fires deadly Necromantic energy. (Described under Weapons, below).

** 10% have mechanical or bionic legs (triple Spd).

Horror Factor (H.F.): Horror Factor of 10 for 1-6 Scappers. H.F. 12 for a small group of 7-15 Soldier Boys. H.F. 14 for 16-50. H.F. 16 when there are more than 50 Soldier Boys or when they are part of a much larger Dead Mob of 1D4x100+100 Chaos Zombies. H.F. 17 for a mixed group of thousands of Chaos Zombies with 10-20% of them being Soldier Boys and/or other Scrap Zombies.

Size: Human; 5-7 feet (1.5 and 2.1 m).

Weight: Varies depending on size of the zombie and the amount of armor and augmentation. Typically 150-500 pounds (67.5 to 225 kg).

Average Life Span: Scrap Zombies exist until destroyed or as long as the Transmission keeps playing. Through dark magic and constant repair by Stitchers and the Black Obelisk, this threat can keep going indefinitely.

Level of Experience: Not applicable. Zombies do not learn nor grow with experience; they are drones.

P.P.E.: None, they are dead.

Natural Abilities: Standard, same as the Chaos Zombie.

Vulnerabilities: Standard. Remember, Scrap Zombies do not heal or Bio-Regenerate on their own. They need the help of a Stitcher or to return to the Black Obelisk for repairs.

Skills of Note (Combat Programming): Programmed as hunter-killers with the following skills: Climbing 30%, Land Navigation 50%, Recognize Weapon Quality 60%, Salvage 50%, Tracking skill of 40% when trying to follow the trail of human prey, Weapon Systems 40%, and the equivalent of Hand to Hand Combat: Basic (equal to 3rd level). Soldier Boys can use any melee and handheld weapon, but without benefit of bonuses other than those from Hand to Hand: Basic and those below.

When necessary, the Transmission may order Soldier Boys to recover electronics, wiring, weapons, cybernetic, bionics, weapons (all), M.D.C. armor, scrap metal and other M.D.C. materials and bring them to the Obelisk.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. or weapons. Punches do 1D6 M.D., Power Punch does 2D6 M.D. but counts as two attacks, kicks do 2D4 M.D. Crush/Squeeze after grabbing a victim in a bear hug does 2D6+6 S.D.C. damage, and bites inflict 1D6 M.D.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 to strike with any type of weapon, +1 to grab and grappling, +1 to parry, but never tries to dodge, pull punch, or roll with impact. Impervious to Horror Factor, mind-affecting magic, psionics, drugs, disease and toxins.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Bionics/Cybernetics and Weapon Limbs: Varies from none to some. May have one or two mechanical or bionic weapon arms and/or legs.

Weapon Limbs: This is a simple melee weapon made of M.D.C. scrap that is shaped and sharpened that usually replaces the hand and forearm. All such weapons do 2D6 M.D. (1D6 M.D. for the weapon, regardless of size plus the Supernatural P.S. of the zombie for a total of 2D6 M.D. per successful strike.) Though usually a blade weapon of some kind (sword, scythe, axe, etc.), a weapon limb can also be a pick, spike, trident, or a length of chain (1-4 of them and used like a whip or flail), or clawed or bladed fingers. No blunt weapons.

Vibro-Blade: A weapon limb may also be an arm of any design style with a Vibro-Blade at the end in place of a hand. Vibro-Sabers, Swords and Vibro-Axes as well as Vibro-Claws are all possible.

Bionic Weapons: This can be Vibro-Blade finger claws that extend from the fingers, or forearm blades that extend and retract from a forearm housings (standard damage as described in the **Chaos Earth RPG®**, page 51), robotic tool arms such

as chainsaws and drills, to forearm energy blasters (same types as used in Combat Cyborgs, Drone Soldiers and power armor) and *Death Bolt blasters* that are forearm weapons.

Bionic Legs quadruples the Speed attribute number and enables the Soldier Boy zombie to leap up to 10 feet (3 m) high and 20 feet (6.1 m) across! Mechanical but not true bionic legs triple speed.

Any bionic augmentation the person may have had in life, such as bionic arms, legs, reinforced spine, and cyborg body armor are likely to have been kept. Cybernetic implants have either been salvaged for more parts or discarded during the zombie's reconstruction.

Weapons: Also see Bionics and Weapon Limb, above.

A full 25% of Soldier Boys possess a Death Bolt weapon, described below. Another 25% have a conventional energy pistol or rifle, or forearm weapon. In addition to built-in weapons and the Death Bolt Rifle or forearm blaster, Soldier Boys can use any firearm or melee weapon it finds, provided it has at least one hand to use them. Most Soldier Boys have one complete hand with articulated fingers that can hold weapons and pull a trigger.

They are never given additional limbs.

Death Bolt Rifle or Forearm Blaster: The Black Obelisk can transform any type of energy rifle or bionic energy weapon into a Death Bolt blaster. Such weapons fire a blast of energy similar to that of the *Death Bolt Necromancy spell*. The Death Bolt can go through unliving matter, such as body armor or light vehicles and power armor (less than 250 M.D.C. on the main body), to damage the person inside.

Death Bolt weapons can only be fired by Soldier Boys. In the hands of anyone else, the weapons are useless scrap metal. **Note:** In the future on Rifts Earth, Necromancers can figure out, operate and recharge Death Bolt weapons (requires 15 P.P.E. per blast). Techno-Wizards may also be able to use and recharge such weapons, but those of good or selfish alignment would probably use them only as a weapon of last resort.

Weight of Rifle: 8 lbs (3.6 kg).

Range: 600 feet (183 m).

Damage: 2D6 direct to Hit Points, or 2D6 M.D. to Mega-Damage creatures. Death Bolt blasts penetrate body armor and power armor with a main body of less than 250 M.D.C. This kills the person inside and leaves the armor undamaged, leaving a fully armored Chaos Zombie when the dead rises. Affects only the living. Animated dead and undead are impervious to these weapons.

Rate of Fire: Single-shot only.

Payload: 10 shot capacity, double the payload when in a Blue Zone. The weapon recharges at a rate of one blast per five minutes on a ley line or nexus point/Blue Zone, and two blasts for every live humanoid the Soldier Boy slays at close range (the weapon is charged by the P.P.E. released from the kill).

Note: Only 25% of Soldier Boys have a Death Bolt weapon, as does their creator, Marcel LeMerchand.

Armor: These zombies always have some amount of armor, whether it is full or partial NEMA body armor, bionics or patchwork armor made from scrap. M.D.C. by Location takes into consideration the type and amount of armor grafted and bolted onto the Soldier Boy's body. See Light, Medium and Heavy *Main Body* under *M.D.C. by Location* for M.D.C. values.

Enemies: The living.

Allies: Recognizes Chaos Zombies and other Scrap Zombies as non-combatants, and sees *Amped Zombies*, *Brain Melters*, *Headbangers*, *Reapers*, *Scorchers*, *Stitchers*, and *Garbagemen* as allies. Soldier Boys often travel among Chaos Zombies where they can hide in plain sight, and may interact with and defend other Scrap Zombies. Programmed as Soldier drones, they automatically fight to protect the Black Obelisk, and their creator, Marcel LeMerchand, as well as Stitchers and Garbagemen Scrap Zombies. Soldier Boys gather and travel in small squads of 3-12 (3D4) and may be accompanied by 1D4 other Scrap Zombies of various types. 1D6 Soldier Boys (or Chaos Zombies) may accompany and protect a Stitcher.

Habitat: Point of origin is Madison, Wisconsin, where the Black Obelisk is located and the invasion originates. All Scrap Zombies are created inside the Black Obelisk and extend outward into the world to the edge of the Transmission's current broadcast range. Soldier Boys are the single most common Scrap Zombies and are found wherever the Transmission broadcasts.

Stitcher

Stitchers are the combat field medics of the Scrap Zombie world. They are almost never involved in actual combat, but are rather used as support personnel during large raids against the living and travel among the Scrap Zombies, "stitching" them up and replacing damaged armor and limbs. They move from one Scrap Zombie to the next making sure they can function at optimum capacity. When no Scrap Zombies are in need of repair, Stitchers may also repair Chaos Zombies.

Stitchers keep spare parts in a large container on their backs, but can also harvest limbs and body parts from corpses or other zombies – even living people (fresh parts). They can do the same with metal scrap, removing damaged armor from Scrap Zombies and attaching metal scrap and/or salvaged armor in its place. Similarly, a leg or arm may be replaced with a metal rod or bionic limb (if available) - anything to keep the dead moving.

Stitchers are an integral part of the invasion dynamic orchestrated from the Black Obelisk. These particular monsters work to keep the zombie horde operational and the specialized Scrap Zombies at peak effectiveness. They stitch up their fellow zombies and send them back into combat. Repairs and complete reconstruction can be made at the Black Obelisk, but the work of the Stitchers is done in the field where repairs are needed as they are needed. The zombie invasion force are facing stiff resistance from the survivors of the Great Cataclysm, and without a way to repair their dead bodies quickly, they would soon find themselves on the losing side.

Stitchers work closely with Garbagemen, who acquire the spare parts, scrap metal, bionics, weapons, and body parts the Stitchers need to repair other zombies. When suitable pieces for repair cannot be found, Stitchers send out Garbagemen to scrounge up what they require. These masters of patchwork and jury-rigging keep the zombie legions going, using whatever happens to be scattered about the ruins of human cities. They are helped by the fact that the zombies they repair are little more than robots or pieces of furniture made of dead flesh, bone and metal. Thus, a Scrap Zombie may end up with a table leg for one of its own legs, or a microwave oven for part of its torso, and a hatchet



for a hand – all held together with the dark magic of the Black Obelisk. Ideally, these kinds of repairs are temporary and after a battle or raid is done, the Stitcher can accumulate more appropriate “spare parts” with which to make repairs.

Stitchers are generally tall, lean zombies, heavily armored on their heads, necks, shoulders, and backs. While one or two arms may be mechanical with cutting tools, blades and a laser, its other arms are usually normal human limbs, as Stitchers require a more refined touch for the work they do. They usually have 4-6 arms, sometimes of various sizes, races and genders, for their repair work. Stitchers use both surgical tools and hardware (drills, saws, bolt cutters, screwdrivers, hammers, etc.); sewing, wiring, soldering and bolting body parts and machinery to the dead flesh and bone of the zombie hordes. Many have cybernetic eyes, or wear multi-optic goggles or similar eye-wear and optic systems for magnification and close work; sometimes attached right to their skulls! To someone seeing a Stitcher for the first time, it may look like a Frankenstein monster or bizarre, multi-limbed cyborg, or even an alien from another world; always a horrific abomination, no matter the form it takes.

Stitcher Scrap Zombie

Also Known As: Zom-Docs and Fixer Zombies.

Alignment: Considered Diabolic.

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D4+6, P.S. 1D4+16 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D4+10, P.E. 1D4+14 (Supernatural, never tires), P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D4+6; all other attributes not applicable.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head (Armored) – 5D6+30 M.D.C.

Normal Arms (2-4) – 1D6+12 M.D.C. each

* Mechanical Arms (1 or 2) – 4D6+20 each

Legs (2) – 2D6+20 each

Main Body – 1D4x10+50

(**Note:** On S.D.C. worlds, the zombie has S.D.C. and S.D.C. Armor at the point value listed above. No Hit Points as it is dead.)

* Half have one mechanical arm with 3-5 tools or cutting implements built in (laser scalpel, soldering iron or plasma torch, saw, blade, drill, and similar); and half have two such mechanical arms. Both machine arms are designed for its work as a Stitcher/zombie repairman, not as weapons.

Horror Factor (H.F.): Horror Factor of 12 for 1-4 Stitchers. H.F. 14 for a group of 4-8 Stitchers. H.F. 16 if they are part of a larger Dead Mob (10-20% of which will be Scrap Zombies).

Stitchers often travel alone or in small groups, but are seldom encountered in groups larger than eight unless they're part of a larger, mixed group of zombies. One or more Stitchers may be accompanied by 1D4+1 Garbagemen and 1D6 Soldier Boys and/or maybe 1D4 other Scrap Zombies. Stitchers tend to stay away from large mobs and avoid active combat. The only time a large number of Stitchers may be encountered is away from combat when they are going through a zombie swarm making repairs. Even then, they are likely to be operating as several uncoordinated groups, individuals, or pairs.

Size: A tall human or humanoid; 6-8 feet (1.8 and 2.4 m).

Weight: Varies depending on size, number of arms and the amount of armor and augmentation. Typically 200-400 pounds (90 to 180 kg).

Average Life Span: Scrap Zombies exist until destroyed or as long as the Transmission keeps playing. Through dark magic

and constant repair by Stitchers and the Black Obelisk, this threat can keep going indefinitely.

Level of Experience: Not applicable. Zombies do not learn nor grow with experience; they are drones.

P.P.E.: None, they are dead.

Natural Abilities: Standard, same as the Chaos Zombie with the following exceptions: Better dexterity and intelligence than most zombies, multiple arms and tool arm(s).

Repair Scrap and Chaos Zombies (special): Stitchers are the only way Scrap Zombies can have damaged bodies and armor fixed, and armor replaced while away from the Black Obelisk. Stitchers sew up and close cuts and gashes, sew or solder gaps, reattach arms, legs, and weaponry, and remove, patch and replace armor. In game terms, this means they can repair any Scrap Zombie, restoring 2D6 M.D.C. every melee round the Stitcher spends tending to it. During this time, the zombie repairer can do nothing but work on their subject; it cannot attack or defend itself. Every 2D6 M.D.C. repaired consumes 5% of the total possible spare parts they may carry on them. (Meaning that a fully loaded Stitcher can repair up to 40D6 M.D.C. over the course of 20 melee rounds or 5 minutes!) Of course, there may be other supplies/parts/bodies and scrap just laying around on the battlefield or carried by one or more Garbagemen zombies or at a nearby parts cache. Other zombies know to stop and let the Stitcher work on them, resuming its business as usual, fighting and killing, after the Stitcher is done. Simple repairs can be made while walking along, provided the Stitcher can keep up and delicate work is not required.

Install and Upgrade (special). As the zombie equivalent of surgeons/mechanics, Stitchers can aid their undead comrades by installing basic cybernetic and bionic systems, prosthetic limbs, and weapon limbs by re-attaching fleshy limbs, or by removing limbs and replacing them with mechanical limbs or weapons. Doing so uses up 10% of the Stitcher's total spare parts and takes 2D6+6 minutes. They can attach plates of Mega-Damage material onto a zombie in order to provide it with patchwork armor, or repair simple bionic tools and weapon systems. Since zombies are dead, they do not feel any pain or discomfort during the rushed procedure and are in no danger of blood loss or infection. The Stitcher shoves the device in, attaches the necessary nerve endings and muscle groups, sews it up, and moves on to the next one. The unnatural dark powers that provide the zombies with animation also activate the devices and allow them to function.

Vulnerabilities: Standard. Remember, Scrap Zombies do not heal or Bio-Regenerate on their own. Stitchers may repair limited damage to their own bodies if they have the required materials (but at twice the time per 2D6 M.D.C. or limb repaired). Otherwise, they need the help of another Stitcher or to return to the Black Obelisk for repairs.

Skills of Note (Repair Programming): Programmed as a repair drone with the following skills: Basic Mechanics and Basic Electronics at 60%, Climbing 30%, Field Armorer 50%, Jury-Rig 75%, Land Navigation 40%, Salvage 70% and Sewing 80%. Stitchers can use any melee weapon and tool, but without benefit of bonuses other than those below. No W.P. skills.

When necessary, the Transmission may order Stitchers to recover electronics, wiring, weapons, cybernetic, bionics, weapons (all), M.D.C. armor, scrap metal and other M.D.C. materials and bring them to the Obelisk.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. or weapons. Punches do 1D6 M.D., Power Punch does 2D6 M.D. but counts as two attacks, kicks do 2D4 M.D.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 to strike with any type of melee weapon or weapon built into it (not designed to fight), +3 to grab and grappling, +2 to parry, but never tries to dodge, disarm, pull punch, or roll with impact. Impervious to Horror Factor, mind-affecting magic and psionics, drugs, disease, and toxins.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Bionics and Weapon Limbs: Varies. May have one or two mechanical arms with tools for repairs; surgery, electrical repair, and metalworking. This can include Vibro-Blade finger claws that extend from the fingers, or forearm blades that extend and retract from a forearm housings, Laser Scalpel, Pen Laser, Laser Torch, and Plasma Torch (standard damage as described in the **Chaos Earth® RPG**, pages 51-52), as well as robotic tools such as chainsaws and drills.

Some Additional Types of Tools and Damage: All are melee weapons unless a range is given. All damages listed are the ranges possible with that particular tool.

Bolt or Nail Gun: 1D6 S.D.C. per each single bolt or nail, or one M.D. in M.D.C. materials. **Note:** This is NOT a ranged weapon. Physical contact is necessary to be nailed. Any that might penetrate M.D.C. armor does 1D6 S.D.C. to the person inside.

Chainsaw, Small: 1D6x10 S.D.C., 1D4 M.D. or 1D6 M.D.

Chainsaw, Medium: 1D6x10 S.D.C., 1D6 M.D. or 2D6 M.D.

Drill: 4D6 S.D.C., 1D4x10 S.D.C., 2D4x10 S.D.C. or 1D4 M.D.

Hammer, Wrench and most Blunt Instruments: 1D6 S.D.C.; crowbar 2D6 S.D.C.

Saw, Small Surgical: 2D6 S.D.C. 4D6 S.D.C., 1D6x10 S.D.C. or 1D4 M.D.

Saw, Medium Surgical: 4D6 S.D.C., 1D6x10 S.D.C., 1D4 M.D. or 2D4 M.D.

Scissors/Snips: 1D6 S.D.C. to cut or stab.

Sewing Needle: One S.D.C.

Soldering Iron: 1D4 S.D.C., 2D4 S.D.C., or 3D4 S.D.C.

Vibro-Blade: A small blade/knife: 1D6 M.D.

Weapons of the Stitcher Scrap Zombie: None, though the tools it carries can often be used in combat.

Equipment (Special): Most Stitches carry a backpack or tool case/satchel with common tools that include screwdrivers, wrenches, a hammer or two, pliers, crowbar, pry bar, bolt cutter, and a hydraulic nail and/or bolt gun with a supply of nails/bolts, as well as a roll of duct tape, and surgical equipment, including sutures, sewing needles, thread and wire, some scalpels, scissors and other tools of the trade.

Armor: Stitches are lightly armored and not intended for combat. M.D.C. by Location, above, includes whatever light armor plating they have.

Enemies: The living. Thankfully, Stitches do not engage in torture, but they do sometimes take body parts while people are still alive!

Allies: None per se. Recognizes Chaos Zombies and other Scrap Zombies as non-combatants and Reapers, Soldier Boys, and

Garbagemen as allies. Stitches gather and travel in small bands of 1-8 Stitches and are often accompanied by 1D4 Garbagemen and 1D6 Soldier Boys, and maybe 1D4 other Scrap Zombies or 2D4 Chaos Zombies.

Habitat: Point of origin is Madison, Wisconsin, where the Black Obelisk is located and the invasion originates. All Scrap Zombies are created inside the Black Obelisk and extend outward into the world to the edge of the Transmission's current broadcast range.

Toxic Vomitous

The foul Scrap Zombies known as Toxic Vomitous spew harmful acidic fluids and necrotic bile from their gaping mouths, special concoctions created at the Black Obelisk as weapons against the living. These fluids are extremely harmful to unarmored civilians, but not against NEMA troops in environmental body armor. Still, it is disgusting and slowly eats away at S.D.C. rubber and plastic.

Toxic Vomitous zombies carry a pair of large containers or one large 55-70 gallon (208-265 liter) drum on their backs. The chemical containers are modular and easy to replace by Stitches or at the factory inside the Black Obelisk. Large hoses connect from the barrels into the back of the zombie's skull or behind the jaw. Mechanical pumps propel the horrid fluids directly out the undead's mouth in a disgusting spray. Vomitous are usually fairly well armored and likely to have one weapon arm like the Soldier Boys.

On the surface, the Toxic Vomitous may appear to have a severe design flaw. The ammunition for their spray is kept in light M.D.C. containers on their backs. Shoot the barrel, spill out the toxic substance and the creature is no longer much of a threat, right? Wrong. As if that tactic were anticipated, the barrels carried by the Toxic Vomitous are highly pressurized, and breaking the seal on the barrels (by depleting the M.D.C.) causes them to explode, showering their contents on anyone within a 50 foot (15.2 m) radius around the zombie!

The zombie itself is unaffected by the explosion, other than losing its ammunition, and continues to attack and kill with its weapon arm, bare hands and teeth. The Necromantic magic that animates the Chaos and Scrap Zombies also renders the vomit inert when they come into contact with it. Furthermore, the substance beads right off even their bionics and mechanical attachments, so their vision is rarely impaired by anything but the largest concentration engulfing their optics. As a final devious twist, the smell of the vomit is repulsive to the living and attractive to the dead, allowing other zombies to track the scent of humanoids with comparative ease.

Though not really any more dangerous than a Soldier Boy to the high-tech forces of NEMA, there is something repulsive and disgusting about a zombie the uses a vomit attack. Combined with their inherent threat to civilians and their disruptive influence in the heat of combat, these reviled monsters are a dreaded component of the Transmission's forces.

Toxic Vomitous Scrap Zombie

Also Known As: Cesspool Zombies, Vomiters, Pukers and Toxic Zombies.

Alignment: Considered Diabolic.



Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D4+4, P.S. 1D4+16 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D4+8, P.E. 1D4+14 (Supernatural, never tires), P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D4+4; all other attributes not applicable.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 4D6+30

Armored Arm (1, right) – 1D6+12 M.D.C.

Weapon Arm – 2D6+80

Armored Legs (2) – 2D6+20 each

Main Body – 1D4x10+30 (light armor)

Back Tanks (2) – 2D6+15 M.D.C. each

(**Note:** On S.D.C. worlds, the zombie has S.D.C. and S.D.C. Armor at the point value listed above. No Hit Points as it is dead.)

Armor: These zombies always have some amount of armor, whether it is full or partial NEMA body armor or patchwork armor made from scrap. M.D.C. by location always takes into consideration the type and amount of armor grafted and bolted onto the Scrap Zombie's body.

Horror Factor (H.F.): Horror Factor of 12 for 1-6 Toxic Vomitous. H.F. 14 for a small group of 7-15. H.F. 15 for 16-50 of them. H.F. 16 for 50-100, and H.F. 17 for more than 100 or when combined with a Dead Mob of 1D4x100+100 Chaos Zombies or larger; 10-20% of which are Scrap Zombies.

Size: Human; 5-7 feet (1.5 and 2.1 m).

Weight: Varies depending on size and the amount of armor and the weight of the toxic fluid it carries. Typically 300-500 pounds (135 to 225 kg).

Average Life Span: Scrap Zombies exist until destroyed or as long as the Transmission keeps playing. Through dark magic and constant repair by Stitchers and the Black Obelisk, this threat can keep going indefinitely.

Level of Experience: Not applicable. Zombies do not learn nor grow with experience; they are drones.

P.P.E.: None, they are dead.

Natural Abilities: Standard, same as the Chaos Zombie with the following exceptions:

Vomiting Attack (special). See Weapons, below.

Vulnerabilities: Standard. Remember, Scrap Zombies do not heal or Bio-Regenerate on their own. They need the help of a Stitcher or to return to the Black Obelisk for repairs.

Skills of Note (Combat Programming): Programmed as hunter-killers with the following skills: Climbing 30%, Land Navigation 50%, Recognize Weapon Quality 60%, Salvage 50%, Tracking skill of 40% when trying to follow the trail of human prey, and the equivalent of Hand to Hand Combat: Basic (equal to 3rd level). Toxic zombies may use any available melee weapon or gun, but without benefit of bonuses other than those from Hand to Hand: Basic and below. No W.P. skills as such, and when the ammo runs out the Scrap Zombie either drops the gun or uses it as a blunt weapon.

When necessary, the Transmission may order Toxic Vomitous to recover electronics, wiring, weapons, cybernetic, bionics, weapons (all), M.D.C. armor, scrap metal and other M.D.C. materials and bring them to the Obelisk.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. or weapons. Punches do 1D6 M.D., Power Punch does 2D6 M.D. but counts as two attacks, kicks do 2D4 M.D. Crush/Squeeze after grabbing a victim in a bear hug does 2D6+6 S.D.C. damage, and bites inflict 1D6 M.D. See Weapons for the vomiting attack and damage.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 to strike with any type of weapon, +2 to strike with vomiting attacks but requires a Called Shot and uses up two attacks, +2 to grab and grappling, +1 to parry, but never tries to dodge, pull punch, disarm or roll with impact. Impervious to Horror Factor, mind-affecting magic and psionics, drugs, disease, and toxins.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Bionics/Cybernetics and Weapon Limb: None, unless one includes weapon limbs and its chemical spray mechanism.

Weapons of the Toxic Vomitous Scrap Zombie:

1. Toxic Vomit/Spray (special): In close combat, the Toxic Vomitous tries to aim for the face of living creatures (requires a Called Shot, counts as two melee attacks but is +2 to strike with it).

Range: 12 feet (3.6 m), though most attacks are at a closer range.

Damage: *Against an unprotected face*, the vomit temporarily impairs vision, causing the eyes to burn, water and blurs vision. It also causes disgust, revulsion and has a 01-50% chance of making the victim vomit. Roll once for the initial attack and once at the start of each new melee round. Victims who fail to save vs non-lethal toxin/poison, throw-up and lose initiative and two melee attacks. The putrid stench causes victims to choke, gasp for air, and eyes and nose to burn (see penalties, below).

The vomit attack has a Horror Factor of 13 because it is so revolting.

1D6 S.D.C./Hit Point from the fumes (one time damage roll) to an unprotected face, and the toxic fumes continue to burn the eyes, nose and throat as if it were tear gas or mace, making the victim lose one melee attack (more if he vomits) every round, suffer blurred vision and is -5 *on all combat rolls* (strike, parry, disarm, dodge, etc.) and -10% to skill performance, until the duration wears off or the vomit is washed away (takes three melee rounds; 45 seconds), mostly wiped off (takes two melee rounds; 30 seconds, but only reduces penalties to -2), or slowly falls off (2D6+4 melee rounds). The vomit seems designed to stick to human flesh, so the foul smelling, syrupy slime does not drip off until several minutes (2D6+4 melee rounds) have passed. It can be wiped away in two melee rounds (30 seconds), but the revolting odor from the residual smear and dried particles lingers for the full duration at a reduced penalty of -3 on all combat rolls and skill performance.

Against environmental body armor and helmets, the putrid substance is thick like syrup with small particles and globs, and though it does no damage to someone wearing a helmet, it is disgusting and temporarily impairs vision and breathing. The slime slowly drips away as the victim tries to peer through the sloppy mess on his helmet's visor or goggles. Trying to wipe it off a helmet visor, goggles or window only smears it worse (-3 to strike, parry, disarm and dodge for 1D6+4 melee rounds or until washed away). Taking the helmet off to wash it makes the wearer vulnerable to the noxious fumes and full penalties.

The vomit can be easily cleaned off with a little soap (dish soap is ideal) and a gallon of water (two gallons without soap), but who has that on the battlefield? Only those in environmental body armor or HAZMAT suits, or goggles and gas masks are unaffected by the putrid stench. Although the spew does not harm Mega-Damage materials, it obscures vision through windows and camera lenses, (window wipers only smears it around;

-3 to all combat penalties), and ruins water and food supplies if contaminated by it.

Duration: 2D6+4 melee rounds or until washed away, whichever is shorter for full penalties. However, unless completely washed clean, the dried vomit smells terrible for 2D6 days. People and animals will not want to be anywhere near the victim or his foul-smelling armor or vehicle. Moreover, Prowl is impossible (people can smell him coming a mile away), and the victim who smells so badly is -5% on skill performance and so is anyone within a 100 foot (30.5 m) radius of him (distracted and disgusted by the smell). The part that nobody realizes is that Chaos and Scrap Zombies smell and recognize the vomit and are attracted to it, and are able to follow the scent (+20% to track humanoids).

Rate of Fire: Single-shot only. Each vomit attack counts as one melee attack to hit the body, or two attacks to vomit into an enemy's face (+2 to strike, but requires a Called Shot and counts as two attacks).

Payload: 110 vomit attacks are possible. To reload, the Toxic Vomitous zombie must return to the Black Obelisk.

Special: Explosion: If the Toxic Vomitous's backpack containers are ruptured, the compressed acid inside sprays everything in a 50 foot (15.2 m) radius, requiring a 17 or higher to dodge! Everything hit by the spray is treated as if hit by the Vomitous's regular spray, not as if it was hit in the face.

2. Weapon Limb: This is a simple melee weapon made of M.D.C. scrap that is shaped and sharpened, and usually replaces the hand and forearm. All such weapons do 2D6 M.D. (1D6 M.D. for the weapon, regardless of size plus the Supernatural P.S. of the zombie for a total of 2D6 M.D. per successful strike.) Though usually a blade weapon of some kind (sword, scythe, axe, etc.), a weapon limb can also be a pick, spike, trident, or a length of chain (1-6 lengths and used like a whip or flail), or clawed or bladed fingers. No blunt weapons. **Note:** A weapon limb may also be an arm of any design style with a *Vibro-Blade* at the end in place of a hand. Vibro-Sabers, Swords and Vibro-Axes as well as Vibro-Claws are all possible.

Armor: Varies. M.D.C. by Location takes into consideration the type and amount of armor grafted and bolted onto the Scrap Zombie's body.

Enemies: The living.

Allies: Recognizes Chaos Zombies and other Scrap Zombies as non-combatants, and sees *Amped Zombies*, *Brain Melters*, *Headbangers*, *Reapers*, *Scorchers*, *Soldier Boys*, *Stitchers*, and *Garbagemen* as allies. Toxic Vomitous often travel among Chaos Zombies and other Scrap Zombies where they can hide in plain sight. Programmed as hunter-killers, they automatically fight to protect the Black Obelisk, and their creator Marcel LeMerchand, as well as Stitchers and Garbagemen Scrap Zombies. Toxic Vomitous gather and travel in small packs of 2-8 (2D4) and may be accompanied by 2D4 other Scrap Zombies of various types or Chaos Zombies.

Habitat: Point of origin is Madison, Wisconsin, where the Black Obelisk is located and the invasion originates. All Scrap Zombies are created inside the Black Obelisk and extend outward into the world to the edge of the Transmission's current broadcast range.

Walking Nightmare

After seeing one of these behemoths chase down someone and tear him apart, it is easy to see why this loathsome creature has acquired the nickname, "Walking Nightmare." This bizarre monstrosity seems to have been constructed with the purpose of delivering shock and horror to the living who must face it in combat. The terrifying zombie is created by the merging of two or more human or D-Bee torsos (or human and D-Bee torsos) together and augmenting them with a conglomeration of multiple human and alien arms, legs, heads and faces. Walking Nightmares always have multiple limbs that appear to be attached without any rhyme or reason. For instance, the monster may have additional legs and arms protruding from the upper body or back, or it may have one of many arms sticking out of its chest, neck, back or side.

Despite the jumble of body parts, Walking Nightmares seem quite adept at using their additional appendages. They are able to traverse rugged terrain with little difficulty, they climb better than many zombies, and can follow the living up and down ladders, through narrow passageways, and over and under obstacles.

In combat, Walking Nightmares are even more savage and bloodthirsty than other Scrap Zombies, and may slaughter livestock and kill animals, large and small, just for the fun of it or in a rage. Walking Nightmares are aggressive predators driven by anguish to hunt and kill. They possess no special weapons or powers (other than the extra attacks and bonuses from their multiple appendages and strange construction), and enjoy killing their prey with their bare hands. Lucky victims are beaten to death, the less fortunate are attacked tooth and claw, and are often literally torn to pieces. Though it serves no functional purpose, these abominations may drink the blood and eat pieces of the people and animals they slay. Thankfully, Walking Nightmares are not as common as other Scrap Zombies, and their large size and misshapen bodies make them easy to identify in a swarm.

As one might expect from their demented construction, there are many variations of Walking Nightmares unleashed by the Black Obelisk, with no two exactly alike. By just looking at them you might think some are mistakes, while others might be the result of twisted experiments by a mad man. A little of the latter is true, but the designs of these twisted mockeries of the human form are quite intentional. Built to be revolting, frightful and insulting to the living. Such is the disdain for humanity held by the zombie's creator.

Walking Nightmare Base Stats

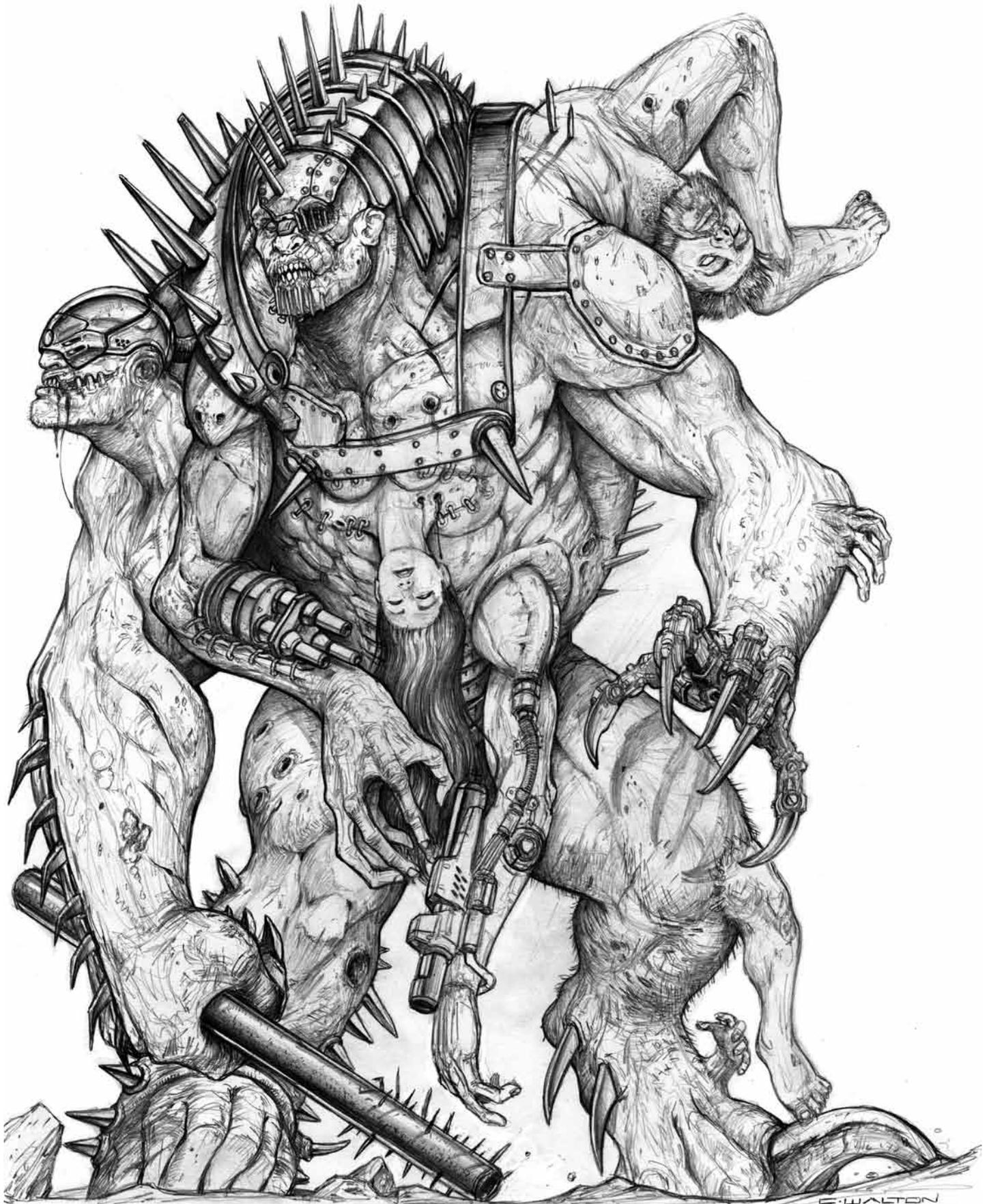
Build your Nightmare by following the additional creation and augmentation tables. Have fun!

Also Known As: Monster Zombie, Walking Death, and Freak Show.

Alignment: Considered Diabolic.

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D6+2 (different for each head), P.S. 1D4+20 (Supernatural; plus any applicable bonuses), P.P. 1D4+8, P.E. 1D4+16 (Supernatural, never tires), P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D4+6; all other attributes not applicable. **Note:** Additional bonuses from the creation process are possible.

Starting M.D.C. by Location for Walking Nightmares: All M.D.C. numbers include considerations for armor and the supernatural nature of zombies in general, and the Walking Nightmare in particular. This is a creature that may be larger,



stronger and more freakish than the typical resurrected human, with additional limbs, specific torsos, fused torsos, etc., all of which may add to the base M.D.C. listed here.

Head(s) – 3D6+40 M.D.C.

Arms (2) – 1D6+14 M.D.C. each

Legs (2) – 2D6+22 each

Main Body – 2D4x10+20; plus M.D.C. bonuses from additional torsos, Torso Table, and various, possible modifications/enhancements.

(**Note:** On S.D.C. worlds, the zombie has S.D.C. and S.D.C. Armor at the point value listed above. No Hit Points as it is dead.)

Horror Factor (H.F.): Base Horror Factor of 12 plus any modifiers from random features.

Size: 6-9 feet (1.8 to 2.7 m).

Weight: Varies depending on size and the amount of armor and augmentation. Typically 150-500 pounds (67.5 to 225 kg).

Average Life Span: Scrap Zombies exist until destroyed or as long as the Transmission keeps playing. Through dark magic and constant repair by Stitchers and the Black Obelisk, this threat can keep going indefinitely.

Level of Experience: Not applicable. Zombies do not learn nor grow with experience; they are drones.

P.P.E.: None, they are dead.

Natural Abilities: Standard, same as the Chaos Zombie plus a higher than usual M.D.C. even without armor, and the bonuses and capabilities from multiple limbs and body parts.

Multiple Limbs, Heads and Weirdness (special): Roll repeatedly on the *Nightmarish Body Configuration Table*, below, to randomly figure out the number and types of appendages of this Scrap Zombie. Then roll or make selections from the Weapon Limb Table and Optional Features and Modifications tables of your choosing (none, one, all).

All Walking Nightmares look different, similar only in the horror of their appearance and extra limbs.

Vulnerabilities: Standard. Remember, Scrap Zombies do not heal or Bio-Regenerate on their own. They need the help of a Stitcher or to return to the Black Obelisk for repairs.

Skills of Note (Combat Programming): Programmed as an aggressive hunter-killer with the following skills: Climbing 60%, Land Navigation 50%, Tracking skill of 45% when trying to follow the trail of human prey (+20% to follow a blood trail), and the equivalent of Hand to Hand Combat: Basic (equal to 3rd level). Walking Nightmares can use blunt objects and melee weapons, but without benefit of bonuses other than those from Hand to Hand: Basic and those below. No W.P. skills as such.

Does not respond to the Transmission's order to recover electronics, weapons, and scrap, except to tear apart vehicles and power armor and leave the scrap for other zombies to haul away. Will always attack living beings, including any animals that cross its path.

Attacks per Melee: Four plus any provided by multiple arms.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. Punches do 2D6 M.D. Power Punch does 4D6 M.D. but counts as two attacks. Kicks do 2D6 M.D. Crush/Squeeze after grabbing a victim in a bear hug does 4D6+6 S.D.C. damage. Bites inflict 2D4 M.D.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 to strike, +2 to grab and grappling, but never tries to parry, dodge,

pull punch or roll with impact. Impervious to Horror Factor, mind-affecting magic and psionics, drugs, disease, and toxins.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Bionics/Cybernetics and Weapon Limb: None.

Weapons: Generally none, fighting tooth and claw. When a weapon is used, it is usually a blunt object or melee weapon found nearby. When done fighting, the weapon is usually dropped and left on the ground at the scene of the battle.

Armor: These zombies always have some amount of armor of some kind, but their multiple limbs and gnarled bodies make it difficult to impossible to use standard human armor.

Enemies: The living, including people and animals.

Allies: None per se. Recognizes Chaos Zombies as non-combatants and most Scrap Zombies as allies. Walking Nightmares are often encountered as lone hunters, in pairs and in small groups of 1D4+2 fellow Nightmares or 3D6 Chaos Zombies or other Scrap Zombies of various types. If they are among a herd or swarm they fight as they please and may wander off at any time.

Habitat: Point of origin is Madison, Wisconsin, where the Black Obelisk is located and the invasion originates. All Scrap Zombies are created inside the Black Obelisk and extend outward into the world to the edge of the Transmission's current broadcast range. Walking Nightmares are one of the least common Scrap Zombies, but may be found wherever the Transmission broadcasts.

Build Your Walking Nightmare

Start with one human body with *one head, two arms and hands, two legs and feet*. Then follow Steps 1-3 to turn it into a Nightmare. The following tables add appendages and freakish elements to the standard Scrap Zombie as well as provide weapons to create something truly horrible.

Unless otherwise noted, all Walking Nightmare zombies have all the same basic stats, attributes, traits, and qualities intrinsic to all other Scrap Zombies as presented above. They are, for the most part, a simple-minded drone created to destroy human life and create (not collect) scrap for the Black Obelisk.

Step One:

Nightmarish Body Configuration

Roll on the table below *1D4+2 times*. All appendages and bonuses are accumulative, and multiple limbs and heads are common. No matter how impossible or hideous, the zombie seems to function as an efficient hunter-killer of the living. Note that the different limbs, heads and bodies are likely to incorporate different races, ages and even D-Bee body parts, to create a mismatched, patchwork abomination.

01-07% One Human Leg: The leg and foot is in an appropriate location and seems to be the correct proportion for the zombie. This leg is strong enough to help support the zombie. The leg has 1D6+18 M.D.C. **Bonus:** +10 M.D.C. to Main Body.

08-14% One D-Bee Leg: The leg and foot is either inhuman, coming from an alien, humanoid being from another dimension (D-Bee), or is human but much too small (a child's limb, woman's limb, or deformed) to work well with a normal, adult's leg.

If a third or fourth limb, the leg may give the Living Nightmare a Centaur-like appearance or it may have a leg sticking out of someplace that doesn't help it very much, like its chest or back. The leg has 2D6+22 M.D.C. **Bonus:** 1D6+10 M.D.C. to Main Body. **Note:** Having 3-4 legs on a human body does not add to the creature's speed.

15-21% Extra Human Arm. This is an extra arm and hand. It is in an appropriate location and the correct proportion for the body. If it is a third or multiple limbs, the arm may be located someplace odd, like the middle of the chest or back, or in place of a leg. The arm has 1D6+12 M.D.C. **Bonuses for multiple arms:** +1 point to P.S. per each arm, +1 attack per melee round for a 3rd, 5th, or 7th arm; +1 to grab or grapple an opponent per arm and +5% to Climbing skill for each extra arm and hand. **Note:** If the zombie has several arms but no legs or one leg, the arms are placed in such a way that it can walk on its hands; may resemble a spider.

22-28% Extra D-Bee Arm. This arm and hand is not human, coming from an alien, humanoid being from another dimension (D-Bee), but roughly proportional and fairly human-looking. In the alternative, the limb is human but much too small (a child's limb, woman's limb, or deformed limb), or too large for the body (an adult or D-Bee limb on a small body). If it is a third or multiple limbs, the arm may be located someplace odd, like the middle of the chest or back or in place of a leg. The arm has 2D6+14 M.D.C. **Bonuses for multiple arms:** +2 to P.S. per D-Bee arm, +1 attack per melee round for a 3rd, 5th, or 7th arm; +1 to grab or grapple an opponent per each extra arm, and +5% to Climbing skill for each extra arm and hand. **Note:** If the zombie has several arms but no legs or one leg, the arms are placed in such a way that it can walk on its hands; may resemble a spider.

29-35% Extra Monstrous Arm. The arm and hand are clearly inhuman, oversized, muscular and monstrous. It may have claws (inflicts +1 M.D. per each clawed finger), is a strange skin color and inhuman in appearance (may be scaly, lumpy, furry, covered in warts, etc.), may have fewer or more digits, and is oversized for the body by 1D4x10%. If it is a third or multiple limbs, the arm may be located someplace odd, like the middle of the chest or back, on the shoulder or under the usual arm, or someplace else. The arm has 3D6+18 M.D.C. **Bonuses for multiple arms:** +14 to the M.D.C. of the Main Body, +3 to P.S. per monstrous arm, +1 attack per melee round for a 3rd, 5th, or 7th arm; +1 to grab or grapple an opponent, +10% to Climbing for each monster arm, and this particular arm has more M.D.C. than typical (+20 M.D.C.). **Note:** If the zombie has several arms but no legs or one leg, the arms are placed in such a way that it can walk on its hands; may resemble a spider.

36-42% An Extra Hand: The zombie has an extra hand (no arm) someplace where there should not be one. It is fully articulated and can grab and hold victims or carry objects. **Bonuses:** +1 to grab and grapple. The hand has +1D6+3 M.D.C.

43-49% Another Human Head! This additional head has no control over any body parts, but it can bite if anyone gets close enough. Does 1D6 M.D. from a bite. The head has 2D6+20 M.D.C. without armor plating attached to it. **Bonuses:** Adds +1 to the Horror Factor, +5% to all skills, and attackers must destroy ALL heads or the Main Body to stop this Walking Nightmare. **Note:** The head may be located next to the original head, or below it in the chest or belly, or on the zombie's back or shoulder.

50-56% Another Head! Roll percentile again: 01-50% The head is human but of a different ethnicity and gender than the main head and the rest of the body. 51-00% The head is inhuman like that of a humanoid D-Bee and may be proportionate or a bit big or small for the body. This additional head has no control over any body parts, but it can bite if anyone gets close enough. Does 2D4 M.D. from a bite. The head has 3D6+26 M.D.C. without armor plating attached to it. **Bonuses:** Adds +1 to the Horror Factor, this extra head is +2 to the I.Q. and knows two skills common to Scrap Zombies the other head does not know, and attackers must destroy ALL heads or the Main Body to stop this Walking Nightmare. **Note:** The head may be located next to the original head, or below it in the chest or belly, or on the zombie's back or shoulder.

57-63% Vestigial Head. Located near the original head at the top of the creature's torso, between the shoulders, in the back or dangling from what looks like a second spinal column that hangs to the side or drags behind the zombie. This head is non-functional, drooling, growling, dead weight. It is basically brain dead, cannot bite and has no influence on the zombie whatsoever, but it does add +1 to Horror Factor. The useless head has 2D6+12 M.D.C.; destroying it has no impact on the zombie whatsoever.

64-70% Vestigial Wings! The wings may be proportional to the body, too small or too large. They come from an unknown humanoid D-Bee of some kind and may be bat-like, demon-like or bird-like (never insectoid). The wings may be withered and unable to move or be able to spread and flap but cannot fly nor be used as a weapon. **Bonuses:** +1 to Horror Factor, +2D6 M.D.C. to the Main Body and each wing has 2D6+10 M.D. Destroying one or both wings has no impact on the zombie.

71-77% An Extra Face and 1D4+1 Extra Eyes. The extra face may appear as if two faces or heads were melted together, one face on each side of the head, or as if one is sliding off the other onto the neck or chest, or off to one side of the head, or even in the back of the head. The extra eyes can be clusters or spread out between the two faces. Each of the extra eyes darts around and looks in different directions than the others; eerie. All extra eyes are functional and add to the Walking Nightmare's awareness. **Bonuses:** +1 on initiative, +1 to strike and parry, +5% to Tracking and Land Navigation skills, and +1 to Horror Factor.

78-84% Two Tentacles for Extra Limbs: The tentacles extend from the creature's shoulders. They are as thick as arms but twice as long and taper toward the end. They may resemble the coiling body of a snake, those of an octopus or squid, or may be hairy resembling a thick monkey's tail. **Bonuses:** The pair of tentacles add +1 attack per melee, +2 to grab and grapple/entangle, +10% to Climbing and each have 2D6+16 M.D.C. Tentacle strikes do the same damage as punches, but power punch is not possible.

85-91% Fused Torso. This horror has an upper torso and head (human or not) facing forward as usual and another fused into it. The second torso, head and one additional arm and leg may be facing backward (so one facing forward and one facing backward), the two may both be facing forward, as if one is on top of the other (probably creating a hunched appearance), or the two bodies and heads (plus any additional) may be fused side by side like Siamese Twins. Each head controls its side/half of the body. **Bonuses:** Double the M.D.C. of the Main Body, +10 M.D.C. to each head and 1D6 to each arm of the fused torsos. Each body has three attacks per melee round (six total, plus those from any extra

limbs on its half of the body), +1D6 to P.S. for the arms of each torso, +1 on initiative and +2 to Horror Factor. **Note:** Attackers must destroy ALL heads to stop this Walking Nightmare.

92-00% Twisted and Hulking Body. The zombie is 50% to double the size of a normal human, perhaps two or more bodies somehow fused together and misshapened: bent and stooped over, hunchbacked, main head is either bent as if broken or has no neck as if the head was pushed into the body. Legs and arms will all be different shapes and sizes and one of its heads may be upside-down. Roll one extra time on this table. **Bonuses:** +3D6x10 M.D.C. to the Main Body, +30 M.D.C. to the main head, +1D6 to P.S., +10% to all skills, and +2 to Horror Factor. **Note:** Attackers must destroy ALL heads to stop this Walking Nightmare.

Step 2: Weapon Arm

As many as half the arms can be weapon limbs (round down); Game Master's discretion. Roll percentile for random determination or Game Master's choice. **Note:** Not all Scrap Zombies have weapon arms, so if the G.M. wishes he may skip this table.

01-05% Spikes/Razors: The zombie's two main arms and hands, shoulders, and back are covered with metal spikes or rusty razor blades, bits of sharp debris, or thick lines of barbed wire; anything metal and sharp works. Anyone grabbing the Nightmare's arm or hand takes 1D6 M.D., and grappling or wrestling with it, or leaping on its back or shoulders inflicts 3D6 M.D. to the attacking individual each melee round due to being stabbed by the spikes/razors. Adds +4D6 M.D.C. to Main Body, +1 to parry, and adds +1D4 M.D. to its punch damage.

06-10% Armored Shoulder Pads: The zombie is wearing big, armor-plated shoulder pads, similar to a football player or larger (or shoulder spikes). They add +2D6+24 M.D.C. to the two main arms.

11-20% Bionic Forearm Laser: Range: 1,000 feet (305 m). Damage: 2D6 M.D. Payload: 40 blasts; takes an hour to recharge payload.

21-30% Bionic Robot Forearm Ion Blaster: Range: 800 feet (244 m). Damage: 3D6 M.D. per blast. Payload: 30 blasts. Takes one hour to recharge.

31-35% Bionic Forearm Plasma or Particle Beam Blaster: Range: 600 feet (183 m). Damage: 4D6+2 M.D. per blast. Payload: 20 blasts. Takes one hour to recharge.

36-40% Vibro-Forearm Claws built into Forearm (normal hand): 2D6 M.D. extendible and retractable forearm blades built into the armor of the forearm (or bionic arm). The blades may be hooked, straight or serrated.

41-45% Vibro-Saber for a Hand and Forearm: 2D4 M.D. May substitute for extendible/retractable *Finger Blades/Claws* (1D4+1 M.D. plus Supernatural P.S. damage from clawed finger strikes) or a *Meat Hook* in place of a hand (2D4 M.D. and +5% to Climb).

46-50% Vibro-Sword (Large) for a Hand and Forearm: 2D6 M.D.

51-55% Vibro-Sword (Giant) for a Hand and Forearm: 3D6 M.D.; limb may be oversized.

56-60% Vibro-Fire Axe (Large) for a Hand and Forearm: 2D6+2 M.D.

61-65% Industrial Chainsaw for Hand and Forearm: 3D6 M.D. per strike, impossible to Prowl while activated. May substitute for other style of saw, but all do the same damage.

66-70% Mechanical Scissor/Pincer (Giant) for Hand and Forearm: 3D6 M.D. per attack. +2D6+6 to the M.D.C. of the arm and +2D6 to Main Body.

71-75% Mechanical Drill (Large) for Hand and Forearm: 2D6 M.D. per attack. +3D6 to the M.D.C. of the arm and +2D6 to Main Body.

76-80% Melee Weapon Blade (Large) for Hand and Forearm: 2D6 M.D. per attack. This may be any style and shape of blade, from sword or sickle, to a blade similar to the head of a pole arm (runka, glaive, etc.) or even a shovel.

81-85% Melee Weapon Pick-Axe (Large) or Spiked Ball (Large) for Hand and Forearm: 2D6 M.D. per attack. If a spiked ball, the hand is a large ball covered in large spikes like a morning star.

86-90% Melee Weapon Battle-Axe (Large) for Hand and Forearm: 3D6 M.D. per attack from this double-headed axe. May be substituted for a scythe.

91-95% Melee Weapon Chain (Heavy) for Hand and Forearm: 1D4 lengths of heavy chain used as a whip or flail. 1D4+1 M.D. per length of chain. Chain is 4-8 feet (1.2 to 2.4 m) long, adds +20 to the M.D.C. of the arm, but Prowl is impossible.

96-00% Extra Armor: All the arms get extra armor: +3D6 M.D.C. to each and every arm regardless of how many the Walking Nightmare may have. This may be plate armor, strips of scrap armor, chain, bolts or spikes that provide additional protection.

Step Three: Additional Modifications

The following tables are in addition to what the zombie has gained from the tables above. They represent weapons, extra armor, strange features and attachments or strange experimentation.

Roll once on each table, or only the ones desired to add more weirdness to your nightmare creation.

Then either pick the modification or roll on the table for that Category to randomly determine the enhancement. Or not. As optional tables, the Game Master is free to utilize them or not. Not all Walking Nightmares have the same features.

Torso/Main Body

01-10% Corpse: The zombie looks like a dead person with varying degrees of decay and/or damage; moderately armored. Add 1D6+10 M.D.C. to Main Body.

11-20% Fresh and Life-Like: Instead of a rotting body, this zombie has the torso of a healthy, living person; lightly armored. Add 1D6+6 M.D.C. to the Main Body and +2 P.B.

21-30% Bionic: The zombie's Main Body is from a full-conversion cyborg. It is almost entirely metal and is heavily armored. Add 2D4x10+40 M.D.C. to the Main Body and +1 to Horror Factor.

31-40% Patchwork Armor: The zombie has scrap metal bolted onto its torso and shoulder areas. Add 1D4x10+12 to the M.D.C. of the Main Body.

41-50% NEMA Body Armor: This Zombie wears NEMA armor and may have been a soldier or first responder. Add 1D6x10+10 to the M.D.C. of the Main Body.

51-60% Inhuman (D-Bee): This zombie's torso is that of a D-Bee or the human torso has the hide of a D-Bee or monster stitched or tied to it for additional protection. Skinned from a D-

Bee or large animal and stitched onto the zombie. Add 2D6+15 to the M.D.C. of the Main Body and +1 to Horror Factor.

61-70% Oversized: The dark magic used on this creation has made the original body 1D4x10% larger than a normal six foot (1.8 m) tall human being (7-9 feet tall/2.1 to 2.7 m). Additional limbs may be of equal proportions or smaller. +1D6x10+12 M.D.C. to the Main Body.

71-80% Impaled: The torso is covered in shrapnel and/or large and small shards of M.D.C. material impaled right into the zombie's body and still sticking out to provide armor protection; add +4D6+14 to the M.D.C. of the Main Body and +1 to Horror Factor.

81-90% Attractive Beefcake: Not only is this zombie's torso healthy and normal, but it is totally ripped, with huge pectorals and washboard abs. Add +3D6+12 to the M.D.C. of the Main Body, +4 to P.B., and +3 to P.S. attribute.

91-00% Spare Parts Container: Attached to the back of the zombie is a carrying receptacle for holding and transporting either metal parts/components or dismembered human body parts, or perhaps it carries extra ammunition for itself or other zombies. (Typical load is 1D4 hand grenades, 3D4 E-Clips, 1D6x100 rounds of M.D. and/or S.D.C. ammunition.) The container has 2D6+8 M.D.C.

Optional Leg Modifications

Note: If there are multiple legs, you may roll for two of them.

01-15% Legs for Leaping: The Nightmare can leap 15 feet (4.6 m) high and 30 feet (9 m) across.

16-30% Simple Mechanical Leg: One of the zombie's leg is a simple metal frame armature or even a pegleg, but it has 4D6+50 M.D.C. It may have one or two containers attached to the leg (simple metal boxes with snap-top lids) or straps for storing body parts and other stuff: Spare parts, scrap components, wiring, extra ammunition for itself or other zombies, body parts, and other items. -1 Spd.

31-45% Extra Armor, Light: All the legs of the zombie are lightly armored. Add +3D6+3 M.D.C. to each leg. Does not affect speed or mobility.

46-60% Extra Armor, Heavy: All the legs of the zombie are heavily armored. Add +4D6+26 M.D.C. to each leg. Reduce Spd attribute by two points.

61-75% Clawed Toes: Used mainly in climbing. +10% to Climb skill.

76-90% Spikes on Knees: 1D6 M.D. from knee attacks.

91-00% Talon for Toes: The zombie has one, large, hooked blade sticking out from a foot. It could be technological, or organic. Either way, it does 1D6+2 M.D., and the zombie knows how to use it as a weapon.

Optional Head Enhancements

Note: If there are multiple heads, you may roll for one of them or each of them.

01-20% Partial Armored Head: The top and back of the head like a skullcap is armored, but the face is completely unarmored. +15 to the M.D.C. of the head.

21-40% Completely armored Head and Face (or Full Helmet): The zombie is either wearing a helmet or its head and face is well covered in plates or strips of armor; only the eyes and mouth are visible. +30 to the M.D.C. of the head.

41-60% Spikes: The zombie's head is covered in sharp metal spikes. +15 M.D.C. to its head. May be combined with all other head options for cumulative protection.

61-80% Devil Horns: These may be obviously fabricated from M.D.C. scrap metal, or removed from D-Bees or M.D.C. monsters. They are large and impressive, giving the zombie a demonic appearance. +20 M.D.C. to the head and +1 Horror Factor. Inflicts +1D6+2 M.D. plus Supernatural P.S. punch damage with head butt attacks.

81-00% Face Plate: +20 to the M.D.C. of the head. A metal plate that covers the face. It may be attached to a helmet or bolted directly into the front of the zombie's face.

Optional Eye Modifications

Note: If there are multiple heads, you may roll for one of them or each of them.

01-20% Corpse: The zombie has dead eyes, cloudy and lifeless. They never move, blink, or tear.

21-30% Fresh: The zombie's eyes appear to be alive, but since it doesn't use them, they are blankly staring forward, or sometimes in totally different directions. +1 P.B.

31-40% Cybernetic Eyes: The zombie has cybernetic/robotic eyes of some kind; may look like camera lenses. The type depends on what other cybernetic systems the Obelisk had when it reconstructed the zombie. More than likely, the cybernetic eyes are useless except to recycle for human use (after a thorough cleaning), but disturbing. +1 to Horror Factor.

41-50% False Eyes: The zombie picked up some fake eyes. They could either be an obsolete glass eye for those too poor to afford cybernetics, doll eyes, or has a toy/gag eyeball.

51-60% Random Objects: The zombie has something sticking out of (into) its eye sockets replacing the eyes making the creature appear even more gruesome and frightening. The object may be a piece of metal, pipe, wood, half-melted plastic, shard of stone/concrete, or other type of debris. +1 to Horror Factor.

61-70% Animal Eyes: The zombie has the eyes of an animal or animal-like D-Bee, even if it has a human head. The eyes appear living, but look inappropriate and disturbing.

71-80% Glowing Eyes: The zombie has lights shining from its eyes thanks to a small light source inside its head. This could be a partially revealed bionic implant or an actual light installed in each light socket. (Or is it magic?) In the dark, they are +1 to Horror Factor, but -15% to Prowl or hide and the head is easier to target (attackers are +1 to strike on Called Shots).

81-90% D-Bee Eyes: Alien eyes means they may have a strange, exotic appearance or shape, and may be too small or too large or the zombie may have 1D4 additional, inhuman eyes. +1 to Horror Factor.

91-00% No Eyes: The zombie has no eyes. It either has empty sockets, or the eyelids have been sewn, stapled, or melted shut. +1 to Horror Factor.

Optional Mouth Modifications

Note: If there are multiple heads, you may roll for one of them or each of them.

01-13% Corpse: The zombie's gums are rotting and stretched over the bone. Some of the teeth are starting to fall out.

14-26% Fresh: This zombie's mouth, teeth, and gums are as fresh and clean as a living person's, and the lips and mouth are attractive. +1 to P.B. attribute.

27-39% Pointed: Most people have four "canine" teeth in their mouths. This zombie has had all of its teeth replaced with pointed, canine-like teeth. This makes it easier to rip the flesh of living people. +3 to bite damage.

40-52% Razor Blades/Glass Shards: Instead of teeth, this zombie has wicked and painful-looking razor blades or sharp pieces of metal or ceramic for teeth. They look like they were installed intentionally. Bites inflict 2D4 M.D.

53-65% Bionic Choppers: The zombie's jaws have been replaced with a bionic or crude mechanical jaws. +2D6 M.D.C. to the head and bites do 2D4 M.D.

66-78% Shark-Like: This zombie has multiple rows of sharp, jagged teeth, probably extracted from animals or D-Bees. The creature will make very dangerous bite attacks, ripping out large chunks of flesh and causing massive trauma. All the better to eat you with! Bites do 2D6+3 M.D.

79-91% Lamprey Tongue: No teeth, but the zombie has a long tongue three feet (0.9 m) in length. The tongue seems to

move with a mind of its own, and has sharp teeth at the end. The tongue was part of an alien creature of some kind implanted into the Nightmare zombie, and it thirsts for the blood of living creatures. The tongue has 2 attacks per melee round independent of the zombie, and is +2 to strike and +4 to Automatic Dodge. Once it hits living tissue, it clamps on (1D4 S.D.C. damage) and starts draining the blood from the target. Damage and blood loss inflicts 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Points of damage every melee round (15 seconds) it stays attached. Ripping it off is possible, but inflicts 3D6 S.D.C. damage. The tongue is a Mega-Damage creature with 22 M.D.C. If killed, the zombie keeps on fighting as usual.

92-00% Radio Transmitter/Speaker: Instead of a mouth, this zombie has a speaker (like from a stereo system) or radio transmitter. It is functional, and alternates between playing white noise (the Transmission), or any powerful radio frequency that might still be broadcasting over an open channel. **FYI:** The Lord of the Black Obelisk can use this zombie to communicate with humans, should he ever desire to do so. And, of course, this zombie head loses its ability to bite.



Random Encounters

While they're in areas infested with Scrap Zombies the player characters are likely to find a variety of threats and opportunities. Roll percentiles on the following table or pick one. In all cases, the G.M. may substitute other types of zombies or threats and adjust their numbers as they deem necessary or desirable. **G.M. Note:** Some of the encounters involve demons, monsters, and D-Bees from other **Chaos Earth®** and **Rifts®** titles, such as *Rifts® Chaos Earth®: Creatures of Chaos*, *Rifts® Dimension Book 10: Hades – Pits of Hell* and *Rifts® World Book 30: D-Bees of North America*. Feel free to make substitutions as desired or necessary.

01-02% Small Group of Zombies. Moaning louder now that they've located the living, 3D4 Chaos Zombies and 1D4 Scrap Zombies lurch around a corner and attack! The sounds of fighting may attract more of the dead.

03-04% Brain Melters. Two of them, but the sounds of movement and zombie grumbles can be heard a short distance away (and perhaps around the corner). Kill the pair of Brain Melters in two melee rounds (30 seconds!) and maybe you can hide and avoid the 4D6+8 Chaos Zombies and 1D6+2 Soldier Boys that are following the Brain Melters.

05-06% Zombie Scavengers. Up ahead, 4D6+6 Chaos Zombies and 1D4 Garbagemen are collecting salvage and metal scraps. They are taking what they have found and are loading it all into a disabled semi-truck's trailer; the cab is completely de-

stroyed. Presumably, they or other zombies will carry the collection off piecemeal after they fill it with scrap and salvage. Or perhaps the salvage is going to be a hidden parts depot for a Stitcher in the area. (Indeed, a careful search will uncover 1D4 Stitchers and their bodyguards within a 1D4 mile/1.6-6.4 km radius of this semi-trailer.) The player characters may be able to get the drop on the creatures, or they can try to avoid the area if they need to. The material in the truck is mostly M.D.C. metal scrap, but there are 1D6 Vibro-Blades, 1D6 energy rifles in working order, 3D6 E-Clips, a dozen S.D.C. rifles, a loaded shotgun, 2D6 pistols and revolvers, and lots of metal scrap, electronics and wiring.

07-08% Zombie Aftermath. 3D6 Chaos Zombies and 2D6 other Scrap Zombies of any combination have just finished killing some helpless victims and tearing them apart. They will be looking to add the player characters to the body count.

09-10% Headbanger 1D4+4 Chaos Zombies, 1D4+1 Soldier Boys, two Scorchers and a Headbanger are looking for humanoid prey, and stumble across the player characters while they happen to be investigating a particularly defensible position (high ground, a bottlenecked area of ruins, etc.) or holds some other type of advantage. Will the group try to escape, or stand their ground?

11-12% Dead Mob. A group of 3D6+20 Chaos Zombies (half of them are recent kills newly risen from the dead), 1D4 Stitch-



ers, 1D6 Garbagemen, 1D6+2 Soldier Boys, and 1D6 Reapers or Amped Zombies shamble out of a building or from a secluded area nearby and begin to surround the player group so they can harvest a few more fresh recruits.

13-14% Large Dead Mob. 6D6+30 Chaos Zombies, 1D6 Reapers, 2D4+4 Soldier Boys, 1D6+1 Scorchers, 1D6+1 Toxic Vomitous, one Brain Melter, and one Headbanger or Walking Nightmare are converging on a building. Within minutes, the monsters will be tearing down the doors and smashing in windows. They really want whatever is inside. What's inside could be more survivors or it could be weapons and gear - maybe both! If there are people inside, they may be shouting for help or already attempting to fortify their location and fight back. It looks like a hell of a fight is about to break out. **Note:** The simple-minded zombies are all attacking the front of the building, so the back and sides are currently clear of any walking dead. It may be wise to make good an escape, because the sounds of combat double the number of Chaos Zombies and Soldiers Boys in 1D4+1 minutes. That number doubles again every 2D6 minutes! As their numbers grow, the creatures will slowly spread to surround all sides of the building.

15-16% Dead Mob on the Move. The player characters stumble upon an area containing 1D6x10+80 Chaos Zombies of all types; 20% are Scrap Zombies including at least one Brain Melter, a Boogeyman, 1D4 Reapers, 1D4 Garbagemen and many Soldier Boys. All of them are moving in the same direction with a single purpose, whatever that may be. If our heroes come within 200 yards (meters) of the gathering, 3D6 of the dead notice them right away and move in to attack. It won't be long before the rest of the herd follows suit. This may be too many to handle and the characters may want to quickly leave and totally avoid the area.

17-18% Too Many Zombies! A huge mob of 1D4x100+150 zombies; 20% are Scrap Zombies including at least 1D4+2 Brain Melters, 1D6 Amped Zombies, 1D6+1 Reapers, 2D6 Scorchers, 2D6 Toxic Vomitous, 1D6+4 Garbagemen and many Soldier Boys. They're heading towards a column of smoke a few blocks away where a fire burns out of control. A group of 5D6+10 civilians flees the burning building or wildfire, with another group of zombies hot on their heels!

Can the player characters rescue these people or help in any way? They could attract the mob's attention and get most of the zombies (roll percentile) to chase them instead, but that might be suicide. Can a NEMA extraction squadron fly in to rescue the people? Can air support or a larger ground force intercept the zombies and save the people? **Note:** There is a 01-33% chance that one Living Dead Girl zombie is among the survivors.

19-20% Starving Survivors. 2D6 terrified and starving survivors emerge from under some rubble and plead with the player characters to take them someplace safe. They have nothing on them but some S.D.C. weapons and the clothes on their backs. At least half of them have injuries that prevent them from moving at a Spd higher than 10.

21% Survivors with Children. 1D6+2 adult survivors lead a group of 2D6+12 children through the ruins. They are elated to see NEMA troops or anyone who may be able to ensure their safety. What they don't know is that 1D4 of the children are Living Dead Girl zombies, or that 1D4 Boogeymen zombies are following them from a distance. Both the Living Zombies and Boogeymen hope to find where humans are hiding, so that they can wipe them out. In the alternative, the zombies may be part of an advanced scouting party.

22-23% Looters/Scroungers. 2D6+6 survivors are breaking windows and doors, searching buildings for supplies. They are mostly unarmed (10% have M.D. weapons and an additional 20% have S.D.C. weapons). They flee at the first sign of danger or violence, but the ruckus they are making is likely to attract some dangerous *things* (zombies, demons, monsters, better armed bandits). If they have the chance, they will try to snatch up some of the player group's gear/supplies or a vehicle. If offered sanctuary, they probably decline, preferring to take their chances on their own. These people don't trust the government or any military institution, not even NEMA.

24-25% Bandits or Raiders. These thieves are ordinary civilians who have managed to equip themselves with some Mega-Damage armor and weapons. All are tough guys, punks, and gangbangers who take what they want from those who are weaker or outnumbered. They will rob everyone they see, taking whatever they please. The worst of them are cutthroats who engage in torture, rape, murder, ritual human sacrifice, or cannibalism. There is one for every Player Character, plus 1D4. One or two among them may possess magic (see *Rifts® Chaos Earth®: Rise of Magic* for details) or psychic abilities which they are still trying to figure out. They flee if outnumbered, out-powered, or if 20% of them are killed. However, they'll remember who is responsible for their losses and will even seek revenge if they can.

26-27% Survivors in Need. 3D6 survivors desperately need assistance. Some of their members have been seriously injured or are desperately ill, and most are suffering from starvation or dehydration. It could be that some or all are infected with an alien disease or Apocalypse Plague! A group of 1D6+6 Chaos Zombies and 1D6 Scrap Zombies (probably Soldier Boys and/or Garbagemen) are approaching. The survivors have only a few minutes before the zombies reach them. In addition, the hurt or sick survivors cannot move quickly under their own power. They need medical assistance.

28-29% Friendly Military, NEMA, or Militia. A group of 1D6+2 soldiers or militia members greet the characters. They are moderately well-armed, but headed in the opposite direction. They may be looking for supplies, traveling to meet back up with their company, or on their way to a mission point. They are willing to trade information, but not any equipment.

30% Unfriendly Military/Militia. These guys pretend to be friendly police, military or NEMA forces until the player characters lower their defenses, then they spring the trap! They still



appreciate life and soldiers who continue to fight, but they have given up on the government and their duty, and now fight only for themselves. They are not out to kill, but looking to simply relieve the characters of some or all of their weapons, ammo and gear. They will fight and kill if met with resistance but these rogues eventually retreat if they face tough opposition, fleeing when as few as 20% of their force is killed or seriously injured. There is one for every Player Character, plus 1D4.

31% Rogue NEMA or Military Operatives. These deserters are AWOL and won't follow any orders given. They're operating on their own and they intend to stay that way. They are as well-armed and experienced as the player group (if not more), and though they probably don't want any trouble, they won't hesitate to fight back if the player group doesn't leave them alone. However, they may be willing to offer information or some temporary assistance; whether that info or assistance is given freely or has a price (trade for weapons, ammo, food, supplies or a favor/help) is another matter entirely.

If they do agree to help, these selfish survivors will still run away when the situation gets too harrowing or they have an opportunity to grab something valuable or powerful and run off with it. There is one rogue for every player character, plus 1D4 additional. **Note:** If these deserters think they can get the upper hand on the player group, they may try to rob them and take any vehicle that may be available.

May substitute with a small group of survivors driven mad by all they've seen and lost. They refuse to be evacuated to a NEMA base or human encampment for survivors, preferring to live on their own terms. But they *may* have information about the zombies or other dangers, the location of supplies, other survivors, etc., but getting the information from them is likely to require a great amount of patience and kindness, and maybe a bribe of food, supplies they need, or even just trinkets.

32-33% Friendly NEMA Operatives. A NEMA group that is under similar orders as the player characters. These guys are combing the ruins looking for survivors, salvaging equipment, and to take down any zombies or monsters they find. They may be willing to fight alongside the player group, at least for a little while, or may ask the group to give them some help. These operatives share information on supply caches, safe havens, NEMA fortified zones, survivor enclaves and data on the zombies and other enemies. They may also be willing to share a little bit of their supplies if the player group is in need. There is one fellow NEMA soldier for every player character.

34% NEMA? 1D6+1 NEMA troops. Or are they? These guys are using NEMA gear and are dressed in the appropriate armor, but something seems a bit off. They could be deserters afraid of being found out and taken into custody, bandits, civilian impersonators, trickster demons, D-Bees or shape changers, soldiers afflicted with a disease, or even well-disguised Scrap or Chaos Zombies! They may be dangerous, or they may simply be faking it for some other purpose. They want to move on quickly, but are

happy to share information and act friendly, fighting only if they feel threatened.

35-36% Friendly Wizards or Psychics. A small band of 1D4+1 spell casters or psychics (Blue Zone Wizards, Chaos Wizards, mystics, or psychics ranging from Minor to Master level) are scouring the area looking for supplies, people in trouble, or are headed to a Blue Zone to work magic. They say that they have to take care of some "work," but there's no telling what they are really up to. They know a bit about the supernatural nature of the undead, and are willing to answer a few questions or offer advice in exchange for information or some supplies.

37-38% Hostile Wizards or Psychics. 1D4+1 dangerous misanthropes who are using their newfound powers to steal from and hurt others. Drunk on power and full of themselves, they are even willing to take on NEMA operatives and just about anyone else — including the player group. If the player characters prove to be too hard to handle, they will use their powers to make good an escape, but are likely to seek revenge later. Will not fight to the death if they can help it.

39% Necromancer or Chaos Witch. A powerful (1D4+3 level), evil spell caster (probably a D-Bee or a human from another world or time; a Shifter or Ley Line Rifter is likely in this case). He or she seems friendly at first, but it is a ruse to get the player characters to drop their defenses. May have 1D4 lesser demonic minions or human henchmen hiding in the shadows, and may try to lure the group into a trap. This villain will want to capture the characters alive for interrogation, their gear, and/or ritual sacrifice later. He or she may tie people to lampposts, trees, buildings, cars, or fences, and leave them there for the zombies to find.

40-41% Scrap Zombie Stalkers. A pair of Boogeymen notice our heroes, and begin to stalk them. May be substituted with Living Dead Girls or Brain Melters. These monsters quietly tail the player characters in the hopes of being led to other, easy human prey or a human encampment. The zombies prefer easy targets, but may pick off stragglers and those who separate from the group.

42% Chaos Demons. 1D4 lesser Chaos Demons (day or night) are following the characters, preparing an ambush. They may be out to rob, kill, or simply harass and cause trouble.

43-44% Chaos Demon Lair. The characters have stumbled into an area claimed by a territorial band of demons. There are hanging skeletons, rotting piles of flesh and entrails, and evil symbols painted in blood all over the place. The demons do not take kindly to any intrusion. Nearby, they have a small pen set up with 2D6 human and/or D-Bee captives inside. If the captives are not rescued/released, they are certain to meet a fate worse than death. The creatures that live in the lair are not currently present, but could arrive at any time and the place reeks with the stink of supernatural evil. The demonic enemies include one Greater Chaos Demon and 1D4 Lesser Chaos Demons as its minions (see *Rifts® Chaos Earth®: Creatures of Chaos* to select which type of demons, or may substitute demons from Hades or Deevils



from Dyval). As is the nature of demons, violence is not the only choice here. Clever player characters may be able to negotiate a deal for the release of the prisoners. Of course, making a deal with a demon is never a wise action.

45% Chaos Demon Lord. A powerful Demon Lord riding on the back of a massive supernatural war beast strides boldly through the ruins. He has an entourage of 1D6+6 Lesser Chaos Demons and either 1D4 Greater Chaos Demons and/or 1D4 devoted human spell casters (Witches or Demoncallers); four times that number of demons can be summoned by the Demon Lord at will, but they take 1D6 melee rounds to appear. See *Rifts® Chaos Earth®: Creatures of Chaos* for different types of Chaos Demons; may be substituted with demons from Hades or Devils from Dyval, or any similar beings like the archaic demons in *Rifts® World Book 18: Mystic Russia* or *Rifts® World Book 8: Japan*.

To determine the monster's general intentions and possible reaction to NEMA troops or heavily armed "heroes," roll percentile and consult the table below (or pick one):

01-40% A potential ally - for the moment. The Demon Lord has his own plans for apocalyptic Earth (or at least this part of the world or perhaps he just doesn't like being shown up by the unknown power in the Obelisk), and is enraged about the zombie invasion. That means he and the heroes share a common enemy: the zombies.

The Demon Lord commands his henchmen (a Greater Demon or human servant) to speak with the heroes on his behalf. The monster is willing to share everything he and his minions know about the zombies, the dark magic and the forces at work here. That info is very little, but he does know about the *Black Obelisk*, its location, and the Transmission, and may offer other bits of info (and magic?) to help the mortals destroy the source of the resurrected dead.

While the demons may help by way of information, most demonic beings cannot stand to associate with mortals directly unless they are slaves or groveling underlings. Instead, demons try to manipulate, out-barter, or trick human beings into doing their dirty work for them, and this situation is no different. However, that could still be of a huge help to the player characters and NEMA. Depending on the situation, the Demon Lord *might* even send his own forces into battle, but **ONLY IF** the mortals seem to be winning. Demons only commit when they believe they are on the winning side and can get the upper hand. The player characters may also realize that as soon as they have served their purpose, their demon "allies" will turn on them in a heartbeat, or use them for other schemes.

41-60% The Obelisk shall be mine. The Demon Lord wants the Black Obelisk for himself, and by working with these humans and/or the rest of NEMA, believes that he can get it. Of course, the Dark Lord pretends to have more magnanimous intentions and may even claim the same as if a 1-40% was rolled above. Unknown to the player characters, the Black Obelisk is an ancient

and forgotten doomsday device of great magical power, long believed to be only the stuff of legend until one appeared on Chaos Earth.

If there is good news here, it's that should the Demon Lord get his claws on the Obelisk with their help, he will use magic to take the Obelisk away from Earth and vanish. This magic device is worth a thousand kings' ransoms and the Demon Lord wants it. What the demon does with it or who he may sell it to (the Splurgorth, Naruni, Hades or Dyval, some dark god, etc.) is unknown, but it cannot result in anything good. If our heroes can wrangle it, the Obelisk needs to "accidentally" be destroyed or damaged beyond repair.

61-80% Another menace that wants to enslave humanity. In fact, the demons are leading a group of 3D6x10 humans and D-Bees in chains. They are either captured slaves, stock for their food, or intended sacrifices for a magic ritual. They know or care nothing about the zombies or the Obelisk, and do not get involved in fighting zombies. Any mortals encountered are potential enemies to be destroyed, enslaved or captured for use as livestock or human sacrifice.

81-100% Seeks revenge against Marcel LeMerchand and has followed him to Chaos Earth! The Demon Lord and his minions will do anything necessary to achieve their goal - foil his plans to conquer North America, forcing him to find another world to invade, but just as easily may wish to destroy the Black Obelisk and carry Marcel to the pits of hell, or to kill Marcel and take the Black Obelisk for himself, using the structure and the zombies for its own invasion of Earth — or elsewhere. (Maybe to turn the tides of the Minion War?)

Good luck, with whatever the situation may be.

46-47% Demons vs Zombies. Chaos Demons and Scrap Zombies of various types are fighting in the streets. The battle is fierce and causing quite a bit of collateral damage. The zombies outnumber the demons ten to one, but the demons are powerful and better fighters. Player characters can either wait and watch, place bets on the winning side, or join in the fray. If contact is made with the demons, they are not likely to willingly share information nor join forces with puny humans. However, they might be tricked into revealing information or manipulated to help (leaking them information, pitting them against each other again and again).

48% Ghouls. 3D6 Grave Ghouls (demons from Hades) are devouring mangled body parts. Strangely, the parts they are eating are moving and wriggling around as if still alive! The ghouls don't seem to mind too much, but the whole scene is bizarre and scary. Horror Factor: 13. The Ghouls ignore and don't bother living humans unless they are attacked first. If approached, they hiss and threaten, but run away and hide, burrowing into the earth if necessary. They fight only when cornered or commanded to do so by a greater demon, Shifter, or Demoncaller.

49% Shell-Shocked Little Girl. Alone and frightened, she needs help. Roll percentile again. *01-50%* She is a real child



who needs help (separated from family, doesn't know if they are alive). *51-00%* She's really a *Living Dead Girl* zombie that plays the role of a traumatized human child to a tee! If a zombie, she waits to be taken to a human encampment before she considers killing. If that does not happen in a few days, or if there is a chance to kill one or more people in the group without revealing her true identity, she attacks. Once the zombie girl attacks, she has tipped her hand and must finish off her intended victim. If she leaves a witness, she must flee and hide.

50-51% Open, Wooded Area... If in an urban area, the characters have found a park, cemetery, golf course, or the large yard of a private residence. If away from the city, they are near a gas station, major road, or shopping center. Everything seems fine until the characters start to walk through the wooded area. There are 1D6 Soldier Boys in good repair and 1D4+1 severely damaged Soldier Boys, all missing arms and legs. There are also 1D4 Garbagemen, an Amped Zombie and a Stitcher present. In the shadows a dozen yards away, is a Boogeyman, probably unnoticed by anyone who comes upon the scene and slips away to circle behind any intruders. The Stitcher has just finished patching the armor of a Soldier Boy and was about to replace his missing right arm with a fresh one. A very fresh one, as the Garbagemen have two human captives (a man and a woman in their twenties) who are about to be slain and dismembered for replacement parts.

In the alternative, our heroes could encounter any type of animalistic demon or D-Bee, a Gargoyle could swoop in, a Living Dead Girl pretending to be lost and frightened, bushwhacking bandits caught unprepared and who are likely to pretend to be lost and frightened civilian survivors (though heavily armed), or 1D4+1 Walking Nightmares.

52% Ghosts/Entities. The group wanders into a place haunted by 1D4 Entities. Any of the ghostly beings in this book, *Rifts® Dark Conversions*, or *Rifts® Madhaven* would work. In the alternative, the group hears crying and comes upon a lone *Weeper Scrap Zombie*. 2D6 Chaos Zombies are not far and respond to the sound of combat.

53% Battlefield. Smoke still drifts upwards from the scene of a recent battle. The column of smoke can be seen for miles around and may attract all manner of predators, from zombies and monsters to humans and bandits. NEMA or military forces fought against some kind of threat. The monsters were slain, and it appears the combat troops have moved on. Bodies litter the area, most of the useful items already picked over by the survivors. The player characters arrive just in time to be attacked by the dead bodies of the slain human (or D-Bee) fighters, now 4D6 fearsome Chaos Zombies! And many more may soon rise.

54% Massacre. It's impossible to tell how many for sure (dozens at least), but a large number of people have been totally torn to shreds by some kind of terrible monster. Their twisted and bloody remains have been tossed around the area and dangle from building ledges and streetlights like Christmas decorations. Some have reanimated and try to get the player characters, but

their bodies are so torn apart that they have little, if any means of locomotion. With some searching, the player characters find some basic supplies: energy weapons, ammunition, first aid kits, and some canned foods. The monster that did this is still lurking around. The player characters can try to track it down to make sure it doesn't hurt anyone else. Or it might be tracking them already.

55% Where Did Everybody Go? A panicked survivor runs out of the ruins and collapses at the feet of the player characters. He tells them he was part of a group of survivors trying to make their way to an evacuation center they had been told about. He heard a noise and left the group to check it out, and when he got back, everyone was gone without a trace! Is he insane, hallucinating, leading the group into a trap, or did his buddies really just disappear? If so, what happened? Where are they? Who has them? Plenty of rooms and places to search. He insists he's telling the truth and if they won't help him, he's going back in to find them himself! And he won't delay. He (and our heroes) knows that time is always of the essence since the Cataclysm.

56% Cries from the Darkness. The player characters hear the sounds of one or more children or women crying. Whoever it is, they are hiding down a sewer, tunnel, or some dark corner of a building. Chaos Demons or Scrap Zombies are also in the area. The player characters will only have 1D6+4 minutes before they have a fight on their hands or the children are hunted down and killed by monsters.

57% Danger in the Shadows. Lurking in the shadows are 1D4+1 monsters or zombies, who will use hit-and-run tactics to strike quickly and vanish again after wounding or killing one or two victims. This can be Boogeymen, Living Dead Girls, Brain Melters, a Walking Nightmare, or any combination of them – or something else entirely.

58% Siren or Alarm. Suddenly, piercing the silence is a loud, blaring noise. It can be heard for several blocks (maybe farther), and is likely to attract monsters and/or zombies. The alarm may be coming from a car/truck, a store's security system, an emergency vehicle, or an Air Raid Siren. It is likely that someone needs help, but could also be an accident or trap. Either way, it won't be long before zombies or monsters converge on the location. The player characters may want to investigate, or take cover or flee.

59% Screams. The screamer sounds human and somewhere close by. They could be in trouble, but it could also be a trick or one of those damn screaming or weeping zombies, or a Ban-shee. Any NEMA personnel or good aligned character should feel compelled to investigate and help anyone in need. Zombies and monsters may also respond to the screams, even if it really is someone in trouble. Whatever they are going to do, they need to do it fast.

60% Gunfire. Not far from the group's current position, gunshots or energy blasts ring out – possibly followed by monstrous roars or explosions. If they hurry, they can make it over there to see what's going on. It could be survivors, NEMA, police or



70-71% Cautious D-Bees. These mortal creatures from another world and keep their distance from the player characters until they can determine whether or not they are a danger to them. If attacked, they are more likely to flee than to stand and fight. They are new to Earth and won't speak or understand English, so communication is a problem unless a psychic or the right magic is available. They may or may not be armed, but will never be the first to open fire.

72-73% Frightened D-Bees. These D-Bees have no interest in meeting with the characters. They have been attacked and shot at by humans many times, so they take off running into the ruins as soon as they realize they have been discovered. They fight if cornered, but only to escape. They are new to Earth and won't speak or understand English, so communication is a problem unless a psychic or the right magic is available.

74% Dying D-Bees. Not every creature that ends up on Earth can survive on its own. These D-Bees are recent arrivals on our world, most likely in the past few hours or days. Something is killing them all. It might be bacteria, pollution, exposure to the elements, incompatible atmospheres or a difference in gravity straining their bodies. Or it could be something worse, like a curse bestowed by an evil force or an Apocalypse Plague! Whatever the cause, these D-Bees are never going to adapt to Earth and will never be seen here again. Oh, and after they die, they are similar enough to humans that they rise again as *Chaos Zombies* and attack the player characters! They are new to Earth and won't speak or understand English, so communication is a problem unless a psychic or the right magic is available.

75% Hostile D-Bees. These visitors from another planet want to kill or capture the player characters for slaves, trade, food, sport, or as a gift for a demon or powerful spellcaster. Or maybe as a human sacrifice to a god or the zombies. The D-Bees are either well-armed with alien weaponry, or have special powers that help them in their task. They are new to Earth and won't speak or understand English, so communication is a problem unless a psychic or the right magic is available. The alien visitors may be a war party or advanced scouts for one, but more likely they are terrified and panic-stricken, swept up by chaotic dimensional forces and brought to Chaos Earth via a Rift. From their perspective, they are the victims torn from their world and they want to be sent back home. Unfortunately, NEMA and Earth people have no idea how to control the Rifts or engage in dimensional travel. They have their hands full fighting for their own survival against monsters, magic and the supernatural.

76% Undead D-Bees. A group of 3D6+2 humanoid D-Bees that could have died from any number of reasons are now Chaos Zombies and out to kill.

77% Barbarians Attack. 3D6+3 dirty, unshaven humans howl like maniacs and rush at the player characters. They attack with S.D.C. clubs, blade weapons and spears. Some are dressed in filthy, tattered clothing or animal skins, a few are totally naked and wear war paint. They could be civilian survivors driven in-

sane, or primitive people displaced from another time or dimension. They are harmless to well-armed NEMA troops, but are a dangerous threat to any unprotected civilians, and the noise they make may attract zombies, monsters or bandits. They are also pretty helpless, themselves, against demons and zombies. Good aligned characters and heroes may want to help these wild warriors rather than destroy them.

78% Weapons Cache. The player characters discover a well-stocked weapons cache nearby, either from a coded NEMA tag or from a local friendly survivor. There will be 1D4 energy weapons, 2D4 fully-charged E-clips, 1D4 neural maces, 1D4+1 suits of body armor, a working water filtration unit (it is too big to remove), and some various supplies like S.D.C. melee weapons, batteries, fresh bandages, 1D6 flares, and 2D6 cans of dog food. There is a 20% chance of a stock of missiles, large, mounted rail gun, or power armor suit in the cache. NEMA operatives are encouraged to only take what they absolutely need and leave the rest for others. Also, any excess equipment they are carrying can be left here for the next group that comes through.

79% A Bank. Banks of the Golden Age of Man did not hold paper money as North America was completely on the credit system. There are still lock boxes that may hold gold, jewels, a gun, and other things that were valuable prior to the Great Cataclysm. The original owners probably are not coming back, so it is all fair game. The vault holds the bank's computer servers, which used to handle the flow of digital money. The vault door has 100 M.D.C. Some survivors may be holed up in the bank, or there may be no one present or only zombies inside.

80% Police Station. Most police stations were looted or destroyed shortly after the Great Cataclysm due to total anarchy and rioting. This one is still partially standing. There is only a 01-10% chance of finding 1D4 light energy weapons, 1D4 S.D.C. rifles or a shotgun, light M.D. riot armor, medical supplies, 1D6 flares, or 1D4 walkie-talkies inside. The cells may hold a few or a multitude of prisoners who are probably all Chaos Zombies if the Transmission is broadcasting!

81% Fire Station. The typical fire station is going to be empty as firefighters and first responders were the first to dive headlong into the Great Cataclysm to save lives. Many perished in the process. Still, there may be useful items inside: S.D.C. and/or M.D. fire axes, first-aid kits, some food, bottled water, a working radio, fire-proof coats (impervious to S.D.C. fires, half damage from M.D. flame), gas masks, air filters, blankets, and even just a few clean beds.

82% Hospital. Hospitals are very bad places on Chaos Earth. They were overcrowded by victims of the devastating events of the Great Cataclysm and quickly became places of death. Hundreds upon hundreds of people were rushed to the hospital straightaway and thousands more showed up on their own. It wasn't long before the resources were pushed to the limit for every sort of injury and trauma imaginable. Medical personnel tried as hard as they could to save everyone, but they were completely



overwhelmed. This was a scene tragically replayed over and over across North America.

When society really began to unravel, the hospitals disintegrated into the worst sort of anarchy, mayhem, and wanton bloodshed. Many hospitals are destroyed by the sheer violence of the Cataclysm or rioters and looters. Within a few weeks, most hospitals are usually completely looted out and stacked to the ceiling with the bodies of the dead. Not to mention that Chaos Demons and bandits tend to keep a watchful eye on hospitals, knowing full well that there are still survivors who desperately come to these places seeking medical attention or to scavenge for medical supplies. Hospitals within range of the Transmission are going to be particularly terrible because all of the people who died there, thousands and thousands of them, are going to be zombies. A great number of the resurrected may have wandered off on their own, seeking living victims or valuable salvage materials, but hundreds of the undead remain. Just standing around waiting for the desperate or foolish to come. Veterinary clinics, hospices, retirement homes and schools have shared similar fates, though the zombie count should be much lower.

83% Corner Store. This place is still locked up tight, and it appears nothing has forced itself inside. There could be one or two survivors, one or two people who have died and are now zombies, or no one at all. More importantly, the place is fully stocked with basic food staples, snacks, soda, beer, cigarettes, toiletries and simple household items. It is a hidden treasure. Do the player characters radio the information back to base and wait until a truck arrives from base to cart the items away? Do they secure it first? Are raiders, bandits, zombies or Chaos Demons poised to loot the place or wreck the goods out of spite?

84% Gas Station. Gas stations are comparatively rare in the Golden Age, as petroleum-based fuels fell out of favor with the progressive mindset of the people of the time. Nevertheless, they continue to prosper in low-income and rural areas. This one has been looted and partially burned up. 01-30% chance of finding some snack food, bottled beverage and other odds and ends. If there is gasoline, it is no more than 4D6 gallons (15-90 liters).

85-86% Abandoned Vehicles. The characters have found a large stretch of country road, highway, or 4D6 city blocks where gridlocked vehicles make the road impassible for other vehicles. NEMA giant robots and tanks can move through them, either by going over the vehicles, crushing them in the process, or pushing them aside. Either way, the NEMA vehicle's speed is reduced by 80% as it slogs through the blockage. Mega-Damage weaponry can be used to just blow the comparatively weak vehicles apart, if the characters are willing to spare the ammo and make a ton of noise. There are also 4D6 zombies among the cars and trucks, tearing out engines and electrical systems; more if it is appropriate for the game.

87% Big Box Corporate Retail Store. This vacant shell of a building was mostly looted out weeks ago. Not to mention that the Christmas shopping season was reaching an apex by the time

the Great Cataclysm struck and many of these stores were understocked because of that. The cheap building construction has not survived well, meaning that there are walls knocked down and large sections of the ceiling have collapsed. Naturally, the place is full of zombies. 4D6x10 Chaos Zombies (former shoppers, employees, and those who took refuge here), Stickers, and Garbagemen are tearing the place apart for salvage.

88% Electronics Shop. Chances are high (70%) that this place has been or is being looted out by zombies. This includes places where electronic components are sold, places where electrical appliances were sold and repaired, legal cybernetics clinics or black market Body Chop Shops, and computer shops/repair. The places that have not been emptied and ransacked by zombies have valuable technological resources.

89% Sporting Goods Store. Dimensional flux has returned a sporting goods store in perfect condition right at the spot where it vanished without a trace! Player characters can find new clothing, new shoes, bicycles, lightweight high-S.D.C. sport gear (including armor and melee weapons), energy drinks and nutrition bars, along with S.D.C. firearms for hunting and personal protection. Many guns are inexpensive to own and still very easy to obtain in the United States even in the Golden Age. With a special permit, you could even get low-powered Mega-Damage energy weapons! 1D4 Chaos Demons are smashing the place up and ruining supplies that could help humans, just to be mean and destructive.

90% Military Surplus Store. Similar to sporting goods stores, gun stores and military bases are all places that were looted just hours after the Great Cataclysm hit. Remaining stock is limited to odds and ends that were dropped and overlooked, which means valuable items remain, provided one has 1D4 hours to shift through the rubble and debris hunting around for them (or just luck into something). A lot of weapons and gear exist only in places where no one was left alive, but could mean dozens of zombies now walk the aisles. If a well-stocked store is found, characters are likely to find all kinds of goodies, including weapons, camouflage clothing, boots, gas masks, low-grade S.D.C. body armor, freeze-dried rations, and wilderness survival gear.

91% Automotive Store or Mechanics Garage. There is very likely something worth salvaging in these places, from tools, motor oil and tires to spare parts, a tow truck and 1D4 vehicles in need of minor repairs. No one is driving anywhere far with the roads and highways in ruin and predatory monsters running around out there. If the player characters have a vehicle, they can use the supplies here to repair armor, get new tires, and do engine work. The specialized facility and equipment provides a +10% bonus to such skills as Armorer and any Mechanics skills.

92% Civilian Bunker. Some people built bunkers on their own property just before the Great Cataclysm due to the worsening socio-political climate. People who could smell disaster in the air built themselves some peace of mind. Any civilian bunkers the characters are likely to find are probably unoccupied; hardly anyone had time to get to a bunker as millions perished in the



opening minutes of the Great Cataclysm. Of those lucky enough to make it to their bunker, some may still be alive, and waiting until things calm down to come back out. Those who died inside due to starvation, disease, suicide, or any other reason have become Chaos Zombies if within the range of the Transmission, and will have torn the place apart, killing anyone else inside the bunker until only zombies remain. They wait for new prey to open the doors and let them out. Bunker contents differ widely, but they are typically stocked with cases of canned and dried foods, cases of bottled water, a basic medical kit/first-aid kit, gas masks and air filters, batteries, 1D4 flashlights, a lantern, warm clothing, blankets, a basic power source of some kind, 2-6 places to sit, 1D4 common S.D.C. weapons (pistols, hunting rifles, shotgun), 1D4x1000 rounds of ammunition and probably an E-Clip or battery powered generator.

93% Collapsing Building. Either the building the characters are inside or one they are passing by on the street starts to crumble. The steel interior starts to scream as it bends and snaps. Moments later, half of the building comes right down. The player characters have 1D6 melee rounds (15-90 seconds) to get clear of the collapse or get buried in the rubble! Anyone buried takes 2D6x10 S.D.C. damage (or 1D4 M.D.), but while those in environmental body armor may survive, they are pinned down and covered in tons of rubble and debris. That includes characters in power armor and vehicles. 01-50% chance of being trapped and buried alive and then dug out by rescuers or zombies or demons. And the collapse attracts anyone in the area. Better hope the radio inside your EBA survived and still works (01-50% chance that it does). Call for help or hope you are found by chance.

In the alternative, the player characters are far enough away to avoid injury or being trapped, but they saw another NEMA or military squad get buried or some civilians inside vehicles get buried. Now it's a rescue mission as they or fellow NEMA troop search for survivors. A task made all the more dangerous by the attacking (swarming?!) zombies and/or Chaos Demons attracted by the catastrophe and trying to pick off the rescuers and their protectors (the player characters?).

94% Sinkhole. A huge section of earth just falls away into a deep recess in the ground. Frequently found during earthquakes and along natural cave lines, sinkholes can appear without warning, and one already exposed creates a barrier travelers must find a way around. Sinkholes can be very destructive when they appear in cities. An entire portion of a street or whole blocks can drop down into the earth, killing or trapping everyone who is present when the earth collapses. The player characters have either found a large sinkhole, stretching up to 900 feet (274 m) across and up to 1,000 feet (305 m) deep into the ground, or stumble upon a smaller one while it is crumbling away! Zombies and monsters may be down inside the sinkhole and around it, especially when in an area where the Transmission is broadcasting. If the sinkhole appeared under the feet of our heroes, they could be trapped under rubble the same as a collapsing building, described above. **Note:**

Sinkholes and any connecting tunnels and sewers may make an appealing lair or hiding place for Boogeymen zombies, demons, monsters, and D-Bees who like subterranean habitats or caves.

95% Mudslide or Flash Flood. The characters have discovered the wreckage left behind from a previous mudslide or flash flood which swept away vehicles, rubble, and people to create a debris wall that may now be impassible and which may contain Chaos Zombies sticking out at places – people who died and whose remains are pinned or partially buried in the wreckage. This happened in the preceding days or weeks. Entire neighborhoods and small towns can be buried in mud or completely washed away. Roads are impassible by walls of mud or debris 6-18 feet (1.8 to 5.5 m) tall. Even where the debris is not tall but scattered and spread out, it makes walking and driving difficult across the debris strewn streets and lawns, and may stretch for miles; -20% to Prowl. Again, if the Transmission is broadcasting, those who perished or are pinned and buried are zombies out for blood, many of them trying to clawing their way free or to the surface.

A flash flood or mudslide occurs when a lot of rain falls in a short time, and the ground cannot absorb all the water. Streams and lakes of rushing rainwater and/or mud form, sweeping away people, pets, vehicle, fences, etc. Being caught in a flash flood sweeps its victims along like a raging river, drowning people and livestock and washing away vehicles and debris. Unless the water is incredibly high (12 feet or greater), most homes and buildings should survive, giving people rooftops to climb onto to escape the strong currents of the rushing water. Of course, those trapped on rooftops become targets for *flying monsters* and zombies washed up to the building and who may be able to climb up to the roof or tear down part of the structure, knocking people into the water. Anyone caught in the rushing water or a mudslide is likely to be carried off 4D6 miles (6.4 to 38 km) away. The lucky ones manage to survive and pull themselves to safety or get rescued. The rest drown or are buried in tons of mud or crushed by debris.

Mudslides are very similar but can be more destructive, with the worst picking up cars and trucks and carrying them away, smashing down and carrying away homes and small buildings, and covering roads with a mound of drying mud, earth and debris 6-24 feet (1.8 to 7.3 m) tall.

96% Flash Storm of Rain/Snow/Sleet/Hail. A freak storm picks up out of nowhere. Within 1D6 minutes, it's a nightmare of weather with high winds, torrents of rain, flash drops of temperature, snow or sleet, or hail the size of apples! Since the Coming of the Rifts, violent storms appearing out of nowhere are all too common. They usually last for 1D6+6 minutes, reducing visibility to arm's length and temporarily knocking out communications while the storm rages; -10% to skills such as Prowl, Climb, and Land Navigation, and -3 to Perception Rolls based on sight during the storm. Any attacks directed more than 10 feet (3 m) away are considered to be Shooting Wild. Then the storm stops as suddenly as it started! The clouds melt away and it's suddenly



Good fortune. As the saying goes, sometimes it's better to be lucky than smart. The world is a shambles. Civilization has literally crumbled overnight. Anarchy reigns. Yes there have been riots and madness, monsters, and swarms of alien invaders or refugees. There are bandits, raiders, spell casting wizards, and people with strange (psychic and super) abilities. Though many of the stores, buildings and military bases that still stand have been looted, there is no organized political or military power, other than fragments of NEMA and the military. Warlords, gangs, and soldiers who rise up and disappear on a daily basis. Someone who was a force to reckon with one week is gone or dead the next. Chaos reigns and resources change hands and slip through people's fingers over and over again. That means a character in the middle of a firefight who has just run out of ammo could look down and see an E-Clip or hand grenade sitting right next to his foot. Something dropped by God only knows who, but it's there right now. There is debris and wreckage, and items spilled, dropped, hidden and forgotten, abandoned and left untouched, all over the place. Vehicles may still have keys in the ignition. A canteen or bottle of water or a backpack full of food, water, ammunition, tools, etc., could be found almost anywhere. Items won and lost in the frenzy to survive the ongoing madness of the Great Cataclysm. And now, zombies. When a survivor is slain by a zombie, whatever he or she was carrying, hiding, or saving, is dropped. The newly resurrected zombie does not even remember that satchel of explosives, guns, or medical supplies, much less the vehicle around the corner or supply cache he stocked just yesterday. It's all treasure and good fortune for the next survivor who stumbles across it.

Weapon Caches. In the constant search for survivors NEMA squads sometimes find weapons and equipment laying around. This is usually at the site of a battle or disaster where things did not go in favor of soldiers or rescue crews. As noted above, caches of weapons and supplies can be found all over the place if one knows where to look or is lucky.

Thankfully, zombies tend not to recognize potential hiding places and even goods left out in the open. Scrap and Chaos Zombies take the bodies of the dead and any obvious weapons, electronics, valuable devices, and armor, but they may ignore things that are not obvious to them. And in their case, that may include crates, boxes, suitcases, satchels, backpacks or whatever may be locked in a trunk, left in a closet, or tucked under the stairs or a chunk of debris. Zombies tend to ignore packages and containers as well as locations that, to humans, seem like a good hiding place. Even though powerful weapons may be right under their proverbial noses, they are likely to walk right on by without ever even knowing. Scrap Zombies can detect and recognize technology, but Chaos Zombies just gravitate to the obvious.

Likewise, many demons and monsters ignore the gadgets and machines of humans after they have dispatched their victims. They have no use for them and leave them where they fell. People who succumb to strange dimensional anomalies, disease, injury,

starvation, or the forces of nature (floods, storms, etc.), may die with weapons and supplies all around them in their cubbyhole hiding place, or tucked inside the backpack still on their back – all functioning equipment and supplies up for grabs.

NEMA patrols and survivor groups are notorious for gathering up such resources and stashing them in a quick hiding place. Ideally, such useful equipment and supplies are secured and removed immediately. But if in hot pursuit of the enemy, or if being pursued themselves, people may try to quickly stash as much as they can in some convenient hiding place, toss it down a hole, or conceal it with debris or even a layer of ash, before running off. Such hideaways are likely often basements, crawl spaces, underground sewers, transit or maintenance tunnels, fallout shelters, natural cave systems, small or hidden military installations, or anywhere that seems suitable at the time. Many are located underground or under a large piece of debris, the wreckage of a car, or a slab of concrete; anywhere the resources are out of sight. Their intention is usually to return for the gear, but they may not remember where it was stashed or they might not survive to come back for it. That leaves a cache waiting to be discovered by someone else in need.

Of course, there are still untouched resources located inside warehouses, retail outlets, trucks and trailers, shipping yards, boxcars, the belly of cargo planes and ships, train depots, military bases, and buildings. It's just a matter of finding the right one and managing to live long enough to haul it away.

To prevent powerful energy weapons, power armor, and vehicles from falling into the wrong hands (living or dead), NEMA squads are regularly stashing these things in places that are well-hidden or hard to reach. Most of the time, they simply cannot carry it all, and with Mega-Damage weapons and armor in such incredibly limited supply, every rifle, pistol, E-Clip, and power armor suit must be claimed for NEMA. These locations are marked for the military and NEMA squads using military code words and insignias that civilian looters and bandits are likely not to recognize. NEMA player characters can recognize the code words and symbols with a successful Perception or skill roll (Military Etiquette). The Game Master can set the difficulty higher and award bonuses or penalties depending on how well-hidden the cache is. They may also deliberately stash extra ammunition, weapons, supplies and vehicles at strategic, fallback positions in case they need them.

Hidden weapon caches and as of yet undiscovered resources are most plentiful in urban areas than in rural and wilderness locales. Contents of weapon caches can be anything, but a common mix at NEMA safe houses and hidden supply depots are: 2D4 energy rifles or pistols, 1D4 portable rail guns, some basic medical supplies, 1D6 various suits of armor, 2D6 cases of canned or boxed meals (usually 8 or 12 meals to a case), 2D6x10 gallons (75-454 liters) of water, 2D6 gallons (7.5 to 45 liters) of gasoline, 1D6 large electric batteries (suitable for civilian vehicles), 1D4x10 E-Clips, some basic electronic and communications



equipment, and possibly one or two suits of slightly used power armor. There may also be maps marking the locations of evacuation centers or other stashes of equipment, written messages, observations and warnings, or useful information for battling demons and zombies in the area. As more troops move through the cache, they leave signatures, dates, and short notes for those who will come after.

These caches are intended by NEMA and military operatives for use by their own forces, not for civilians. Thus, basic survival gear is not usually included. There is nothing stopping civilians from helping themselves to the loot, provided they are lucky enough to find it in the first place. Occasionally, NEMA troops patrol the area around these caches, combing the ruins for other salvageable goods and chasing away looters and D-Bees. Naturally, any demons or undead are destroyed on sight. They do not reveal the location of weapon caches to non-NEMA or military personnel, but may have a small, safe place nearby where survivors can gather. However, they are just as likely to give them little more than a drink of fresh water and some directions to someplace else. Troublesome survivors may find themselves arrested or detained (even beaten up), but they are not likely to be killed unless they prove to be dangerous.

Safe Places/Havens/Safe Houses. This is the same concept as the Weapon Caches above, but with the intention of attending to the needs of civilian survivors. These places are safe only in that they are hidden in places where hostile forces have been (mostly) cleared out, and/or locations monsters and zombies are not likely to go looking for humans, or would have a difficult time getting to. Some have guard animals, former pets and police dogs who hang around the area. It is a good idea to feed and take care of these animals while staying in the Safe House, because they might be the only thing between a survivor and an untimely end at the hands of a demon.

Safe Houses are going to be stocked with basic essentials: beds, blankets, 50 gallon (190 liter) drum of drinking water, a large water filtration unit, basic toiletries (shampoo, razor blades, shaving cream, anti-bacterial soap, toilet paper, etc.), clean clothes in various sizes, blankets, a well-stocked first aid kit with bandages, sutures and robot medical systems, canned food, crackers, and perhaps a few S.D.C. and low M.D. firearms and ammunition. There may also be additional food, medicine, and some communications equipment. Some places have limited amounts of power, just enough to run a few lights and a hot plate. In some of these places, the walls are covered with photos of missing people and messages that survivors have left for their loved ones.

It is generally wise to only stay in a Safe House for at most, a day or two; often just long enough to catch one's breath, eat a little something, treat any wounds, discuss or review a plan, refill basic supplies, and maybe get some sleep before moving on. The longer you stay, the greater the chance of being discovered, so it is best to keep moving.

The Zombie Plague

—Earth, Winter, 2099

According to myth and legend, undead creatures are believed to have visited or existed on Earth as long as humankind and prior to the *Coming of the Rifts*. However, they were exceedingly rare throughout history and some would argue, the stuff of fantasy. However, such beings can be found elsewhere across the Megaverse®. On other worlds, and in other times on Earth, creatures that straddle the line between life and death have existed in many forms. In almost every case they prey upon the living and/or function as creatures of chaos driven to cause pain, suffering and death. As a rule, the so-called “undead” have the power to create more like themselves, often simply by killing the living and transforming them into undead creatures like themselves. This is how such monsters spread their influence and conquer entire continents, and sometimes whole worlds.

The undead are known by many names: Vampires, Dybbuk, zombies, and thousands of other names across the Megaverse. Each one is different from the other, but related in their unnatural undead existence. It is generally unknown what causes such supernatural and demonic creatures to exist in the first place, or what perpetuates their “un-lives.” Many scholars, wizards, and Necromancers of other realms have speculated and theorized on the undead for untold millennia, but few have ever been able to unravel their dark secrets or why in death, they seek to bring more death and terror.

Though unknown to survivors of the Great Cataclysm, the zombie outbreak in Wisconsin, spreading down into Illinois is different. The Black Obelisk broadcasting the *Transmission* is the source of the zombie plague in Madison. This makes the resurrected a very unique and specialized type of zombie spawned by a rare magic that is unknown even to Necromancers. Zombies that can exist only through a very specific set of criteria and dark magic.

Across the Megaverse divide, the Black Obelisk can sense when there are suddenly hundreds of millions of deaths and fresh corpses. The massive number of dead signals two things: One, a planet in strife and therefore vulnerable to conquest; and, two, the raw materials with which to build an invading army, i.e. millions – or in the case of Rifts Earth – billions of dead bodies to be made into an army.

With the eruption of magic that reignited the ley lines on Earth, the flow of magic energy shines from our planet like a beacon in the night. All manner of supernatural beings and creatures of magic can see or sense that beacon, and are attracted to our world for the new potential it offers. Most access our world via the *Rifts* – tears

in the very fabric of space and time. The Black Obelisk and its master lurking in the shadows behind the scenes, are one such threat, and the *Chaos Zombie* is the first weapon in its arsenal.

NEMA's response to the Zombie Plague

As soon as NEMA realizes the danger represented by the zombie hordes coming from somewhere in the north, they try to determine the source and scope of the *the Zombie Plague*.

Ground zero – where is it?

How does the zombie plague spread?

Who is already afflicted and how can they be helped?

What are viable countermeasures?

Who or what is responsible?

How can the plague be contained and the zombies it creates be stopped?

The zombie outbreak is something new for the beleaguered Earth defenders and survivors in the initial aftermath of the Great Cataclysm. Thanks to zombies in pop culture, the threat is labeled *a plague*, because NEMA leaders and medical personnel assume the cause is some sort of virus. They are not yet used to the idea of magic and alien invaders from other worlds and dimensions, though they are getting there quickly. They've already witnessed the impossible: a global cataclysm of unimaginable proportion, the appearance of the Blue Zones, the paranormal and things that can only be classified as demons, monsters and magic. In a weird way, the dead rising seems somehow appropriate.

Identify the enemy. The first thing NEMA forces set about doing is identifying the enemy – determining the different types of zombies being unleashed upon them. That is followed by trying to ascertain the zombies' command structure (if any), mission objectives, base of operations, and source/creator/cause.

NEMA quickly identifies two classifications of the so-called "zombies." **Chaos Zombies** that are the risen dead: corpses of ordinary people animated and turned into robot-like killing drones. Chaos Zombies look and function very much like the zombies of fiction and pop culture. Their numbers seem to range into the tens of thousands and grow with every new casualty. If left unchecked their numbers will grow into the hundreds of thousands in a matter of a few months, and then into the millions.

The other is classified as **Scrap Zombies**. The risen dead *re-made* by an unknown hand into weaponized and armored hunter-killers. "Scrap" because many of their weapons and armor seem to be constructed from the scrap gathered by the former classification of zombies.

Initially, NEMA forces know nothing of the **Black Obelisk** and have no idea from where the zombie plague originates, how they propagate or how far they have spread. That information can come quickly, but it requires first-hand investigation and observation in the field. One thing is clear: The source from which these monsters originate must be found and eradicated before their numbers swell into the millions and beyond the capability of NEMA to stop them.

In the beginning, there are three theories about the Zombie Plague: One, the zombie abominations are coming into our world through a Rift. Two, they are the horrific creation of some yet unknown magic. Three, they are being created by something alien and unknown that has come to Earth from another dimension.

In a way, all three theories contain bits of truth. NEMA leaders lean toward the latter, because Scrap Zombies are either still dressed in NEMA and US Military armor or have recognizable pieces of body armor and weapons made from scrap and attached to them. Other zombies wear the clothing they died in, and are clearly people of this current time and North American origin.

Conclusion: Someone or something is turning the dead into weird zombie-like automatons. And that "something" is not likely to be from this world.

It is quickly determined the enemy's objective is conquest. The zombies are an invasion force. And a brilliant one. An army raised on foreign soil from the dead of the very people they intend to conquer. A swarming army that does not require food, water, rest, shelter, heavy ordnance or elaborate strategies and tactics. The more people that die, the bigger the invading zombie army becomes. Frightening. Efficient. And wickedly brilliant.

Within a short time (days or weeks depending on how you play your campaign), the NEMA leaders in the Chicago area begin to speculate that there is *one central source* for these "things." Someplace farther north, as there are no zombie reports coming from anywhere else. The zombies' bizarre altered physiology and armor also suggests that something is *making* these creatures. This is not a contagion and these dull-witted monstrosities are not arming themselves. They are being created.

During the Great Cataclysm, zombies are but one of many monsters, demons and disasters that threaten human life. The Zombie Plague, however, is a much more immediate threat because if left unchecked, their rapidly increasing numbers could overwhelm NEMA defenders and spill across the entire continent.

Fighting the good fight

Even with the world in chaos and civilization in ruin, people persevere. The forces of evil try to push humanity into subjugation, or over the edge into extinction, but hope and survival drives the human survivors of Chaos Earth to fight. NEMA and its heroes have not given up on humankind even though their prospects could not be darker. They are still struggling to wrap their heads around what is happening to them and their planet, but are doing all they can to rescue and safeguard survivors. People continue to go on, not out of a fear of death, but out of a love of life. NEMA and their Silver Eagles (SAMAS) and Chromium Guardsmen (what will, over time, become know as the heroic Glitter Boys) are already seen as the symbols of hope, and survivors flock around them.

As NEMA soldiers deal with the encroaching zombie hordes, they begin to figure out how to adapt to the situation. They learn that there are certain "rules" to dealing with the undead, and as long as they stick to those rules, lives can be saved. Most of these rules, strategies and tactics are figured out the hard way, in the field and by trial and error.

For many NEMA troops in the Chicago region of the Midwest, the appearance of an army of dead soldiers is merely one part of a much larger battle. A great and terrible cataclysm is upon them, and it is their responsibility and honor to safeguard the human race and whatever tenets of civilization they can. Those who see the bigger picture are starting to realize the zombies may represent the greatest threat to their survival. A threat that could spell the complete extermination of every human being. If NEMA is



C. WALTON



to survive this new crisis, the zombies and whatever is creating them, must be found and destroyed.

Job One: Rescue the Living

It is paramount that survivors are rescued and taken to a safe and secure location. Not that there are many safe places left. Survivors rescued by NEMA often find themselves being piled into armored transport vehicles with scores of other frightened people trying to make sense of everything that is happening. They are shuffled around to one temporary safe haven to another until relocated to a permanent safe zone. While there are a few sprawling cities, such as Rockford, Illinois, where people are allowed to remain in their homes, most people are stuck in small temporary shelters and safe houses for weeks on end. The lucky ones get brought to the unofficial **NEMA Midwest Command Center** in the Chicago area, but tens of thousands more remain out in the ruins – on their own. The only thing separating them and a grisly death at the hands of monsters or zombies are a few scattered bands of law enforcement officers, soldiers, NEMA operatives, armed civilians, and amateur wizards and newly empowered psychics.

NEMA Commanders understand the gravity of the situation and intend to find and bring all survivors in under their protection, but it is a herculean task. Civilization is shattered, lines of communication nearly non-existent, and though there are rumors of military bases and fragments of the government still operating out in the southwest, there has been no contact with any of them. Humankind is in dire straits. The cities are in ruin, demons and monsters are pouring from ashen skies, and some people are exhibiting strange powers. The NEMA forces that have managed to create a survivors' beachhead in and around Chicago have no idea how other NEMA troops are faring. Not well, it's presumed. And now, the dead are rising from the rubble to finish off the living. Many people, NEMA peacekeepers included, are worried that humanity's final days could be upon them.

Despite that, NEMA forces in the Midwest struggle to hold things together and rescue all the people they can. They fight, first and foremost, to save lives. They fight because the alternative is too horrible to consider. They fight because they believe humankind is worth preserving, and that the unholy forces who dwindle their number each day have no right to cause such turmoil and death. They fight because they may be the only ones left who can.

Player characters are likely to be official NEMA operatives trained in peacekeeping, rescue and disaster relief. Others may be civilian survivors who have become part of NEMA's volunteer militia. Nowadays, you either stand together and fight to save lives, or give up and die. So far, people are committed to fight, and in the Midwest with NEMA behind them, they feel like they can win.

Reconnaissance missions and search and rescue operations, along with perimeter patrols are the most common assignments. Every day, dozens of NEMA squads journey into the ruins of populated urban areas in search of survivors. Humans are brought

back to the Chicago area or taken to some other secured survivors' camp, monsters are dealt with and intelligence on the area is brought back to H.Q. More recently, zombie seek and destroy patrols have become part of operations.

Search and rescue operations are slow and deliberate, especially in urban areas. Many cities have sustained substantial damage; some like New York City and Los Angeles, have almost collapsed completely. It is generally assumed that anyone trapped underneath the ruins is dead. If they did not die from injuries, then surely they have succumbed to starvation, disease, or some kind of creature. Therefore, only minimal efforts are made to locate survivors trapped under rubble. Dogs, small robot drones, and as of late, psychics, are used to sense and locate anyone who may still be alive. NEMA troops conduct building-by-building sweeps, sometimes in accordance with body-burning teams, looking for anyone who may still be alive.

Rescued survivors are given a quick medical examination, and a little food and water, if it can be spared. Those who are sick from common ailments are treated. Those suffering from strange or alien diseases are quarantined and kept separated from the rest of the population. Survivors are then routed to small evacuee camps until they can be moved to a more strategically defensible location.

The supplies in these survivor camps and communities are limited, requiring NEMA forces to make frequent salvage and supply runs into the ruins of cities and suburbia. Weapons in the hands of civilians are generally S.D.C. types, with nothing more damaging than a few M.D. pistols, and items like crowbars, axes, metal pipes, hunting rifles (for food as well as defense), and maybe some smoke grenades and signal flares. Mega-Damage and military grade weapons at camps under NEMA's protection are in the hands of its trained peacekeepers and handpicked militia volunteers. Such "secured survivor camps" and communities may look more like a military outpost or even a prison, but its part of NEMA's combat and rescue operation shared with its own operatives and patrolled and protected by them.

Independent survivor camps also exist. NEMA knows they cannot rescue or protect everyone, so they make an effort to help people who prefer to remain independent and take care of themselves. This may include helping such survivors find suitable shelter, establish a sustainable environment, and arrange for a shipment of basic medical supplies, containers of clean water, packaged food, some fuel or batteries (solar cells became quite popular in the mid-21st century, but they are useless now), flashlights, and some basic weapons. If they can spare it, silver bullets will also be left, as they can come in handy against supernatural enemies. NEMA doesn't usually leave Mega-Damage weapons behind, because they feel such powerful weaponry belongs in the hands of trained personnel, and they don't want to empower bandits, raiders, or Doomsday cultists who will only use the weapons to cause more death and destruction. Such survivor communities and havens creates allies and outposts in the field that can help NEMA with its own operations and intelligence gathering.



NEMA shares information about potential threats against these survivors, and forces swing by on patrol to check in on them. NEMA operatives may also help to reinforce strongholds, clear out hostile forces and help secure the survivors' encampment, from time to time, should their help be requested. Some may even have radios to check in on a regular schedule and to call for help when necessary. However, radio interference is common, thanks to the dense clouds of ash in the air and weird energies from the Rifts and along Blue Zones. Radios are unreliable at best.

These places are not immune to infiltration by supernatural sources, which is why it is important to support them and check in on them on a regular basis. The defenses at most of these independent communities are light, and there are no permanent NEMA forces stationed there. They are on their own.

Game Note: Player characters may be assigned to be part of defending survivor camps, either as guards or part of a crew to help the survivors. They can also be sent on missions to find more survivors, make supply runs, or to escort survivors from one evacuee center to another. NEMA bases of operation and survivor communities always need guards, protectors, police and perimeter patrols to keep them safe. Any gathering of humans becomes a potential target for monsters and aliens, so NEMA defenders and heroic player characters can be instrumental in building and stocking these places. The base or company commander issues assignments and missions on a regular basis. If bandits or monsters are sniffing around in a nearby ruin or around a strategic location, or resource NEMA needs for its own operations, someone needs to be sent out to deal with them. If a survivor wanders off or disappears, NEMA operatives are the ones likely to be sent out searching for him.

NEMA is also establishing much smaller safe houses, hideouts and supply caches. First, they need to find suitable locations, such as in basements, inside trains or large hollowed-out vehicles, old fallout shelters, bank vaults, etc. The area around these places needs to be made secure, so any demons, zombies, or other bad things sleazing around have to be destroyed or run off. Then the shelter needs to be reinforced with Mega-Damage structures, or made totally hidden by moving rubble on top of it. Lastly, it will have to be stocked with supplies that survivors or NEMA troops looking for a temporary safe have can use.

Job Two: Secure Resources

NEMA and military operations like them know they need to secure all available resources. Troops are sent out to locate and collect weapons, armor, supplies, gasoline, food, water, medicine and salvage and bring them back to base camp or H.Q. before looters and zombies can get their hands on them. Chaos Zombies gather such materials and use them to create the M.D.C. Scrap Zombies. Because of the proliferation of high-tech machinery during the Golden Age of Man (and these zombies can use lower-tech machines and scrap as well), NEMA is unable to control the creation of the more powerful Scrap Zombies. Out of necessity

and expediency, they are concentrating fortifying strategic locations, establishing refugee camps and field hospitals, and searching for food, bottled water, medicine, and supplies to support the living as their top priority. Securing portable power supplies, armor, weapons, ammo and military-grade bionics, power armor and vehicles is next on the list. This includes securing hospitals, functioning factories, munitions plants, military bases, research facilities, and industrial zones. If these places cannot be secured within zombie infested areas, they are to be destroyed. If the technology can not be extracted and delivered to a safe place for use by humans to fight zombies and other unholy threats, it has been decided it is better to destroy them rather than let them fall into the hands of monsters.

Player characters can be part of a team that goes building to building to search for supplies and secure places that offer valuable resources or strategic advantages, like those listed above. Zombies are not the only threat, so they need to forcibly "remove" or "eliminate" any hostile forces, monstrous or otherwise, as well as rescuing survivors and civilians and escort them to an evacuation center. Securing a resource usually entails locking down the facility, making certain it is free of hostile forces, securing entrances and exits, setting up guards and a perimeter patrol, and keeping the valuable resource safe. Actually, **Resource Recovery squads** usually find and secure the area, facility or resource and then turn it over to other, larger forces to keep it secured. NEMA has the authority to commandeer any location or items it needs to protect and safeguard lives and defend the three nations (USA, Canada and Mexico) under its jurisdiction. This tends to be something that their brothers-in-arms in the respective militaries of these nations do not fully appreciate.

NEMA sometimes uses secured facilities for evacuation centers and survivor camps, as well as supply depots, warehouses and much needed manufacturing centers, but only if they are far from zombie infestation zones. Of course, Resource Recovery operations may take place within enemy held territory, especially if the resource is of immense value or importance to survivors or continuing combat operations. Such missions in enemy territory are risky, but often a necessity. This is also true of rescue missions. NEMA never deserts civilians in need unless the collateral damage to the rescue team and other civilians is much too high. And remember, anyone who dies returns to unlife to kill the living. One survivor dies from anything – disease, exposure, a heart condition, or from a fall down the stairs – and he becomes the enemy within; a Chaos Zombie programmed to immediately begin killing all humanoid life around it. One risen dead on a truck or in a camp full of survivors can lead to the doom of everyone. That's why NEMA and ROSCOES must make the hard decision of who gets saved and who is left behind for the sake of the majority.

When zombies swarm the location of a secured resource, the defenders of the place fight only as long as they can to hold it with reasonable expectations for success. That may require holding it until reinforcements, armored combat troops or air support



can arrive. Under more dire circumstance, the force on location may have to try to hold the line all on their own and make their own escape should it come to that. This may require engaging the enemy in order to keep them from entering, or attempting to evacuate with the technology or supplies and bugging out.

When holding a strategic location becomes impossible, the troops make a run for it or pray for aerial extraction. If a resource has to be abandoned, all NEMA units are ordered to withdraw from the location while a demolitions team rigs the place to raze it to the ground. Better to destroy the resource than see it fall into the hands of the evil dead and be turned against the living.

Job Three: Burn All Corpses

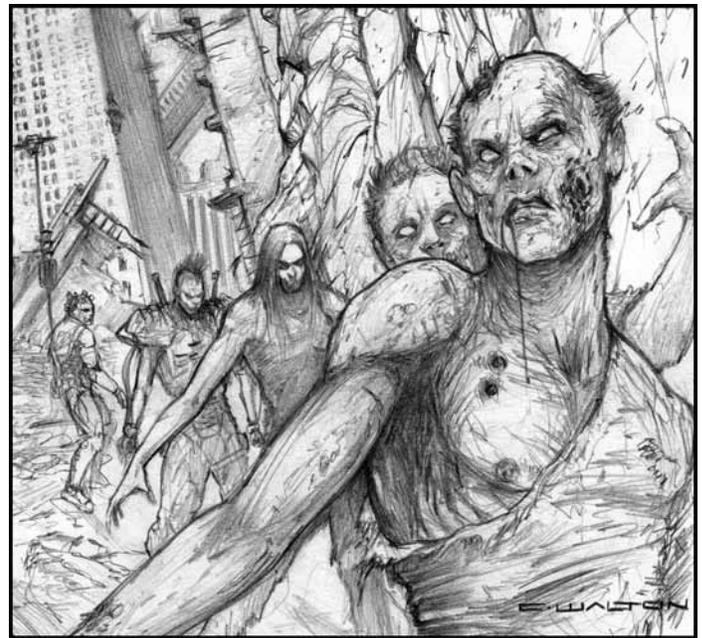
NEMA was already making an effort to control the number of dead bodies laying out in the streets. Corpses rot, which brings vermin, bacteria and disease. But now, with more and more areas falling to the influence to the Transmission, efforts to eliminate dead bodies have been stepped up considerably. NEMA units, Roscoe Fire-Fighters and Peacekeepers with energy weapons, move through towns and cities in Northern Illinois and the Chicagoland area, incinerating bodies wherever they find them. It is more efficient and expedient than gathering them all up and taking the bodies to one central location. Only minimal effort is made to limit collateral damage. When necessary, the Burn Details may immolate an entire apartment building, but they make the effort to keep it from burning anything around it.

Torching the dead quickly becomes an integral part of NEMA's plan to combat the resurrected dead. If there are no parts for the zombies to use, then they have a much harder time replenishing their numbers. So not only are the dead incinerated, but whenever possible, the bodies of fallen zombies are also collected and burned to ash. It is grim and tedious work, but necessary.

Player Characters can be part of such a **Burn Detail**, making it their responsibility to secure an area and incinerate the remains of the dead. This is done at the site of recent battles, as well as city ruins. Cars, trucks, even ruined power armor and robot vehicles must be checked. If the street has been torn up, or a manhole uncovered, a group must be sent into the sewers to search for bodies and zombies. They need to go quickly through every block, street, alleyway, building, floor, room, closet, and wherever a corpse might be found. Corpses are burned wherever they are found or gathered up, dumped in a nearby pile or a pit, and torched. Not only does this help prevent disease, but it also eliminates bodies from being re-animated and used against them.

In areas where the Transmission is actively broadcasting and zombies have already begun to appear, any corpse discovered is destroyed immediately, either by using Mega-Damage weapons or fire. Sometimes explosives and combustible material are used to blow up a huge area full of them, such as an evacuee center, hospital or morgue that is too damaged to be rebuilt and used by the living. Wherever the dead bodies may have been taken, the Burn Detail is sent out to dispatch them.

Burn Details face many challengers and dangers that run the gamut. There are plenty of monsters, demons, alien creatures, D-Bees, evil spell casters, Doomspeakers, bandits, and natural disaster to keep NEMA forces on their toes. Plus there is always the danger that during a particular Burn Detail, the dead suddenly rise and attack the living! In small towns and rural areas, the dead rising right before their eyes might not spell disaster, but in the suburbs and urban areas with dense populations, the dead can outnumber NEMA forces a thousand to one in a matter of minutes! This is why it is so important to conduct body removal operations quickly and without pause. Consequently, soldiers conducting these missions are usually on edge the entire time. And since the work basically amounts to running around city ruins torching bodies, it can get tedious and depressing. Roscoe units have had training and some experience with disasters and this type of operation, but the magnitude of destruction and death even effects them.



Job Four: Destroy All Zombies!

This one kind of goes without saying. The Scrap Zombies are here to kill everyone and turn them into zombies. Here to turn the world into a giant cemetery with rusty metal headstones. They will not ever stop, that much is clear.

NEMA soldiers have orders to shoot any zombie they see. If it looks dead, has a bunch of junk attached to it, and doesn't respond to vocal commands, they shoot it. If it doesn't go down at first, they shoot it until it does. If more show up, they shoot them too.

NEMA Midwest Command is at the front lines of battling the undead. They know that because of the severe loss of life during the past few months, the dead outnumber the living by anywhere from a hundred to a thousand to one. The exact amount of dead cannot be counted now due to the extreme danger of venturing



Game Master's Eyes Only

The following section is intended for the Game Master only. Players can read it if they wish, but doing so may spoil some of the secrets that should be revealed only after confronting the villain behind the zombies. Personally, I always find it more entertaining, and more frightening, when I don't know where the monsters, especially zombies, come from. – *Taylor White*.

The cause of the Zombie Plague

The strange effects of the Black Obelisk are not the result of a zombie virus or genetic tampering, or the intervention of an Alien Intelligence. It all restarted with one man, corrupted by power, blinded by rage, and a victim of his own megalomania.

A faraway time and place

When the Great Cataclysm hits, the ley lines of the Earth surge with incredible power. Where these ley lines intersect, the fabric of space and time is stretched thin and becomes distorted. When this happens, reality itself can tear apart and separates. Whenever this happens it creates a Rift, a dimensional hole that functions as a bridge between one dimension and another. During the Great Cataclysm and the decades that follow it, there is no way to control or pacify the Rifts, or even determine where many of them lead. Chaos and randomness are the law of the land. Rifts tear through space and time and connect with alien worlds and dimensions with the phases of the moon, the new positions of planets and stars, and the slightest shift in the flow of magic energy along the ley lines of the Blue Zones.

Humankind had speculated and fantasized on theories regarding parallel dimensions for centuries. Unfortunately, due to the low levels of magic energy flowing through the Earth, humanity was cut off from many dimensions but its own. While races and creatures elsewhere in the Megaverse were able to hop from one dimension to another with relative ease, if they knew how, humankind on Earth was limited to exploring the neighboring planets and outer space inside tin-cans and via satellites and other science-built devices. Therefore, it came as a complete surprise when holes in reality started opening and doorways to other worlds were revealed during and after the Great Cataclysm. Hundreds of doors to an untold number of worlds. Those other worlds had always been there, but until the Great Cataclysm and the return of magic energy at such a high level, no modern scientist on Earth had ever known about them.

One such Rift led to another world where a giant war among all nations reached every corner of the planet. The justifications for the war had faded from memory many generations ago. Every nation had its own version of history, and no one could agree what had started the war, and so it continued, unabated, for centuries with new grievances, politics, greed and reasons to keep fighting.

No one side was ever powerful enough to break the deadlock, and the war carried on with no permanent gains. Land that was taken was eventually taken back, lives lost for nothing. If a nation grew weak through attrition, plague, or political instability, it was quickly conquered by one or more of its neighbors. The war devolved into a massive stalemate that persisted for hundreds of years.

The weapons used in this war included magic and technological wonders, often fused together. Magic became a fuel source of great efficiency, and in seemingly inexhaustible supply. It powered great mechanical beasts, and these machines, controlled by mighty warriors, fought with each other in epic battles across the face of the planet. Infantry troops were armed with rifles that fired magical blasts instead of lead bullets. The deprivation caused by centuries of war meant technology was crude and limited. The machines clunky, clockwork behemoths made of metal and magic. Trains and airships powered by magic, carried people and cargo across ashen fields, barren plains, through sprawling and smog-filled cities, over mined-out mountains, and to the front lines of the never-ending war.

The endless arms race forced each nation to specialize in a particular discipline of magic. One nation was predisposed towards Biomancy, to nature and the power of life. The people there lived in tune with their surroundings and with the natural world. Another nation was predisposed to summoning magic, using slave labor consisting of thousands of oppressed creatures and monsters summoned from other worlds. And there were others as well. A nation of Ocean Magic, and others that harnessed Elemental Magic, or Wizardry, and Alchemy, and of "Industrial Enchantment" in which soldiers were magically grafted to their weapons.

One was a nation whose power base was Necromancy, a magic based on disease, decay, death, and the proliferation of entropy. The people of that dark land lived in a culture that welcomed death and respected the power it held in the universe. To them, death was not something to be feared, it was an inevitability. Unavoidable. They did not worry about dying, because death is a release from the banalities and weaknesses of life. To die is a reward.

An important part of this *Death Culture* was the use of animated dead and the proliferation of the *undead*. Zombies in particular, were commonplace. One of the fundamental practices of Necromancy is to reanimate empty bodies. They are not alive in any sense of the word, but remain active, operating through



magical means that only death mages can comprehend. It was common practice for the bodies of the dead to be reanimated and used to provide services beneficial to the living.

Zombies are, by nature, non-thinking automatons. A sort of robot suitable for basic labor and used in everything from construction and war to housekeeping. They never tire or complain. They do not need food or rest. And with their help, great cities of the Necromancy kingdom were built, and zombies performed the drudgery needed to maintain them. This freed the living citizenry to pursue other ventures and interests in magic, war, politics, art, music, scientific achievement, or simple leisure.

The walking dead were so common that it was stranger to not have one's own body persist as a working zombie after death. Only the oldest and most frail were exempt, their bodies too weak to perform physically demanding tasks. Also excluded were the wealthy and powerful. They could simply pay vast sums, much more than the average citizen could afford, to have a burial or cremation. Many in the lower classes saw this as a wasteful extravagance, an insult. While they worked on, even in death, the rich refused to allow even their dead bodies to contribute to society after they were done with them.

Marcel LeMerchand

– The Necromancer King

The ruling power in this kingdom was the LeMerchand family, a dynasty with total control over the government and military of its nation. The current head of the family was Marcel LeMerchand, known as the Necromancer King. The family ruled the country, but Marcel ruled the family. As the Necromancer King, Marcel was sternly detached, but ruthless and cunning. He also had a tremendous sense of fair play and personal honor. He never lied, cheated, or used underhanded techniques in politics or war. Marcel was passionate, driven, and emotional. His major fault was his supreme arrogance. As a sorcerer schooled in the mystic art of Necromancy, LeMerchand had no equal. He was the most powerful and talented Necromancer that the world had ever known. LeMerchand knew this, and was not afraid to flaunt his power.

The people respected and feared their leader. Even among Necromancers, Marcel was known for his fascination (some would say obsession) with the dead. When not performing his duties as ruler, he could be found dabbling with death magic, improving his skills, and developing new techniques or research to unravel ancient mysteries. He experimented with undead creatures, and developed new ways to raise and animate the dead through combinations of magic and technology. LeMerchand wrote countless books on the subject, which served as the proclaimed national philosophy and direction for the cultural mentality of his people.

The Necromancer King was a domineering leader. Some said, a tyrant. He wanted the love of his people, their respect and admiration. He wanted to be revered as a mortal man who could

conquer death, someone who had unraveled and mastered one of the great mysteries of existence, a cornerstone of the human condition. But his power and endless ambition frightened those around him, even some members of the royal family. Many worried that his endless tinkering with the building blocks of life and death might unleash some terrible abomination upon them all.

The kingdom had always possessed an army of the dead. It was both economical and intimidating to enemies to use animated dead as soldiers. Summoned and created in elaborate magic rituals, the animated dead were imbued with supernatural abilities. They were difficult to kill and could not succumb to fear, hunger or disease. Yes, they were slow and dull-witted, but strong and fought tirelessly. And there was always the gruesome but convenient fact that the dead bodies of the enemy made excellent new recruits.

Animated dead were simply robotic drones made of dead bones and flesh, never a true army of soldiers. The commanders were the Necromancers who raised the dead and oversaw the zombies, mummies, Ghouls, Entities, and other monsters that did the actual fighting.

The Necromancer King, Marcel, sought ways to improve his army. He envisioned a more efficient way to command the dead, using industry and high technology. He wanted an army free of unreliable and potential rival Necromancers. There should be only one supreme commander of the dead: him and he alone. First, however, the army of the dead needed to be redesigned from the ground up. Zombies and mummies were fine servants on a small level, but they made poor soldiers on a real military battlefield. They were creations of ancient magic. Magic that was, in Marcel's eyes, antiquated and lacking in true, modern vision.

The Necromancer King wanted something more, and began to experiment with incorporating body armor, mechanical parts, weapon limbs and electrical batteries into his zombies. A breakthrough came when he found a way to consistently program his automatons with simple commands. His greatest achievement, however, came in the form of the Transmission. A broadcast method of sending Necromantic magic through electromagnetic waves the same way one used radio and television signals, both considered high-technology at the time. These signals would carry dark magic into receptors in the rotting brains of the dead, forcing them to rise again as his zombie soldiers. Automatons instantly and automatically under his control and programmed to function under a uniform set of parameters.

Until his secret breakthrough, a Necromancer could only animate and control so many corpses. The creation of a true zombie or mummy was a daunting and debilitating task, and limited greatly in the number that were possible to create even in a lifetime. A pitiful handful even for a powerful mage such as himself. As it currently stood, to command an army of the dead required him to rely upon underlings. Thousands and thousands of Necromancers out in the field of combat functioning as squad and company leaders, under a traditional military command structure. The troops



were animated dead, but their leaders were human Necromancers. People with their own ambition and agendas. People expected to obediently execute the bidding of their king and correctly follow his orders. Even without worrying about the ambitions of rival Necromancers, there was always the matter of underlings conveying orders clearly down the chain of command. As King, Marcel had to trust the many different levels of leadership being able to execute battle plans and make the correct decisions in the field. Miscommunication, incompetence, discontent, politics, fear and cowardice could all undermine a battle. While the dead soldiers were invulnerable to such things, the Necromancer officers pulling their string were not. Now, with the breakthrough of the Transmission, Marcel could raise an army of millions and command them all, eliminating human error (other than his own) and preventing dissension and rebellion within his combat ranks. These experiments and breakthroughs offered Marcel the potential for the control and ultimate power he had always sought, and would make him the most powerful man on the planet.

His one stumbling block was the short range of the Transmission. LeMerchand needed a super-transmitter from which to create and direct his armies. Dedicated broadcast towers with large antenna arrays, and specially-trained Necromancers to operate them, did the job relaying the broadcast signal further, but they created strategic targets that needed to be defended. Still, it was an improvement.

LeMerchand's work reached its dark and terrible height in the formation of what he called **The Army of the Resurrected**. Animated troops without the need of human leaders that proved to be incredibly efficient killing machines. Nearly all the logistical and tactical failings of the old army had been eliminated with these new innovations. And with every victory, new dead joined the ranks of his zombie army – troops born from the corpses of their victims. Border skirmishes with rival nations were quickly brought to a halt as King LeMerchand's creations decimated enemy armies one after another.

Before long, King Marcel LeMerchand was at the zenith of his reign. The war was quickly moving in his favor, and he was formulating plans to extend his empire further. The Army of the Resurrected was, arguably, the most powerful and largest in the world. Each nation around the globe had reason to fear the Necromancer King, for it appeared that his lust for power and ruthlessness might not end until he ruled the entire planet. Or so active imaginations decided.

Marcel's arrogance grew as well. He became cold and distant to all but his wife Julietta, the only thing that kept him grounded and connected to humanity. His love for her reminded him that he was still just a mortal man, and that there were still some things more important than power over the living through the dead. Some speculated that Marcel's obsession with death was born from his realization that one day he and Julietta would have to part forever. Perhaps he felt that if he could beat death, then they would never be apart.

Julietta was known as the **Necromancer Queen**, but only by association with Marcel. She had no particular affinity for magic or any of the dark things that Marcel surrounded himself with. In Marcel's eyes, she was a being of light, warmth, and love, a stark contrast to his usual preoccupations. While King LeMerchand plotted and tinkered in his ancient crypts, raising the dead and communing with otherworldly demons and spirits, Julietta saw to many of the day-to-day operations of running a nation. She was well-loved by the common people, and highly respected by members of the government as well as foreign dignitaries. She was so important to the running of Marcel's kingdom that some said the entire nation would be lost without her.

The leaders of the world began to plot against The Necromancer King. He had become too powerful and dangerous too quickly. If left unchecked, he could become unstoppable, even against their combined might. Something had to be done.

Despite public perception of King Marcel LeMerchand, especially to outsiders, he was a scholar and a mage, not a conquering warlord. He was an innovative thinker who prided himself as a man of science. He had no desire to crush or eradicate every rival nation. After centuries of war, the idea of peace intrigued him. He was content to have brought an end to the constant conflict that raged for generations against his nation and supported peace talks among other nations. For the moment, at least, he was the man of the hour. He felt powerful, heroic and his ego sated. His Army of the Resurrected was the ultimate power. His enemies admitted defeat rather than see their countries invaded and overrun. Other nations opened their arms to him and made favorable political gestures out of fear. He would be able to use the fear of his superior technology and unparalleled army to extort riches and arcane knowledge from the other nations, all in the name of peace. He could not have been happier. Had the leaders of other nations realized this, their futures might have been very different.

A grand, week-long, celebration and feast in the name of peace was sponsored by the Necromancer King and held at LeMerchand's palace. The supremely confident King welcomed the world leaders into his palace. There, at a grand feast, they would further discuss the terms of peace and the future of the world with him as its most prominent figure. Proud of his accomplishments in Necromancy, King Marcel had his finest undead creations do all of the serving and hosting of the affair. Everywhere the guests went, zombies stood to wait on them. To some foreign visitors, it was unsettling. To others, disgusting. And to many others, it was a flagrant show of power and an intentional slap in the face.

One evening, while Marcel wined and dined with his former enemies, Julietta, the Necromancer Queen, made every attempt to counter her husband's boasting and self-importance with her trademark congeniality and astute political savvy. As the night wore on, Marcel's swagger, fueled by too much wine, became overbearing. Finally, the Necromancer Queen sent her husband to bed, led off by a contingent of zombie servants.



By this time of the night, most of the other visiting dignitaries and their entourages were asleep as well. Julietta was left with only a handful of leaders from other nations.

The enemies of the LeMerchand family knew that the Necromancer Queen was as important to the welfare of the nation as Marcel. Without her, they predicted, the nation would dissolve from within. And so it was that a poisoned drink ended the life of the gentle Queen. To the zombie guards she seemed but asleep. When carried away to her bed chamber, the zombies saw no danger and remained calm and at their stations. Traitorous insiders, paid off by rival nations, disposed of her body, leaving only her decapitated head on a pillow, as proof of her demise.

Marcel was torn from his bed, gagged, beaten and immobilized with powerful magic. He was made helpless while the cabal of fearful foreign nations demanded his surrender and the dissolution of the Army of the Resurrected. To punctuate their demands, they dragged Marcel to his queen's bed. If he did not agree to their demands, he and his people would suffer the same fate as their Queen. If he complied, he and his nation would be spared. To make sure resurrection of the Queen was completely impossible, his enemies threw her head into the blaze of the fireplace.

King Marcel collapsed on the floor and wailed and wept with unspeakable grief. He knew the limitations of his magic. With her mortal shell utterly destroyed, his powers were useless in bringing her back to life. For the first time, Marcel felt helpless against his rivals and the power of nature itself. He had devoted his entire life to uncovering the mysteries of death and how to overcome them, and still he had failed his beautiful wife. His mind raced, tormented by the thought that had he been more studious and diligent in his pursuit of mystic power, he might have discovered the secrets of "true" resurrection. Resurrection that could rebuild a body from the ashes, and return its proper soul. If only he were more powerful, nothing could have taken his love away.

As his enemies had hoped, the Necromancer King was a broken man, shattered by the brutal death of his beloved wife. He could not even speak for three days and seemed almost catatonic. Finally, he agreed to dismantle his army and destroy all the secrets behind it, and the foreign leaders departed, leaving an "advisor" and rival Necromancers who had sold out their king and nation to supervise the process. They gave him a mere two weeks to get his affairs in order. His famous bravado and cockiness were gone, replaced by despair and bleak misery. After all his posturing, Marcel was left an empty shell, overcome with sorrow.

Despondent, his "advisors" left Marcel to his own devices while they discussed what to do with him next. They had promised to spare his life and feared the reaction of the people if both king and queen were slain. Still, he seemed too dangerous to let live. They were pleased when he locked himself away in the darkest bowels of his palace to contemplate all that he had lost. The nation mourned the royal family, especially their Queen. Uncertainty reigned in the minds of the people. Many feared the inevitable invasion by foreign armies.

The rest of the LeMerchand family was in disarray following the Queen's assassination. No one had the ability to run the nation. For their cooperation, some members of the LeMerchand family were allowed to serve as puppet-leaders to keep the kingdom from devolving into complete chaos. The Necromancers and the use of animated dead had strict limits imposed upon them. Never again would they be allowed to use the dead, unchecked.

LeMerchand's Resurrection

While his kingdom was being disassembled and parceled off to those who had betrayed and conspired against him, King LeMerchand had quietly slipped away into self-imposed exile. He left the catacombs underneath the royal palace without fanfare and traveled in secret to a place owned by his family for generations. A small parcel of land out in the country. The only structures were a small cottage the family used for vacations and the ancient ruins of a family castle said to have been built over the skeletal remains of several previous castles lost over the centuries. It was also a place legend claimed to be steeped in tragedy and forgotten magic, and said to have once served as a nexus to other dark dimensions, long ago.

The ruins had their own special meaning to the King. It represented a simpler and happier time from his childhood. And it was here, as a child, that he had crawled deep down into a tunnel that only a child could squeeze through. He would go missing for two days, and when found covered in dirt, the child would cheerfully report that he had been out playing, and seemed no worse for the wear.

Though only eight years old at the time, the young Marcel was not afraid as he burrowed through the darkness across the damp earth and rock of the natural tunnel. He never knew how deep or how far he had crawled that day, but to a child, it seemed like miles. He stopped only when exhaustion claimed him, and it was then, deep underground in the comforting darkness, that he first dreamt of combining Necromancy magic with technology. It was there that he first dreamt of standing tall atop an obsidian tower commanding millions of dead soldiers covered in scrap armor as they snuffed out the last light of humanity.

And it was there, now, at the location of the filled-in cave that was the entrance to the narrow tunnel, that Marcel found himself once again looking for inspiration. No, not just inspiration. He was looking for much more than that. He had returned to something that had waited for him in the darkness all these many years. Something he had forgotten about until very recently.

Marcel LeMerchand was the Necromancer King, and using his great power, he brought hundreds of corpses to their feet and set them to the task of digging. They dug tirelessly to make the old tunnel of his childhood large enough to accommodate a grown man. A tunnel Marcel found in an instant and knew was correct the moment he saw it. His tireless minions dug and dug for months on end, until they finally hit a solid wall. A wall that greeted Marcel like an old friend, slid open, and let him inside.



Thinking him completely mad, his enemies left the king alone to dig what they were certain was his own grave. While LeMerchand dug and clawed at the earth, the world fell back into chaos and war. His nation would succumb to more than one enemy. There, in isolation, except for a few hundred of his zombies, the Necromancer King watched with hatred and anger as traitors and foreigners subjugated his people and dismantled all that he had built. Little did his enemies know, but Marcel was convening with a dark power under the ruins of his family castle. He was the greatest Necromancer that ever lived, and this kingdom was his to rule. The treachery he suffered could only be answered in blood, and he would have his vengeance.

The day an invading army came to the site to put an end to the Necromancer King, they found a crater. Deep at the center of the pit was a massive black tower. An obelisk of pure black metal (or was it stone?), smooth and polished to a mirror finish. The mad king nowhere to be found except, perhaps inside the strange edifice. The tower was bombarded, but when the shelling stopped and the dust settled, it still stood. And from the darkness around it spilled out a legion of zombies. Many wore armor bolted to their bodies and weapons that replaced their very limbs. As enemy soldiers died, they soon rose again to fight for King LeMerchand. Not just they, but every corpse within 20 miles (32 km) of the Black Obelisk rose up to strike down the invaders.

The killing by the zombies paused only long enough for the now massive zombie army to drag weapons, vehicles and scrap into the Black Obelisk. When they emerged again, they were armored and ready for their next military campaign. His zombies went forth slowly, spreading out for miles in all directions around the pit, slaughtering the people without mercy. Inside his great tower, Marcel LeMerchand took no joy in the slaughter around him. It simply had to be done. They had taken away the one thing that gave him joy and kept him human. Now they would pay for what they had done. He made no discrimination between his own people, or even his own family. They all died at the hands of his dead army. When those dead rose, they too fought for the King.

When everyone in King LeMerchand's own nation had perished and been resurrected as zombie soldiers – an army that had swollen into the tens of millions – the dead spilled across borders like devouring locusts in an ever-expanding circle of death. King LeMerchand's ability to control the dead seemed unlimited. Since the Necromancers of his nation were the first to perish, there were no death mages left to offer any countermeasures or defenses against the dead, if there ever were any.

A decade later, when King LeMerchand believed no one was left alive on his world, the Black Obelisk held him in its dark embrace and in a dream, made him aware of other people – entire worlds and other dimensions – that deserved a similar fate. Worlds that cried out in the darkness to be taken by entropy once and for all, and he could make it happen. He could bring peace, in death, to countless other deserving worlds. All he had to do

was to give himself to the comforting darkness that is the Black Obelisk.

For the first time in years, Marcel LeMerchand smiled and felt joy. He had found his calling and accepted the offer. Though it has never quite dawned on Marcel, doing so has made him the immortal Bringer of Destruction and Destroyer of Humanity.

Marcel is the active heart and mind – the controlling force – behind the Black Obelisk as it searches for planets of humans and human-like beings to slaughter. It is a task Marcel LeMerchand has embraced. He finds Chaos Earth especially interesting because it is very much a shadowy reflection of his own planet.

The Black Obelisk Enigma

The Black Obelisk is the product of ancient Necromancy magic. A doomsday device created by unknown hands so long ago, that even the oldest races in the Megaverse may know absolutely nothing about it. Even among societies of Necromancers and beings who pride themselves on their knowledge of magic, the Black Obelisk is the stuff of legend – rare and ancient legends that speak of it as one of several doomsday devices created trillions of years ago by a dark force whose name is long forgotten. These legends are so ancient and cryptic, that even 99.9% of Necromancers have never heard them and the fraction that have, don't believe the Black Obelisk ever really existed.

The appearance of Marcel LeMerchand and the Black Obelisk on Chaos Earth speaks otherwise. But that's the thing, when a Black Obelisk is rumored to have made an appearance, it either leaves no witnesses to speak of it (i.e. LeMerchand's homeland), or the death it unleashes happens on an isolated world within an infinite number of worlds across the Megaverse, so nobody hears about it, except perhaps, as rumor. Even if the humanoid population of an entire planet is annihilated, who is going to know about it? If the decimated world is discovered, it is pure speculation as to what caused the demise of its people; the only hints of it likely to be buried in the fossil record of that planet.

And even if the Black Obelisk is implicated in the legends or history of a particular people, it is just that, legends, hearsay and guesswork, not hard evidence. And depending on how history has been recorded (and how accurately), the legend may not clearly identify or implicate a Black Obelisk. A descriptive line such as, "And from the darkness came death," for example, does not suggest a Black Obelisk at all.

On Chaos Earth, the appearance of the Black Obelisk is completely unknown. In a very short time, it will be forgotten, along with NEMA. Lumped together with many other unnamed "demon plagues." Though its appearance may claim tens of thousands of lives (maybe hundreds of thousands!) before it is stopped, the events that unfold and the incredible tales of heroism NEVER survive the *Two Hundred Year Dark Age* even as a legend. The vampires of Mexico, Mrrlynn in England and the Splugorth of Atlantis, all of whom come to Earth afterward, have no clue a



Black Obelisk has ever appeared on Earth. Should the threat re-emerge in the future, the learning process NEMA must endure takes place all over again for a new generation of heroes.

The Splugorth and a very few others have heard the fairy tales about the Black Obelisk. A doomsday machine that is said to be able to raise the dead and build an army of zombies capable of conquering or wiping out entire planets. On one hand, the Splugorth would love to have such a powerful magic in their armory. On the other, even the Splugorth are likely to be too frightened of the dark magic and the unknown life force rumored to inhabit the very walls of the Obelisk itself. As masters of Rune Magic, they would like to know the secrets contained inside the Black Obelisk, however, it's magic is said to be more ancient than Rune magic and much more unstable; a force of chaos and entropy that may have devoured the very beings who created it. And those who use it. Thus, the Splugorth would work to help rid the cursed object from Rifts Earth or utterly destroy it. So would the Lemurians. The demons of Hades and the infernals of Dyval, by comparison, would do anything to lay their hands on a Black Obelisk and use it in the Minion War against their enemies, and later, to conquer and enslave other worlds. This must never happen.

As for the Black Obelisk itself, little is known. It cannot be object read, because it is somehow alive! Ironic, considering it is

a bringer of death and appears to be a factory or machine operation of some kind.

It appears on worlds where millions have perished and magic is strong, and always on a ley line nexus point. The Black Obelisk needs tremendous amounts of magic energy to do what it does. The nexus point is also how it is able to Rift from one world to another.

The Black Obelisk is somehow able to communicate with a chosen advocate (in this case, *Marcel LeMerchand*), and create for him a sense of belonging and purpose, perhaps even destiny. However, it never speaks outright to him or others in words, nor does it outwardly try to tempt or torment. Like a Millennium Tree, it seems to give its chosen one ideas, dreams and impressions that are left for him or her to interpret and use. As a result, the Black Obelisk is very much a weapon currently under the stewardship of the Necromancer King. He is the hand and mind that guides it, using it as a weapon against human life. The very purpose for which the doomsday machine is designed. Coincidence? In that sense, the Black Obelisk may indeed simply wait to reveal itself to a sympathetic soul in the hope that he unleashes its destructive power. Without such a kindred spirit, the Black Obelisk vanishes and goes dormant, sometimes for millions of years, before it resurfaces. Kill Marcel LeMerchand, and, in theory, the Black Obelisk may be knocked out of commission for a very long time.





Siege on the Black Obelisk

NEMA Midwest Command is working with a limited timetable concerning the constant encroachment of Scrap Zombies into Rockford, Illinois, a safe haven community that numbers into the hundreds of thousands! By all estimates, they have 5-8 days until the zombies start banging down their doors.

Unfortunately, communications with any group sent to shut down the source of the Transmission are spotty at best, and any forces sent into *Rockford* or beyond should assume they are on their own. NEMA defenders in Rockford, which include power armor troops and robots, have begun flying video-recorded messages back and forth to H.Q. in Chicago via *Silver Eagle SAMAS* messengers. Relaying messages and orders by messenger is not ideal, but it is effective. Depending on possible attacks from hostile forces, a Silver Eagle courier can make the run from Rockford to Chicago H.Q. in 15-20 minutes. However, this is not a luxury available to small squads in the field. Command will not know the progress of the player group, for example, until the Transmission suddenly stops and the zombies drop to the ground, or the characters return.

The defense of Rockford is considered a necessity in holding the line against the zombie army. However, while combat troops and militia fighters are moving in, as a precaution, *General Sawyer* has ordered all her subordinates to begin preparations to evacuate the entire civilian population of the city to the Chicago compound. This is not an easy task, and stretches the resources

of the Chicago base of operation to the max. She simply does not want to risk the lives of so many civilians should Rockford get overrun. Her job is to save as many lives as she can, and right now that means she needs to get as many people out as she can. Estimates are that 60-70% of the Rockford population can be temporarily relocated in 6-7 days. This is a logistical nightmare that leaves civilians vulnerable to attack en route to the temporary relocation encampment in Chicago. The player characters could find themselves assigned to escorting and protecting civilian convoys to Chicago, or as part of the military operation that is expected to meet the zombie swarm on the northern outskirts of Rockford and stop it from getting any farther south. That is assuming they are not being sent deep into enemy territory to knock out the Transmission or to destroy the Black Obelisk.

Lt. General Sawyer realizes that not everyone can be saved, but she'll save as many as she can. In fact, she estimates that given the sheer number of dead bodies in northern Illinois since the first days of the Cataclysm, they could be overrun themselves. All the more reason to act quickly and decisively to stop the invasion here and now. She would have them all run if they could, but where could they go? With so many areas of the country inaccessible, near total communications loss, and God-knows-what else pouring out of the Blue Zones, where is safe? Milwaukee? The Dakotas? The southwest? It sure isn't Detroit, St. Louis, Windsor or the East Coast - all overrun with demons, monsters and



dimensional Rifts. Indiana or Kentucky could be options, but not if the zombies keep spreading out like a plague. It would only delay the inevitable. No, it was probably fate that they were near the epicenter of this zombie outbreak. Stop it now. Stop it fast. Or be the next to perish. And General Sawyer has no death wish. They'd face this new crisis head-on.

It might be tantamount to suicide, but Lt. General Sawyer is determined to stay and fight. But they are not going to wait for the zombies to come to them, that really would be suicide. The General intends to take the fight to them. She has already experienced enough to know that there must be a source of these monsters. Probably a damn Rift or some sorcerer conjuring them up. They need to find the cause and shut it down. Fast.

That's where the player characters come in. General Sawyer is sending small squads of NEMA and volunteer militia into the north to find the source of the Zombie Plague, gather intelligence and determine a way to put an end to it. The north, because as far as they can tell, that's where the zombies are originating.

Player characters who do not go off to find and stop the source of the zombies can participate in any number of other combat operations.

A surprisingly small percentage of the civilian population decide to flee the Chicago area, and even fewer of the NEMA peacekeepers desert in the face of the danger. General Sawyer does nothing to stop them, unless they try to take valuable weapons and resources with them, or jeopardize the safety of those taking a stand. Any troops who go AWOL during the eight days before the zombie invasion hits Rockford will be accepted back into the fold afterward – if there is an afterward – no questions

asked. She knows how dire their situation is and that fear can overcome compassion and duty. There is no precedent for any of this, and the General intends to be as understanding as possible. Of course, many of those who run off to parts unknown are never heard of again. That said, she is proud the vast majority choose to stay and fight. Those who go AWOL will have a lot to prove should they return, and those who turn to banditry get no mercy from the NEMA forces.

The Apocalyptic Ruins of Madison

Eventually, enough pieces are put together that NEMA's leaders learn about the **Black Obelisk** in the city of Madison, Wisconsin as the source of the zombies. Whether that revelation comes from the player characters or by other means depends on how each individual game plays out. Ultimately, the player group should be one of the teams sent out to penetrate the Obelisk and destroy the strange structure from within.

Anyone who approaches the city of Madison can see the massive and towering Black Obelisk from miles away. It towers above the city skyline, tall, straight, and made of such pure black material that it seems to absorb light. Mobs and mobs of zombies go into and out of the huge openings at its base like a procession of ants. Hundreds more zombies (not thousands, only hundreds) wander the streets a few miles around the Black Obelisk, as if the powers that direct it are confident that no one can get this close to them. Indeed, the zombie hordes are miles away and pushing outward, away from the Black Obelisk to expand the territory they dominate, and to make more dead. Madison, Beloit, and the



other cities and towns around it are *Tomb Cities* where nothing but zombies and desolation can be seen. Them and Gargoyles. A flock of 80-100 **Gargoyles** – presumably from the Detroit and Windsor Rifts – have decided to roost in the ruins of Madison; some even live atop the Black Obelisk. For reasons yet undetermined, they attack aircraft and flying power armor that come near the obsidian tower. They also harass NEMA flyers as far south as the skies over *Aurora* and *Chicago*. The truth is, the Gargoyles are simply using the situation to torment and strike out at humans, preventing them from their goal of reaching the Black Obelisk simply out of spite and for sport. Fortunately, they seem to ignore most ground troops, relegating their attacks to flyers.

Madison is built on an isthmus between two large lakes, though it claims five to its territory. The land is well known for its wet marshes, making the city prone to flooding during the rainy season. Much of Madison is still frozen over from the harsh winter and has not begun to thaw yet. It may become a problem in the summer and after the ash dissipates from the skies, but not yet. Still, the streets and ruins are covered in snow and ash. Large sections of the marshland and parts of the lakes are still frozen solid enough for a group of people or power armor suits to stand on (nothing bigger than a Chromium Guardsman, and even that is pushing it; don't even think about firing the Boom Gun).

Before the arrival of the Black Obelisk, Madison was no different from any other mid-sized, 2099 American city after the Great Cataclysm. It and the ensuing chaos left the city devastated. The infrastructure collapsed. The streets blocked off by piles of rubble from collapsed buildings. The interstate and local highways either choked off by the congestion of stalled cars or smashed to pieces. However, since the zombie invasion, the city has been gutted. The dead have worked tirelessly at dismantling everything that can be used to make Scrap Zombies. There is not likely to be one gun, car, truck, lawnmower, fork, knife or piece of Mega-Damage material that has not been taken apart, carried away to the Black Obelisk, and recycled to weaponize the Scrap Zombies. The dead have stripped the city nearly clean, like a swarm of locusts in a field of wheat. This has left streets completely cleared of vehicles and human bodies, making it seem empty and all the more desolate. Buildings remain toppled and crumbling, and piles of bricks, concrete and debris are everywhere, but not the usual signs of human habitation. It's eerie.

The small squads of NEMA agents trying to make their way to the Black Obelisk still have plenty of places to hide, but it also means there are wide expanses and empty streets they must navigate without being noticed. And since the zombies have mostly moved on, other than the procession of dead going into the edifice with more scrap and coming out as Scrap Zombies like a demonic assembly line, the number of animated dead in the city is much fewer than what they have encountered anywhere else.

Player characters find precious little to salvage for themselves. Zombies have no need for food, and there are no living people in the city at all, so some stores, supermarkets, and homes are sure

to have canned or frozen food in them. Although the intelligent cooking appliances are no longer functioning (and probably stolen by zombies), the base food components are just lying around and still edible in the frozen wasteland. Zombies also have no use for medicine or clothing, so those things are still somewhat available as well. But forget about finding Mega-Damage weapons, surveillance gear, cybernetics, communications equipment or vehicles. Not even a bicycle. That stuff was taken weeks ago.

Although the Blue Zones of Madison raged during the initial chaos, they have subsided since the appearance of the Black Obelisk. Characters attuned to magic are sure to notice that the Blue Zones in Madison nearest the Black Obelisk are noticeably smaller and weaker than in other places. The reason is that the Black Obelisk is drawing on their energy to create and keep its growing zombie army mobile and expanding.

As if in the eye of the hurricane, things are unusually calm and quiet all over the city. Other than the zombies and the Gargoyles, there are few other demons and monsters in Madison. Most of the time, the only things that can be heard is the biting cold Wisconsin wind and the occasional squeal of an animal. With no humanoid life to hunt, even the handful of remaining zombies are quiet and subdued. The dead make little noise as they wander about. It is only when living things get close enough that they start to move with more interest. The closer the living get, the more hostile and agitated the dead become. Even at their most aggressive, zombies are still very quiet. The best clue to their presence is to listen for the erratic shuffling of their feet or the inevitable moan when they move in on prey. Chaos Zombies have notoriously bad balance and spatial recognition abilities and tend to shuffle, kick up dirt, bump things and knock things over.

Although there are no living people and little wildlife left in Madison, there are other dangers besides zombies to worry about. Some Lesser Demons and Sub-Demons, like the Gargoyles, too foolhardy, arrogant, or ignorant to know any better, are found lurking in the ruins, tearing apart zombies for fun, and fleeing before they get seriously outnumbered. The presence of living beings, NEMA heroes at that, may bring out demons who were hiding, to "play" with the mortal interlopers.

The number of demons skulking around Madison is minuscule compared to the number of ghosts and Entities that have been cropping up. Most of the people who were living here when the Great Cataclysm hit have died horrible, gruesome deaths. Those not killed by the initial onslaught have been whittled down by sickness, starvation, exposure and monsters. But those numbers combined don't even come close to the number of people who were brutally murdered when the dead rose. The mass deaths and the savage and terrifying nature of those deaths have attracted ghosts, Banshees and other beings that feed on misery and sorrow. They are attracted by the emotions left behind by the hundreds of thousands who suffered and died here. The majority are harmless, frightening *Haunting Entities* and annoying *Poltergeists*, but some of the more dangerous and hostile varieties are



also present. *Possessing Entities*, *Screaming Puppet Ghosts*, *Rotting Entities*, *Harmful Ghosts*, and a particularly large and nasty *Conglomerate Entity* can all be found in Madison. These ghosts enjoy not only wallowing in the shadows of past human turmoil, but causing it as well. (**Note:** The descriptions of new Entities are located toward the back of this sourcebook.)

The Black Obelisk must be destroyed!

The exterior of the Black Obelisk appears to be made of the purest, darkest, and smoothest of obsidian stone, but cold and hard to the touch like steel. It is made of an unknown material that may be neither stone nor steel. Scaling up its smooth, flat surface is like trying to climb a solid sheet of glass or ice. And at the higher elevations, the walls are likely to be coated in ice. Anyone capable of digging into Mega-Damage material is free to try to scale it, but they do so with a -50% skill penalty and the climb is certain to be long, slow and arduous. Roll under the Climbing skill for every 100 feet (30.5 m) scaled. And the climbers had better watch out for Gargoyles as well as ranged weapon attacks from the ground.

There are no visible windows or markings, and the only entrance or exit appears to be the many openings at the bottom where the zombies come and go. These entrances have remained opened since the day they appeared, but when the Black Obelisk first arrived, it appeared to be completely solid until these entrances slid open to allow Chaos Zombies to enter, their arms loaded with scrap, weapons and electronics. The different openings are divided into *entrances* and *exits*, and although these passageways are not marked, the zombies seem to know which is which. There are no guards or checkpoints as such things are unnecessary. Chaos Zombies and Scrap Zombies are always present, coming and going like ants heading out to gather and return with food; only the zombies gather building materials to make more Scrap Zombies. Thus, only the dead go in and out.

The Black Obelisk is a Mega-Damage Construct. Player characters can try to get into the Black Obelisk by making their own entrance, but the walls of the Obelisk are tough and thick. By concentrating their assault or using powerful explosives, they can inflict enough damage to make their own opening anywhere along the Obelisk's exterior. However, this alerts all zombies (and the master of the Black Obelisk) to the presence and exact location of intruders. Combat ensues within 1D4 minutes, if not immediately.

In game terms, the walls of the Black Obelisk are a heavy Mega-Damage material capable of withstanding tens of thousands of Mega-Damage. Every 5 foot (1.5 m) of thickness has 200 M.D.C. The walls themselves vary in thickness, but as a general rule, are thicker at the base of the structure, and thinner towards the top.

The first 50 floors (roughly 500 feet/152 m height) are 30 feet (9.1 m) thick, requiring 1,200 M.D.C. to blast a 5 foot (1.5 m) diameter hole through the wall. The 200 stories (2,000 feet/609.6 m) above them are only 10 feet (3 m) thick, requiring 400 M.D.C. to open up a five foot (1.5 m) diameter opening, and the walls of the upper 1,500 feet (457 m) of the tower are only five feet (1.5 m) thick (200 M.D.C.). It would be next to impossible to simply blow open enough holes in the Black Obelisk to cause it to collapse, unless one were using weapons powerful enough to destroy entire cities.

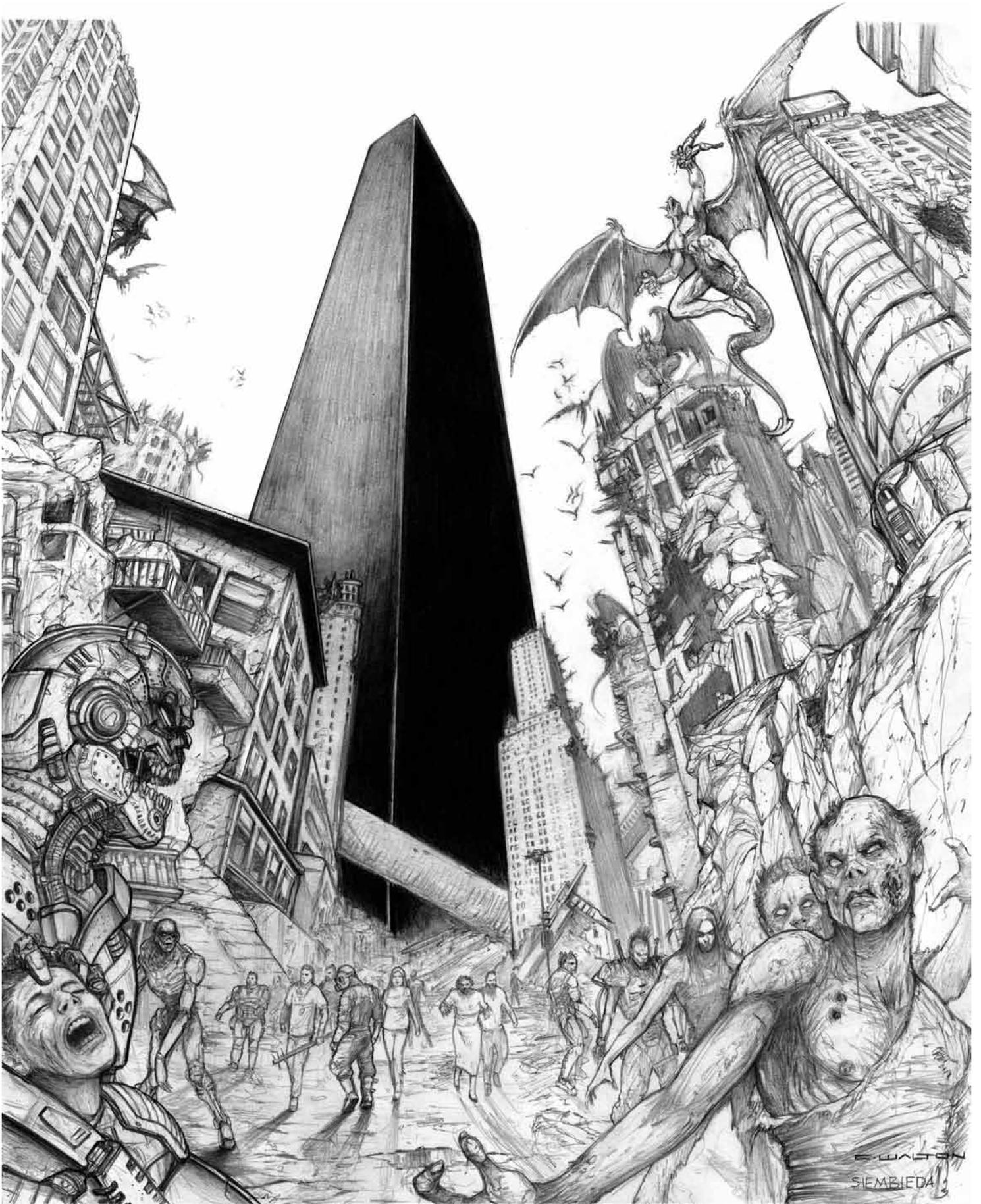
Game Design Note: Weapons of mass destruction do exist in Chaos Earth, but NEMA does not have access to them. Getting their hands on one or more nuclear missiles or bombs would require a trek across country to the nearest missile silo to retrieve or launch one. Though this is extremely unlikely and would take time our heroes probably don't have, it is possible, and could turn into an adventure or series of adventures in and of itself. If nuked, the entire city of Madison is obliterated and remains irradiated for a century. Worse, the Black Obelisk might survive the blast, making all that effort futile.

Though it is not apparent, *the Obelisk is alive!* As such, it heals from damage inflicted upon it. Normal healing is 1D6x1,000 M.D.C. per 24 hours, but it can use the magic energy it draws from the ley lines to heal itself at a rate of 1D6x1,000 M.D.C. per every 10 minutes! It is important to note that time spent healing itself shuts down the factory for 30 minutes per each act of healing with cumulative effect.

As far as anyone is able to tell, the only way into the towering Black Obelisk is through the openings at its base, at street level. Large mobs of Chaos Zombies constantly stream through these openings in jumbled lines as they come with scrap and leave to go get more. There are four such openings on each side of the Obelisk (there is no actual door that opens and closes, just an opening), 16 total. Each is the size of an entrance to a stadium – 30 feet (9.1 m) tall by 50 feet (15.2 m) wide. If necessary, the openings can be closed off by the wall sliding back into place, but it takes a lot to compel the master of the tower to close the openings even for a few minutes. As a rule, once the zombies have risen, the openings are never sealed. The exception being only if the master of the Black Obelisk decides to end the invasion, abandon his zombies and leave that world, or he is slain, in which case the Black Obelisk Rifts away to parts unknown.

Getting Inside

The Black Obelisk sits in the center of Madison, right on the junction point (nexus) of its largest Blue Zones/ley lines. This area is an isthmus: a narrow strip of land between lakes Mendota and Monona. As luck would have it, this geographic location is ideal for the defense of the Black Obelisk. Zombies leaving and entering the Obelisk are crammed onto a land bridge roughly 2,700 feet (823 m) wide at its most narrow, and almost three miles (4.8 km) in length. When zombie activity is at its highest,



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the dead choke the streets of Madison all around the Black Obelisk. However, as they move out to sweep the countryside, the dead disperse and the streets are mostly empty.

Over the lakes. Zombies, even Scrap Zombies, do not like water and have a difficult time crossing it. If the lakes are not frozen, humans could find a wooden boat or a raft, of which there should be plenty at local docks and marinas (the zombies have no interest in salvaging wood or boats in general unless they are metal or M.D.C. material), and use it to cross one of the lakes. That said, the lakes should still be frozen for months to come as the effects of nuclear winter keep the continent in the deep freeze. That means people (and zombies) can cross the frozen surface on foot. The problem with that is people on the ice (whether on foot or in a boat) are out in the open and easily spotted by Scrap Zombies and the Gargoyles.

Flying in. Low-altitude aircraft and flyers in power armor or wearing jet packs are besieged by the Gargoyles and are knocked out of the sky. They have the same problem as trying to cross the open expanse of the lakes: they are seen as they approach, giving the enemy time to attack first and prepare for invasion. However, they should be able to remain largely unnoticed if they hug the ground and fly close to the buildings. This enables them to get close enough to observe the comings and goings around the Black Obelisk and avoid contact with zombies by flying up into buildings with smashed out windows (most) and onto rooftops to hide or escape attacks, or to fly back to base to report what they've seen. (Remember, radio signals are scrambled and jammed by the Transmission wherever the monsters dominate the area. Thus, NEMA has resorted to couriers to deliver orders and receive reports.)

Power armor and jet-pack mobile troops can successfully rush the openings at the base of the Obelisk and zoom inside largely unopposed. However, the zombies outside and everyone inside are immediately alerted to the presence of intruders and respond with deadly force. Flying in for all to see makes stealthful exploration inside out of the question. All available Chaos Zombies (2D6x100 of them) and Scrap Zombies (2D4x10 of the latter, with a new one rolling off the assembly line every five minutes) immediately engage any living beings they encounter. Worse, the Black Obelisk summons all other available Scrap Zombies in a 20 mile (32 km) radius to come to protect it; 1D6+1 arrive every minute/four melee rounds. Unless the living know the exact location of a strategic target such as the Transmission or Marcel LeMerchand, and how to get there, they are likely to be overwhelmed before they can do anything but kill a few dozen zombies. Most are forced to make a hasty retreat against such fierce and sizable resistance, or perish at their cold, dead hands. Flying back outside and fleeing into the ruins remains possible because the master of the Black Obelisk, Marcel LeMerchand, is so confident and cocky that he is not likely to seal the openings to trap intruders inside.

Charging the gates in armored vehicles or robots has even less chance of success. The vehicles are seen and heard coming miles away, causing Chaos and Scrap Zombies to gather and wait for the coming onslaught. Roaring vehicles may also become targets for the Gargoyles and other monsters. If there aren't too many zombies blocking the roads, armored vehicles may be able to plow right through them. A thick mass of zombies, however, are going slow down travel and the blood, gore and hunks of flesh caused by running over them could clog engines and immobilize the combat vehicles. Moreover, the Black Obelisk becomes aware of the incoming assault and has nothing more to do than close its doors and have the Transmission summon thousand of zombies to attack the invaders. Within minutes, the armored vehicles are overwhelmed as zombies begin to chop and rip them to pieces, providing more material for making new Scrap Zombies.

The roof and upper levels are not an alternate way in, either. The roof of the structure is completely unguarded and unwatched, except for the 2D6+12 giant Gargoyles that have made it their roost. Gargoyles are enjoying foiling the humans' attempts to fight the zombies. As a result, the monsters fight to the death to prevent characters from entering from the roof. Should battle ensue, an additional 1D4x10 Gargoyles join the fray within 2D6 melee rounds!

Even if the characters could get inside from the roof, it is a dead end. Any breach above 1,200 feet (366 m) off the ground results in a surreal dimensional experience.

Stepping into the Black Obelisk from the roof or from high up puts each character in a pitch black, limbo-like environment for 1D4 melee rounds. Everyone entering the darkness feels like they are floating, as if carried aloft like a feather or leaf on a cold breeze. Blackness, cold, and flares of crackling, blue magic energy ripple around all those who enter from above. All feel the presence of something ancient and terrifying, and want nothing more than to leave. (There is no saving throw. Everyone feels this.) Moreover, they get a vision that is a rapid snapshot of Marcel's origin story and know that the Black Obelisk is a doomsday machine meant to eradicate all human and human-like life from the Megaverse! A moment later, there is a **01-50%** chance the intruders find themselves teleported back outside at the location they had entered, or **51-100%**, they are teleported to someplace inside the tower and directly in front of Marcel LeMerchand, himself; probably on the floor that is his living quarters and research facility. **Note:** For every minute spent inside the darkness of the black limbo, each character(s) ages one year!

Object Read of the Black Obelisk: Anyone who tries to perform an Object Read on the Obelisk, or on a particular piece of factory machinery inside the Black Obelisk, falls into a trance for 1D4 minutes, and has a nearly identical experience as above, right down to aging one year for every minute in that trance. Object Reading Chaos or Scrap Zombies reveals how they were created, that they come from a skyscraper-sized Black Obelisk, and



are programmed to kill or collect salvage as the case may be with specific zombies.

The easy way to get inside

The easiest way to get inside without being noticed is the scariest and most unlikely: walking right in with the Chaos Zombies! As strange as it may sound, the best way to enter the Black Obelisk without conflict or immediate battle, is to slowly and stealthily walk in among *the Chaos Zombies* carrying scrap into the Black Obelisk.

There are always 1D4 long lines of Chaos Zombies delivering scrap to the Black Obelisk. Each line is a jumble, several zombies thick, never single file. All of these scrap laden zombies are in “salvage mode,” not combat, so they *completely ignore* small numbers of the living, especially if people are spread out among them, not clustered together in one group. Living people who scatter themselves among the zombies, but within view of each other, and keep their heads down, remain quiet, walk slowly like the Chaos Zombies all around them, and make no attacks or sudden movement or noise, can hide in plain sight. They don’t even register to zombies in salvage mode. The humans need only worry about *Scrap Zombies* that might be also be scattered among the Chaos Zombie porters (not likely, and few, if any). Newly minted Scrap Zombies coming off the assembly line exit the Black Obelisk via a completely different opening, so they should not get close enough to notice the living. However, Scrap Zombies are in combat mode from the start, and do attack if they spy a live person. Thankfully, none of the Scrap Zombies expect the living to be this close to the Black Obelisk, so they are not actively looking for them and should not see anyone being stealthy and hiding in the crowd.

Inside the Black Obelisk

Characters inside the Black Obelisk need to focus on finding a way to shut down or destroy it. Every minute that goes by, somewhere somebody dies and a new zombie rises. The fate of humanity could rest on their shoulders. It is time to man up and save the world!

The Chaos Zombies *inside* the Black Obelisk are also in salvage mode and ignore the living as they go about their business. Small numbers of people who are stealthy, keep to the shadows and don’t make their presence obvious, can navigate the corridors and around the machinery inside for a long while before running into trouble. The newly built Scrap Zombies coming off the assembly line are so few at this stage – a new one appearing every five minutes, and usually making a bee-line for the exit – that it should be easy to avoid them and escape combat, at least for a while.

As the theory goes, once inside, the assault team(s) should be able to locate the source of *the Transmission* and disable or destroy it. Better yet, it is hoped that once inside, the assault

team(s), equipped with explosives and heavy weapons, can find a way to forever destroy the Black Obelisk entirely. Since there is little if any intelligence on the inner workings of the Black Obelisk, NEMA operatives are flying by the seat of their pants and making up strategies and tactics as they go along. Everyone who has volunteered for this mission knows it may be their last.

Inside the Darkness

As noted previously, getting into the city ruins around the Black Obelisk is the hard part, getting inside is easy if the interlopers are brave enough to walk in with the scrap-carrying Chaos Zombies. If Scrap Zombies leaving the Black Obelisk can be avoided, a band of humans can walk in with the trash. It is a terrifying prospect, but the most effective way to gain entry.

Once inside, the same principles apply, with Chaos Zombies ignoring the living. Ducking through lines of Chaos Zombies and following various zombies around only gets intruders so far. At some point, our heroes need to break off and sneak around on their own. The good news is that, since the interior of the Black Obelisk is mostly an automated factory, there are no other personnel, other than Marcel LeMerchand, his personal guard and the zombies. The **Chaos Zombies** present are limited to those hauling scrap inside on the lower storage levels and those being dismembered for reconstruction on the upper factory levels. Scrap Zombies, with few exceptions, are those being assembled on the 12 different factory levels and released to exit the Black Obelisk to go about their dirty work. They do not linger or wander the halls unless their master, Marcel, has some special purpose for them. Of course, if he suspects intruders afoot, that purpose may be to find them and either chase them to him, or exterminate them. His personal guard, with few exceptions, are only encountered with him or on the Living Quarters level above the factories.

Once Chaos Zombies and newly minted Scrap Zombies are released from the Black Obelisk, they don’t linger in Madison. They immediately head out to the outer edges of the expanding zombie range of influence where they can hunt the living and be the most productive for their master. Currently, the Zombie Factory is running at 50%, but is ready to ramp up to full operating capacity around the clock.

The Zombie Factory within the Black Obelisk

The Black Obelisk is an incredibly massive structure sticking out like a black dagger among the other buildings. Day or night, it can only be seen from a distance as a pure black silhouette cast against the ashen sky and blue light of the ley lines it straddles. Its base covers an area of roughly four city blocks (around 900 feet/274 m from one edge to its parallel), but even more impressive is its height. The Obelisk stands over the tallest skyscraper at



an astounding 4,000 feet (1,219 m). That's just over three quarters of a mile (1.2 km) tall.

Inside is an entirely different story.

The Black Obelisk is immense, with massive factory chambers that sprawl across its four city block width. The ground floor is divided into two parts, storage of organic parts and a factory that dismembers Chaos Zombies for reconstruction into Scrap Zombies. Also on the ground floor are two comparatively small automated chambers where "repairs" to Chaos and Scrap Zombies take place. Zombies that have suffered battle damage in the field can simply step or crawl onto the conveyor belt and get patched up. Organic body parts are kept from decaying via magic.

The next four floors are devoted to additional storage, mostly scrap divided up by category or objects: scrap metal, electronics, computer parts, communications gear, weapons, armor, bionics, etc. Not just big empty rooms, but storage bays with different compartments lined with conveyer belts and ceilings covered in tracks and automated systems that sort, collate and move biological and technological parts to where they need to be. This includes cranes, mechanical arms and other machinery coming out of the ceilings.

An array of corridors, catwalks and man-sized access tunnels create a labyrinth for outsiders to navigate. Large freight elevators and a few small, human-sized elevators carry cargo and zombies to the factory levels higher up. A network of ladders in between the walks and connected to the catwalks and service tunnels – all much narrower than any of the elevators – also allow human-sized people access, up through the ceiling, and to the other levels of the massive structure. Each of the three storage levels is three stories tall (30 feet/9.1 m). The 13 factory levels above them are each two stories (20 feet/6.1 m) tall.

The 13 floors are the factories that "reconstruct" dismembered Chaos Zombies and reassemble them with armor, weapons and augmentation. Each type of zombie has its own factory level, with the most common, the **Solider Boy**, getting two factory levels.

The factory is a complex system of assembly lines and robotics. Pieces of human bodies, cybernetic systems, high-tech weapons, bionic limbs, and metal scrap are carried along tracks by conveyor belts, mechanical hands, and meat hooks. The tracks twist and turn all over the factory, shooting off in different directions. Stitching and soldering lines connect dead flesh to recycled metal. Everything is constantly moving at blinding speeds. Hooks and robot hands dip into large vats of gory limbs, combine them with all sorts of technological devices, and before you know it, a new, fully-functional Scrap Zombie rolls off the factory line and is deposited at the exit gate.

Upon entering, zombies that have collected spare parts dump their finds onto wide, moving conveyor belts. While they are there, Scrap Zombies are inspected for repairs and possible upgrades. Ordinary Chaos Zombies, meaning those yet to be converted into Scrap Zombies, may be instructed via transmitted message to go to the reconstruction chamber. The Black Obelisk's only resources are the materials brought to it by its zombie

horde, so it can only create *Scrap Zombies* when it has the supplies to do so.

Salvage and spare parts that are dumped by zombies vanish through openings where they go through an automated system that inspects and separates them into organic/corpses and body parts and inorganic materials. Behind the walls and within the factory system located inside Black Obelisk, electronics, scrap metal, weapons of all kinds and other materials are inspected, repaired, modified, repurposed and inventoried until they are required for the reconstruction process. Base metal components are always useful, and taken to a metalworking section of the Black Obelisk where they are cut and reshaped into armor, weapons, false limbs, and other useful parts for the Scrap Zombies.

Organic components are the easiest to identify, and are preserved via Necromancy Magic. That said, they are generally used with great haste and with no concern for aesthetic qualities, gender or racial-specific consistency. There is even little concern for size-to-weight ratios. Whoever or whatever is deciding what pieces to string together to make **Scrap Zombies** is not taking any aesthetics into consideration and does not care how these patchwork abominations look at the end, as long as they can do the job they were created for. The focus of the operation seems to be cranking out Chaos and Scrap Zombies as quickly as possible, no matter how twisted and bizarre their appearance.

There are no living workers inside, so there is no need for lights, proper ventilation or safety concerns. As a result, the zombie factory is loud, dark, hot, stuffy, and stinks like a slaughterhouse and machine shop rolled into one. The smell of machine oil and rotting meat permeates all storage and factory levels.

The only lights come from the assembly lines themselves, and from sparks shooting out of the metalworking equipment. Player characters need a source of illumination to navigate through the facility and it is impossible to see the entire factory on any level at once. Even if the interior were lit up, the factory goes up into the Obelisk for hundreds of feet. All the intruders are able to see are tracks, assembly lines and machinery that stretches everywhere into the darkness, twisting like a deranged roller-coaster ride, broken up by huge vats of dismembered human pieces, piles of metal junk, and racks of weapons.

Though there are no living workers or wandering zombies through most of the factory – they are all either on the assembly line, shuffling through lines to drop off their finds, being tended to for repairs, or being put through reconstruction – there are, as noted earlier, staircases, catwalks, and platforms that honeycomb the factory, on most of which interlopers are able to walk safely. There are also freight elevators that give intruders a direct route to the various levels of the towering structure. They can take the stairs, fly if they are able to do so, climb the walls or the support beams, use a crane or lift, or they can ride the assembly tracks of the factories to get around.



Taking the stairs seems like it may be the most obvious and simplest choice. There are multiple stairwells, ladders and catwalks around the factory. Some only go up to the next level or a few stories, while others seem to connect to every level in the structure. Inside actual factories, the stairs may lead to a catwalk, observation deck or specific piece of machinery. Most of the stairs are sturdy and pretty safe, but a few are a bit rickety. ROSCOE troops are able to tell if a particular section of stairs or catwalk is too dangerous to traverse or ready to collapse, but few are in such a state of disrepair. The Obelisk is very tall, so there are many sets of stairs. Player characters may find themselves walking up stairs for well over an hour. This can be exhausting, especially if they are fighting zombies. Characters with high Physical Endurance attributes have an easier time, but characters with low P.E. attributes may not be able to make it without rest stops.

Climbing the walls or machinery and using the catwalks are good ways to avoid wandering zombies or any possible defenses on the ground. Remember, intruders inside the Black Obelisk have no idea what to expect nor what kind of defenses might be in place. Caution, stealth and slow movement are the logical choices when exploring inside. A catwalk or other position high up or along the ceiling gives them a bird's eye view and is also likely to conceal them from anyone on the ground. Should zombies become aware of their presence, at least the creatures are notoriously slow and poor climbers. Healthy, skilled individuals should be able to out climb, outrun and escape them. The interior walls of the Black Obelisk are just as smooth as the outside, but the machinery is not. There is also a network of massive support beams that rise up to the ceiling and crisscross the factories. They can also be climbed and once on top, they can be walked across, provided the person has good balance and Climbing, Gymnastics or Acrobatics skills. Using the catwalks is easier and safer.

Riding the assembly tracks and conveyor belts, or hanging onto fast-moving cranes, machinery and chain tracks that run across the ceiling, is another means of transportation inside the complex. However, it can also be the riskiest as the automated systems may pluck up a living being mistaken as a Chaos Zombie to be dismembered or reconstructed. Riding along a conveyor could send the intruder into a set of slicing blades, stabbing stitching needles, searing soldering tools, pounding hydraulic hammers, and machines trying to bolt plates of armor directly to their body. The tracks and belts may also be slippery or grimy from grease, blood, guts, machine shavings and grit that may make walking them slippery, and you don't want to fall into a piece of factory equipment and get ground up. Again, there are no guards, not even zombies, so the only zombies the living have to worry about are those they happen to run into. Even then, most Chaos Zombies are not in combat mode and should ignore them unless they are attacked first. However, coming across one or more Scrap Zombies under assembly or fresh off the assembly line is almost

certain to lead to combat. The sounds of fighting are likely to attract other Scrap Zombies and may lead the Black Obelisk to activate the combat mode and dispatch a growing number of zombies (2D6 Chaos Zombies and 1D6 Scrap Zombies every melee round!) to investigate. Thankfully, that only happens when there are acts of destruction/explosions inside the Obelisk or when the facility is unmistakably under attack.

Odds are, sooner or later, living people inside the Black Obelisk are going to be discovered by one or more Scrap Zombies. Unless combat is extremely swift (under three melee rounds), battle is certain to attract 1D6 other Scrap Zombies, then 2D6, and 3D6, the longer the fighting continues. It may also invite the lord and master of the Black Obelisk to make his appearance. This would be the **Necromancer King, Marcel LeMerchand**, an enigmatic figure who seems unconcerned that his abode has been breached by living intruders. The Lord of the Black Obelisk may also investigate "incidents" and suspicion of intrusion.

The question player characters need to be asking themselves is, why is security virtually nonexistent? Is the facility that indestructible, is the being who runs the Black Obelisk that overconfident or powerful? And who or what is that being(s) and where can they find him?

Getting lost for hours or days is the real danger. Unless a person has an inkling of where to go, he could wander around for days inside the maze-like factory interior. People who may have an idea of where to find the Transmission room or even Marcel LeMerchand can be a player character or NPC psychic or mage afflicted with a vision about the Black Obelisk from the Transmission. This person could know where the Transmission or Marcel LeMerchand are located, but the group still needs to make their way through the noisy, factory labyrinth.

Doing a psychic **Object Read** can be dangerous. As noted above, using psionics to read an outer wall has devastating results. Reading a piece of factory machinery or conveyor belt only provides a brief flash of what it is used for – usually something ugly and disturbing – and provides the psychic with a sense that powerful magic, ancient evil and death are all around them. **Important Note:** What they don't know is that every *Object Read* alerts the Black Obelisk and Marcel LeMerchand that the living are inside and pinpoints the exact place where the Object Read was performed! This is likely to result in a visit by the Necromancer King, in person. And he won't come alone.

The Power Station

Directly above the Zombie Factory is the Black Obelisk's **Power Station**, but it is not obvious. There is no apparent furnace, engine, or turbine. No power lines or solar panels, or anything that the people of the Golden Age would recognize. Unknown to Earth's defenders new to magic, the machine runs on ley line energy (a.k.a. the *Blue Zones*). The entire framework and walls of the Black Obelisk channel and consume a massive amount of magic energy to keep its operations going. This limits



its choice of worlds, but Chaos Earth's ley lines are overflowing with mystic energy and the Madison site has a powerful ley line nexus located in the downtown area. It was this nexus point that tore open and deposited the Black Obelisk on Earth, and it is now providing ample energy to power its operations. This is a fact lost on most NEMA operatives, though characters with a budding knowledge of magic and ley lines may be able to deduce this on their own. (**Note:** Discovering the power source of the Black Obelisk may be an important part of shutting it down, getting it to move, or forcibly moving it away from its source of power. Another is stopping the Transmission or slaying Marcel.)

The entire floor is separated into fourteen subsections, each connected by a series of tubes to a large, black cube in the center of each chamber. At the center of the floor, the nucleus of all fourteen subsections, are massive black pillars. This is where the power needed to run the Black Obelisk is collected and stored. Marcel draws his power from here as well, an almost inexhaustible supply of magic energy. The collection and P.P.E. channeling process is more efficient than most conventional sorcerers could have ever imagined possible.

The fourteen substations are arranged with one in each corner of the Obelisk's interior walls, with the others scattered between them in the interior. Each substation is protected by the super-thick exterior walls of the Obelisk and interior walls that separate each station. These interior walls are simply extensions of the Obelisk itself, and are ten feet (3 m) thick (400 M.D.C. per five foot/1.5 m area).

Each of the 14 substations is equipped with an **Energy Siphon Mechanism** and **Primary Storage Battery**. The siphon resembles a large phonograph speaker or satellite dish. It draws in and collects ambient magic energy, which is then channeled to the Primary Storage Battery. Each siphon has 660 M.D.C., and each Primary Storage Battery has 1,980 M.D.C. The majority of the energy transferred to the Primary Storage Batteries is drawn upon by the Black Obelisk to keep its endless operations going. A fraction of energy is then sent to the **Secondary Storage Batteries** in the center of the floor in each chamber. The Secondary Storage Batteries are meant to keep magic energy flowing over long periods for use in an emergency and for dimensional travel via the Rifts. They are black, stone pillars, covered in symbols that form a circle in the center of Marcel LeMerchand's research level, one level above. The 13 Secondary Storage Batteries are little more than small obelisks themselves. Their arrangement gives them more power, similar to the way Stonehenge and other magic circles channel and direct magic energy. This improves their storage and retrieval capabilities. Each Secondary Storage Battery has 990 M.D.C., and there are 13 in all (14 Primary Storage Batteries and siphons). At the far edges of the floor are spiral staircases that go up to the next floor and one that goes to the factory level below it.

If a battle erupts in the Power Station, it could prove to be exceptionally hazardous. There is a great deal of magic energy

coursing through this entire facility, and if there is a sudden change in the flow or a sudden release of energy, it causes dimensional and magical effects. Every time a siphon is destroyed, a Ley Line Storm that lasts 1D6 minutes appears inside that room! Destroying a siphon AND a Secondary Battery doubles the storm's duration. Moreover, energy goes crackling and coursing throughout the entire Black Obelisk inside and out, creating quite the fireworks display, but no damage other than the effects of the Ley Line Storm.

Destroy a Primary Battery and the Ley Line Storm lasts for 4D6 minutes and envelops the entire floor. Any zombies on that floor either: 01-50% shut down, or 51-00% are put into a highly aggressive combat mode.

Destroy more than five of the 14 Primary Batteries, and the Black Obelisk's hold on this reality becomes unstable. First, 1D6x10% of the Chaos and Scrap Zombies *everywhere* shut down. The rest retreat and head back at their top speed to the Black Obelisk to protect it. Every time an additional Primary Battery is destroyed, there is a 01-50% chance (+5% cumulative per each additional Primary Battery's destruction) that a dimensional Rift tears open and swallows the Black Obelisk, taking it to some other world or reality. Of course, everyone inside the structure vanishes with it. Those outside remain on Earth. All but 10% of the Chaos and Scrap zombies collapse in a heap, dead once again. The remaining 10% wander off continuing to kill and cause mayhem, but the people they slay do NOT rise again as zombies. Any characters carried off to another world must find their own way home; Marcel LeMerchand cannot help them and may seek their demise. Any zombies inside remain active and under Marcel's control.

Living Quarters

The floor above the Power Station is where the Transmission's broadcast station is located, as well as the living quarters for **Marcel LeMerchand**, the master of the Black Obelisk.

Here are a large number of large rooms, each lavishly furnished and decorated with skulls, bones, dead animals, and corpses, as well as conventional sculptures, paintings, tapestries, other things you might expect to see inside a castle or mansion. This is the abode of the Necromancer King.

There is a master bedroom larger than most people's home, a larger adjoining bathroom and study, and adjoining spell casting chamber that has a large collection of books, Necromancy components and magic items. Remember, each level is the equivalent of 4 city blocks, so there is a stadium style arena, 64 guest bedrooms with private bathrooms, a massive grand ballroom, a grand dining area, a throne room, private library, a number of meeting rooms/offices, a few interrogation rooms, a torture chamber, a small prison with 24 individual solitary confinement cells and a dozen large jail cells that can hold many prisoners (some chained to the walls), the equivalent of a small hospital with operating rooms and wards, several kitchens, several laboratories, two ma-



chine shops, a large spell casting chamber, and storage areas, as well as the Primary Storage Batteries that power the Black Obelisk. Few of these places look to have seen much use. Many look like they haven't been touched in decades, if ever. The covered furniture of most rooms are caked in dust, the air is stale and musty. The entire floor is quiet as a tomb. No one lives here except Marcel LeMerchand and his undead entourage; and technically, none of them are alive.

Secret panels, passageways, stairs and elevators known only to Marcel exit to his advantage, and enable him to get around quickly and unseen. He is usually found in and around his bedroom/study, spell casting chambers, Research Center and the libraries. When entertaining unwanted visitors, he may be found at the prison, interrogation area and torture chamber.

At both ends of the main corridor are two doors. One leads to a twisting spiral staircase, and the other to an elevator. Both go to the lower levels of the Black Obelisk, but not up. For all intents and purposes, this is the top floor inside the Black Obelisk.

The **Research Center and Library** are the size of an entire city block. The library contains a massive collection of books on Necromancy and alien forms of magic (including Techno-Wizardry), but there are also books on biology, literature, art and other written works. This place looks as though it hasn't seen any use in a very long time, and there are areas where books are stacked high without any kind of order, all over the place. Most of these books are from Marcel's home world and are hundreds of years old. Any book a player character may pick up is likely to be written in an unknown language, and some are so brittle with age that they may crumble if not handled with care. The Library is totally unguarded and unoccupied. The characters are free to take the elevator or the stairs down to the next level. It is quite a walk down to the lower levels, as there is a fair amount of space between this floor and the next one down, and each factory level is two stories high.

Above it is the black limbo dimension that not even Marcel understands or visits. There is no stairwell, door or hatch that leads to it.

The Transmission Chamber

Located on the same level as the Living Quarters is the broadcast room for the Transmission. In a surprisingly modest chamber in the center of the level is the force that creates and spreads the Zombie Plague. Supported by metal beams jutting out from the walls, floor, and ceiling is the **Zombie Signal Transmitter**. It is the mechanical device that creates and delivers the Transmission. Below that is a thick cube, constructed out of the same material as the Black Obelisk. Its exterior is covered with etchings of strange symbols, runes, and a language that no one on Earth has ever seen. This device creates the Transmission, which is then boosted and sent out by the Black Obelisk, both a massive conduit for magic energy and a broadcast antenna.

The Zombie Signal Transmitter is suspended in the center of this very large chamber by thick steel beams. These beams have 600 M.D.C. each, and there are ten in all. It is powered magically, so there are no tubes or wires connecting to it. Physically, the transmitter looks like a giant, rust colored, metal ball, inlaid with what looks like arcane circuitry that lights up as magic energy courses through it. It is 50 feet (15 m) in diameter, weighs 15 tons (13.5 metric tons), and has 3,000 M.D.C. However, its construction is so delicate that it stops transmitting if knocked from its perch or after taking only 1,000 points of Mega-Damage. It can still be repaired/regenerated until the point it is totally destroyed (reduce M.D.C. to zero).

There is also a tiny altar that resembles a control panel with a number of glowing gems and cone-shaped stones that function as switches and levers. Rearrange and twist the right gems, in the right position, and you can switch the Transmission off. Stealing the gems is pointless as Marcel has replacements, and destroying the control panel leaves the Transmission blaring. Marcel, who understands how the control panel works, can use it to transmit instructions to his zombie army and hold the Transmission from broadcasting into new territories until he's ready.

If the Transmission sphere is knocked out of its place on the metal beams, the Transmitter stops working and all zombies except those within a 20 mile (32 km) radius of the Black Obelisk stop functioning. Destroying 3-4 pillars is enough to drop the sphere to the floor and at least temporarily suspend the Transmission. Destroying the sphere has a similar effect, leaving only the zombies inside and within a 20 mile (32 km) radius of the Black Obelisk active and functioning. Of course, anyone who dies within this radius of undeath rises as a Chaos Zombie, and the factories in the Black Obelisk can continue to turn them into Scrap Zombies as long as it has sufficient building materials. That said, if the sphere is destroyed, Marcel is likely to take his Doomsday device and abandon our world — for now. He can use dark magic to rebuild the Transmission Sphere, but it requires going to a particular dimension and takes three hundred years to recreate.

The smaller cube sitting under the sphere is actually the entrance to Marcel LeMerchand's private control chamber. From inside this cube, which he calls the **Sarcophagus Machine**, he controls everything and can see through the eyes of his zombies wherever they are.

The **Sarcophagus Machine** is an eight foot (2.4 m) cube that hovers a foot (0.3 m) above the floor. Its faces are etched with mystic symbols that glow red and blue. The top is emblazoned with the LeMerchand family crest, a macabre design of skulls, eyes, worms, and ancient script. The lid to the sarcophagus is sealed with magic but opens with a touch from Marcel. This is where he observes his handiwork through the eyes of his zombies and enjoys the slaughter of the living at the hands of the dead.



Interlocutor Guardians

Marcel LeMerchand's Personal Guard

Interlocutor is a fancy term for one who is engaged in a conversation. These undead creatures are “Speakers,” of sorts. Marcel designed and created them for a variety of purposes. To do so, he reconstructed a few very large dead bodies, and outfitted them with heavy armor and fierce-looking skulls that were all spikes and teeth. In their mouths are large speakers from which dark spirits may converse with the living. This is the feature that earned these creations their names. Otherwise, they are, in effect, *Headbanger Scrap Zombies* with 50% more M.D.C. for the heads and main body.

Marcel can use these creatures to aid him in ritual spell casting, though he has not needed to do so for quite some time. And they cannot converse with Marcel or each other in the conventional sense. They don't ever just “talk” about things. Marcel can, however, invite spirits and Entities to inhabit the great armored bodies. When the spirit has offered whatever knowledge, or performed the task, that Marcel required of it, he sends it away. Marcel is cold and distant from his own humanity and past morality, so he doesn't usually even ask the spirit's name nor inquire about its past, pain or desires. This means that, for all he knows, the intelligence locked within the walls of the Black Obelisk may (and does) secretly use his *Interlocutor Guardians* to speak to him and help him with his goals.

Marcel invites many malevolent spirits into these bodies, where he prods them for information and they entertain discussions about magic, Necromancy, life, death, dimensions, deities, chaos, entropy, philosophy, the darker nature of the universe and the worthlessness of humanity. The possessed Interlocutor may sit or stand tirelessly or accompany Marcel on walks and other activities. They usually seem happy to oblige him in most discussions, for he and they are kindred spirits and the more powerful he becomes, the greater chaos and death he causes. These are things the spirits crave and desire, so they help and encourage him. They want nothing more than to see the living suffer and pushed over the edge into oblivion, particularly humanity and its cousins.

Over the centuries, Marcel has absorbed a great deal of knowledge from the dark spirits who visit him through these monstrous forms. It would disturb him greatly if he knew how much these spirits manipulate and lie to him. It is not that the dark spirits and demons do not want him to succeed, they just enjoy watching him suffer in what humanity remains in him. They frequently give him conflicting information or outright falsehoods because his frustration amuses them. As someone no longer truly alive himself – a fact that he does not fully acknowledge (or perhaps truly realize in his isolation) – Marcel has few emotions other than the grief and loneliness that eat at his soul. He is cold and distant. He does not even get pleasure from the carnage and chaos his zombie

invasions cause as he wipes clean entire worlds of humanoid life. This is one of the reasons it has been more difficult for Marcel to get anything truly inspiring from the Interlocutors. They like him as a sullen, heartless, killing machine lost in his own grief and weird dementia. They only encourage his grief, his pain and his desire to express that pain and anger through endless campaigns of genocide against humanity across the Megaverse.

As an instrument of destruction who commands the power of the Black Obelisk, they are only too happy to fight to protect him and the doomsday machine. So if either are threatened, the **Interlocutor Guardians** are quick to take action. This also means 1D4 are constantly at his side, even if they stand silent like statues, and another 1D6 are always nearby (arrive to his rescue within 1D6 melee rounds). Even when he is not aware of it, there are 1D6+1 lurking nearby. A dozen Interlocutor Guardians are usually scattered across the Living Quarters level of the Black Obelisk, though when not with Marcel, they stand stationary, waiting to be called upon, and are likely to be mistaken for one of the many disturbing statues and abominations found throughout the Living Quarters Level. **Note:** They are likely to take no immediate action against intruders, watching and following from a distance. They strike only when Marcel or the Black Obelisk are in clear and immediate danger or when they are called upon by the Necromancer King to take action.

Marcel keeps the spirits on a retainer, of sorts. He summons them to inhabit the bodies only when they are needed, allowing them to wander through their own native dimension or to cause trouble in ours. And when they are summoned, it is understood by both parties that they are there to do his bidding and kill the living. This pleases these disturbed spirits greatly. They are all highly adept at killing, and stop at nothing. They can only be dispersed or banished by Marcel, or by destroying the Main Body of the armored Headbanger zombie they inhabit. As noted above, while Marcel may call upon additional Entities, via magic ritual, to inhabit more Interlocutor Guardian bodies, there are always 12 active Guardians spread out on the floor that Marcel considers home.

The murderous spirits inside the Interlocutor Guardians can use the voice box to activate certain powers, all of which are aimed at making living victims easier to kill. The inhabiting dark spirits are also intelligent enough to talk to living creatures, though they only speak after being addressed or spoken to first. When speaking to people other than Marcel, they generally talk in short phrases, and they never reveal secrets or information about Marcel, the Black Obelisk or magic. When the Guardians speak to mortals, their voices come out low and growling with a bit of a mechanical sound to them, like an old radio broadcast or computer speaking.

Creating these behemoths was very taxing for Marcel. It took months to assemble the bodies properly, and years to get the voice box working properly. It was years more before he got the spirits cooperating enough so that they would obey him without



question (or so he believes). Not only that, but the spirits can be very demanding and exhausting to interact with. As a result, Marcel never activates more than two dozen at a time, and usually only has 13-16 active Guardians.

There are at least four Interlocutor Guardians in the Inner Sanctum, in addition to any other undead he may have summoned or that may be hanging about. Marcel has the following zombies at his disposal on the Living Quarters level he considers home. All wait for his orders.

- 1D4 Amped Zombies
- 1D4+2 Boogeymen
- 1D4 Brain Melters
- 1D4 Garbagemen
- 2D4 Headbangers
- 1D4 Living Dead Girls
- 1D4 Reapers
- 2D6 Soldier Boys
- 1D4 Stitchers

Interlocutor Guardian Stats

Physically, the Interlocutor Guardians are, in effect, the *Headbanger Scrap Zombie* with 50% greater M.D.C. for the four heads and Main Body. However, because these are intelligent, demonic beings who possess and control the bodies, they have a much higher intelligence, possess special powers and use the same types of strategies and tactics that humans (or demons) use. They may stalk and kill people straight-up, engage in cat and mouse games, work together or with other zombies, use hostages and deception, play on people's emotions and fears, and capture intruders for torture and interrogation by their master, Marcel. Moreover, destroying the heads on the zombie have no adverse effect other than making the Guardian mute. To destroy an Interlocutor Guardian, the M.D.C. of the Main Body must be reduced to zero (or less).

It is best to think of Interlocutor Guardians as demons, not zombies!

Alignment: Diabolic.

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D6+11, M.A. 2D6+7, M.E. 2D6+9, P.S. 1D4+25 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+10, P.E. 1D6+14 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D4, Spd. 1D6+8.

M.D.C. by Location: Takes into consideration the type of zombie and the amount of armor grafted and bolted onto the Scrap Zombie's body.

- ** Main Head & Laser (1, top) – 2D4x10+60
- * Additional Heads (3, chest) – 6D6+45 each
- * Speakers (4) – 1D4 each
- * Shoulder Spikes (2D6+10 per shoulder) – 4 each
- * Armored Arms (2) – 1D6x10+60 each
- * Weapon Hand (Right): Chains (or Weapon Arm) – 1D6x10+60
- * Weapon Hand (Left): Mechanical Pincer (or chainsaw) – 1D6x10+40

Armored Legs (2) – 1D6x10+80 each

** Main Body (Heavy Armor) – 3D6x10+135

* A single asterisk indicates a small or difficult target to strike, and requires a "Called Shot" to hit. Even then the shooter strikes with a penalty of -3 to strike.

** Destroy the main head and you also destroy all of the lasers. However, until the *Main Body* is reduced to zero, the Interlocutor Guardian continues to attack without penalty. In this case the possessing spirit controls the Headbanger zombie, the heads are simply a means with which to communicate. All four heads can be destroyed and the Guardian continues to function and attack.

(**Note:** On S.D.C. worlds, the zombie has S.D.C. and S.D.C. Armor at the point value listed above. No Hit Points as it is dead.)

Total Number of Active Interlocutor Guardians: 1D4+12, but may be spread out or stationed at different locations on that level. One or two might even be dispatched to investigate trouble on other levels.

Horror Factor (H.F.): Horror Factor 16.

Size: 9-13 feet (2.7 to 3.9 m).

Weight: Varies depending on size and the amount of armor and augmentation. Typically 700 pounds (315 kg).

Average Life Span: Interlocutor Guardians exist until destroyed (reduce the Main Body M.D.C. to zero).

Level of Experience: Interlocutor Guardians are possessed by demonic Entities, with powers generally at 1D6 level.

P.P.E.: None, they are dead.

Natural Abilities (special and different than those of the zombies): As supernaturally possessed zombies, the creatures do not need to eat, sleep, or breathe, are impervious to poisons, drugs, and toxins, nightvision 1,000 feet (305 m), does not feel pain, but do have minds, memories and emotions — they hate desire and fear, +5 to save vs Horror Factor, are vulnerable to magic and psionic attacks.

Regenerate 1D6 M.D. per melee round. Impervious to regular cold and heat. Magic and M.D. cold and heat do regular damage. Impervious to most regular weapons, except those made of silver, which do Mega-Damage. Takes normal damage from M.D. weapons and attacks. They can lose limbs with little adverse effect, and can even lose their heads and keep fighting. Can only be permanently killed by reducing the M.D.C. of the Main Body to zero and burn the remains, which dispels the spirits inside back into their native dimension until called upon again by the Lord of the Black Obelisk.

Also see Skills of Note, Magic, Psionics, Weapons and the powers below.

The Special Abilities of the Interlocutor Guardians:

1. Essence of a Greater Demon: All manner of Lesser Demons automatically recognize *Interlocutor Guardians* as Greater Demons and respond accordingly. This means small numbers of Gargoyles and other sub-demons, and most individual, or as



many as four, Lesser Demons fear and respect these beings, and obey their commands!

2. Death Bolts from Eyes or Hands: These blasts of dark energy can penetrate objects and armor with less than 250 M.D.C. to hit the person inside. Each blast counts as a separate action, and can be done as often as once per melee round. Range: 300 feet (91.5 m). Damage: 4D6 S.D.C. or Hit Point damage, 1D4x10 M.D. to Mega-Damage creatures. See page 80 for complete details.

3. Eyes of the Abyss: Looking directly into the “eyes” of these Interlocutor Guardians causes the characters to lose all sense of time and be momentarily distracted as if they are tumbling into a great black abyss. *Roll to save vs magic 15 or higher to save.*

A successful save means the victim only loses half his melee actions, initiative, -3 on Perception Rolls and -15% on skill performance for the rest of the melee round.

Failing to save means the individual is lost in the depths of the monster’s eyes until it moves away or he is attacked or someone else physically removes the transfixed character from the gaze of the monster; this is usually a few minutes, but can last hours. Roll to save once every five minutes. While entranced, the victim is completely unaware of the world around him, cannot formulate thoughts, use skills, or act on his own. Loses all sense of time, has no idea of what is going around him and he does not react even to people calling his name or fighting all around him. He remains in this oblivious state until he saves vs magic, is released from it by the Interlocutor Guardian or the stare is broken via him being physically attacked or pulled away. When the victim snaps out of the trance, it feels as if only a few seconds have passed, not minutes. It takes a full melee round (15 seconds) for the victim to completely regain his senses. Until then he is -2 on Perception Rolls and Initiative, and -1 on all combat maneuvers (strike, parry, dodge, etc.).

Avoiding looking into the monster’s eyes enables the individual to escape getting lost in them. However, in combat with the creature, trying to avoid the eyes of its four heads inflicts a -3 penalty on all combat maneuvers (initiative, strike, parry, etc.) and -1 melee attack.

4. Shriek of Terror: Interlocutor Guardians are able to unleash an angry, piercing shriek when they first engage an opponent in combat. Unless the opponent makes a save of 16 or higher vs Horror Factor, he is -2 to on initiative, -2 to strike, parry, dodge and disarm, and skill performance is -20%. A successful save vs Horror Factor means those who hear it suffer no impairment. **Note:** Everyone else within 30 feet (9.1 m) of the Shriek of Terror must also save vs H.F. but only need to roll a 12 or higher to save.

5. Woeful Moaning: When Interlocutor Guardians suffer large amounts of damage (M.D.C. reduced below half), they begin to wail, sob, and moan as if in terrible anguish. Naturally, they do not feel pain since they are undead. Their cries are a dramatic mocking of what one would expect if a living creature were so injured.

Those who can hear the moans have to save vs Horror Factor 14. Failure means they are overcome with sadness and feelings of desperation. Reduce speed by half, -1 attack per melee round, skills are -20%, and -1 to strike, parry, and dodge. Plus the moan attracts zombies to converge on its location and attack the living. The Woeful Moaning counts as one melee of the monster’s melee attacks.

6. Dark Blades: A pair of black daggers or cleaver-shaped axes, one in each hand, can be created out of thin air. The monster is +1 to strike with Dark Blades and the blades inflict 4D6 M.D. against Mega-Damage opponents or 4D6 S.D.C. against S.D.C. opponents.

When the Interlocutor Guardian is destroyed, the blades fade away and vanish as if they never existed. Only the Interlocutor Guardians can summon and use these blades at will. The blades cannot be thrown by the monsters.

7. Link to Marcel LeMerchand: The Necromancer King is permanently linked to the Black Obelisk, and through it, his zombies and the Interlocutor Guardians. The latter can be Telepathically summoned to him regardless of distance and location; they know exactly where he is, his condition and what he may need or demand of them. Likewise, Marcel can command any and all of the zombies created by the Black Obelisk, leading millions if he chose to do so.

Vulnerabilities: Standard. Remember, Scrap Zombies, not even the Guardians, do not heal or bio-regenerate on their own. They need the help of a Stitcher or the Black Obelisk for repairs.

Skills of Note (demonic intelligence): Magically understands and speaks all languages, Climbing 60%, Intelligence 70%, Interrogation 70%, Land Navigation 70%, Lore: Demons and Monsters 80%, Lore: Magic 80%, Lore: Religion 80%, Math: Basic 95%, Prowl 65%, Tracking and Tailing 80%, and the equivalent of Hand to Hand Combat: Expert. No W.P. skills as such.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S. or weapons. Punches do 3D6 M.D., Power Punch does 6D6 M.D. but counts as two attacks, kicks do 2D6 M.D., and bites inflict 1D6 M.D. *Also see Weapons, below.*

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 on initiative, +2 to strike with any weapon or power, +4 to parry and dodge, +2 to disarm, +2 to entangle, Critical Strike on an 18, 19, or 20, +3 to pull punch, +3 to roll with impact/punch/fall, +2 to save vs magic, and +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic: Limited; knows the following spells: Fear (5), Horror (10), Multiple Image (7), Power Bolt (20). Cast at the level of experience, above. 3D4x10 P.P.E.

Psionics: 1D4x10+35 I.S.P. Considered a Minor Psychic. Has the powers of Empathy (4), Mind Block (4), Presence Sense (4), Sense Magic (3), and Telepathy (4).

Bionics/Cybernetics and Weapon Limb: As a rule, none.



Weapons: Same as the Headbanger Scrap Zombie. Also see special powers and Dark Blades described under Natural Abilities, above.

Armor: Always heavily armored. See M.D.C. by Location, above.

Enemies: Anyone who threatens their master, Marcel, or the Black Obelisk, and those Marcel commands them to capture or destroy.

Allies: Marcel and fellow Interlocutor Guardians. Each can also command up to 12 Chaos and/or Scrap Zombies.

Habitat: The Black Obelisk, and only ever encountered inside of it or within a mile (1.6 km) area around the Black Obelisk, or in the company of Marcel LeMerchand who always takes 2-4 Interlocutor Guardians with him whenever he leaves the Black Obelisk; 1-4 usually accompany him inside the Obelisk as well.

Marcel LeMerchand

The Necromancer King

Sooner or later, the player characters are likely to meet the madman behind the Black Obelisk and the Zombie Plague – *Marcel LeMerchand*. Those who penetrate the Black Obelisk and reach his inner sanctum, most certainly meet the man and his Interlocutor Guardians.

He is dressed and behaves as if he were human, but he looks more like a porcelain doll or some sort of android. His skin is hard as steel and rather sleek and glossy like the exterior of the Black Obelisk. This is his actual, original body as preserved by the Black Obelisk. Marcel LeMerchand has beaten death by joining the Black Obelisk and becoming some new sort of undead being. He does not need food or water, but rather feeds on the Necromancy energy channeled throughout the structure of the Obelisk. When he leaves the safety of the tower to step out into the world around him, the Necromancer King must feed upon the living, requiring a minimum of 50 P.P.E. every 72 hours. Without the P.P.E. released at the moment of death when the living die (no other P.P.E. will do outside the Black Obelisk), his powers wane, dropping 10% every 48 hours, as does his M.D.C., until he is powerless and withers away to nothingness. Of course, neither Marcel nor the Black Obelisk ever allows this to happen. In the former case, Marcel tries to escape and return to the sanctuary of the Black Obelisk. In the latter case, the Obelisk knows where Marcel is and dispatches as many Scrap Zombies (dozens, hundreds, thousand or tens of thousands), led by one or more Interlocutor Guardians to rescue the Necromancer King.

Marcel seems cold, aloof and supremely arrogant. And why not? He is practically a demigod. An immortal more and more removed from his humanity with the passage of every century. Though he does not show it, Marcel is wary of any intruders who make it this far into his Black Obelisk. He is no coward, and any

hostile action is met by force, most likely through spell casting or one of his Interlocutor Guardians or a host of zombies. However, if interlopers are not quick to violence, they may be able to buy themselves some time by getting Marcel to talk.

The truth is, even though he is an undead immortal, Marcel still possesses a human side and misses contact with other human beings. It may be buried deep within his cold exterior, but his human side is still there. And though he will not admit it, he gets lonely. The problem is he has no tolerance for human foibles, squabbling or treachery from others, and quickly tires of people. When that happens, or if he is angered or attacked, heads roll – literally. He has committed himself to his ambitions of becoming a Necromancer god and wiping out his enemies, which includes all of humanity and sentient beings like them. As a result, he is convinced humans are horrid creatures undeserving of life, and he has surrounded himself with dead things for hundreds of years.

However, when living people show up inside his great dark edifice to challenge the might of his Army of the Resurrected, it rekindles his sense of humanity – if only for awhile – his human emotions and attitudes awakening from dormancy. The prospect of conversing with fellow humans who have proven to be so brave and ingenious is too good to resist.

Marcel remains calm and disturbingly nonchalant. He is willing to talk philosophy, explain how entropy and chaos are the natural order of things and that his actions bring order via destruction, and why humanity needs to be extinguished from the Megaverse. He admits he “was once” human, and in fact, heralds from an alternative Earth and time-line, which is why he knows how foul and terrible human beings really are. As for himself, he was fortunate and has been elevated into something more than human to become the hand that brings penance and justice in death to the crimes and weaknesses of humanity. Judge, jury and executioner of an entire species. Anyone else who gets in his way or shares too many traits with humanity is destroyed right along with them. Marcel is also willing to answer questions about himself and his origin, but does NOT reveal anything substantive about Necromancy Magic, the Black Obelisk or his plans other than he intends to exterminate humanity wherever he finds it.

If the intruders are not openly hostile and intrigue him, this conversation may last hours or even a few days. The Lord of Necromancy as he calls himself, may ask questions of his own. He wants to know what they think of his Scrap Zombies, how difficult it is to fight them, if they know anyone who has been killed by or turned into a zombie, how did they feel about that, and so on. He does not express any guilt or regret, he is simply curious.

Marcel is willing to relate his entire history, starting with his betrayal by the other world powers and the murder of his beloved Queen. As he tells it, these events were the start of his transformation into the superior being he is today. A bringer of order and peace through chaos and death. This last part and any discussion about his zombies and deadly efficiency of raining down destruction is spoken of with grim pride.



Though Marcel speaks with intruders and is a polite host, at least until angered or annoyed, he has no intention of letting them walk out of the Black Obelisk alive. The moment they entered the black tower, they invited the embrace of death. If Marcel displays anger, annoyance or frustration that lasts for more than a minute or two, their time is up. When he is sad and reminiscing he is at his most human and vulnerable (-3 on Perception Rolls and initiative).

Special Powers & Abilities of Marcel LeMerchand

1. Connected to The Black Obelisk. An M.D.C. Being: Marcel's body has been preserved and transformed by the dark magic of the Black Obelisk. The two are, in effect, one. The Necromancer King controls all aspects of the Black Obelisk because the doomsday machine needs a human, living spark to bring it to life and set it in motion. Once that has occurred, the Black Obelisk goes to great lengths to preserve that "spark." In this case, that spark to drive and empower it is *Marcel LeMerchand* who has been made into some sort of immortal undead version of himself. He controls the operation of the factory with exquisite detail to construct and reconstruct the bodies of the dead. There is no external thinking apparatus that decides which zombies are created and how. The process is all done by the Necromancer King, personally.

Marcel's direct control over the power source of the Black Obelisk enables him to regulate and direct the power any way he deems necessary. He also controls the Transmission and uses it to direct his zombie swarms and spread their reign. Marcel may draw upon the energy of the Black Obelisk to open a Rift to vacate the planet at any time, as well as to fuel his own magic; up to 6,000 P.P.E. points an hour. However, unless circumstances dictate otherwise, he lets the Factory, the Transmission and the zombies operate as under pre-set parameters without his direct involvement.

2. Connection with the Transmission: Marcel LeMerchand is tied directly to the Transmitter, so he knows the exact range of transmission and when it can be extended another 10 mile (16 km) radius. If he wants to gather his forces or create terror by having them surrounding or concentrating on various and specific locations in the next 10 mile (16 km) target zone, he can do so. It is via the Transmission that he can "tune in" to any zombie currently animated by it and "see" what the zombie can see. If that zombie has cybernetic eyes, audio listening devices, or other mechanical sensory abilities, Marcel can receive, interpret, and understand everything that those devices pick up. Otherwise, he is limited to receiving information from what the zombie detects on its own.

Marcel does not focus his attention on one particular zombie very often. He prefers to see things on a much bigger scale, watching zombies in large groups as they move across the landscape. On occasion, a group of zombies encounter something that catches or demands his attention. This has been happening a lot

since his arrival on Chaos Earth. The complexity of Golden Age technology and the myriad of nonhuman life forms present has Marcel in a constant state of discovery.

Contrary to what one might think, Marcel does not put any strange imagery, scary noises or disruptive signals within the Transmission. These are side-effects caused by the dark and magical nature of the Transmission and its powerful broadcast signal. Elements that are part of the magic already in place, and possibly the voice or thoughts of the sinister supernatural being that is the Black Obelisk.

3. Linked to his creations. The Necromancer King is permanently linked to the Black Obelisk, and through it he is connected to the Interlocutor Guardians and all the zombies it creates. The Guardians can be telepathically summoned to Marcel regardless of distance and location; they know exactly where he is. Likewise, Marcel can command any and all of the zombies created by the Black Obelisk, leading millions if he chose to do so. He can also see through the eyes of any and all of his zombies, though he is so complacent about their destruction of humanity that he only does so when there is serious trouble.

4. Master of the Dead. Marcel is a highly accomplished Necromancer. His knowledge of death magic and his control over it is unparalleled, on par with many demons and lesser gods. Aside from his formidable Necromancy knowledge and spell casting abilities, Marcel LeMerchand has significant influence over most undead creatures. All beings linked to death and the undead, including Ghouls, Banshees, vampires and other supernatural creatures, instantly recognize him as the equivalent of a Demon Lord. Most give him a wide berth, while Lesser Demons and subdemons either run away or bow down before him and obey his every command! Vampires, not so much, but newly made vampires and young vampires may see him as a sort of Death God and become willing henchmen.

On the rare occasion that the Necromancer King travels away from the Black Obelisk, he can select as many as 15 specific Black Obelisk zombies, increase their M.D.C. by 50, and provide a +1 attack per melee round bonus. These chosen become his retainers and are under his complete control. Marcel is also able to use his Necromancy magic to repair Chaos and Scrap Zombies much more quickly than Stitchers, and he can rearrange or add limbs and armor.

The quickness with which Marcel is able to process all of the information he receives allows him to maintain a broad picture of everything going on around him. He is simultaneously aware of his Scrap Zombie mobs butchering living people far to the north, as well as more zombies battling NEMA forces to the east, mobs of zombies stripping a military convoy of supplies to the south, and intruders attempting to sneak into the Obelisk through the zombie gates. Not only is he aware of these things and more, but he is able to attend to the needs of these situations with deliberate precision, tactical acuity and a calm, calculating demeanor.



Since Marcel is used to looking at his zombies and the Black Obelisk in a large scope, he frequently misses minute details going on in his sensory range. Instead, he lets his zombies “run free,” as it were. The Transmission has all of the information they need to perform their tasks, so Marcel very rarely takes a direct hand in controlling the zombie hordes. He tends to make decisions on a grander scale. If his zombie mobs are having trouble taking ground in a certain area due to living defenders or interlopers, he may reroute thousands more and send them in to deal with the problem.

A personal quest. The other reason Marcel has agreed to become one with the Black Obelisk is to learn more Necromancy. At first, his goal was to run through and absorb countless texts covering arcane lore and dealing with the resurrection of the dead. Unfortunately, knowledge of “True” Resurrection is something that has eluded The Necromancer King for hundreds of years. A power he has coveted ever since his Queen was murdered. The secret of true resurrection and all things Necromancy have become his obsession for the purpose of creating a grand spectacle of the end of all life on this or any other world he might find himself in. It is not enough that he consume all living things, reconstruct them, and spit them back out in macabre and twisted forms. All must fear him as well. They must know the terror that is in death’s icy grasp.

Strangely, Marcel has occasional moments of mental fatigue where he becomes momentarily distracted by daydreams or things that are unrelated to his obsessions. In these brief moments, Marcel becomes almost human again. He seems weary and haggard. But then, 1D4 minutes later, The Necromancer King snaps himself out of it and sinks quickly back into his work. He has no term for these moments, because he ignores them and pretends they do not exist.

Marcel LeMerchand

Race: Formerly human, now an undead immortal.

Alignment: Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 25, M.E. 14, M.A. 20, P.S. 18 (Supernatural), P.P. 19, P.E. 21 (Supernatural), P.B. 17, Spd 20.

M.D.C.: 1,600 (On S.D.C. worlds, 600 Hit Points, 1,000 S.D.C. and a Natural A.R. of 17). Any weapon or attack that inflicts Mega-Damage has full effect.

Depleting the Marcel’s M.D.C. to zero or a bit below, puts Marcel into a coma state in which he appears to be dead. There is no heartbeat, pulse, brain waves, body warmth, respiratory function, nothing. But these things did not exist even when he was walking and talking. Marcel is the undead.

To further suggest he is slain, all of the Obelisk’s functions turn off, including the Transmitter and the Zombie Factories, lights, everything stops. The zombies outside remain animated, but they seem sluggish and move away from the Black Obelisk (reduce the speed and number of attacks of Chaos and Scrap Zombies by half). Likewise, the Interlocutor Guardians

accompanying Marcel seem to shut down and become lifeless. (A ruse, see below.)

However, unless Marcel’s M.D.C. is reduced to -500 M.D.C. below zero, he is not yet slain. The Necromancer recovers and heals at a rate of 1D4x100 M.D.C. per hour. When Marcel’s M.D.C. is back above zero, the Obelisk flickers back to life, but doesn’t resume the Transmission or factory operations until Marcel tells it to. He may have enemies and intruders to deal with first. Any Interlocutor Guardians in his presence also *appear* to die, and go inert; a ruse to make enemies believe they have won, in order to give Marcel’s body time to recover.

Note: Meanwhile, of the Interlocutor Guardians not known to the intruders, half sneak to the Power Sphere where they stand guard to protect it, and the other half position themselves so they can make a rush if they have to retrieve Marcel’s body before the intruders inflict enough damage as to truly slay their master. If this happens, they rush in, secure his body and flee with it, fighting only long enough to make good their escape. Some of the Interlocutor Guardians are willing to stay behind and fight the intruders to the death, if it means rescuing Marcel. This could result in the search for Marcel’s body inside the labyrinth that is the guts of the Black Obelisk.

Please note, *cutting off Marcel’s head* does an additional 30 M.D. and staking his heart 2D6 M.D., but requires something that can penetrate M.D.C. material. The Interlocutor Guardians present and pretending to be deactivated, allow this if it helps to convince enemies the Master is dead. When the intruders leave the body behind, the Interlocutor Guardians retrieve it and hide it. As long as the head is within 100 feet (30.5 m) of the body, it magically teleports back into place and reattaches. A stake to the heart has no effect on Marcel’s recovery. Any Interlocutor Guardians near the body come to life and intercede only when it appears Marcel’s body is going to suffer more damage than it can survive, or if the head is being taken away or about to be destroyed. **The head** has 400 M.D.C.

Average Life Span: Indefinite. Marcel LeMerchand in now the immortal Necromancer Lord of the Black Obelisk and exists until his body is utterly destroyed (suffers more than 2,000 M.D.C. points of damage). As odd as it may seem, Marcel still thinks of himself as human and alive, albeit, immortal and superhuman. It has not dawned on him that he is one of the undead. Should he ever have that revelation, it is not likely to have much of an impact on him. And though he has never sought immortality, he does not reject it. Marcel believes he has a destiny to fulfill as the harbinger of human genocide across the Megaverse, and lives to accomplish that goal.

P.P.E.: Away from the Black Obelisk, Marcel has 1,500 P.P.E., but he draws magic energy from the Obelisk itself while inside



or within one mile (1.6 km) of it, giving him access to as much as 6,000 P.P.E. per hour. Drawing upon the Black Obelisk's P.P.E. batteries can slow down production speed.

Experience: 15th level Necromancer, an 8th level Techno-Wizard, and an 8th level Noble/diplomat.

Skills: Armorer/Field Armorer 85%, Art 90%, Basic Electronics 98%, Basic Mechanics 98%, Biology 75%, Biology (human) 98%, Bioware Mechanics 80%, Chemistry 98%, Computer Operation 90%, Computer Programming 60%, Computer Repair 50%, Electrical Engineer 90%, Electricity Generation 85%, Gemology 90%, Interrogation Techniques 85%, Jury-Rig 90%, Lore: Demons & Monsters 80%, Lore: Magic 98%, Math: Advanced 80%, Math: Basic 98%, Mechanical Engineer 90%, Medical Doctor 98%, Field Surgery 86%, M.D. in Cybernetics 80%, Military Fortification 60%, Optical Systems 85%, Paramedic 70%, Pathology 70%, Philosophy 98%, Public Speaking 85%, Radio: Basic 98%, Research 98%, Recognize Weapon Quality 98%, Recycle 98%, Robot Electronics 50%, Robot Mechanics 60%, Salvage 98%, Sensory Equipment 75%, Surveillance 75%, T.V./Video 75%, Vehicle Armorer 90%, Weapons Engineer 90% and Xenology 65%.

Note: Via magic, Marcel can understand and speak all languages.

Attacks per Melee: 8, usually via spell magic. As an aristocrat and demigod, Marcel avoids direct physical combat unless absolutely necessary. He does not know Hand to Hand Combat nor any Weapon Proficiencies, though he is an expert torturer. He summons his personal guard or zombies to fight and do his bidding.

Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): +4 on Perception Rolls, double when it involves Necromancy, zombies, the undead, or the Black Obelisk, +4 on initiative, +3 to parry and dodge, +4 to Spell Strength, +8 save vs magic, +3 save vs psionics but he is impervious to mind control, possession, and Horror Factor, and nothing about the Black Obelisk or secrets of Necromancy can be pulled from his mind or read via Telepathy or other means; they are locked deep inside of him. Impervious to spells and powers that affect emotions, and impervious to poisons, toxins, disease, and pain.

Vulnerabilities: 1. Arrogance: Marcel LeMerchand has convinced himself that he is the greatest Necromancer of all time. It enrages him to no end that there are secrets that he has yet to uncover, and that True Resurrection eludes him. He sees no reason why these powers should not belong to him. After all, if

he is as great as he believes, he must possess more knowledge and wield more power than anyone!

2. A Constant State of Turmoil: Though he appears to be cool, calm and in complete control, Marcel is a tortured soul filled with sorrow, regret and hatred. His anger is just below the calm surface and contributes to his ruthless execution of his mission to destroy humanity. And to do so in a manner most foul, by turning them into the walking dead. Ironically, a part of him hates himself for what he has become and what he is doing. Yet Marcel feels compelled to continue. He has gone too far to turn back. He must see this through to the end. If he is to be feared and hated forever throughout all of creation, then so be it. He has tried hard to accept his fate as the destroyer of worlds and devourer of the living. Marcel is a cruel, vengeful being who enjoys tormenting his enemies and seeks revenge against those who thwart him.

3. Holy Weapons: Holy Weapons and Rune weapons inflict double damage to Marcel, though he is impervious to soul-drinking weapons and attacks.

Magic: All Necromancy Spells and Bone Magic Spells from levels 1-9, All Spell Magic Invocations available to Necromancers from levels 1-7, plus Aura of Doom (40), Commune With Spirits (25), Control/Enslave Entity (80), Create Mummy (160), Create Voodoo Xombie (300), Create Zombie (250), Desiccate the Supernatural (50), Dimensional Portal (1,000), Dimensional Teleport (800), Resurrection (650; but he still seeks a superior form of resurrection), Restoration (650), Shape Bone (80), Sickness (50), Skull of Knowledge (320), Soultwist (170), Summon Insect Swarm (80), Summon Maggot (320), Summon Worms of Taut (210), Transfer Life Force (150). **Note:** These spell descriptions and more can be found in the **Rifts® Book of Magic**, pages 186-199.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: All human life, and beings like them. Marcel believes it is his destiny to erase human beings from the Megaverse. He is still lost to hatred from his former life, and though his enemies are all dead and the people of his world turned into zombies, he cannot forgive human treachery and seeks to destroy all human life wherever he finds it.

Allies: At one time, Marcel the Necromancer King had living subjects, servants, students, and family. At this point, except for the Interlocutor Guardians (who are as much his torturers as his allies), and short-lived intruders and prisoners, he is completely alone. He has no allies, no friends, no one.





Putting a stop to it all

Fight it Out! Destroying the Black Obelisk seems extremely unlikely, even if NEMA could lay its hands on nuclear missiles.

Destroy the Black Obelisk via Golden Age Superweapons

At some point, the NEMA defense force (and player characters) are likely to touch upon the idea of destroying the zombies and the Black Obelisk with weapons of mass destruction. At first, this may seem like a good plan, especially as opposed to risking life and limb just to get inside the Black Obelisk before fighting tooth and nail to get to the source and shut it down.

Unfortunately, those kinds of weapons are not just lying around. They are rare, even during the New Cold War of the Golden Age of Man. Partly because the kind of warfare that took advantage of such highly destructive weaponry had fallen out of favor with the people of the Golden Age. The trend in military tactics was gravitating towards super-soldier technology. By comparison, power armor troops, Juicers and cyborgs cause fewer civilian casualties and less collateral damage. Nukes were seen as obsolete, archaic and barbaric.

That is not to say that nuclear weapons do not exist, but it is very difficult for NEMA, let alone the player characters, to track any down and get their hands on them. NEMA is primarily a peacekeeping and disaster relief organization. They did not have access to weapons of mass destruction prior to the Great Cataclysm. Characters who were working for the military may have a better idea on how to reach these weapons, but even they should find the task prohibitively difficult.

Nevertheless, it is not totally inconceivable that the player characters get their hands on weapons of mass destruction. Activating and deploying them is another matter, and each different weapon has its own effect on the enemy.

Strategic thermonuclear weapons, the kind that obliterate entire cities, may destroy the Black Obelisk and everything inside it. Or not. It is a creation of magic and somehow alive. It also rests on a ley line nexus which gives it additional power and, if given enough notice, the ability to Rift out of harm's way.

Zombies caught in a thermonuclear blast will be annihilated. Those that are not immediately wiped out lose their functionality if the Black Obelisk is destroyed, rendering them into lifeless corpses and machine junk. Strategic nukes have all but disappeared from the national defense plan of the North American nations, but there are some still out there. Even if the player characters discover a live nuclear warhead, however, they have to find a way to deliver it to the Black Obelisk on their own, as

anyone who could launch a missile or fly a long-range bomber is presumed dead, have abandoned their post or are not responding.

Smaller nuclear devices, such as those deployed on robot vehicles and long-range missile platforms, can damage the Black Obelisk, but are insufficient to destroy it. Remember, first one must get through a legion of zombies even to reach the Black Obelisk. Second, it is very heavily armored, and third, *it heals* from damage. It would take many nuclear devices and a Herculean effort to mobilize, arm and deliver enough to be effective. It is not impossible, but seems highly unlikely.

Enhanced Radiation Weaponry, such as the neutron bomb, still exist in various capacities, mostly in smaller warheads and experimental weapons. They have a comparatively lower explosive yield, barely better than a conventional explosive missile. Their true power is in the immense amount of radiation they release upon detonation. Since zombies are unaffected by radiation, the impact of an ERW will be minimal and makes the zombies that survive, radioactive.

Satellite weapons were the WMD of the day for the New Cold War. Amazingly precise, and safely stored in orbit around the Earth, thousands of these weapons are sitting in space. Unfortunately, it is next to impossible for terrestrial characters to communicate with them. The ash cloud that envelops the Earth has cut off communication to satellites and space stations before the Black Obelisk ever appears. The ash-caked skies, and a massive ring of debris and particles that has recently begun to circle the planet, blocks transmissions to and from space. Assuming someone could get past those difficulties, their communication with any satellite weapons gets overridden by an outside source. The crews of the space stations in orbit around the Earth have been keeping a close eye on the world below them for the past few months and have taken control of the satellite weapons for their own use. Wrestling control of the satellites from them will be difficult.

Destroy it from within

This may seem like the most dangerous solution, but it is actually one of the better options, and one that the player characters are likely to be best suited for. It simply involves blowing the hell out of everything inside the Black Obelisk, starting with the Living Quarter's level (and specifically, the Transmission's room, power room and/or Marcel himself). They may be attacked by Chaos and Scrap Zombies, and whatever other defenses that await inside, but the idea has a shot for success. NEMA leaders correctly surmise that the tower is much more vulnerable from the inside than attacking its fortified exterior.

Marcel LeMerchand will, of course, fight invaders and enemies with every ounce of his formidable being, using magic to confuse and weaken his enemies, while summoning his zombies to finish them off. They are better off trying to destroy Marcel than destroy the entire facility. Not that they know it, this tactic



effectively shuts down the Zombie Plague and causes the Black Obelisk to leave the planet.

If Marcel is destroyed completely, the zombie factory stops production, the Obelisk stops collecting Blue Zone energy, the Transmission stops broadcasting and the Black Obelisk vanishes through a Rift. Only zombies around the Obelisk remain undead and a menace, the rest cease to function. See **Slaying Marcel** for complete details.

Stop the Transmission. As noted earlier, stopping the Transmission severely limits the range of the Zombie Plague. This and other constant harassment and attacks might convince Marcel this planet isn't worth the effort and cause him to pack up and leave.

Destroy the sphere completely, and Marcel is likely to abandon our world, for now, and vanish with the Black Obelisk through a Rift. However, when he has rebuilt a new Transmission Sphere (only one can be created at a time, and it takes 300 years to build it), he might return with a vengeance three hundred years later.

In both scenarios, tens of thousands of Chaos and Scrap Zombies are left behind to continue to cause havoc.

Sabotage the Power Source. Player Characters may be able to destroy the Power Station without Marcel taking notice. He can sense their presence on the level, but in his arrogance, may not realize their intentions until it is too late. This is especially true if he is busy talking or fighting with other intruders elsewhere inside the Black Obelisk. If one group can keep Marcel distracted long enough, another may be able to shut down the Power Station for good.

The equipment in the Power Station is likely to be far beyond the ability of the player characters to understand, even if they are NEMA soldiers, mages and scientists. They are unable to operate any of it unless one of them has a had vision or psychic flashes about this room. The simplest solution, in this case, is to blow it all up. To do so, the group needs to take out at least one third of the primary or half of the secondary batteries. Destroying the Siphons only slows down the collection of energy, but Marcel simply has new Siphons constructed.

The Storage Batteries are large, magical and difficult to destroy. If the characters brought M.D. satchel charges, grenades, or other explosives, it is much easier. Otherwise, they will have to blast at them with weapons, which may be an awful drain on their ammunition. Not to mention that this will attract all kinds of attention.

See the **Power Station**, above, for details. Marcel LeMerchand and existing zombies within a 20 mile radius (32 km) are still able to function, but spreading beyond is not possible.

Peace Talks

Talking with LeMerchand and appealing to what's left of his humanity may seem like a solution, but is the least likely to work. He has lost too much of himself to be swayed by words. If anything, prolonged discussions and diplomatic meetings only delay the inevitable. People involved in such talks need to wonder, are

they staying the advancement of the Zombie Plague, or is the Necromancer King the one who needs time for some nefarious purpose (for him or the Black Obelisk to heal, for zombies to return, etc.). Odds are, talks are only a delaying tactic being used by one side or the other.

Inevitably, there is likely to be someone who thinks their words and deeds can touch Marcel's heart and get him to stop and go away without going to war with him or killing the man. After all, Marcel LeMerchand was once a human. Even though he is now some sort of undead immortal, his human-self must be inside him somewhere. A human side is necessary so he can possess the imagination to create more monsters and bring hate and death to other worlds.

This approach is largely going to differ depending on the occupational make-up, personalities, and social strengths of the people (player characters) involved. Naturally, more charismatic and socially appealing characters who are good with words are going to have an easier go at it. But characters who also hold great knowledge of mechanics, magic (Necromancy and Techno-Wizardry, especially), and even philosophy, will interest the Necromancer King most. Players should get a chance to speak with Marcel, make their pitch, and see if they can reach the man lost to darkness. Game Masters, hear the players out and allow them to approach Marcel in their own way.

Should player characters try to appeal to what humanity Marcel has left, the Game Master should provide clues when the Necromancer speaks and interacts with them that he is not entirely gone or without emotion. That means there *may* yet be something human left. Accomplishing this feat should require *actual role-playing* by the players; an in-depth dialogue between the heroes and the all-powerful villain. If they can get Marcel to relate his story to them (which every decently dramatic villain does), they can provide new moral angles to view the events that have driven him to this point. They must be able to make him understand the great pain he is causing to millions of innocents is every bit as painful as what he has endured, and is not justice. No one on Earth has ever heard of the Necromancer King, Marcel LeMerchand. No one here can possibly be responsible for what he has suffered, and no one is deserving of the kind of hell that he has brought to their world. Marcel should listen to such arguments, but they probably fall upon deaf ears. The bottom line is he likes causing chaos and death and believes he is a divine agent of entropy, chosen by the Fates to destroy the human population of entire worlds.

More than anything, Marcel needs to be convinced of the fruitlessness of his actions. That nothing he does will ever make right what he has lost. His Necromancer Queen is gone, forever. His once great nation is in ruins. The enemies responsible, punished and destroyed long ago. He has won the war against them. By bringing his hate-driven vengeance to other people and planets, it makes him not the righteous seeking justice, but makes him like the very monsters who murdered his wife. What he did to them



may have been justified. (Not really, but it's a good way to reach him.) But that moment is long over. It was for a different time, on a different world. Marcel needs to let go. Find peace.

Whatever the argument made, those making it must NEVER say something like, "This is what your Queen would want." Or "Your Queen doesn't want to see you suffer or hurt innocent people." Any pretense of knowing what his wife may want or think ruins the moment and sends Marcel into a murderous rage. ("You have know idea what my wife wants or thinks!") There is no reaching him now. However, leaving her out of the argument may lead him to this conclusion on his own. Marcel is more human than he would ever admit. The problem is even if the player characters soften his heart, the influence of the Black Obelisk and the Interlocutor Guardians is likely to harden it right back up and reverse any mercy Marcel decides to show.

At best, there is a 01-05% chance (roll percentile) they might convince him to stop his invasion of Chaos Earth and leave. If this happens, congratulations, because few ever get him to make such a decision. Under this slim circumstance, Marcel deactivates ALL the zombies and leaves Earth, but only to travel to some other world to being about its destruction. Not only that, but Earth *may* (01-50% chance) stick in his craw as the one that got away, compelling him to return someday in the future. **Important Note:** If Marcel reaches the miraculous decision to spare Earth, it takes him 2D6 hours to leave. During that period, he must either be left alone to make his preparations to leave (that's the smartest course of action), or be treated with the utmost respect, kindness and kid gloves. Saying or doing the wrong thing could have disastrous results. If he feels for a minute that they are insincere, or that this is all a trick to steal his secrets, or to attack or betray him in some way, he reverses his decision and becomes more ruthless and driven to destroy them than ever. And nothing can be said or done to change his mind again. He fights for the conquest of Chaos Earth until he is slain!

Remember, at his core, Marcel LeMerchand is a man of darkness and evil. He has tampered with the forces of life and death for his entire natural life, and now even beyond that. His only goal is to tear down all that lives and replace it all with things that are cold and dead. He cannot, and will not, join the player characters or NEMA. He cannot be convinced to use his zombie army as a force for good, nor can he be convinced to deactivate or destroy the Black Obelisk. Although technically possible given his great power, the idea is unbearable.

Intimidating the Necromancer King is next to impossible. Although he is not entirely without fear, he is incredibly powerful and thoroughly convinced of his own godhood and purpose. Although the player characters may be heroes strong and courageous enough to fight through zombie hordes, they are still only mortal specks of dust compared to him. Their lives are brief flashes of light in an otherwise eternal darkness. At least that's the way he sees it. Marcel may laugh at, or not even respond to, an attempt to intimidate or scare him.

Shut it down or chase it away

Rather than completely destroying it, shutting the Black Obelisk down, or forcing Marcel to abandon Chaos Earth are both realistic objectives, but they too are difficult and likely to require an all-out surprise attack on the Necromancer King. Jumping him when he steps outside of the Black Obelisk (super rare) or going inside to knock out the Transmission and/or power station (see the scenarios above), or to slay him (as outlined below).

An alternative to slaying Marcel is to injure him so grievously, and press the attack so hard, that he comes to believe that the only way for him to survive is to abandon Earth and leave, Black Obelisk and all. The zombies that exist within 20 miles (32 km) around the Obelisk remain behind to ravage all humanoid life, but all zombies beyond that point are instantly taken out of action and the remaining zombies are limited in number, do not create new zombies, and can eventually all be destroyed.

Another way to stop the invasion is to chase Marcel away. This can be done by relentlessly stopping his zombies from advancing (picking off Scrap Zombies so the Transmission cannot advance, etc.), harassing him at the Black Obelisk (repeated incursions inside the Obelisk, sabotage of the factory, long-range bombardment, slaying of his personal guard, attempts on his life, etc.) and being so annoying at thwarting his every effort, that the Necromancer King – who is always short on patience – gives up and abandons Earth for easier prey. It takes a lot of work, time and manpower, but it can be done.

Slaying Marcel

Killing Marcel is the most direct and expedient way to stop the Zombie Plague.

His destruction causes the Black Obelisk to shut down. The Transmission stops. All the zombies collapse except for those inside and within a 20 mile (32 km) radius around the doomsday machine. The Interlocutor Guardians point at those responsible for Marcel's demise, bellow and collapse; the corpses they once inhabited returned to inanimate flesh and bone and the Entities sent back from whence they came.

The structure shudders with escalating severity and bolts of crackling, blue magic energy shoot across the ceilings and up the walls. A moment later, a terrible wailing like that of a thousand Banshees fills the entire Black Obelisk. Gargoyles and other supernatural beings near the Obelisk flee, flying far and not returning. Zombies race for the exits in a strange display of both panic and self-preservation, no longer interested in overwhelming the living. The dead inside the structure ignore the living, quickly exit and move away from the Black Obelisk, as should any humans inside or nearby. A feeling of doom washes over the living still within the structure. Psychics and mages know they must leave quickly or face a horrible fate! Meanwhile, the other zombies within the 20 mile (32 km) radius stop, and stand motionless while all this is going on. Those beyond the 20 mile (32 km)



mark collapse, lifeless, devoid of the force that once powered and directed them.

1D6+4 minutes after Marcel is slain, a huge Rift tears open and 1D4+1 minutes later, the Black Obelisk vanishes to parts unknown. Presumably, it randomly Rifts to a random world or dimension where it waits for a new candidate to use its power to raise the dead and unleash wanton destruction upon humanity. That could happen within days, years or many millennia later.

As if to mark that it was once present, the motionless Chaos and Scrap Zombies that were located in the 20 mile (32 km) radius around the location where the Black Obelisk once stood, reactivate 1D6 minutes after it disappears. Their goal, now, is to simply scatter into the world and continue to slaughter humanoids. While the recently slain do NOT rise as zombies themselves, the carnage that the remaining thousands of zombies can unleash upon the living can be terrible.

The horror lingers. The zombies may scatter, but they do so as large *Dead Mobs* and *swarms* that can range from the hundreds into the thousands. It is only over time that these large mobs are whittled away and break down into smaller groups of 1D6x10 zombies, trios, pairs and individuals. Their instinct, regardless of the size of their group, is to gather and kill the living, so small groups are likely to be encountered even years later. Worse, the **Garbagemen** and **Stitchers** find each other, pair up and continue to work at repairing the other Chaos and Scrap Zombies. Every large group of wandering zombies include at least a few Garbagemen and Stitchers who work to keep them going. Garbagemen, Stichers, Boogeymen and Living Dead Girls may also command as many as a dozen zombies. The latter two, however, are more likely to go off on their own to hunt the living. Stalking them in the style of a serial killer, always on the move, lingering at a populated area until they slay 2D6+4 people before traveling elsewhere to continue their killing spree. Without the Transmission to guide them, these and all of the Black Obelisk zombies now target all humanoid life forms, not just humans.

Victory!

Successfully stopping the Demon Plague means the people responsible (the player characters?) are heroes, having won a great victory for NEMA and survivors of the Great Cataclysm everywhere. When NEMA Midwest Command learns that the zombie menace has been cut short, they hold up the people responsible as exemplary men and women and hand out promotions (and more responsibility). This victory boosts morale for every NEMA soldier and civilian survivor who hears of it. With all that is going wrong in the world right now, this victory is huge, and word of it spreads hope. It may also attract more survivors to NEMA at this location.

Of course, the events of the Great Cataclysm have brought a thousand horrors to Earth. So many, that the Zombie Plague and the Black Obelisk will be completely forgotten. Tomorrow there

will be something else that emerges from a Blue Zone that will threaten mankind. The heroes of NEMA will have little time to rest before their services are called upon again.

Of course, with the Black Obelisk gone, this may be a good opportunity for other demons and Necromancers to start scavenging or animating the bodies of the zombies left behind for their own evil purposes, Scrap Zombies in particular. Others may believe NEMA is weak and spread thin, and launch their own offensive against humanity or the defenders of North America. However, the level of danger they represent compared to the Black Obelisk is minuscule and much more easily addressed. NEMA should try to act hastily to burn/destroy all zombie bodies they find, just in case, and be wary of new threats.

If NEMA should fail ...

If NEMA fails to stop the Black Obelisk here, the zombie forces spread out into the Midwest and up into Canada and must be stopped by someone else. If that is even possible.

This is not an acceptable option, and General Lindsey Sawyer knows it.

Forget about the Vampire Kingdoms of Mexico or the Xiticix hivelands that come later, North America will be overrun by zombies. South America falls next and then Marcel, using the ley lines, Rifts the Black Obelisk from one continent to the next to invade and conquer them until Earth is a planet of the dead. On some parallel Earth, this is the scenario that does unfold.

Future Outbreaks

A dark legacy

Turning off the Transmission, killing Marcel LeMerchand and even completely destroying the Black Obelisk (unlikely) does not put an immediate end to the Zombie Plague. It stops it from spreading, because without the Transmission, there are no new dead to rise and replenish the zombie hordes. Moreover, the vast majority of zombies beyond the initial 20 mile (32 km) radius around the Black Obelisk instantly deactivate and become dead, again. However, the thousands of zombies that are present within that 20 mile (32 km) radius remain active even after the Black Obelisk is shut down or, more likely, abandons Chaos Earth.

Without the Transmission to guide them, the remaining Chaos Zombies and Scrap Zombies default to killing mode, and wander off in Dead Mobs and herds to continue to hunt and kill the living. Like devouring locust, they sweep the countryside killing every living humanoid they encounter, as well as large animals and any creature that challenges them or stands in their way. The dead do not rise, so the Dead Mobs don't create new zombies, but left unchecked, they may kill tens of thousands of people. Especially those headed for *Rockford* and *Chicago*, Illinois.



The worst news here might be that these zombies have no limitation to where they can go or how far they can travel. They are not limited to the 20 mile (32 km) radius or the edge of where the Transmission last reached. They can travel any distance. Some will inevitably go in all directions from coast to coast, into Mexico and South America and up into Canada. Some are certain to wander into a Rift and end up in every corner of the planet and even end up on alien worlds or in Earth's future or past! (**Note:** In the case of those that enter a Rift, the Dead Mob is not likely to be more than a small mixed group of Chaos and Scrap zombies. We would recommend a random roll of 5D6 to determine the number of zombies, with 20% being Scrap Zombies as usual. Of course, a Game Master can make that number much smaller or much larger, and the percentage of Scrap Zombies can be less, more, or entirely zombies of that ilk. Have fun with this. And with the craziness of the Minion Wars, it is possible that some of these zombies could appear through any random Rifts or dimensional anomaly or spell gone wrong, especially on planets, space stations and perhaps even ships at places with a lot of dimensional activity, including Rifts Earth, Moon Base and space stations around Rifts Earth, Phase World, the Thundercloud Galaxy.)

How many zombies remain? That is ultimately left up to each individual Game Master, but it should not be more than NEMA can handle, though casualties may be high. To provide a bit of direction in this area, you can make a random roll on the table below, or pick the one that makes the most sense to you and your plans for the player group.

01-20% 4D6x100 zombies. A miracle.

21-50% 2D6x2,000 zombies. Manageable.

51-80% 3D4x10,000 zombies. It could be worse.

81-00% 2D4x100,000 zombies. The war is still on. Pray they scatter to the wind.

Don't panic. Whatever the number that survives, these zombies scatter and shamble off in **all directions**. So even if there are 800,000 of them, only 10,000-60,000 may head toward Rockford or Chicago. Heck, without the Transmission or real leaders, the swarm(s) might miss any given city completely! They don't have an agenda, nor do the zombies know where cities and survivor camps are located. They are traveling blind and attacking everyone they run across. They could pass within a few miles of Rockford without incident only to ravage some other city or town that thought it had dodged the mass destruction of the Great Cataclysm; or a group of zombies may spend weeks or months sifting through the ruins of a city, hunting survivors before moving on or heading back.

This scenario can be played out over and over again, have fun with it. NEMA and others heroes may be called to rush in and evacuate innocent survivors and/or to battle the latest zombie Dead Mob to wander into the area. After the remaining zombies have dispersed, heroes may encounter one to several zombies almost any time, anywhere – while exploring ruins, helping survivors, while on patrol, in the middle of a mission, taking a break, and so on. They will be a persistent, though dwindling, threat for years to come.

Waves of zombie attacks. Until the vast majority are destroyed, Dead Mobs and herds may appear and attack in waves spread apart by hours, days, weeks months or years — a few dozen last week, a thousand this week, several hundred or thousands next month or next year. Without direction, the mobs of zombies wander around aimlessly. Some may head off in one direction and keep going and never turn back. Other groups may wander around in circles, or in a zigzag pattern, or go off one way for weeks or months, hit a barrier of some kind (whether it be natural like a lake, or defenders who manage to fend them off), and turn around to head back the way they came. This also keeps



adventurers, heroes and NEMA peacekeepers always guessing, because they will not know if the lone zombie or handful of zombies they have just encountered are on their own or whether they signal a much larger mob or herd advancing on their position.

Regrettably, survivors who find themselves besieged by zombies may never see them coming and not be prepared, especially for large Dead Mobs or herds. There is no central communications system anymore, so people more than 50 miles (80 km) from the actual site of the Zombie Plague, or are not in frequent contact with the NEMA forces in the Chicago area, don't know a thing about zombies.

Over time, the Dead Mobs and herds become much, much smaller. Whittled down by the people who fight and hunt them and through dispersement. Four or six years later, a large Dead Mob may be only 1D6x10 zombies and a typical group no more than 2D6.

Necromancers are able to collect, control and command the zombies of the Black Obelisk. As people accept and learn magic, and as those gifted in the mystic arts learn magic – both on their own and from supernatural beings and D-Bees – the secrets of Necromancy are one of the first types of magic to become prominent. Necromancers are able to step in and lead Chaos and Scrap Zombies, with even the more specialized types accepting them as their new leader. Under the thrall of a Necromancer, who can command 12 Black Obelisk zombies per level of experience, as well as the mage's own creations, the zombies are obedient servants.

Reconstruction Sites

Even without the presence of the Black Obelisk, Scrap Zombies still continue the Reconstruction process, to a limited degree. First, a **Stitcher** and/or **Garbageman** must establish a **Reconstruction Site**, a kind of lair, a secretive area where zombies and scavenged technology can both be brought. Once there, it is up to one or more Stitchers to transform normal Chaos Zombies into Scrap Zombies “by hand.” Metal pieces and gadgets are forcefully embedded into Chaos Zombies, jammed into dead flesh with none of the magical ease of the Black Obelisk's arcane processes. Specialists like Amped Zombies, Brain Melters, Boogeymen, Living Dead Girls, Reapers, Stitchers and Walking Nightmares are too complicated for Stitchers to assemble, so a Reconstruction Site only produces Scrap Zombies such as **Soldier Boys** and **Scorchers**, and try to effect repairs, as best they can, on all others.

A “hive” or “lair” slowly grows this way, gradually adding more and more Scrap Zombies to the remaining Chaos Zombies. While they will never have the same reach or capabilities as the Black Obelisk, a Reconstruction Site can become a serious problem for any human survivors nearby. Not only do the zombies kill people, but the zombies also gather up mechanical and electronic devices that could be extremely important to survivors, from emergency radios to medical equipment to portable generators. The interior of a Reconstruction Site is a horrific mess of

shuffling zombies, discarded bodies, stacks of body parts, piles of scavenged devices and *Garbagemen* and *Stitchers* working day and night to repair zombies and create more weaponized Scrap Zombies. There is no central leader or authority, per se. Without the Necromancer King and the Black Obelisk, the Scrap Zombies are functioning on basic instinct and programming, like bees or ants without a queen. In this case, that includes, kill the living, gather scrap, go to a Stitcher for repairs or upgrades, and obey and follow certain specialized Scrap Zombies as squad leaders. Particularly *Brain Melters*, *Headbangers*, *Living Dead Girls* and *Stitchers*, but some even gravitate toward *Soldier Boys* to lead them.

The zombies continue to lay siege to the living and gather technological remains with no real long-term goal or strategy. It is what they are designed to do and they continue to do it. Only *Boogeymen*, *Living Dead Girls* and *Stitchers*, and to a lesser degree, *Garbagemen*, have the cunning and skills to direct other zombies to use hit and run tactics, hide and lay low for awhile and attack again at a later date. The rest just continue to wander and slaughter humanoids as they are encountered. And while intruders in the Reconstruction Site will come under attack, Scrap Zombies are not trained soldiers, and posting guards, setting patrols and using monitoring devices are all beyond their capabilities.

New Zombie Outbreaks

Secondary Transmissions

The most insidious secret of **the Transmission** does not reveal itself until the Black Obelisk is long gone: The Transmission is a permanent part of every device that has ever received or broadcast the Transmission. That's right, it is imprinted inside the communications system, radar and targeting computer of your Chromium Guardsman, Silver Eagle, robot or helmet comm system. The Transmission infects electronic devices and communications equipment, becoming a permanent part of them. A phone, for example, within the *initial range of the Transmission* broadcast is imprinted with the dark magic that raises the dead to kill the living. The Transmission broadcast over millions of communications and electronic devices, becoming a part of their internal memory. NEMA environmental body armor, as well as tactical helmets with built-in communications and computers, and even basic field radios, all have recording and broadcast capabilities that picked up and carried the Transmission. And they still have it inside of them, even with the Black Obelisk gone or Marcel dead. Power armor, robot vehicles, tanks, APCs, aircraft and civilian cell phones, digital cameras, computers and monitors are no different; if they were ever touched by the Transmission, they are forever contaminated by it. All of them a potential vessel from which a new Zombie Outbreak may occur.



Remember how the Transmission could be heard even on broken and unplugged electronics, speakers and headsets? That same magic remains trapped in the machine, dormant, until exposed to high levels of magic energy. Reactivation of this **Secondary Transmission** may occur at ley line nexus points, or during ley line storms, eclipses and planetary alignments, but may also be (accidentally?) activated by a Techno-Wizard or a powerful Necromancer. A plague, a massacre, disaster or a battle where several hundreds, or thousands, of people are killed in a very short time, can also trigger the Secondary Transmission – the sudden surge of P.P.E. energy awaking the Transmission imprinted on any communications device in the vicinity to cause the dead to rise again.

Under the right circumstance, that scene of mass murder, battle, plague or disaster suddenly becomes the site of a new zombie outbreak. The recently deceased within a two mile (3.2 km) radius of this Secondary Transmission rising to kill the living. This could bring dozens, hundreds or even a few thousand people back to life as *Chaos Zombies*. Worse, with an active Secondary Transmission running again, everyone the zombies kill within that small area also reanimate as *Chaos Zombies* themselves! This *new Zombie Plague* can only function within the short range of the Secondary Transmission, which is very limited, but it can still cause outbreaks that wipe out an entire village, half of a town, a 'Burb and anyone who happens to wander in. Note: In the case of the Secondary Transmission, ALL the zombies are stuck within the two mile radius (3.2 km) of the outbreak; they cannot travel beyond the Secondary Transmission. This can literally create ghost towns, or what NEMA used to call Tomb Cities, inhabited by zombies.

The **Secondary Transmission** creates *Chaos Zombies*, but it also programs 5% to become *Garbagemen* and 5% to become *Stitchers* to perpetuate their numbers and to create simple and crude Scrap Zombies, namely *Soldier Boys* and *Scorchers*. *Brain Melters* just happen when a Crazy is slain and his body is reanimated as a zombie.

The cause of the new zombie outbreak?

Nobody knows.

That's because nobody has any inkling that the Transmission has infected existing devices that can create small outbreaks (and that includes new, current day devices that begin to broadcast it). During the early years of the Great Cataclysm and the Two Hundred Years Dark Age, nobody possessed enough understanding of magic (let alone Techno-Wizardry which wasn't invented yet) to figure out the cause of new outbreaks. After the Black Obelisk is forgotten, nobody even knows anything about it or the Transmission, and have no reason to look at devices for a magic transmission that turns the dead into zombies.

Zombie outbreaks just spring up from time to time for generations to follow. NEMA and future defenders of humanity fight them to the best of their ability, eradicating small infestations without ever knowing the cause.

Rifts® of the Future

Three Hundred Years from Now

In the Rifts Earth time line, the zombies of the Black Obelisk are defeated three centuries earlier and their very existence is long forgotten by the time the Coalition States rise to power.

Nothing remains of the Pre-Rifts cities of Milwaukee and Madison except for a few rusting skeletons of skyscrapers and bits and pieces of the old highways. There is no trace of the Scrap Zombies or the atrocities they committed during the early days of the Great Cataclysm. Madison, Milwaukee, and most of South-Central Wisconsin are forested wastelands. The new threat is the bug men known as the *Xiticix*. The Coalition State of Chi-Town uses this area for weapon testing and military maneuvers. Demons, monsters, and random creatures emerging from the powerful nexus points at the Madison and Milwaukee sites are wiped out or chased off as the CS keeps this entire region under close watch and have it secretly earmarked for Coalition expansion.

That said, specialized Scrap Zombies like *Stitchers*, *Garbagemen*, *Boogeymen* and *Living Dead Girls* are cunning enough that they could have, conceivably, survived over the centuries into modern times. They may continue to be a threat to the living anywhere across North America for generations. The ancient zombies function until destroyed even without the Transmission. And the region where the Zombie Plague started still contains plenty of relics from the past that could be imprinted with the Transmission and able to cause new, isolated zombie outbreaks in the current time line.

The Secondary Transmission and Chaos and Scrap Zombies in 110 P.A.

The terrible legacy of the Black Obelisk and the **Secondary Transmission** is that it has caused Zombie Plagues to pop up throughout the Two Hundred Years Dark Age and can even spawn them in modern day Rifts Earth, circa 110 P.A., and beyond. ANY device that originally broadcast the Transmission is permanently infected with it.

Right up into modern times, Golden Age technology, relics and artifacts are highly coveted by collectors, historians, engineers and scientists. They are excavated, studied and reverse-engineered whenever possible. If of M.D.C. construction, after it is cleaned, the device may be suitable for use in modern devices. This is especially true of spare parts and components used in **Glitter Boys** (NEMA's Chromium Guardsmen), **SAMAS** (Silver Eagles) and robots and vehicles. Any old NEMA radios, computers, radars, and electronics that played the Transmission in the past, are still contaminated three centuries later. Buried underground with the dead and the past, the Transmission inside of them was inert, but once excavated, the imprint of the Transmission has a chance of being activated to unleash chaos and zombies all over



again! The artifact does not even have to be in working condition, just preserved enough for the Transmission to be intact and able to activate and broadcast. All it needs is the right amount of P.P.E. for the artifact to rebroadcast (as described above).

All of this means the Secondary Transmission can cause small outbreaks of zombies (as described above) on modern day Rifts Earth. Thanks to travel via the Rifts, outbreaks could happen anywhere in the Megaverse.

Return of the Black Obelisk to Earth

If Marcel was convinced to leave Chaos Earth, or forced to leave due to constant harassment or to escape attacks against him and the Obelisk, he might return 300 or so years later to try again. The man holds a grudge, and Earth was fascinating back during the days of chaos. It's even more interesting now.

The same basic scenario as what happened in Madison, could unfold again on the very spot, or someplace else. Only this time, things are more complicated. North America is protected by the Coalition States, Northern Gun, Cyber-Knights, the Kingdom of Lazlo, Federation of Magic, Archie Three, and other people and nations. And when it comes to a legendary magic artifact such as the Black Obelisk, beings such as the Splugorth of Atlantis, Lemurians, ancient dragons and even some deities may get involved to destroy it or capture it for themselves. These are not the same people Marcel and the Obelisk faced the last time. The people of North America are much more powerful and used to dealing with alien and monstrous invaders showing up and looking for trouble, and none of them are going to lay down and submit without a fight that Marcel most certainly does not expect.

Depending on exactly when and where the Black Obelisk returns to Earth (if it does at all), this could create considerable drama and backstabbing among forces who will want to secure the doomsday device for themselves. For example, *Lord Dunscon of the Federation of Magic* and the *demons* of Hades and the *Deevils* of Dyval would do anything to lay their hands on the Black Obelisk. And with Earth as a gateway to infinite worlds, the destructive capabilities of the Black Obelisk could be taken anywhere in the Megaverse. This danger could draw the Splugorth, Naruni, the Republicans, Archie, the Federation of Magic, Mrr'lyn and other forces out to take a stand against it or to try to usurp its power for themselves. Unless nipped in the bud, the ensuing free-for-all could be of epic proportions. And if it falls into the wrong hands ...

Encountering the Black Obelisk on an alien world

Dimensional travelers could run into Marcel LeMerchand and the Black Obelisk on an alien world, in another dimensions, or a parallel Earth or Rifts Earth.

Could the Black Obelisk have been created by the legendary Dominators, or the United Worlds of Warlock eons ago (one of their great shames?), or even by the Cosmic Forge? Or perhaps it originates from the demonic realm of Wormwood? More likely,

it is something new and terrible even to these worlds and storied dimensional travelers like True Atlanteans, Splugorth, Naruni and Prometheans.

The point is, you can place Marcel and the Black Obelisk, or the Obelisk in the hands of a new maniac, anywhere. On *Phase World®* or *the Three Galaxies*, in the *Heroes Unlimited* or *Aliens Unlimited* setting, *Palladium Fantasy* or just about anywhere. Have fun with it. Explore the possibilities.

Dead Reign® Conversions

Dead Reign® is another Palladium RPG that follows a similar theme of a zombie apocalypse, although on a different Earth. No one knows what caused the dead to rise, or the plagues known as the "Wave." All that is known is that a plague killed millions and millions of people in a very short time, and then the dead came back to life as murderous zombies. It was not from the Transmission, though the two phenomena could be related. They certainly deal in the same thematic elements: highly aggressive zombies killing people to create more zombies. They may also exist entirely independent of each other. Who knows?

Bringing Dead Reign® zombies to Chaos Earth and other settings. With the dimensional Rifts tearing open space and time, and opening doorways to a myriad of worlds, it is not impossible that a Rift could open somewhere in the world in which **Dead Reign®** takes place, depositing zombies, survivors, or both, onto *Chaos Earth*. Dead Reign® zombies, however do not require a direct feed from the source of their re-animation, and can continue to function in any dimension, because they feed on the P.P.E. of the living.

The dumping of cannibalistic zombies from another world could present itself to be a serious problem for NEMA and the survivors in Chaos Earth. These "other" zombies do not have the limitations of the Transmission, and are perfectly capable of killing people, and thus creating more zombies. They can spread more quickly, since they do not need radio towers to function, and are not limited by geography. They do not, however, have the benefit of cybernetic enhancements or weapon limbs.

Dead Reign zombies and Scrap Zombies would generally ignore each other, since they both are only interested in tracking down and killing the living. And because it is likely to happen sooner or later, a person killed by Dead Reign zombies while in an area under the influence of the Transmission will rise again as a Dead Reign zombie, not a Chaos Zombie. Of course, if they are wounded by a Dead Reign zombie and die later on, either from their wounds, or infection, or some unrelated cause, they rise as a Chaos Zombie like normal.

Conversion notes for Dead Reign Zombies can be found in the **Dead Reign® RPG**, page 55. In addition, when in an area where they can pick up the Transmission, they receive a bonus of +1 to initiative, +2 to strike, and +10% to their M.D.C. Or you could keep them as S.D.C. zombies that only become M.D.C. on ley lines or within a ley line triangle.



Survivors from the Dead Reign® world would find themselves in an even stranger and more terrifying environment than what they left behind. However, they tend to be people who are very good at adapting. Thus, the basic situation, that of a global holocaust caused by unknown supernatural contributors, is not particularly hard for them to handle. And once they get more accustomed to demons, magic, and Mega-Damage technology, a massive horde of the dead will seem like a piece of cake.

Survivors from Dead Reign® transported to Earth keep their original O.C.C. when sent to Chaos Earth or Rifts Earth, and can continue advancing in it as normal. There really is no time to learn to be anything else, and the skills of a Dead Reign Survivor are well suited to staying alive during the Great Cataclysm and Rifts Earth. Most wouldn't even try to become something else. They can, however, learn skills available pertaining to high-tech gear and the supernatural, and most will do so to some degree.

In the alternative, a player may simply choose to play a Dead Reign® O.C.C. as someone born during or right before the Golden Age of Man that preceded the Great Cataclysm. In this case, most O.C.C.s from that book are perfectly suited for Chaos Earth. There would be no Retro-Savages at this point, and any Death Cults would only be in their infancy unless they existed prior to the Coming of the Rifts, which would be very rare. The Half-Living would be Mega-Damage beings and no stranger on Chaos Earth or Rifts Earth as any other D-Bee or monster. (**Note:** If only human survivors are being ported to the Chaos Earth or Rifts Earth setting, the Half-Living would not exist due to the nature of the Black Obelisk zombies.)

Hound Masters could be particularly useful and appropriate in the Chaos Earth® or Rifts® setting since dogs can sense the supernatural and can even hurt or scare many of them! Scrap Zombies do not see dogs and other animals as anything other than something to kill, but they can be damaged and even destroyed by them. NEMA may even hire Hound Masters to serve as trackers of the supernatural, and to locate survivors who are injured or incapacitated. On Rifts Earth the same applies, plus Hound Masters find they have an affinity with Dog Boys.

Most of the other **Dead Reign®** character classes fit in nicely as well, especially the *Road Reapers*. These road warriors could be an unrelated gang of heroes with access to vehicles and high-tech weaponry, and possibly safe places to hide and knowledge of weapon caches. And they would probably call themselves by names like "Bionic Butchers" or "Zombie Slayers," or something similar. It makes them feel heroic and strong enough to stand up to the forces unleashed by the chaos. Their gang name and general attitudes should reflect that. On Rifts Earth, Road Reapers are only one step away from groups like Reid's Rangers, the Cyber-Knights and roving bands of heroes, so whether a lone Road Reaper or a band of them, they fit the environment well. Oh, and they are likely to fall in love with hovercycles, rocket bikes and skycycles.

Whether a Road Reaper or normal person, NEMA considers these people to be foolhardy, though brave, amateurs. A potential militia force at best. To NEMA, this is a matter of national security, and their primary goal is to save lives. They would rather these independent fighters stay out of their way and report to an evacuation center, but that wouldn't be in the nature of a "true" survivor or hero, would it? And under the circumstance, when push comes to shove, NEMA is happy to accept help from wherever and whomever they can get it. One more batch of heroes unafraid of battling zombies and monsters, and go scavenging for supplies is more help than a hindrance.

Converting the Black Obelisk to Dead Reign® (or Heroes Unlimited or any modern Earth setting) is a bit trickier, mainly due to the limitations of the Black Obelisk and the Transmission. Unless, that is, the Black Obelisk or Marcel could figure out how to link the Transmission to communication satellites and broadcast the Transmission around the globe simultaneously. In this case, the Wave really could be a disease that kills a billion or more people, and it is the Black Obelisk that raises the bodies of the people who died in the pandemic! Marcel's motives are unchanged, and the Black Obelisk is happy to bring destruction to another world (or a parallel Earth).

The big question in terms of game mechanics is, which zombies to use? You could keep the Dead Reign zombies, or swap them out with Chaos and Scrap Zombies, at least the ones that fit the setting of our modern Earth, which most still do. Scrap Zombies would be S.D.C. constructs, but they can still utilize scrap metal and weapon limbs (mainly melee weapons) the same as always. Since they are not necessary for the spread of the Transmission (the satellites are doing that job), they are simply the armored shock troops among the other zombies.

An ambitious Game Master could use all the zombies, adding the Chaos and Scrap Zombies to the menagerie of zombies that already exist in **Dead Reign®**. The main differences might be that the Chaos and Scrap Zombies are tied to the Black Obelisk and, as usual, are programmed and directed by it, while the rest of the zombies are not. Strange accidents or side-effects, perhaps. Or maybe they are all creations of the Black Obelisk.

Since the Black Obelisk requires magic energy, it appears at a historical site that legend attributes as a place of mystic power. This could include sites like Stonehenge, Mount Olympus, anywhere inside the Bermuda Triangle, the pyramids of Egypt or any stone pyramid of the Americas (Mexico, Central America, South America), Native American burial mound, or similar place of magical repute anywhere in the world. In the USA, that could include the Wyoming Medicine Wheel, St. Louis Arch, Salem, and many other locations.

Destroying the Black Obelisk or killing Marcel has the same effect as in Chaos Earth, and stops the zombie invasion, especially since the Transmission is being broadcast via satellites around the world. Of course, finding the Obelisk might be a challenge.

Let your imaginations run wild and have fun.



Disease & Monsters

Apocalypse Plagues and Undead Threats other than Zombies

There are countless horrors and nightmarish creatures flooding into our world since the advent of the Great Cataclysm and the opening of the Rifts. The Black Obelisk with its armies of Scrap Zombies is only the most immediate of such threats. Deadly plagues, insect swarms, demonic beings, aliens, weird animals, dragons and monsters the likes of which have never been seen on planet Earth before, are common, everyday occurrences. **The Creatures of Chaos** sourcebook introduced a range of chaos demons, the Black Obelisk and its zombies are another. What follows are a few more. They have nothing to do with the Black Obelisk other than they may be attracted to the death and destruction it unleashes, and give survivors and NEMA heroes more headaches.

Apocalypse Plagues

The following afflictions have been discovered only in the last several weeks since the Great Cataclysm began. Because of their severity and the danger they represent, NEMA has started classifying them as **Apocalypse Plagues**. For now, these particular diseases are limited to areas where the undead are especially prevalent, but given time, they may spread out on their own. Please note that while some of these plagues are not directly lethal, in and of themselves, the debilitation of the sick leaves people weak, unable to care for themselves and vulnerable to other diseases and dangers that often result in death.

Sour Maggot Parasites

This is an insect plague, and one of the more lethal and horrific ones. Like ordinary maggots, these small, white, parasitic worms feed on dead and rotting flesh. Unlike regular maggots, however, they do, from time to time, infect living creatures, burrowing deep into the flesh of an open or infected wound. There, they release a chemical that causes necrosis in living tissue.

Necrosis is pretty terrible. It occurs when normally healthy flesh is deprived of blood, oxygen, and its autoimmune functions. The flesh becomes diseased, filled with pus, and literally starts to rot right off the bone. When caused by **Sour Maggots**, necrosis also emits a foul stench that resembles both rotting meat and spoiled milk. That's how the condition got the nickname "Sour."

Sour Maggot Parasites infect and feed on the flesh of zombies, as well as dead carcasses and sometimes the living. At the onset of the Zombie Plague, twenty percent of the Black Obelisk zombies are afflicted with the parasite. The number increases to one third after only 1D6+2 weeks and to 50% in 2D6+8 weeks. The walking dead have no chance to save against the parasites, but because they are generally tougher than regular living creatures, they suffer much less. Infected zombies permanently lose 1D6 S.D.C. (or M.D.C., as the case may be) per week. Once they have been reduced to less than 5% of their starting M.D.C., the creature has deteriorated to the point that it is immobile and a useless jumble of bones that can no longer walk, but can still claw out and bite anyone who comes too close. Once the creature's M.D.C. runs out, it is truly dead, literally eaten away. **Note:** Vampires, mummies, animated skeletons, and other undead, demons and supernatural beings are immune to Sour Maggot Parasites.

Sour Maggots are not usually contagious enough to warrant calling them a "plague." They infect rotting meat, that rotting meat is consumed by a scavenging animal, the animal is infected and dies, becoming food for another carrion eater. The parasites ride along the whole time, slowly killing the living host, eating him from the inside out, and turning it into food for more scavengers which eat it and spread the horrid worms. However, with all the dead bodies from the Cataclysm and now zombies, they are proliferating on a wide scale in a large, centralized area. The maggots feed on Chaos Zombies because they are rotting meat and plentiful. Only unlike a dead carcass rotting in an alley somewhere, the zombies keep moving, dropping some maggots when they go into combat and get jostled around, and transfer Sour Maggots to uninfected ones they come into contact with. All of which is spreading the parasites much more rapidly. Stitchers can pluck out Sour Maggots and replace infected limbs, but most of the time they just clean themselves and Garbagemen of the worms and leave the rest.

Classification: Class 3 Parasites

At Risk: Any mortal, S.D.C. life form composed of flesh and zombies. Caution must be taken to avoid contaminating meat in the food chain.

Horror Factor: 14

Save vs Disease/Parasite: 14 for the living. None for the dead.

Duration: Until cured/parasites removed, or the victim dies. It usually takes humans 2D4+8 weeks before humans are so mutilated and eaten away that they die.

Effects on the Dead: No saving throw. The dead are slowly eaten away into nothingness.

Effects on the Living: Saving throw is 12 or better. Ingestion of tainted meat/food with live Sour Maggots requires a save of 14 or better.

If a few Sour Maggots get on a person's clothes or bare skin, they are easy enough to simply brushed away. On healthy flesh, Sour Maggots are likely to let go and roll off themselves. Should



they try to burrow into the skin, the victim feels pinching and burning pain that should alert him to brush the parasite off and/or to crush the hideous things. Burning with a cigarette or crushing the worms kills them (one Hit Point each).

Open wounds are a different story, Sour Maggots burrow into the open skin and into the tissue in less than one melee round (15 seconds) and must be surgically removed one at a time or magically killed and removed via Cure Disease, Purification or Restoration spells. Psychic Surgery is also effective at removing them, one at a time, even when inside the stomach.

A failed save vs disease means the character is infected with Sour Maggot Parasites which start inducing necrosis within 48 hours. First, large blotches appear on the affected area of the body. In the case of an already existing wound, it won't heal and gets worse. Then the wound or area of infection starts to die and to rot, the maggots feeding on the dead flesh, lay eggs and new larvae feeding and spreading the necrosis. Eating Sour Maggots has the same results only with the necrosis and rot starting in the stomach and requiring surgery or magic for healing. This continues until the host becomes too incapacitated and sick from infection (fever, pain, loss of limb) and dies. The Sour Maggots continue to feast on the body until it is all gone or a new host is found.

Damage: For the first two weeks, the host loses one Hit Point per day, which cannot be healed normally until the parasites are killed. Magical and psionic healing restores the victim to normal, but does not kill the parasites and in a week, the individual feels the same symptoms and has the same problem.

Attacks per melee are reduced to one, and the character is -50% to all skills and -4 to strike, parry, and dodge. The character takes 1D6 damage direct to Hit Points every hour until he dies. 1D6 hours after his death, the body is considered contagious, and anyone touching it unprotected may get the parasites themselves.

Treatment: For tainted meat, boiling it or roasting to well done at high temperatures should kill the parasite (1% chance of infection after proper cooking), Otherwise, cut out the tainted areas and hope you got it all. A successful Cook skill will allow the character to know which parts are safe for consumption. Any infected meat, limbs or bodies should be burned to ash to make certain the Sour Maggots are destroyed to prevent them from infecting another person or animal. Another reason to burn or atomize dead bodies.

Removing each Sour Maggot from the infected area of a living creature saves the limb if done at the early stages (within 96 hours). Once removed the body heals. Severe infection and serious necrosis requires the amputation of the infected limb. Internal infection requires surgery to find the parasites to either remove them or remove the section of the stomach that is infected. If spread to several internal organs, there may be nothing that can be done short of removing the organs and replacing them with bio-systems or cybernetic organs; both of which are not readily available after the Apocalypse. Psychic surgery is very effective

in removing the parasites and certain magicks can heal instantly. Cure Disease, for example, kills the maggots and cures the necrosis. And strong antibiotics have a 01-90% likelihood of killing Sour Maggots in the early stages of infection (the first two weeks).

High temperatures/heat, fire, and most pesticides destroy the insects, which have one Hit Point each. So does crushing them.

Necrotic flesh must be removed surgically (Psychic Surgery leaves the least scarring), or cured magically (the magic spells Purification, Cure Disease, and Restoration all do the job).

Penalties: Infection, fever, shooting pain in the affected area until it goes numb (a bad sign, because it means the flesh and nerves are dead): -1 on all combat maneuvers (initiative, strike, parry, etc.), reduce speed 5% and -5% on skill performance for EACH week of infection with cumulative effects. A necrotic limb becomes a useless appendage that cannot function and allows the parasites to spread to other parts of the body.

Wasting Disease

This disease is gruesome, debilitating, and highly contagious, though thankfully it does not appear to be lethal. What it does do is weakens and transform a normal, healthy person into having the appearance of a walking cadaver!

Although the disease itself is not lethal, and will run its course through a victim on its own, the effects are debilitating and some people die as their weakened condition makes them vulnerable to other diseases and unable to adequately defend themselves against hostile forces.

Under the current situation, there is also the danger of being mistaken for a zombie and being slain by frightened survivors or NEMA troops. Indeed, to the untrained eye, and from a distance, there appears to be little difference between someone suffering from Wasting Disease and a Chaos Zombie, aside from a total lack of aggression and the ability to speak, provided the ill person is given the chance to speak. Unfortunately, most survivors have a "shoot first, ask questions later" attitude when dealing with zombies, and rightfully so. For this reason, individuals infected with Wasting Disease are kept indoors and looked after. Anyone taking care of those infected with "the Waste" need to watch out for themselves. The disease can be transmitted through any direct contact.

Classification: Class 3 Viral Infection.

At Risk: Humans, most types of D-Bees, and mortal humanoids. Cold-blooded beings are not affected.

Save vs Disease: 16 or better. Roll if the character is exposed to the bodily fluids of those already ill (saliva including unseen particles and spray from coughs and sneezes, blood, perspiration, etc.). The big problem is that the virus is highly contagious immediately, before the infected individual shows any sign of being sick.

Duration: Runs its course in 2D6+13 days.



Effects: Victims of Wasting Disease – more commonly known as “the Wasted” lose their appetite, suffer rapid weight loss, become weak, their skin turns pale and waxy, and they have difficulty focusing and concentrating. The sicker and thinner they get the weaker they become.

Penalties: Reduce weight, S.D.C., and M.E., M.A., P.S., P.P., P.E., and Spd attributes by 10% for every four days of being sick, as well as -10% to skill performance, -1 melee attack, -1 to all combat maneuvers (strike, parry, dodge, etc.), and -2 to Perception Rolls for every four days sick. By the end, the cumulative penalties, weakness and weight loss has many patients completely bedridden. Thankfully, recovery is rapid, and most people are back to their normal capabilities within 1D6+3 days, though it may take 2D4 weeks to get their weight back to where it was.

Treatment: There is no known cure for “The Waste.” The disease must simply be allowed to run its course. Once the effects wear off, the character is very hungry, and thirsty, but needs to ease into eating and being active again. Most people can resume their normal functions in 4-9 days (1D6+3). For the most part, they will be perfectly fine. That is, assuming they didn’t pick up any life-threatening injuries or illness while sick.

If there is a positive side to Wasting Disease at all, it’s that once a character is infected and has survived, they are completely immune to further exposure. Likewise, characters that make a successful saving throw are immune.

Zombie Pox

The so-called “Zombie Pox” is contracted by dead bodies, whether they are moving around or not. The disease must enter through an opening in the skin, either from an open wound or through the eyes, nose or mouth. Characters are most at risk when fighting with Chaos and Scrap Zombies, and even then only if they are bitten, scratched or if some of the zombie’s blood, bile, or goo enters the body via the wound, eyes, nose or mouth.

For this reason, it is a good idea for anyone engaging zombies to wear protective head coverings/helmet with face mask, and whenever possible, body armor. NEMA troops, clad in full-environmental armor or power armor, have nothing to worry about. It is regular survivors and other operatives who are vulnerable.

Roughly half of the Black Obelisk zombies are carriers of the Zombie Pox. They contract it by having infected parts (either flesh or metal) attached to their bodies. There are no adverse effects to dead creatures from being infected with Zombie Pox, it hurts only the living.

Classification: Class 2 Bacterial Infection.

At Risk: Only humans and very human-like D-Bees.

Duration: Runs its course in 1D6 days. If treated within the first 12 hours of exposure, the symptoms last for only 2D6+6 hours.

Save vs Disease: 14 or better.

Effects: Debilitation. The character suffers from severe headaches, fever, body aches, sleepiness, and nausea. -5 on Perception

rolls, -4 to initiative, reduce attacks per melee and all combat bonuses by half, and -30% to all skills.

Treatment: Zombie Pox can be cured with a moderate amount of antibiotics and rest, or the magic spells Cure Disease and Restoration, as well as Psychic Healing. Once cured, there are no lasting side-effects, though the illness can be contracted repeatedly, as soon as 2D4 days after the last time infected. If treated, the symptoms last for only 2D6+6 hours.

Other Menaces

The dark energies interwoven into the Transmission are perceptible to evil supernatural creatures and those who can read auras, or sense the presence of evil or magic. It appears as a dark and twisting miasma, like a translucent, inky grey cloud that roils and ripples through the air itself, sticking to and staining both the living and the dead. To the undead, however, it is like a signal flare, lighting up the night sky. They are drawn to it as a thing of great interest. Those that are intelligent enough to make distinctions know that it is the energy that creates and maintains their unnatural existence. To see it in a form so concentrated and palpable is very rare and exciting.

Some of the monsters attracted by the dark energy of the Black Obelisk and the Transmission prey upon the undead themselves, but most seek out the living – humans and other sentient beings. None of them are invaders with an agenda to conquer humanity, they just randomly appeared from the Blue Zones and ruins around the Obelisk, via the Rifts, and do what is their nature to do.

Carrion Cleaners

Carrion Cleaners are creatures from the Rifts that have just recently appeared on Earth. They get their name from the fact that they spend all of their time locating the remains of the dead and devouring them. Roughly the size of a medium-dog, Carrion Cleaners may hunt for carrion alone, in pairs and small groups of around a dozen, only they are more cat-like than canine. The Carrion Cleaners are simply animals, possibly attracted by the billions of corpses on Earth. With so many dead from the Great Cataclysm, these creatures are able to gorge themselves on the festering bodies.

With so many millions of dead lying in the streets, the cities are quickly becoming a breeding ground for disease. NEMA has its hands full trying to keep people alive. There is no time and few resources to properly tend to the dead. Disposing of bodies is (for now) not as high a priority as rescuing survivors, securing safe havens, or scavenging for supplies. Carrion Cleaners are helping to take care of the problem by devouring dead bodies in the Chicagoland area and northern Illinois at a steady pace. Much



larger and more voracious than simple rodents and bugs, one Carrion Cleaner is capable of completely consuming a human-sized corpse in one hour, leaving little trace behind. The amount dead flesh and bone one can consume is quiet surprising considering the relatively small size of the animal. However, after it has gorged itself, it doesn't eat again for 4D6+24 hours.

Carrion Cleaners are aggressive, and have it in them to attack and eat zombies! The Carrion Cleaners predatory instincts only seem to come out when dealing with the walking dead. They stalk and attack zombies, incapacitating them and eating them. Carrion Cleaners seem to be the natural enemy of animated dead, and perhaps all undead. They exhibit considerable aggression and hostility toward zombies, and any Carrion Cleaners present attack and feed upon the animated dead whenever they come onto the scene, even if there is an ordinary carcass available to feed upon. They start with zombies that are pinned, trapped or impaired and slow moving, but they also attack zombies in motion. To these beasts, it matters not that their food is road kill or up and walking around. They know that a zombie is nothing but dead flesh, and they want to eat it.

Chaos and Scrap Zombies react to Carrion Cleaners as you might expect, killing them whenever they are able. However, the animals are fast and smart. They may literally nip at the heels and lower legs of zombies, leap up to take a bite and scurry off, or leap onto the zombie's back and hang on while ripping out chunks of dead flesh from, the neck, back and shoulders. Carrion Cleaners that are killed are eaten by others of their kind.

All of this makes Carrion Cleaners one of the few alien creatures human survivors wish there were more of. Though the weird creatures attack and tear apart zombies, there are too few of them, even though there must be a thousand in the area, to make a serious dent in the zombie population walking the streets. They are also simple animal scavengers, easily slain by the monsters, so they are not likely to tip the scales back in the favor of the living any time soon. Still, they are a help and embraced by humans.

Under the current situation with the Zombie Plague, having an animal that consumes bodies before they can be reanimated, and hates zombies, tearing them to pieces and eating them, feels like a small blessing. In fact, NEMA is currently looking into seeing if they can capture and domesticate Carrion Cleaners to use against the zombies and clearing out the dead. NEMA hopes to place the Carrion Cleaners where they can be most useful, and where the city infrastructure has not completely collapsed, allow those places to be habitable for survivors.

Carrion Cleaners resemble a large cat roughly the size of cougar, complete with retractable claws, but with a rat-like tail and a rat-head with a mouth that more resembles a lamprey; its maw filled with teeth for biting and tearing flesh. Their bodies are covered in greyish-white fur, but their six legs are more reptilian or bird like. They run along the ground, but can leap up to 5 feet (1.5 m) high and can scurry along narrow ledges, run along cables and climb trees like a squirrel. Its neck is long and flexible, the mouth

located at the front of its head. If threatened, the creature bites and claws long enough to escape or drive an attacker away.

Carrion Cleaner

Race: Animal Scavenger.

Alignment: Effectively Anarchist or Unprincipled.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+4 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+9, M.A. 1D6+11, P.S. 1D6+11 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+7, P.E. 1D6+12, P.B. 2D6, Spd 2D6+17.

M.D.C.: P.E. attribute number +26 M.D.C.(On S.D.C. worlds, they have 4D6+10 Hit Points, and 2D6 S.D.C., and an A.R. of 10.)

Horror Factor: 9

Size: The size of a cougar or medium dog. The body resembles a feline, but the head does not, and it's rat-like tail is as long as its entire body.

Weight: 45 lbs (20 kg).

Average Life Span: Unknown.

P.P.E.: 4D6+4.

Natural Abilities: Acrobatics at 88% and walk the equivalent of a tightrope, and Climbing at 90%. The small, round eyes of the Carrion Cleaners leave them with poor vision (nearsighted), but they possess an enhanced sense of smell that enables them to track and locate the dead, decaying and rotting meat at 90% proficiency at a range of 5 miles (8 km). By smell, they can not only tell the difference between a living creature and a dead one, but identify specific people and animals by scent, as well as someone who is sick and creatures close to dying. They are not afraid of people and are quite bold, running or fighting only when threatened or attacked first. In fact, Carrion Cleaners can make a pet on par with a cat, except they are rather ugly and, well, eat dead things.

Vulnerabilities: None.

R.C.C. Skills: Not applicable.

Experience: Not applicable.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Damage: A restrained claw strike/warning strike does 2D6 S.D.C. A full strength claw strike does 1D4 M.D. A nipping bite does 1D6 S.D.C., a full strength bite does 1D6+2 M.D. The Carrion Cleaner bites and rips out chunks of (usually dead) flesh and swallows them whole, leaving terrible wounds and ugly scars on living opponents, but does not usually attack humanoids.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative against zombies and all undead, +2 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +7 to save vs poisons and disease, impervious to spoiled, rotting meat and road kill, and +3 save vs Horror Factor.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: None per se, hated by Necromancers.

Allies: None, but seems to like humans and many D-Bees.



Habitat: They can live anywhere where there is plenty of carrion or dead things to eat. They suffer in very dry environments, such as deserts where there are fewer rotting carcasses and don't like extreme heat. They function best in cool to cold climates.

Ghostly Entities

The Transmission and the Black Obelisk are an attractant for ghosts and wandering Entities. Although Entities are somewhat common in Chaos Earth, they are far more common in the area under the effect of the Transmission. Ghosts and Entities also tend to be more aggressive and hostile in this area. Attempts to contact or converse with these beings are met with a higher level of anger and hostility than usual.

Any of the Entities described in **Rifts®: Dark Conversions** and **Rifts® World Book 29: Madhaven** can be found all over Chaos Earth. *Haunting Entities* are by far the most common, followed by *Poltergeists*, *Tectonic Entities* and *Conglomerate Entities*. There is a particularly large and dreadful Conglomerate Entity that haunts the ruins surrounding The Black Obelisk. Did it come from the same dimensional tear that the Black Obelisk emerged from, or is it the spiritual remains of the people of Madison, wailing and screaming in an orgy of suffering?

Meat Puppet Ghost

A minor sub-species of Tectonic Entity that builds a body out of dismembered body parts and pieces from corpses. With all the destruction and zombies, there are plenty of body parts for this Entity to use. The parts are strung together via ectoplasm, don't actually look connected by skin, and movement is managed via Telekinesis. This makes the "meat puppet" move in a floppy, jerky fashion, bobbing and swaying even when standing still, and very much resembles a puppet on a string. Right down to its feet sometimes not touching the ground.

Meat Puppet Ghosts imitate humans and like to follow them or hop out and scare them. When they attack, the animated corpse only inflicts 1D6+1 S.D.C./Hit Point damage with its punches and kicks, but the Entity can also push and punch with Telekinesis. This makes them a threat mainly to survivors, but they can also startle armor-clad soldiers and cause a commotion that incites gunfire and shouting, causes a scare or attracts monsters. Zombies do not attack Meat Puppet Ghosts, because they can sense they are not alive.

Nobody knows why the Meat Puppet Ghost does what it does. The best guess is that like Haunting Entities, it picks up on the psychic imprints of the dead and past lives, and imitates them and the living people currently around them.

Destroy its puppet corpse body, and the Entity fires back with 1D4 Telekinesis Punches or Pushes before leaving in a huff to make a new body.

Meat Puppet Ghost

Race: Entity. An invisible, intangible energy being that feeds on fear.

Alignment: Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+4, M.E. 1D6, M.A. 1D6, Spd 1D6+4 by floating around or walking, puppet style in physical form. All other attributes are not applicable.

M.D.C. of the Entity: 2D4x10 points. (On S.D.C. worlds, the Meat Puppet Ghost has 2D4x10 Hit Points.)

The corpse body has 6D6+6 S.D.C.; M.D.C. only if the body parts are from a Mega-Damage being.

Horror Factor: The Entity itself has a Horror Factor of 15 when it appears screaming and charging.

Size: To those who can see the invisible, the Meat Puppet Ghost's natural appearance is a faint golden sphere the size of a grapefruit, floating in the air.

The physical body it makes from severed limbs and other pieces from corpses can range from 4-8 feet (1.2 to 2.4 m).

Weight: None.

Average Life Span: Unknown, presumed immortal.

P.P.E.: 5D6+30

Natural Abilities: Natural state of this Entity is one of invisibility and intangibility. Does not eat, sleep, or breathe, and is impervious to physical attacks and the physical aspects of magical and psionic powers. Impervious to Horror Factor, Mind Control, and Illusions. Nightvision 2,000 feet (610 m), and can see the invisible. Recovers lost M.D.C. points at a rate of 2D6 M.D. per hour. They don't communicate with people and it is unknown if they communicate with other Entities.

Vulnerabilities:

1. **Spell Magic:** Control/Enslave Entity, Banishment, Constrain Being, Commune With Spirits, Summon and Control Entity, Exorcism, and protection circles, spells, or magic items that hold Entities at bay.

2. **Psionics:** Exorcism, Psi-Sword and energy attacks.

R.C.C. Skills: Prowl 45%.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D4

Attacks per Melee: Three physical or psionic.

Damage: 1D6+1 S.D.C. from physical attacks or from a melee weapon. Doesn't know how to load or use a gun.

Bonuses of the Ghost: +3 on initiative, +1 strike and dodge, +1 save vs magic, +1 to save vs psionics and impervious to Horror Factor, mind control and possession.

Magic: None.

Psionics: 1D6x10+40 I.S.P. Counts as a Major Psychic. Empathy (4), Levitation (varies), Telekinesis (varies), Telekinetic Punch (6), Telekinetic Push(4).



Enemies: Unknown. Targets humanoids and other sentient beings.

Allies: None, though sometimes they are found in the service of powerful demons, Shifters, and Necromancers.

Habitat: Can be found potentially anywhere. On Chaos Earth, they are found in places where a great many people have died or where there is a lot of fear. On Rifts Earth, they are extremely uncommon and most likely to be encountered in Madhaven or Mexico.

Screaming Puppet Ghost

Fear is a natural, unconscious reaction to a perceived danger. It is an emotional response that prepares the person or animal for fight or flight. It allows one to focus on the thing causing the fear with sharpened awareness and heightened senses. Unfortunately, fear can quickly overwhelm someone under its influence. It can cloud judgment and kill the ability to act with reason (i.e. attack without reason or run in abject panic). Those who are completely enveloped by fear are not likely to have the good sense to deal with their terror with intelligence and forethought.

In game terms, fear is represented by a monster's Horror Factor. Someone who fails a save against Horror Factor is momentarily stunned by fear, awe, or shock. This gives the monster a brief advantage over its victim frozen with fear, as he is unable to defend himself as his mind contemplates the threat. This brief moment may be all the creature needs to capture, harm, or kill the helpless victim.

The Entity known as the **Screaming Puppet Ghost** takes full advantage of the nature of fear and the effects of Horror Factor in living beings. It understands quite well the things that cause humans and other humanoids terror, and uses that knowledge to create environments that provoke fear and terrify its victims to the point of madness. This is done first, by making a terrifying appearance using magic to transform the environment to make it seem all the more ominous and threatening. Then, it suddenly appears as a frightful apparition screaming like a banshee. The result is everyone within a 30 foot (9.1 m) radius that sees its horrible visage and hears its scream must roll to save vs Horror Factor. A 15 or higher is needed to save. Those who fail to save suffer the usual effects of Horror Factor, but are also susceptible to being possessed by the Screaming Puppet Ghost! Thankfully, it can only possess one individual. It does so by rocketing toward that person (since he is frozen with fear, a dodge is not possible), and seems to explode upon impact and is gone. Only the Entity is not gone at all, it is inside its victim. (**Note:** When it causes the scare, the target for possession does not get to save vs possession. However, if the scare was caused by something else, the targeted person gets to attempt to save vs possession and gets a +2 bonus to save against the Entity.)

Unlike other possessing Entities it does not control its victim completely, rather it manipulates him with terror. The Screaming

Puppet Ghost feeds on the emotion of fear, which, for it, is like a powerful narcotic that makes it feel wonderful, even as its victim is tortured and traumatized. This is done by the Screaming Puppet Ghost's ability to psionically and magically increase the "fear factor" by several times. That shadowy basement or spooky graveyard is three times more spookier to the poor soul possessed by the Screaming Puppet Ghost. An ordinary Chaos or Soldier Boy zombie might as well be a Walking Nightmare; a Walking Nightmare, the Grim Reaper personified, and so on. Through illusion and Empathic Transmission, the possessed victim sees everything in a hyper-state of being. Heights seem three times taller, monsters and enemies three times larger and uglier. Sounds, especially creepy and unintelligible sounds ("What's that?! Did you hear that? There something out there!"), are amplified several fold, shadows move and flicker, faces of even friends and allies are distorted or superimposed with a skull or demonic visage. Everything seems twisted and dangerous. Think nightmarish acid trip.

On top of everything else, the victim is likely to wonder what's happening to him. Has he been drugged? Is he going crazy? Is the world changing around him? And because the Screaming Puppet Ghost is malevolent, it gives him moments of peace. Suddenly everything is okay. The distortions and amplified sensations are gone. He can catch his breath and chalk it up to a panic attack or hallucination. Everything is okay. That return to the normal may last minutes or hours, but when the cruel Entity wants more soothing terror to feed upon, or the situation is perfect for amplifying the horror or causing trouble or death for mortals, it turns the fear back on and levels it up. An individual on edge is prone to make mistakes or shoot first or shoot wild. Fear could make the possessed person do things (or not do things) that could hurt his teammates or himself, such as running away in terror and perhaps leaving a door or gate unlocked, or a job unfinished, abandon his post, hide when others need him, lie to cover up his fear, or do something bad or wrong, or gives in to madness.

Victim Penalties: While possessed, the victim of a Screaming Puppet Ghost is -6 to save vs Horror Factor, -6 to save vs magic and psionic attacks directed at him by the Entity itself (this does not include save vs possession), -3 to save vs illusions and fear based magic or psionics from others, suffers from restlessness, has trouble sleeping because he is haunted by nightmares, and as a result of lack of sleep and being constantly on edge, is -20% on skill performance (-40% when wracked with fear), -2 on Perception Rolls and initiative, and -1 to strike and disarm, but +1 to parry and dodge.

Chance to save vs possession: Every 24 hours, but only when in a safe, calm environment, the victim can roll to save vs possession. A successful save pushes the Entity out and it flies away to find a new plaything. Needs a 15 or better to save. A failed roll means being possessed and frightened for an additional 24 hours. If possessed for more than seven days, the victim develops a phobia toward Ghosts/Entities. If possessed for more than 21 days,



roll for a random insanity. Use the table in the Rifts® RPG or any available Palladium Random Insanity Table.

Note: Screaming Puppet Ghosts would fit very well into a Rifts game taking place in Madhaven, China, Mexico, or other places where terrifying supernatural creatures abound. It is also possible that these entities have been on Earth for thousands of years, fueling stories of pain and horror throughout the ages. In this respect, they can make dramatic foes for a game of Beyond the Supernatural or Dead Reign.

Screaming Puppet Ghost

Race: Entity. An invisible, intangible energy being that feeds on fear.

Alignment: Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+4 (but crafty and clever), M.E. 2D6, M.A. 1D6+17, Spd 1D6 by floating around. All other attributes are not applicable.

M.D.C.: 2D4x10 points. (On S.D.C. worlds, the Screaming Puppet Ghost has 2D4x10 Hit Points.)

Horror Factor: The Entity itself has a Horror Factor of 15 when it appears screaming and charging.

Size: To those who can see the invisible, the Screaming Puppet Ghost's natural appearance is a dull, gray mist drifting up to five feet (1.5 m) above the ground. The fog measures 5 feet (1.5 m) in diameter. Its natural state of being is an invisible mist.

When it appears as a Screaming Puppet Ghost, it usually take a monstrous form of the being(s) it is trying to scare and possess, only horribly disfigured, with a melting face, weird eyes, claws, fangs and monstrous features.

Weight: None.

Average Life Span: Unknown, presumed immortal.

P.P.E.: 6D6+20

Natural Abilities: Natural state of this Entity is one of invisibility and intangibility. Does not need to eat, sleep, or breathe, impervious to the physical aspects of magical and psionic powers. Impervious to Horror Factor, Mind Control, and Illusions. Nightvision 2,000 feet (610 m), and can see the invisible. Recovers lost M.D.C. points at a rate of 2D6 M.D. per hour. They communicate via Telepathy and Empathy. The Entity possesses living humanoids to afflict them with fear and create ensuing chaos and turmoil for all around them. The Screaming Puppet Ghost can only attempt to possess someone who has failed a Horror Factor roll. If the Ghost is creating the scare, the Horror Factor is 15. If the failed Horror Factor roll was caused by something *other than the Ghost*, the potential victim is +2 to save vs possession by the Entity.

Vulnerabilities:

1. **Spell Magic:** Control/Enslave Entity, Banishment, Constrain Being, Commune With Spirits, Summon and Control Entity, Exorcism, and protection circles, spells, or magic items that hold Entities at bay.

2. **Psionics:** Exorcism, Psi-Sword and energy attacks.

3. **The Light of Day:** Sunlight is painful and frightening to these Entities. They flee from the morning rays and hide in dark places, only to emerge after the sun goes down; except with the equivalent of nuclear winter taking place on Chaos Earth, the sun hasn't been seen in months. Still, they tend to come out when it is really dark, not the twilight of a daytime period. The Globe of Daylight spell is very effective against Screaming Puppet Ghosts, scaring them off until the spell's duration ends.

R.C.C. Skills: Natural Prowl skill of 80%, Basic Mechanics 40%, Basic Electronics 40%, Psychology 75% (but only as it relates to emotions such as fear and sorrow; nothing deeper).

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D4+1

Attacks per Melee: Four via magic or psionics, but only fights when it (not its possessed victim) is under attack.

Damage: Only via possession, psionics or magic, but does not attack others except when defending itself. It typically uses its magic and psionics to magnify the fear in the victim it has possessed, and lets his terror create havoc for others.

Bonuses of the Ghost: +2 on initiative, +1 strike and dodge, +1 save vs magic, +2 save vs psionics and impervious to Horror Factor, mind control and possession.

Magic: Apparition (20), Befuddle (6), Calling (8), Climb (3), Distant Voice (10), Fear (5), Fingers of the Wind (5), Fool's Gold (10), Hallucination (30), Heavy Breathing (5), Horrific Illusion (10), Horror (10), Seal (7), and Shadow Meld (10)

Psionics: 6D6+32 I.S.P. Counts as a Major Psychic. Empathic Transmission (6), Empathy (4), Levitation (varies), Psychic Omni-Sight (15), Psychosomatic Disease (30), Radiate Horror Factor (8), Sense Time (2), Telekinesis (varies), Telekinetic Push (4), and Telepathy (4).

Enemies: All living, mortal life forms. Targets humanoids and other sentient beings.

Allies: None, though sometimes they are found in the service of powerful demons, Shifters, and Necromancers.

Habitat: Can be found potentially anywhere. On Chaos Earth, they are found in places where a great many people have died or where there is a lot of fear. On Rifts Earth, they are scattered all over, but are most common in Mexico, China and the haunted ruins of Dallas, Detroit, Windsor and Madhaven (New York City).

Gargoyles & Demons

A host of supernatural beings, demons and monsters have found their way to Chaos Earth from other dimensions via the Rifts. Some arrive in great numbers, others as lone individuals, pairs and small groups. Gargoyles have arrived in the Chicago area in small flocks. With NEMA and militia patrols constantly monitoring the Blue Zones that crisscross the ruins of this once impressive Midwest city, Gargoyles and other creatures that arrive, quickly fall under attack and must go back into the Rift and



the world from which they came, or flee into our world. Gargoyles generally take wing and fly away. Massive creatures (10-20 feet/3 to 6.1 m), they have taken to roosting among the ruins of skyscrapers.

Intelligent, they have come to recognize NEMA as an enemy that immediately attacks them on sight. As a result, Gargoyles take the offensive and enjoy picking off NEMA flying power armor and aircraft. For reasons unknown even to them, the Gargoyles are attracted to the Black Obelisk and when human aircraft and flyers arrive on scene, they engage them. They do so out of their hatred of NEMA specifically and disdain for humanity in general. They don't realize they are protecting and helping the wicked mastermind inside the Black Obelisk, and don't care. Nor do they care about the Zombie Plague or the fate of humanity. Gargoyles are not attacked by the zombies, so they are not their enemy. Besides, any enemy of humans is a friend of their's. Some Gargoyles actually roost on top of the Black Obelisk. The megalithic structure has no windows or openings at the higher elevations, so there are no Gargoyles in the Obelisk.

Gargoyles and **Chaos Demons** are taking advantage of the situation, attacking humans simply to thwart their efforts against the zombies and to cause more panic and suffering. Other Gargoyles, monsters and predators are taking advantage of the fact that zombies are flushing humans out into the open, making them easy prey, whether it is swooping in to attack mortals after a battle when they are tired and low on ammunition, or picking them off in small groups as they patrol the ruins. Similarly, you see other demons and monsters seizing opportunities from the growing conflict between zombies and mortals. **Grave Ghouls** and other carrion eaters are appearing in the aftermath of battles and disasters to feed upon the corpses of the dead. With so much death and destruction that the Banshees' wailing has become a common occurrence.

All **Chaos Demons** are, as is their nature, reveling in the turmoil, fear and panic of humans, and happy to interfere to cause more chaos, confusion and death. It's what they thrive on. Right now, Chaos Earth is a playground for them. The demons are tickled to be able to subvert the plans and defenses of mortals (humans and D-Bees). They think it is delightful to cause pain and suffering by undermining human defenses, or wrecking a carefully laid plan or stealing the triumph of a hard-fought battle. These cruel and wicked fiends not only attack mortals outright, but engage in all kinds of mischief and actions that adds to the chaos and death toll. Even small acts of sabotage may be the act of a demon — destroying the engine of a getaway vehicle, slash tires, destroy a generator or sensor array, steal food or ammunition, unlock a door, tear a hole into fortifications, alert zombies to the presence of people and so on. Demons may also use valuable supplies and innocent people as bait for a trap, or to lure humans into danger.

Sub-Demons, like Gargoyles, and Lesser Demons are more likely to engage in straightforward attacks, pranks and actions to

foil and hurt humans. Predatory demons and monsters stalk and kill humans and D-Bees for food or the pleasure of killing. Malignant and vengeful ones hurt mortals to deliberately cause fear and suffering, or simply because humans are regarded as their playthings. Tempters on the other hand, take pleasure in manipulating and tricking mortals into doing things that hurt other mortals. They lie and deceive to encourage all sorts of cruelty and trouble, including encouraging dissension, selfishness, rivalry, jealousy, revenge, pettiness, theft, murder and all manner of vile acts.

Conglomerate Entity

Reprinted from **Rifts® World Book 29: Madhaven**.

The Conglomerate Entity is considered by many scholars to be the most powerful and dangerous of all Entities. It takes its name from the fact that it is not one solitary being, but in fact an amalgamation of many different souls. What is even stranger is that the Conglomerate Entity is something of an accident of nature. It somehow comes into being when many people die violent or horrible deaths at the same place or time as each other. Such locations hold the psychic imprints of numerous people and this Entity absorbs the many bits and pieces to become a being with multiple memories, personalities and conflicting agendas. It is, in effect, a mass of tortured souls bound together by their despair, hate and suffering. This manifests itself as a ghostly horror that spreads death and torment as it adds the tortured essence of those it slays into its evergrowing and evolving body. This makes the Conglomerate, or "Soul Collector Ghost" as it is sometimes called, a physical manifestation of human emotions with a focus on misery and despair. As it draws more souls into its twisted mass, it becomes ever more powerful, but also more erratic and uncontrollable.

With so many personalities and memories trapped within its mass, constantly reaching out in every direction for release, the actions of the Conglomerate Entity are chaotic, spur of the moment and often without apparent logic or reason. Thus, this Entity may attack with little or no provocation, or it may choose to help or guide an adventurer, or kidnap someone out of possessive love, or desire an object (worthless trinket or valuable relic or magic item) and perform other obsessive acts. Basically, the Conglomerate Entity is constantly at war with its many selves. There is no one dominating mind or essence, each is equal and each takes turns seizing control depending on the situation. That means the frightened child, when threatened, may be instantly replaced by the bully or the warrior or the homicidal maniac to protect it or face the new challenge. The fighting spirit may be replaced by the vengeful or sadistic personality to punish or torture mortals it has vanquished in combat. When there's an item it/they desire, the thief or seductress personality may surface. Get the picture? And whichever is in control at that time – good,



selfish or evil – it dictates what the monster will do next. Thus, dealing with a Conglomerate Entity is pure chaos and madness. Communication is disjointed at best as each of the dozens of trapped personalities locked within the Entity have different views, desires and opinions. As a result, the Conglomerate Entity is constantly in anguish, confused and angry. An anger that manifests as homicidal rage. Ask it a question, confuse it, frustrate it, anger it, and the Entity’s knee-jerk response is to make the person responsible for its current rage pay for it by attacking or killing him.

Evil Shifters, Necromancers, and powerful Demon Lords sometimes summon these ghosts to use as guards in their sanctums, berserkers in battle, or insane guardsmen who will attack and crush all they encounter.

Only when the Entity is completely destroyed (no easy feat) will the life fragments and personalities spill out and fade away.

The Conglomerate Entity Stats – A Greater Entity

Also known as the Soul Collector Ghost.

Alignment: A seething pool of every alignment and 2D6+12 personalities, the overriding alignment is Diabolic, driven by pain and rage that makes the Entity want to hurt and kill every intelligent being it encounters. These Entities are evil and insane.

Attributes: P.S. 2D6+16 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+16, Spd 1D6+16 by floating/flying. All others are inapplicable.

M.D.C.: The average Conglomerate Entity will have 4D6x10+20 M.D.C.; the largest and most powerful have an additional 2D6+12 personalities and an additional 2D6x10+66 M.D.C.

Horror Factor: 17

P.P.E.: 5D6

Ghostly Appearance: A solid, floating mass of 1-5 dozen people, their angry, confused or sad faces constantly appearing and disappearing as they melt into each other and reform. 1D6+6 arms and hands are also scattered across the body, but there are only six at any give time that are available for attack. The body is molded out of ectoplasm and given power by the burning rage locked within.

Natural Abilities: Like all Entities, the Conglomerate started out as an individual sphere of living energy. In that state of being it is invisible and intangible, does not need to eat, sleep, or breathe, and is impervious to physical attacks and most magic and psionics. Like a Haunting Entity or Beautiful Ghost, it is attracted to powerful emotions imprinted on the land and goes to absorb and emulate one. Then something goes wrong and the Entity absorbs 2D6+12 different imprints, becoming them all in an emotional jumble that makes it insane.

The Conglomerate Entity is driven by pain, rage and confusion to lash out at the living. Thus, it desires and creates a physical body made out of ectoplasm as its vessel and goes in search of victims to kill. It never turns invisible, never hides its true nature and will fight until it is down to its last 25

M.D.C. before one of the cowardly personalities seizes control and makes it flee. As ectoplasm, the Entity can make its body squeeze through a crack or opening the size of a keyhole. However, if lost in a berserker rage controlled by a warrior or lunatic, the Conglomerate may fight to the death.

Nightvision 4,000 feet (1,219 m), see the invisible, physical attacks do half damage, and energy attacks, fire, heat and cold do half damage to the Conglomerate even if magical in nature. *See Vulnerabilities* for its weaknesses and how to kill it. Recovers lost M.D.C. at rate of 2D6 per melee round, and instantly gets 1D6x10+10 when it kills a human, D-Bee or mutant, 3D6x10+30 when it slays a supernatural or magical being! It gets that restorative boost by absorbing part of its life essence as well as doubled P.P.E. at the moment of death. But it does not capture the victim’s personality unless killed by Life Drain, below.

1. Deadly Ectoplasm (Special): The Conglomerate can create Ectoplasm from itself to use as a weapon. They appear as tendrils that resemble an umbilical cord or gnarled tentacle and lash out to strike whomever has earned the monster’s wrath.

In combat, the ectoplasmic tendrils can cause different effects on a target, but only one effect can be used at a time.

Agony (as per the spell) to anyone it touches. Duration is equal to fifth level potency. Cost to the Entity: 10 P.P.E.

Burning Touch inflicting 3D6 M.D. per touch. Range: Touch. Cost to Entity: 5 P.P.E.

Electric Shock inflicting 4D6 M.D. per touch. Range: Touch. Cost to Entity: 7 P.P.E.

Life Drain by entangling its victim and inflicting 1D6x10 M.D./Hit Points (as the case may be) per melee round. If the person dies from this damage, they crumble to dust and become one of the personalities/life essences trapped inside the Entity.

2. Collect Souls: Anyone who dies while in the area of influence (100 feet/30.5 m) of a Conglomerate Entity faces the very real threat of having their soul “collected” and added to the ghost’s power! This includes not only being killed by the Entity, but even being killed by someone else or by natural causes. It takes one action of concentration for the Entity to draw the soul into its collective. During this time, the target soul must make a save versus magic, with full bonuses; an 18 saves. If it succeeds, the soul is free to travel on to the afterlife. If the save fails, it is pulled into the entity and absorbed. A soul that is absorbed cannot be recovered except by destroying the Entity. Reducing the M.D.C. of the Entity to zero will disincorporate the souls and send them off into the afterlife, free of their torment. For every soul collected, the Entity grows stronger, but less stable. The larger ones are like enormous storm clouds that ravage miles of land and kill hundreds. Completely unable to control itself, the Entity rages on and on, growing steadily more and more powerful.

Attacks per Melee: Nine!



Damage: Punch as per Supernatural P.S., bite does 2D4 M.D., or by psionic attack, or Deadly Ectoplasm (above). Seldom uses a handheld weapon unless it is a readily available melee weapon, thrown rock, and similar.

Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): +2 to strike, +6 to parry, +6 to disarm, +2 to save versus magic and psionics, +6 to save vs Horror Factor, +10 to save versus mind control, and impervious to possession.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Bio-Manipulation (10), Electro-Kinesis (varies), Pyrokinesis (varies), Telekinesis (varies), Telekinetic Lift (6), Telekinetic Punch (6), and Telekinetic Push (4), all at the equivalent power level of a 6th level psychic.

I.S.P.: 3D4x10+30! Too savage and confused to draw I.S.P. from others.

P.P.E. Vampire: The Conglomerate is a P.P.E. Vampire who steals one P.P.E. point from each opponent it battles and from the doubled P.P.E. at the moment of death from those it kills. When humanoids aren't around to kill, it will attack animals, livestock and monsters. This Entity needs 30 P.P.E. a day to feel nourished.

Vulnerabilities:

1. Weapons made of silver do their normal damage as Mega-Damage to these ghosts.

Rune weapons and other magic weapons do half damage, but a Soul-Drinking Rune Weapon can remove one of the many personalities inside whenever the soul drinking power is used. Use the standard rules for soul-drinking. When a personality is removed, it also inflicts 1D4x10 M.D. that cannot be recovered for 48 hours.

Psi-Sword inflicts full damage.

Holy Weapons do double normal damage.

2. Spell Magic: Vulnerable to most forms of magic, although physical attacks, lightning/electricity, fire and cold do half damage. Note that these Greater Entities cannot be controlled via Charm, Compulsion, Domination, or mind control, nor by the Control/Enslave Entity spell.

3. Psionics: Those who can Astral Project can attempt to attack the Entity on the Astral Plane with fists, where such attacks do normal damage as Mega-Damage, and by psionics and magic, but it can also strike back with its ectoplasm fists, tentacles and psionics. Most psionic attacks do full damage.

4. Trickery: A creature of fury and destruction, the Conglomerate may ignore (01-60% chance) anybody who turns away and does not look it in the face, and does not say a word or move a muscle even if the horror screams at him, issues a challenge or pushes him around! Likewise, if anyone it attacks feigns unconsciousness (doesn't move even if pushed, struck, picked up and thrown or dropped; the Entity will only do this once), it will leave him where he lay and move on. The Conglomerate seeks conflict to vent its rage; deny it that and it moves on to find someone or something willing to do

battle. **Note:** This ploy will work with one or two individuals, not an entire group of people. Those who run will be chased. Those who hide will be sought out, though not necessarily found.

Habitat: Anywhere there are deep psychic scars from tragedy, death and mass extinction. This includes the ruins of Madison and the growing range for the Zombie Plague, Windsor, Detroit, New York City, Mexico City and many other places. However, they may be found anywhere on Chaos Earth and across the Megaverse.

The Harmful Ghost

Reprinted from *Rifts® World Book 29: Madhaven*.

Some say, when a person dies in a state of extreme emotional pain, a part of that person stays behind in the world of the living. This is especially true of people who are betrayed just prior to their death or murdered by a trusted friend or loved one. It may also apply to those who die violently and unexpectedly, like those who perished in the Great Cataclysm. Ultimately, it depends on the victim's state of mind and whether he or she was at peace or in torment at the time. The Entity who absorbs such an imprint of rage becomes a bitter, resentful, angry and murderous Entity unable to get over its sudden and unexpected demise. The thing feels so cheated and overwhelmed by anger that it is bent on spreading its pain and misery to others.

Harmful Ghosts prey on the living, because the only solace they can find is in destroying the lives of all they meet. Harmful Ghosts are evil in the extreme and it is very difficult to encounter one and escape without becoming their next victim.

Harmful Ghosts are drawn and linked to the place where the person whose psychic imprint they have captured died or was betrayed, worked or lived. The ghost has very few memories left and tries desperately to hold onto anything that reminds it of its past. This means the ghost also becomes attached to objects that remind it of when it was alive or seeks to reclaim that which was taken from it (money, secrets, wife, etc.) just before it was killed. The objects they desire are rarely anything of great value, but are trinkets, photos and keepsakes that hold special meaning to the ghost as a memory of its past life. This is the creature's "Haunted Focus." A Harmful Ghost may choose just about anything as its Haunted Focus, whether it be a house, a doll, a hand mirror, a wallet, a piece of jewelry, a photograph, a book, a statue, a videotape, a computer, etc. Whatever it is, and whether it still works, is broken or in pieces, the item has great significance and/or sentimental value to the ghost. Anyone who disturbs the item, either by desecrating it, taking it, damaging it, or losing it becomes the target of the ghost's terrible wrath. In fact, sometimes just walking through what was once the ghost's home, workplace, favorite get away, or place of death can have the same effect as desecrating an object and invokes the spirit's wrath. The Harmful Ghost



may also attack someone who reminds it of someone it hates or was responsible for its death.

Before the Harmful Ghost launches its attack, the creature will usually voice its rage and make accusations. “You’re just like them. You don’t care who you hurt. You take what you want and do as you please. Well, your day of retribution has arrived.”

Harmful Ghost Stats – A Greater Entity

Alignment: Diabolic or Miscreant.

Attributes: Average I.Q., M.A. 1D4, M.E. 1D4, P.S. 1D6+10, P.P. 1D6+4, P.E. not applicable, P.B. 1D4, Spd Hover up to 4 feet (1.2 m) above the ground and float silently at a Spd of 1D6+10; can walk or crawl at a Spd of 1D6+1.

M.D.C.: 6D6+30

Horror Factor: 15

P.P.E.: 1D6x10

Ghostly Appearance: A pale human who looks like a walking corpse. The face always has an angry expression and the body usually shows how it was killed (hung, dripping with water because it was bound and thrown into the river, riddled with bullet holes or knife wounds, a piece of its skull missing from a gunshot to the head, marks around the neck from strangulation, burnt and charred from fire, and so on).

Natural Abilities: Like all Entities, the Harmful Ghost’s natural state is intangible and invisible (can only use psionics, and at half power, to attack when in this form). However, this angry creature of retribution wants people to see its horrible visage and can assume its ghostly appearance at will and maintains it for as long as it desires, provided there is at least one living humanoid in its presence (within 100 feet/30.5 m) to terrify. The ghost may look semi-transparent or appear solid and real by making a physical body out of ectoplasm. Does not need to eat, sleep, or breathe. Impervious to Horror Factor, mind control, and illusions. Nightvision 2000 feet (610 m), can see the invisible, and is impervious to physical and energy attacks. Recovers lost M.D.C. at a rate of 3D6 points every hour.

Electromagnetic Disturbance (Special): The very presence of a Harmful Ghost gives off an aura that screws with electronic devices. Electronic compasses read all over the place, clocks give odd times (such as 94 o’clock), televisions, computer monitors, and videotapes show static broken by seemingly random “ghost images” that reflect the Entity’s death or evil intentions. Radios and audio equipment pick up menacing whispers, laughter, or screaming. Cybernetic hearing devices and headjacks pick up similar static and sounds, and sensory devices function with a -20% penalty. Furthermore, the cyber-enhanced individual can’t shake the feeling they are being followed and watched (senses the ghost’s presence). Affects all electronics and cybernetics within 100 feet (30.5 m) of the ghost. **Note:** This phenomenon is outside the ghost’s range of control and happens whether it wants it to or not. Those famil-

iar with the ghost will therefore know that a Harmful Ghost is stalking them.

Aura of Fear (Special): The Harmful Ghost constantly radiates negative energy that humans and other living creatures pick up on. They simply “know” that something around them is “wrong” or “evil.” Because of this, humans are on edge all the time. This makes them -5 to save vs any Horror Factor rolls while the Harmful Ghost is within 100 feet (30.5 m) of them, and Dog Boys, Psi-Stalkers and others sensitive to the supernatural will be unable to sleep or relax while they feel the presence (-20% on skill performance). **Note:** The Aura of Fear vanishes during the daytime in the outdoors, but will be felt in dark subterranean environments like tunnels and caves.

Skills of Note: Prowl 80%, speaks and is literate in all the languages the person had in life, but only at 30%.

Attacks per Melee: Three via magic or psionics.

Bonuses: +6 to save versus spell magic, +3 to save versus psionics (the few that affect them), and +3 to save versus mind control.

Magic: Harmful Ghosts can cast the following spells, provided they have sufficient P.P.E.; spells are at 5th level potency: Horror (10), Fear (5), Shadow Meld (10), Heavy Breathing (5), Fingers of the Wind (5), Seal (7), Horrific Illusion (10), Hallucination (30), Shatter (5), Wither Plants (10; an Elemental spell) and Spoil: Water & Food (30). Remember, the Entity may draw P.P.E. from its victims and other living beings to acquire the P.P.E. necessary to cast its spells.

Psionics: Telepathy (4), Empathy (4), Ectoplasm (6-12), Telekinesis (varies), Telekinetic Punch (6), Telekinetic Push (4) and Bio-Manipulation (10).

I.S.P.: 36, however the ghost prefers to steal I.S.P. from others nearby, including the very person it may be attacking, using their I.S.P. to fuel its psionic attacks rather than its own.

Special: Stealing Psychic Energy: Each attempt to draw on another person’s I.S.P. or P.P.E. is considered a psionic attack and the intended victim must roll to save vs psionic attack. A successful roll to save means the Entity did not get the energy it needed and must use its own energy reserve or skip a psionic attack. If the character fails to save, the Entity can steal up to 12 I.S.P. or 4 P.P.E. from that specific person. That individual temporarily loses the energy points as if he had used psionic powers or cast a magic spell himself. A person who willingly offers his or her I.S.P. or P.P.E. does not roll a save vs psionic attack, the energy is automatically taken. This may be the case with terrified people who offer the murderous Entity their energy in the hope that it will spare them further torment or death. Cannot draw energy from ley lines.

P.P.E. Vampire: Like all Entities, the Harmful Ghost is a P.P.E. Vampire who extorts and steals P.P.E. (as noted above) from the living. This Entity will not hesitate to kill, and drink in the doubled P.P.E. that comes at the moment of death. The Harmful Ghost needs 24 P.P.E. a day to be nourished, but its



lust for retribution makes it seek double that amount though no amount ever seems to satisfy or cool its rage. All Harmful Ghosts enjoy intimidating, terrifying and killing the living.

Vulnerabilities:

1. Sunlight weakens the Harmful Ghost. The Entity cannot stand the light of day and remains hidden in a dark place during daylight hours. Sunlight prevents the creature from using its magic and causes the ghost to suffer one point of M.D. every melee round. A Globe of Daylight will scare them away and inflict the same damage. Strikes from a magical Lightblade do full damage and may chase the thing away.

2. Spell Magic: Control/Enslave Entity affects them, though they get a +4 to save versus all spell magic and an additional +3 vs any form of mind control. Other spells that affect the Harmful Ghost: Banishment, Expel Demons, Constrain Being, Commune with Spirits, Exorcism, protection circles and any spells that normally affect Entities. Summon and Control Entity and Summon Lesser Being only work on these ghosts if used in a place like Madison where the creature is anchored to our realm of existence.

3. The Haunted Focus: All Harmful Ghosts have 1D4 objects of “focus.” Possessions that remind them of and link them to the past. This focus object is often (01-60%) a small item such as a mirror, ring, toy, photo, the weapon used to kill him, and similar, or it may be large (61-80%) such as a car, bed, or house (even if it only exists in ruin). The Haunted Focus may also be the *place* (81-00%) where the actual person last lived, died, grew up, or loved (Grandma’s house, a favorite playground, park, church, etc.) even though that place may be in ruin, buried in rubble or look completely different.

The Haunted Focus object is always hidden and kept in a safe place, never carried with the Entity. The Harmful Ghost *never* travels more than 30 miles (48 km) from its Haunted Focus, and most prefer to stay close by (within 500 feet/152 m) and look at and fondle it often. This limits the cruel spirit’s area of operation, but also presents a way to destroy it. If a mortal gets his hands on the focus object and threatens to destroy it, the Harmful Ghost will do anything to get it back. If killing the person outright is not an option (the Harmful Ghost will hate the character for finding and threatening its Haunted Focus), the ghost will submit to that person’s mandates. Thus, the ghost can be blackmailed into releasing any prisoners/captives it may have, revealing where it has hidden something (or someone) vital, the location of the body(s) of those it has killed, or even agree to go away and leave them alone for X number of days (never more than one month, though it may promise longer).

Destroying the Haunted Focus breaks the Entity’s link to our world and causes the Harmful Ghost to vanish as if it never existed. However, that only works if the character has ALL of the objects that are part of the Haunted Focus (e.g. three pieces of jewelry). Destroying just one out of two or more is a

shock and will *seem* to destroy the Entity, causing it to shriek and vanish. However, the fiend returns after 4D6 days angrier than ever.

Habitat: Anywhere there are deep psychic scars from tragedy, death and mass extinction. This includes the ruins of Madison and the growing range for the Zombie Plague, Windsor, Detroit, New York City, Mexico City and other places. However, they may be found anywhere on Chaos Earth and across the Megaverse.



Gargoyles

Excerpted from **Rifts® Dimension Book 10: Hades**, part of the **Minion War Crossover series**.

Gargoyles are huge, muscular humanoids who tower 10-20 feet (3-6.1 m) tall. They have a somewhat reptilian appearance with a long, snaking tail, dark green or grey-green skin and blazing yellow eyes. Their large maws are filled with sharp teeth and fangs, they have long, pointed ears, and a pair of devil-like, curved horns. Of course, their most striking features are their massive, bat wings. When crouched on all fours, they look very much like something you might expect to see leering down from the spires of a gothic cathedral.

Gargoyles and their kin are archaic demons who predate the demons of Hades. This means they tend to act on instinct and emotion and are less powerful than the true demons that would later come to dominate the supernatural world. This relegates them to the category of “Sub-Demons” – minor supernatural beings less powerful than Lesser Demons and given to brute strength and combat rather than cunning or magic.

One of the Gargoyles’ instincts is a pack mentality, which is why they gather in *vast flocks* and are the perfect soldiers in a demon army. Although a bit smarter than their wingless, Gargoyle brethren which have not yet found their way to Chaos Earth, Gargoyles prefer to follow, not lead, and automatically look for powerful leaders to guide them. Gargoyles are often used as front-line



Horror Factor, impervious to fire and heat, though *magic fire* does full damage, resistant to cold (half damage), impervious to disease, toxic gases, and most types of poisons and toxins that are not magical in nature.

Vulnerabilities: Obedient soldiers, they lack resourcefulness, military expertise or a full understanding of strategies and tactics. Without a strong leader they break ranks, become unsure of themselves and are easily divided, pushed back or defeated.

Magic: None.

Psionics: I.S.P. is 1D4x10 + M.E. attribute number. Meditation, Mind Block (4), Presence Sense (4), Sense Magic (3), Telepathy (4), Resist Hunger (2), Resist Fatigue (4) and Resist Thirst (6).

Cybernetics & Bionics: Not possible.

Habitat: Hades, Rifts Earth, other Earth dimensions, Three Galaxies, Palladium World, and other places scattered across the Megaverse. Prefer mountains, canyons, and forest environments to inhabit, but will fight anywhere.

Alliances and Allies: Generally speaking, Gargoyles prefer to stay with their own kind and serve Gargoyle Lords, Gargoyle Mages and the Lords of Hades. However, they may serve other supernatural beings, dark gods, and powerful Shifters, Summoners and practitioners of magic who wield considerable power, including mortals. Gargoyles frequently join forces with other supernatural beings and monstrous D-Bees, and are especially friendly toward other giant beings, mutant animals, and so-called Lesser Demons because they are on more of an equal footing with them.

Rivals and Enemies: Gargoyles do not get along well with most true supernatural beings. They hate vampires and detest most minions of Dyval. They also dislike those who use magic and words rather than fists and weapons.

Notes: Males and females look nearly identical, only females tend to be a bit less muscular, have smaller horns and are a bit more fleshy or soft looking. Gargoyles are hatched from eggs and females do *not* have breasts, nipples or a belly button.

Ghouls & Nasu

Excerpted from *Rifts® Dimension Book 10: Hades*

Ghouls (male) and Nasu (female Ghouls) are the carrion feeders of the demonic realm. They feast on the remains of the dead, eating corpses, lapping up spilled blood and crunching up and eating bones. Fresh "food" is always preferred, but the demons will feast on ancient bones and mummified flesh too. In fact, they'll eat rotting meat of all kinds (humanoid or animal) and may also eat other types of spoiled food/garbage if ordered to do so by their masters, maggots and all. The disgusting creatures are, in effect, living garbage disposals who live to eat.

Despite the fact that Ghouls and Nasu are gluttons who love to eat and gorge themselves whenever they can, they are small,

gnarled, skeletal demons who resemble emaciated, animated human corpses covered in saggy skin. They are nocturnal scavengers commonly found in the mortal plane of existence robbing graves, feeding on dead bodies, and infesting battlefields to feast on those who have died in war.

Ghouls and Nasu are cowards who seldom attack the living unless the Ghouls outnumber them by at least three to one, or are ordered to do so by a Greater Demon or other master. When confronted or threatened, these demons flee, fighting only if cornered, and then only long enough to escape. And escape is easy for a Ghoul, who can dig into the ground like a mole and vanish underground within one melee round (15 seconds).

Even among the other Lesser Demons, Ghouls are one of the lowliest of them all. They dress in tattered rags, and rarely use weapons or tools even when they are available. They often gather in small packs of 1D6+2, working together like jackals to find and dig up food.

Ghouls & Nasu

Also known as Grave Ghouls.

Alignment: Miscreant (60%), Diabolic (35%), or Aberrant (5%).

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+2, M.E. 2D6, M.A. 2D4, P.S. 2D6+8 (Supernatural), P.P. 2D6+4, P.E. 2D6+6 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6, Spd running is 2D6; digging/underground Spd is 4D6.

Size: 4-6 feet (1.2 to 1.8 m) tall; 100 pounds (45 kg).

M.D.C.: 6D6+20 on Rifts Earth. (In an S.D.C. setting, Ghouls have P.E. number +6D6 for Hit Points, 4D6 S.D.C. and an A.R. of 12.)

Horror Factor: 8

P.P.E.: 2D4x10 plus P.E. attribute.

Disposition: Ghouls and Nasu only fight when cornered or forced to do so by a greater being. Otherwise, they are shy, reclusive creatures who run from conflict. Submissive and obedient to their demon masters.

Life Span: Effectively immortal.

Natural Abilities: Supernatural P.S. & P.E., nightvision 300 feet (91.5 m), fair to poor day vision, see the invisible, fire and cold resistant (half damage), Prowl 55%, Dimensional Teleport 21% +1% per level of experience, bio-regenerates 1D6 M.D.C. once per melee round, and magically knows all languages at 92%. Also see skills from *Equivalent O.C.C.* (below).

Smell Death (special): Ghouls/Nasu can smell the scent of dead and decaying bodies up to three miles (4.8 km) away on the surface, and up to one mile (1.6 km) underground. They can also smell old bones and ancient remains, but at half that range. This ability is used to sniff out carrion. **Base Skill:** 60% +5% per level of experience (+15% if there are many dead).

Underground Tunneling (special): Ghouls/Nasu can burrow through dirt like a mole, digging faster than they can run on the surface (see Spd attribute). A typical Spd of 12 enables the demon to burrow an impressive 240 yards/meters (720



feet or 219 m) per melee round! One third that speed when searching for buried food. **Base Skill:** 80% +5% per level of experience.

They can also build solid, strong tunnels (no fear of a cave-in) with amazing speed and dexterity, but seldom do so unless told to by their master. They can also excavate grave sites, ruins and cave-ins with the same prowess. In addition, the demon can usually tell if an existing tunnel or chamber is a natural formation or whether it is a man-made construction, as well as if it is new, old, or ancient. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Underground Architecture: Ghouls and Nasu can also build small and large underground rooms, ornate archways, staircases, and great chambers with cathedral ceilings, as well as a labyrinth of tunnels, passageways, mazes and underground traps, but are lazy and hate doing so. The demons can recognize underground traps and dangerous conditions and avoid or deactivate them, provided they travel at 20% their normal digging/underground Spd and are looking for them. **Base Skill:** 10% +5% per level of experience.

Underground Sense of Direction (special): The Ghoul has an innate ability to tell depth and direction when underground, even in total darkness (not applicable on the surface). Thus, the demon can tell whether he is traveling up, down, straight, diagonal, the approximate angle of decline or ascent, approximately how far below the surface he is, and the approximate direction (north, south, east, west). Also has a good idea where surface structures are located (such as the graveyard's gate, a mausoleum, etc. **Base Skill:** 20% +5% per level of experience.

Vulnerabilities: Ordinary S.D.C. weapons made of silver or bone do their equivalent damage as M.D., so a silver sword that normally does 2D6 S.D.C. does 2D6 M.D. to the demon. (In S.D.C. settings, double the weapon's usual damage.)

Equivalent O.C.C.: Only half the O.C.C. Skills of the *Vagabond O.C.C.*, no other skills are allowed. Ignore the Hand to Hand skill (see combat and bonuses).

Level of Experience: 1D4 on average or as set by the Game Master for NPCs. Not available as a player character.

Attacks per Melee: Three (four only when cornered and in a panic).

Bonuses (in addition to attributes and skills): +1 to strike, +1 to parry, +2 to dodge, +8 to save vs Horror Factor, and +1 on all saving throws.

Mega-Damage: As per Supernatural P.S.; typically around 1D6 M.D. from punch, and 6D6 S.D.C. from a bite (H.P./S.D.C. damage in S.D.C. settings).

Psionics: None.

Magic: None.

Habitat: Hades, Rifts Earth, other Earth dimensions, the Three Galaxies, the Palladium World, and other places scattered across the Megaverse.

Allies and Alliances: None per se, though the submissive fiends are often called upon to serve Necromancers (great for "digging up" bones and components), Witches, Shifters and Summoners. They seldom challenge their authority and do what their superiors tell them. Otherwise, Ghouls spend their days sleeping and their nights foraging for food and eating. They sometimes follow the wail of the Banshee, especially when the cries of many Banshees suggest many deaths are at hand.

Enemies: None per se, though humans and most mortal races find Ghouls and Nasu to be repulsive and disgusting.

Note: Never wears armor.

Banshees

The Harbinger of Death

Excerpted from *Rifts® Dimension Book 10: Hades*

What can one say about a specter that serves as a harbinger of death and wails so that all may anticipate its coming?

The Banshee is a P.P.E. vampire that relies on predatory instinct and a sixth sense to find her prey. Although legends sometime attribute her mournful wail with the power to paralyze or kill, the Banshee is not that hands-on or murderous. In truth, this Lesser Demon is a psychic scavenger whose clairvoyant abilities enable her to sense the *likelihood of death*, and like a vulture, is drawn by the psychic scent of death and waits for it to come.

At the instant of death, the Potential Psychic Energy (P.P.E.) of all living creatures surges, doubling in magnitude, and then drifts away, ultimately drawn into ley lines. This is what the Banshee is waiting for – the moment of death. At that instant, when the *P.P.E. doubles* and vacates the body of the deceased, the Banshee is there to drink it in like sweet nectar, devouring the life energy in a matter of seconds. The creature does not use the energy for magic or any other purpose but to feed. To this demon, Potential Psychic Energy is food, plain and simple, and the Banshee's famous wail is really a cry of hunger, excitement and anticipation as she waits for her coming meal.

The Banshee is an impatient and eternally hungry creature, so when the ailing or injured individual hangs onto life, refusing to give up the ghost, the Banshee's wailing is cries of frustration and the agony of waiting. A way to announce her disfavor, and in so doing, inadvertently serve as a harbinger of death. If a death doesn't occur within 10 hours, the miserable creature begins to moan and radiate an empathic field that creates a sensation of despair and sorrow. This powerful, undirected Empathic Transmission affects everybody within a 60 foot (18.3 m) radius of the creature. The sorrow of a Banshee is not born from sympathy, but self-pity, for the foul being is sad only because she can't wait to feast on the life energy of the living. The wail is a long, deep, mournful howl that can make a person's blood turn cold, and makes everybody who hears it nervous and on edge, especially if they know the source is a Banshee.



A Banshee leaves when the person(s) dies, or if she senses that the ailing person(s) she expected to die has taken a turn for the *better* and death is *not* going to come any time soon. However, a Banshee may wait as long as six weeks, especially if she senses a great deal of Potential Psychic Energy. Should the ailing individual recover, the Banshee lets loose one last groan and departs to search for death elsewhere. Thus, the presence of a Banshee does *not* automatically mean death or tragedy is inevitable, but it does mean that there is a very real possibility, usually occurring within 72 hours of the Banshee's arrival. **Note:** A Banshee *never kills*, and must wait until the moment of death without intervention on her part. *A Banshee can be driven away by exorcism*, or intensely strong emotions of love, or by psionic combat.

Banshees are spirit-like beings whose natural state is invisible. Those with the power to see the invisible can see them, but to most others they are nothing more than a disembodied sound and puff of wind. They are vulnerable to psionics and can be contacted or attacked via Telepathy, Empathy, Empathic Transmission, Bio-Manipulation (they are invisible but exist in the physical plane), attacks from Astral Travelers, Astral Golem, Exorcism and Ectoplasm. Banshees are also vulnerable to spells of Exorcism, Banishment, Constrain Being, Commune with Spirits, Summon Lesser Being, Mental Blast, Desiccate the Supernatural, and magic weapons, and they cannot enter magic sanctums or circles of protection.

A Banshee appears as a monstrous howling face made of crimson flames and surrounded by wisps of energy or as a ghostly hag, clad in a shroud, her lower body trailing off into a mist.

Game Master Note: A Banshee can be an excellent means of creating a sense of impending danger and suspense for the player characters, as a Banshee may follow them around as they prepare for a mission or battle, or a visit to Hades!

Banshees

Alignment: Miscreant (100%).

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6, M.E. 1D6, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6, P.P. 3D6, P.E. 1D6, P.B. 1D6, Spd 4D6.

M.D.C.: 1D6x10+50. (On S.D.C. worlds the Banshee has 4D6+32 Hit Points, 1D6x10 S.D.C., and is impervious to ordinary weapons, energy blasts and most super abilities.)

Size: 6-10 feet tall (1.8 to 3 m) and has no measurable weight in its spirit form.

Horror Factor: 14

P.P.E.: 2D6+2

Disposition: Selfish and hungry.

Life Span: Immortal until slain.

Natural Abilities: *Ethereal*, which means the demon can walk through solid matter, like walls, and physical attacks, like bullets, fire and energy blasts, do no damage; they pass right through. Vulnerable only to psionic attacks and magic, including magic weapons and Techno-Wizard weapons that fire TK rounds or magical bolts of energy.

Hovers and floats above the ground up to 100 feet (30.5 m) high. *Teleport self* only, up to 2000 miles (3200 km), but only when going to a new feeding site. Natural state is *invisible* and cannot make itself visible. *Natural Empathy:* Automatically senses emotions as well as sickness and death (costs no I.S.P.). *Natural Empathic Transmission of Sorrow:* Radiates in a 60 foot (18.3 m) area around the Banshee, costs no I.S.P. (automatic); mortals save as normal vs psionic attack from sorrow/despair. Also see *psionics*.

O.C.C. & Skills: None, animal-like predator.

Level of Experience: 1D4 on average or as set by the Game Master for NPCs. Not available as a player character.

Attacks per Melee: Three attacks per melee against Astral Travelers only. Otherwise, it can only attack on the physical plane with *Empathic Transmission* once per melee round. **Note:** Attacks *only* if it feels threatened.

Mega-Damage: Little on the physical plane, where the Banshee's only means of attack is Empathic Transmission (used in self-defense only) and its own *Aura of Sorrow*. On the Astral Plane or against Astral attackers, the Banshee can inflict 1D6 Hit Point damage per punch, kick or bite.

Bonuses: Impervious to heat, fire and toxic gases, though magic versions do full damage.

Vulnerabilities: Psionics, exorcism, magic spells, and magic weaponry.

Magic: None.

Psionics: I.S.P.: 100. Abilities include: Clairvoyance (4), Psychic Diagnosis (4), Sense Magic (3), Empathy (4), and Empathic Transmission (6). The latter is the only way it can attack a creature of flesh and blood. Equal to 5th level strength. Considered a Major Psionic.

Habitat: Hades, Rifts Earth, other Earth dimensions, the Three Galaxies, the Palladium World, and other places scattered across the Megaverse.

Banshees are commonplace on Rifts Earth, especially at war zones and places where the innocent are persecuted, enslaved, tortured, imprisoned and slain. It is interesting to note that when one Banshee has staked out squatter's rights on one specific individual, other Banshees respect that claim and will not challenge it. However, if numerous people are hurt, sick or could die from some impending catastrophe or attack, then swarms of Banshees *may* appear, each claiming an individual for themselves and following them wherever they go. A "gathering" of Banshees is uncommon except in Hades and at places where death is frequent or occurs en masse. However, Banshees typically travel, hunt and feed as lone individuals or small groups (2D4).

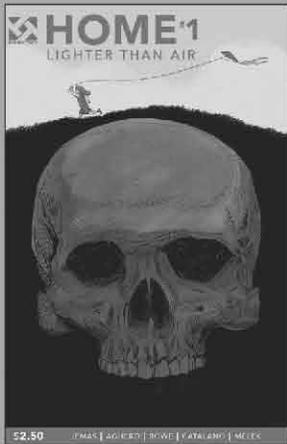
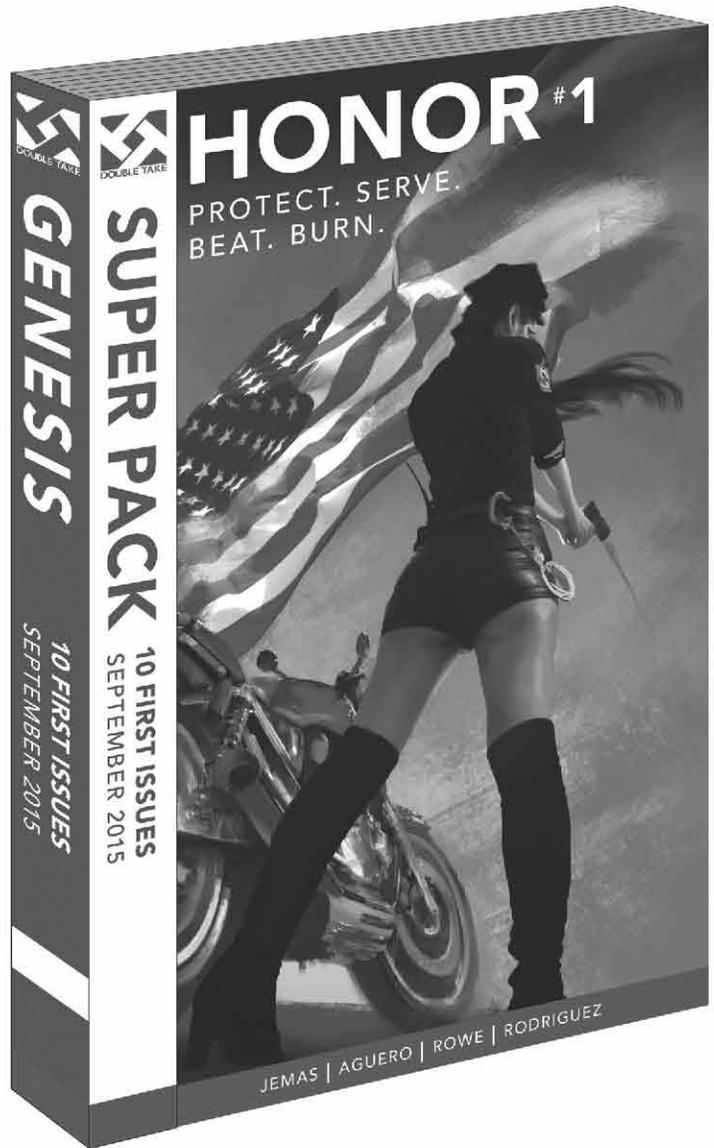
Allies and Alliances: None, per se.

Rivals & Enemies: None, per se.

Note: It is fairly difficult and pointless to kill a Banshee, for they simply wait for death, they do not cause it. Consequently, it is far easier to chase the creature away than kill it.

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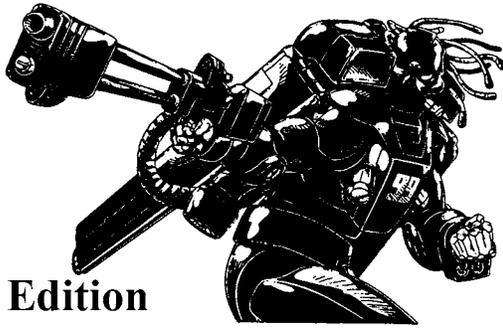
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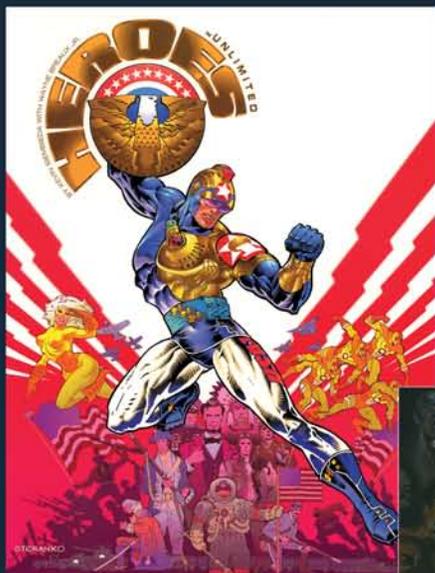
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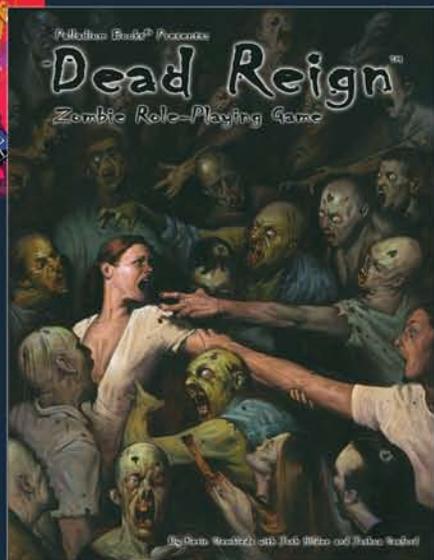


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