THE AFTERMATH :

2012

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PART I: SETTING THE STAGE

CHAPTER I: TEOTWAWKI

December 23 2012. The end of the Mayan Calendar and consequently the world as we know it. It all started with an earthquake. Not just an earthquake, but THE earthquake that geologists had long warned of the possibility of decimating Japan and California. This wasn't just some seismic tremor, but the world shattering convulsion of mother nature herself. Not only were the readings on this event off the Richter Scale, but each tectonic plate rippled its domino effect onto its neighbor until the sequence came full circle. The collateral damage from this event was truly catastrophic, for it was not just buildings and bridges toppled in its wake, but it also woke planet earth's slumbering dragons and the fury of the sea. Turns out that the Pacific Ring of Fire was aptly named, as the initial aftershocks caused simultaneous eruption of not only the worlds active volcanoes, but even a few supers that had sat idle for thousands and thousands of years. Before the survivors could even catch their breath as the ash and smoke filled the skies, the largest tsunamis ever recorded crashed ashore and took thousands of men, women, and children to their watery graves. The entire process happened in less than an hour. There was no time to prepare, react, or even process what we just witnessed. "And so the earth shall tremble..."

Because of the near endless supply of volcanic ash and soot lingering in the heavens, the majority of the California coastline in ruins, and the untold number of naval vessels tossed ashore or lost in transit a mere day before Christmas eve we proved beyond dumbstruck initially. International travel was impossible as aircraft were grounded due to the possibility of engine failure, and maritime was halted as the immense release of heat altered the atmosphere and weather patterns immeasurably. For nearly two weeks the human race was whipped into a frenzy of trying to locate their loved ones, help their fellow man, or simply come to grips with the devastating change this misfortune would bring to their lives. Early casualty estimates were in the hundreds of thousands, and this was only the beginning.

CHAPTER II: THE WAR TO END ALL WARS

In the small hours of the morning sometime in mid January, the entirety of the western world lost nearly all cellular and internet service. Many would never see it again. Shortly thereafter, true to form and letting no catastrophe go to waste, World War III commenced in a series of blinding flashes as nuclear hellfire rained down upon us. The tactic was clear, total war, total devastation. Every major port, financial center, intelligence nucleus, fuel refinery, oil field, air traffic hub, and major military installation was a target. Even some remote locations that would make no sense to us civilians were hit, no doubt the result of decades of intelligence operations conducted by our most formidable adversaries. For the vast majority of us, this is where the world went dark as global telecommunications ceased. We were left to question how this was even possible, what happened to the rest of the world, and why our defenses failed so miserably. Unfortunately, time has a funny way of revealing all truth and makes the possibility of the recovery effort all the more daunting.

That connectivity disruption was the result of a massive and highly coordinated cyber-warfare maneuver, which opened up the possibility to knock many of our low orbit communication satellites offline with systemic overload, surgical precision, and repurposed long range missiles. No "Eyes in the Sky" meant crippled guidance and missile interception systems, and thus a calculated risk to test the theory of "Nuclear Deterrence" and "Mutually Assured Destruction". Retaliatory strikes were certainly launched, but in the end the once formidable military powerhouse that was the United States of America was knocked out of the ring before the fight began. Then came winter...If "War" was the first Horseman, "Death" casually rolled in and on a pale horse no less...

CHAPTER III: NUCLEAR WINTER

The blizzards first commenced as freezing rain, dark as the midnight sky thanks to the remaining ash and radioactive dust. Gradually it transformed into snowfall after it blackened out the sun and forced the temperature to drop substantially. Thanks to the eruption at Yellowstone and the particular attention payed to Texas and Pennsylvania Oil Fields the Heartlands and the Northeast got the worst of it. With the vast majority of senior leadership dead or missing, communications barely existent, and invasion imminent "Martial Law" was the only option on the table. It was an easy sell to the public, lock down in your house, wait for the radiation to pass, and hold tight as the situation develops. Help is on the way. At the start, the major metropolitan areas devastated by the earth or her children were the primary focus of the rescue and relief efforts. As the polar vortex spiraled out of control and the ice kept coming, many of the lucky few miles away from the initial danger began to have problems of their own. High wind snowstorms and felled trees created their own problems for the already fractured energy grid, which in turn leads to more ruptured pipes and gas lines. Many of these outlying survivors quickly found themselves all but isolated in frigid conditions without heat, power, or running water. Thanks to the immense turmoil this catalyst caused the planets atmosphere, this wasn't only happening in the North or Mid-West either. "Old Man Winter" received and open invitation to wreck house as far south as the foothills of the Appalachians in Georgia. Untold numbers of households caught unprepared either froze to death, starved, suffered a structural collapse, or fell to their "Pre-existing Conditions" without access to essential medications. It wasn't until sometime in May that those who endured were able to emerge from their shelters and witness the horrors that occurred once the sun could no longer penetrate the clouds. This was where most of us got our first glimpse of our New World...

CHAPTER IV: SOCIAL RIFTS

After the thaw, the rift between human nature and the duality of man had never seemed more clear than it was during those first few weeks. The schism between those who believed in peace, charity, and goodwill stood in stark contrast to those who focus on power, position, and control as the evidence of what went down during the frigid dark gradually came to light. Another point within the human psychology that could no longer be refuted was not the difference between "good" and "evil" but rather the ease in which one aligns with either "order" or "chaos". The entire world found itself cast into a realm of extremes, with countless variables at play.

At the outset, and for the first time in generations, war was at our door. The extent of nuclear destruction brought down on us left little doubt that we would meet the Russian Federation on the Battlefield likely both here and abroad. While the bulk of the civilian population was locking down in their homes waiting for nuclear winter to pass, Russian forces were making the most of the opportunities that splitting the atom afforded them and landed a trifecta of invasion battalions in Anchorage and Juneau, Prince Rupert and Port Edward, Vancouver and Seattle. Meanwhile, our own fighting men and women were either locked in conflict overseas, scrambling to recover and deploy assets to the Pacific Northwest, and determine a logistics strategy to successfully mount this defense after so much loss of infrastructure, resources, and life itself. These were the ambitions of the ones who chose "Power" and "Order".

For those who decided to follow "Goodwill" and "Order" there was no shortage of goals to attain. Between rescue and recovery, restoration of the power grid, renewal of the supply chain, rebuilding what was lost, and generally simply restoring "Order" was a monumental set of tasks in and of themselves. FEMA wasted no time establishing strongholds at assessed critical areas, and rapidly spread into the countryside. "We the People" were informed of the gravity of the situation and volunteers signed up by the thousands for both Military and Civil roles. Gasoline restrictions were put into effect immediately, with the general consensus being "Get wherever you need to go, and plan to stay there". Most small towns were told that the need to restore the grid nationwide was tantamount and fuel preservation for the war effort was of utmost importance. Thus, relief efforts at their location was only temporary and they were advised to gather up their friends and family, pack their bags, and head to the nearest refugee center as soon as humanly possible. All the while every transportation terminal, hospital, pharmacy, grocery store, outdoors-man outfitter, and gas station was being secured by the local police or national guard. The race was on.

For the people more inclined to embrace "Chaos" they prove significantly more difficult to categorize as they are inherently more fluid and adaptive in their ambitions. However, this "New World" held no shortage of uncertainty, Pandemonium would prove to be an understatement. No matter which way you spin it, this was truly the golden age of Anarchy in the US and many had already begun their journey before the thaw even began. First and foremost, the feeling that this was in fact the "End of Days" was utterly unshakable and there was a substantial percentage of the population who were compelled towards self preservation at any cost, especially after personally witnessing multiple failures of big government to provide for its people in times of crisis. For those inclined towards "Power" and "Chaos" many thought that this was the time of their lives. Not only was the invasion the most pressing threat requiring all of Uncle Sam's attention, organized crime wasted no time strengthening their own grip upon society as they were all but unchecked. Cops and rivals were removed from the playing field at will as it was open season. The Russian Mafia, or Bratva was systematically killing any surviving political officials they could find and sowing as much lawlessness as possible by springing multiple prison or jail breaks just to keep the boys in blue busy. Every terrorist sleeper cell from coast to coast sprang to life for the benefit of whichever nation employed them, and we had no shortage of enemies. Not to mention all the violent crazies who simply wanted to watch the world burn after the nukes provided their signal fire. Once again, pandemonium would be the understatement of the century.

After so much death and dismay, one couldn't blame those who believed that huddling together in mass could prove to be a bad decision. It varied from region to region, but as these scenarios played out nationwide there was a sharp rise in the ranks and formations of local gangs and militias out to preserve their own interests. Again, those who embrace chaos are more amorphous and adaptive than those who believe in the greater good, but the results speak for themselves. While there were certainly still fence-sitters and people simply flabbergasted by the reality of the situation, roughly two thirds of the populace outside the untouched cities heeded the warnings of the food and fuel cutoff and relocated to the designated refugee centers. The other third, for whatever reasons they had, decided to dig in and take survival into their own hands. They would be known henceforth as the "Holdouts". Point being is that for most of this nations citizens, there was not a whole lot of time to weigh the options. By early June, the stage was set. Now lets talk about the weather...

CHAPTER V: CLIMATE CRISIS

If things weren't complicated enough, the issue of climate change stopped being a question of when, but how? The world was heating up rapidly. The running theory is that once the ash settled, the damage to the ozone layer was already done. Between dozens of synchronized volcanic eruptions and global nuclear Armageddon, the true cost to the planet rushed to reveal itself. None of the previous weather models made much sense aside from the general west to east wind convergence at the Gulf. For most states it was simply incredibly hot and dry, with the majority of the "normal" rainfall of the year transformed into irradiated snows for so long. Not only did such a rapid thaw cause serious swelling of the rivers and overrun various dams and bridges, but it seemed to pull all the water out to the ocean and then barely be recycled back in. At least at first. As the summer heat wave soared and tropical storms gradually began to swell, tornadoes became alarmingly frequent in the Midwest and Bible Belt. Tornado, Hoosier, and Dixie Alleys all seemed to converge on one another and only grow more common as the normal season moved into the later months. All that was certain at this point was the twisters were touching down and wreaking havoc in areas they never had before, and considerably more often. Nearly every day one would open up and rip the countryside apart. More bridges and roads fell into disrepair, more farmland destroyed, more homes torn asunder. This was the point where concern began to grow for the future of American Agriculture, but alas the cycle continues...

As time marched ever forward, the West grew increasingly hot and dry. With the counter-offensive raging in British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest, progress for either side proved incredibly slow those first few months. The Pacific fleet had suffered a series of defeats, and Russian reinforcements were largely unopposed in transit to their designated deployment areas. The battle for air superiority was tenuous at best, but as the logistics were being re-evaluated and essentially re-written the majority of the counter offensive consisted of guerrilla warfare and surgical strikes rather than attacks en mass. Once the heat ramped up in late summer, the Reds decided to both continue and fully embrace their "Scorched Earth" policy with us. Armed with incendiary warheads, they launched strikes from Los Angeles to Portland only stopping at the Hood River and with so much infrastructure already ravaged from the quakes and the war there was little hope of fighting fire on that scale. This assault will forever be known to the American people as opening "Hells Gate", and for those who didn't or couldn't flee, all they could do is dig in and watch it burn. For years the thousand mile stretch from Bakersfield to Mt. Saint Helen's was little more than desolate and charred wasteland. To the bulk of the men and women deployed there, this was where they truly understood that their mission wasn't reclamation as much as it was resistance. To everyone that witnessed "Hell's Gate" disillusionment was the word of day as droves of refugees made their way east by any means necessary. Those that survived by hitchhiking or travel ling on foot have been coined "Firewalkers" as both a source of pride and pity.

CHAPTER VI: AMERICA ONLINE & THE B.R.I.C.S.

  The only good news that came from that summers torridity is that after much trial and error, the power grid was eventually restored in most key cities, which allowed industry to ramp up wartime production for the forces entangled and rallied against the Russian invasion effort. Additionally, limited communication systems were successfully restored locally thanks to peer to peer relays and wide area networks, though limited range meant they were barely existent for the neighboring suburban and rural areas. A critical choice had to be made, restore power to these "Hubs" consistently and provide some sort of stability, or push for full restoration and have the connection remain spotty at best as severe weather continued to impact the associated regions. The choice seemed clear. To all those that refused to leave their homes outside of these Hubs and pursue their lives in any unorthodox Machiavellian fashion, both friend and foe alike, were left both literally and figuratively "in the dark". All remaining food and fuel was allocated to the continuation of governance and its defense both within the Hubs and at the battlefields of the Northwest, and anyone outside of these realms was left to fend for themselves in what has come to be known now as "The Outlands". As the telecommunications network expanded to link each hub with its neighbor, more and more information began to pierce the veil and we learned who the real enemy was...

  Apparently, mother earths seizure proved to be the spur necessary for the BRICS to pursue its intent of replacing the US Dollar as the standard of international exchange. Modern warfare always boils down to money. With Japan lying in ruin, it had lost its role in that regard, and with the stage set this coalition had a once in the lifetime of an empire's opportunity to tip the scales in their favor. Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa compose the BRICS and have held this lofty goal close to heart since their inception. Brazil's role was reasonably straightforward, prevent Venezuela from continuing to ship crude oil to the states and curry as much favor and anti-American sentiment in South America as possible to ensure that minimal assistance flowed north. Not particularly difficult after generations of political destabilization efforts. Russia's military might was their bargaining chip in this plan, they lead the initiative in the physical removal of the satellites to facilitate the extensive nuclear bombardment through bypassing our interception systems. Afterwards they commenced the invasion into Alaska and Canada in order to secure the oil present there. The opening assault would secure Alaskan oil and naval ports along the coast of British Columbia, which were to be used to conduct a two pronged assault. One fork would continue east to capture the Canadian oil fields in Alberta and Saskatchewan. The other fork would push down the west coast in order to remove any capacity of influencing naval trade in the Pacific. With Alaskan, Canadian, and Venezuelan Oil off the table for us, combined with the fact they glassed all of our domestic fields and refineries they not only would become the predominant oil supplier of the entire world, but would also remove our functionality as a mobile military force until we rebuilt. India and China were the leaders of the cyber-warfare aspects of this daring plan, contributing heavily to the satellite neutralization efforts. India has long served within our existing communications and information technology infrastructure, and China has been supplying consumer electronics and replacement parts since the inception of the internet. With that in mind they have long held a key to the backdoor via the hardware many, many different systems. As a manufacturing powerhouse countless tons of machinery, parts, medical equipment, and generic pharmaceuticals were already developed in their borders, all they really needed to do is stop service to deliver a scathing wound. After the "Bailout" in 2008, it's likely they decided they would never see any real return on investment and chose to cut their losses. Additionally they all worked together to outbid us on Saudi Arabian oil access, and it was simply a matter of strangling our military and financial influence now that the cards were revealed and our domestic industries halted. Conquest was not the objective, only control, and there was an immense difference between the two. We were truly operating on self defense for the first time in over a century, and this was only the first chapter in the "War to End All Wars".

CHAPTER VII: ISLAND EXODUS

Enter Hurricane Season...The first thing that became evident was the frequency of the storms only increased ever so slightly. The major difference was the sheer magnitude of them. Not only were the squalls that would break away from the tempest's hearts quick to turn into whirlwinds of ruin, but once the cores made landfall they would often decelerate to a crawl. This created throngs of slow moving downpours that would last for days and flood everything in their wake. In the Southeast mudslides and flooding rapidly reached biblical proportions, but comparatively this proved to be a near inescapable nightmare for the residents of the Caribbean. Haiti and the Dominican Republic were already rocked by the initial quakes, and they had only just begun to recover before having their entire island bombarded repeatedly by these enormous typhoons that seemed to swallow their lands whole and wash away their homes. By October, a mass exodus of all the Caribbean was underway due to the elemental dangers and severe supply shortages that challenged the very concept of survival. Only the most stalwart, steadfast, or stupid remained in the islands as the evacuations began. For better or worse, it seems that the American Dream was still in the hearts and minds of these poor souls who fled north and managed to withstand their harrowing passage into our war-torn nation. These displaced migrants share tales of golf-ball sized hail, gale force winds, blinding spin-drifts, and entire vessels lifted from the waves and flung like toys as they sent thousands of people to their final resting place at the base of the Atlantic floor. Then you can see the sorrow in their eyes for those who failed to board the boat at all.

CHAPTER VIII: REFUGEES & REFORMS

With the steady influx of nearly the entire population of the west coast and Caribbean seeking asylum in their respected hubs, combined with those who attempted to make it on their own before eventually being forced to admit they were not prepared for another harsh winter, it didn't take long for the refugee centers to swell beyond capacity. In the beginning those seeking refuge would find themselves about where one could expect. Hotels, civic centers, stadiums, warehouse conversions, corporate offices. Once these filled, people began to simply squat in abandoned storefronts and shops, breaking and entering in any unoccupied space with four walls and a roof, then parking decks, alleys, and breezeways. Reliance on the old system of "On Demand Shipping" was no longer a possibility with gasoline proving to be a wartime necessity in short supply. While the stockpile of emergency goods was not yet in jeopardy, it quickly became clear that it would only last so long. As it stood, it was only a matter of time before desperation would drive those who had already lost everything past the point of no return. A new blueprint for the survival of one nation indivisible was mandatory, as we were truly pushed to the brink of collapse. Delivering any potential long term solutions were tentative at best and each locality had its own spin, but a few universal approaches emerged little by little, inch by inch, with the exception of one.

Across the board, anywhere that managed to maintain some white knuckled semblance of control during all this came to the consensus that "Convict Labor" needed to be re-evaluated and utilized immediately. These men and women owed a debt to society, and at this particular moment, society desperately needed to collect. With big agriculture dealt a vicious coup de-grace, and the prolonged decimation of the mid-west by twisters unending, the primary problem putting inmates to work could solve was food shortages. The next highest priority was the war effort, so either by conscription or the promise of pardon, those who were deemed combat capable found themselves on the front lines. For the areas that held any capacity for production, their factories were either repurposed or updated for ordnance and provisions. The next obvious objective was infrastructure. There was a veritable myriad of roads and bridges in desperate need of repair, and with fuel being scarce, restoration of the railways was one of the only discernible long term solutions. Last but not least was the actual civil service for the overburdened refugee centers, tasks like running soup kitchens and laundry services, garbage collection, and shelter construction. Really anything to free up more of the workforce to address the more pertinent tasks at hand.

On that note, another wide spread reform occurred to alleviate the needs of the people and re-center their focus was the passing of the torch of public education from the state to the federal level. For this, Uncle Sam expanded the responsibilities and the reach of the "Youth Corps" in order to reduce the burdens of parenthood and usher more of the adult population back to return to the workforce. The promise held that they would provide education, food, clothing, and if necessary shelter to the children of America while their relatives contributed to the recovery of this great nation. The counterweight here was they also reinstated the draft, so read between the lines. No matter which way one rolls the dice, any aid for the safety and security of ones offspring during these trying times was a welcome gift.

Another key point here is the largely subsidized formation of privately owned Asset Recovery Teams with one simple goal. To venture into the Outlands and secure anything of use that was overlooked during the scrambles right after the thaw. This meant establishing trade with any of the Holdouts that were doing well for themselves; securing any specific goods, tools, or machines that had particular purpose but weren't immediately useful for homesteaders; and probably most important was to unofficially keep tabs and gather information on any developing news outside of the Hubs. The bulk exchange rates were particularly lucrative, but the fact that the operatives could skim off the top and no-one was the wiser made this an enticing high risk high reward career path. The door swings both ways though, the need for private teams meant that the ones paying wanted to keep their vested interests personal, and if they were directly employed by local governments it usually meant that they were being used for a metric of plausible deniability. Either way, this was the officially the start of a long running relationship of keeping communications open with the denizens of the Outlands.

Finally, in order to offset the need to transport meals from farm to fridge, a massive campaign ensued to jump-start the newly formed Local Farming Initiative. The shift towards locally sourced sustenance was inevitable given the circumstances, but because the concept only gained any real ground so late in the year, public education seminars and large scale planning was the first step. However, right off the top any large offices or unused high-rises with their windows intact were swiftly being converted into greenhouses. Before winter set in there was a mass movement to re-purpose every open rooftop, playing field, golf course, riverbank, and parking lot into high yield urban gardens. Most places started with root crops, but with the long term in mind those aforementioned Asset Recovery Teams were being paid top dollar for seeds.

CHAPTER IX: HARSH WINTERS

Much to the dismay of the soldiers on the lines, that first winter after the apocalypse was incredibly mild until late December, which meant the engagements were frequent, bloody, and continuous. Once the cold fronts eventually made their appearance known though, it all changed in an instant, like the flip of a switch. Planet Earth would forevermore be a world of extremes with minimal transitions, but it did afford the troops a small reprieve from the brutality of war and repelling an invasion. Historically speaking, Russian soldiers knew better than attempting to force an advance during the winter months and seemed perfectly content with reinforcing their positions across Washington and British Columbia.

For the civilians, we just considered ourselves lucky that this time around it didn't seem like Old Man Winter came through, lingering about and overstaying his welcome. It was more like Jack Frost rolled in hard and fast, but then rode off just as quickly. Don't be mistaken, the cold was fearsome for the Midwest and the Northeast once more, and again it pushed further south than it had in the past, but it was a no small relief that one didn't feel quite so buried and abandoned as we did before. The worst of it was over by March, much like the days thought lost to us. Once again, we saw severe winds and sporadic cold fronts afterwards, which spawned more cyclones but the pattern seemed to hold. This was to be the new cycle, chaotic but relatively predictable in the worst kind of way. From then until now, there has been a small sense of security masquerading beneath the fear of pattern recognition.

CHAPTER X: SHIFTING DYNAMICS

As far as the civilian population was concerned, that was about the size of it. Each state had its own micro-crises here and there, but generally speaking the worst of it was over. For years we were caught under this never ending fear of the battlefield reaching our neighborhoods, and for years most people did everything they could to make sure that never happened. For nearly a decade the resistance was the primary focus of the nation. After the initial shock that the end of the world passed, we were left to face the reality that our era of prosperity, abundance, and life of leisure had come to an end. We merely survived trying not to think too much about "the good old days". Obesity isn't much of an issue currently. If the question is how, that's not really an easy one to answer. It's important to remember this is a massive nation and a cultural melting pot, but we can try to put it into general assessments.

The first few years were definitely rough. Once people fully came to grips with the situation, and were able to shake off their disbelief, things went about as one would anticipate. Most were quick to adopt alternate forms of transportation early. Bikes and skateboards were worth their weight in gold, even to this day really. Eventually the livestock industry recouped its strength, and it was reasonably common to see Outlanders strolling in on horseback or cattle drawn carts made from old pickup beds. Public transit ran for as long as it could before it simply started cutting its routes down to critical jobs. Most people walked, but anywhere there was a subway that was clearly the preferred method of transit. A lot of emergency crews and essential transit vehicles were happy to let people hop on the back or hold on tight. If it was worth the risk, go for it just don't expect them to stop if someone ended up eating asphalt.

There was definitely a long period of time where the ambitious and distraught who wanted more for themselves turned to crime. In the Hubs, prostitution, gambling, and gang skirmishes would run rampant for a while as a new criminal underworld began to sprout. Knives definitely came back in a big way. Most of this was fueled by the activities of the Outlands where banditry was common but more or less the worst of it happened out there, where frontier law was the only justice to be found and no-one was eager to serve. The spoils made it back to the hubs to be sold and recycled back outwards, but barter economies largely fall in favor of the ones that have which is in highest demand. For the Hubs that meant survival and continuity, and with that in jeopardy for both citizens of the cities and the Outlands alike, there's little question who ended up with more per capita. Make no mistake, out there it was basically the "wild west" and in a lot of ways it definitely still is but its nothing like it was in the beginning.

As the Hubs grew more and more stable, a lot of them started their own "Squatters Enterprise" in order to ease the pressures on their overburdened public service sectors. The idea was reasonably simple, a lot of records were destroyed and a lot of houses sat vacant. If you could prove residency unopposed for two years, a new deed would be issued, limit one per family. The power grid was expanding ever outward, so eventually the home would be worth the effort and once the war was over and gas restrictions eased up it would not matter how far out anybody ended up. It was actually a genius way to get people to focus on doing something for themselves again while paving the way and making it easier to reclaim what was currently off grid. As more and more people headed out, things got easier in the Hubs, and new trade routes between them started emerging as they handled their own conflicts with whatever they encountered, everyone wins. At first there were definitely a lot of horror stories that circled around of settlers going missing and atrocities between neighbors, but given enough time it proved marvelously successful. Once enough of the railroads were restored and improved upon east of the Mississippi it proved doubly true. On one hand simply because of their own capacity, but on the other the excessive river swells in late spring and hurricane season lead to the resurgence of riverboat trade. Other than during the extreme droughts in the summer, ferries and tugs can get goods from the Gulf to Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, Knoxville, Tulsa, Billings, and Great Falls without much issue other than the occasional outlaw or pirate.

In any event, as the power grid kept creeping outward, security systems kept improving. Both makeshift and modern CCTV systems are everywhere now, the cellular relay system got more and more reliable as everyone started spreading out a little bit, and somewhere along the way the national guard started making widespread use of mass produced armed quad-copters. With eyes ever watching and being the only ones with access to fuel for rapid response, it proved to be an impressive deterrent for keeping Outland problems well outside and away from the Hubs long term endeavors. Combined with the fact that all munitions production went directly to the war effort and zero consumer sales have occurred in ages, the fact is that at this point cops and soldiers are basically the only ones with access to firearms after so many of the Outlanders spent years shooting one another and burning up all their bullets. Fact is no real access to guns or fast getaways does wonders to stifle violent crime. It still happens, certainly, but its almost always outside of the city limits.

Another major point to the expanse of the electrical grid being counter productive to criminal activity is that somewhere along the line it became clear that something needed to be done about banking. It became clear fairly quick that there just wasn't enough cash in circulation to use that method. For a while, big companies tried paying people in their corporate "script" but the exchange rates proved incredibly difficult to monitor and more importantly regulate. In the end, with each Hub reliant upon its own WAN's and peer to peer telecommunications, the simplest answer was for each one to create their own cryptocurrencies backed by the obvious oversight of relaying all information off of and through each device anyway. Everyone gets a free phone app for exchange, everything is monitored, its about as secure as it gets. Then to tighten the grip, the Hubs started offering two to one exchange on physical dollars for digital currency. As the trains grew more and more capable to deliver surplus food and supplies between the Hubs once again and the freight system began to grow exponentially once more, it got considerably easier for the liquid assets to circulate and reinvigorate all the necessary industries. The cash is then used to grease the wheels of the barter economies with the Outlands, and despite all of the original doubt the system seems to work so far. Since most states simply overlook petty crime like drug possession and public intoxication, the drive for under the radar private exchange is pretty low in the US as far as most people can tell. The only exception might be the severe shortage of ammunition but then again there's no wonder why the barter system is still in play to this day, once you really think about it. For nearly half a decade the base trade equivalency was that a single bullet was worth four canned soups...

CHAPTER XI: WAR & PEACE

For the record, the war never officially ended, we just agreed to a cease-fire. That's a point of pride for a lot of our veterans. Concern too probably, but either way after eight grueling years of fire, bloodshed, starvation, bitter cold, death, dismay, and sheer horror at the nonchalant disregard for human life on such an enormous scale the United States signed an agreement to end hostilities against Russian and Chinese forces. Say what you will, but in the end the BRICS achieved most, if not all of their original objectives in spite of us making them fight tooth and nail for every inch of ground they now claim as a recognized territory. On the flip side of that coin, it seems safe to say that they severely underestimated us as well. As information from overseas trickles in little by little, they clearly did not think it would take this long or cost them so many of their own youth either.

How did we reach this uncertain truce? The fact is that once the Eastbound fork of the Russian assault captured Edmonton and Calgary we couldn't hope to uproot them after they dug in. Strikes began to punch into Montana and North Dakota and it became clear we had to act fast to halt the advance or the lines would inevitably break. We were doing reasonably well at holding their Southern prong from Mt. Shasta, in spite of red marines landing in Eureka but Oregon and Washington were lost causes by that point. In a last ditch effort our ruling Military Stratocracy deployed what they called "The Omega Protocol". First the oil sands in Alberta and Saskatchewan were set ablaze, and then the remainder of our nuclear arsenal waited until the majority of the Russian Fleet returned to the Salish Sea or Anchorage and Juneau and we crippled their navy by launching fire and fury at "strategic locations" within our own borders. Not sure how many people believe the Collateral Damage estimates to any remaining civilian population there but the sad truth is that if they were still in the area, we had not received word one from them in half a decade.

Shortly thereafter NATO forces and African mercenaries under the employ of undisclosed benefactors finally began arriving to assist, but they could only land on the east coast in the slowly recovering harbors along the Atlantic seaboard. With their support we pushed north at every front with all the might we could possibly muster. Without fresh Russian troops reinforcing and mobilizing from their ports in the west anymore, we somehow forced their hand into a trap of attrition, abandonment, and ruin at Winnipeg. We knew they believed that last stronghold was going to be the finish line for their eastern campaign before attempting to force their way south, so between ourselves and our Canadian hosts we collectively agreed to evacuate early and left all sorts of nasty surprises waiting for them. It was time to end this.

With the Russians held in place, essentially just digging in and attempting to fortify what they spilled so much blood for, the Chinese confirmed all previous suspicions by proving that they really didn't want any risk of future leverage or influence from the states in the Pacific. Unfortunately for us, their marines were fresh and fighting fit whereas our men and women willing to kill and die in that scorched hell were already weathered and weary. Many people view this as a major oversight of the "Omega Protocol" but in the end the opinions of the mundane members of society don't much matter. Their surprise attack hit San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego hard but in the end only the Golden Gate fell. Rather than engage our soldiers in the hills, they drove their wedge hard into Sacramento. After a few weeks, the capitol surrendered and the troops still lingering in the north were relocated to the defense of LA rather be caught in a pincer maneuver between central California and Oregon. Fast forward a couple of months of repelling our invaders from the far east in the City of Angels; recognition of an impasse was finally reached; the treaty was written; ruefully signed; and we were finally able to breathe a long overdue and exasperated sigh of relief.

To this day, the ruins of Los Angeles are split in two. Everything west of I-5 is considered an occupied territory of the Peoples Republic of China. From the highway it runs due north along the 14 to 395 and then covers all of the charred remains to Redding. Death Valley poetically remains ours. The Russian Federation controls everything north of Redding to Alaska, with an almost straight line of countryside running from Bend Oregon to Calgary Alberta. The provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan are included in this deal, but the Canadians were able to negotiate for the liberation of Winnipeg and Manitoba. The Demilitarized Zone basically consists of the entirety of desert and shrub-land running south to north until Twin Falls, and then is the western half of Idaho to the Canadian Border. The remainder of the Pacific Fleet was to pass through the Panama Canal into the Gulf of Mexico, and naval inspections could be conducted on any ship deemed necessary at port in San Diego. There were also endless details and decrees regarding political interference in the South Pacific, Middle East, South America, South Africa, and Eastern Europe being considered a "Breach of Treaty" but that was intrinsically the end of our custom designed hell on earth. The war still rages elsewhere in the world, namely the Middle East, South Pacific, and Eastern Europe but again our hands are tied. There are definitely still resistance operatives within the occupation and DMZ years later, but they have been classified as rogue agents so long as they are in no way financed or harbored by the United States Government and recognized as terrorists operating against the best interests of their own people...but that was it. It was finally over. The world didn't end. Our food and water wasn't an in-consumable and irradiated death sentence. If you prefer the illusion of safety and the luxuries of the 21st century you can go to the Hubs. If you prefer the concept of freedom and all of its associated risks you try your luck in the Outlands. Either way, life goes on...

CHAPTER XII: NATURE'S SWING

It's been two years since that long awaited and hard earned day of reprieve and we are well past the post war celebrations and their associated baby boom. Now the real and concerted efforts of renewal and recovery can at long last commence. The greatest obstacles ahead are global, making for a reasonably fair and equitable set of challenges that apply to all. Primarily there is the recovery of infrastructure and agriculture in the midst of a never before seen rate of increased global warming. The effects it has had on weather patterns has been staggering, and only seems to be growing less and less compatible for the old methods to thrive once more. For the US in particular, every season holds its own threats and concerns. The winter season begins considerably later than usual, and is considerably shorter but also more severe. With snowfall being less consistent, the alteration of the water cycles seems to be the most obvious transformation. Aside from that the drastic temperature shifts are the most common symptom and lead to sporadic blizzards, whiteouts, and even thunder-snows typically in the northeast and mid-west, reaching further and further south along the Mississippi tributaries and channels. January to March hold the highest prospects of hardship.

Spring tends to bring heavier rains than days past, but only where water is abundant and this often leads to surprise cold snaps. Consequently, tornado season has less of a transitory period and is growing increasingly more active with a rising number to touchdowns within a wider area. Specifically, the south is proving much more vulnerable than it was previously though tornado alley still gets more than its fair share. Ergo, this makes the old methods of large scale agriculture problematic. Not only are the twisters a constant threat to the croplands and their overall yields, but they also consistently damage roadways, train tracks, and power cables. As it stands, April to June seem to be the time of year to keep ones eyes on the horizon.

Summer seems to be growing hotter, drier, and longer by the year much to the dismay of farmers, ranchers, fishermen, and even the river systems themselves. This is no doubt due to the shift of the water cycle, particularly less snow means less melt down the mountainsides, less fed into the rivers at a consistent level, thus the entire revolution and rhythm is off sync comparatively. In unison, this also leads to increased risk of wildfires in many regions as well as the serious risk of dehydration and sunstroke for those in the Outlands with no air conditioning or running water. Travel across the Great Plains and desert territories is ill advised between June and September, which coincidentally is also when Outlanders should remain alert to the possibility of wildfire due to heat lightning or accidental ignition.

For those along the Atlantic, hurricane season ramps up between late July and November, which leads to much higher risk of high wind storms at first, and then slow moving heavy rain and flash floods once they make landfall. The breakaways of cooler condensation that tend to splinter away from these cyclones are also responsible for the late season tornadoes that occur within Cyclone Boulevard as well. Often once these storms pass it shifts right back to excessive heat, which has had some particularly interesting implications for all manner of flaura and fauna. For those in the Outlands, the CDC recommends that they pay particular attention to the possibility of mold and parasites during this time as well as ensuring their roofs remain in good working condition before the winter settles in.

On a lighter note, it turns out that the animal kingdom has been doing increasingly well without the constant expanse of civilization into its few remaining habitats. With substantially less thousand plus pound machines barreling down the roadways at high speeds, perfectly manicured lawns, and excessive pesticides being deployed constantly; wildlife has been experiencing a golden era of resurgence and natural beauty. Entire neighborhoods have been reclaimed by plants and animals alike. Deer proliferate in the Outlands, and other animals brought to near extinction seem to be adapting exceptionally well to this new world of ours. The alligator has spawned immensely and reconquered the vast majority of its natural habitat. Coyotes run rampant in the west, and the both the Grizzly bear and the wolf thrive once more in the mountains and forests they call home. The same is true of the moose, elk, and caribou. Even the big cats and the condor are eating well these days. Seems that once humans insatiable expansion is put in check, the other creatures of the world are quick to recover and make the most of any opportunity that presents itself. Which leads us to where we stand today, mankind in America.

CHAPTER XIII: THE FIRST REALM – URBAN AMERICA

The Hubs are where the survivors of apocalypse can find the closest reflection of the world they have lost. Every major city is rapidly approaching the resurrection of the life and concepts once taken for granted, and the legal system left still standing will let nothing stand in the way of progress. These metropolises are where all commerce and exchange originate, and there are opportunities aplenty for a life of peace and prosperity if one plays by the rules. At this point, the munitions production is in overdrive, though absolutely zero rounds are offered up for sale to the general public. Sheriffs and Soldiers are the only human beings that can get their hands on new bullets. Period. This is also where one can find gasoline, at the affordable national average of 118.99 per gallon but only in select and highly monitored locations with a 10 gallon ration per week. In spite of this, one can find work, electricity, plumbing, a hot meal, thriving shopping centers and flea markets, massive urban gardens, orchards and botanical hubs, an internet and telephone connection, safety and security, alcohol, gambling, and all the boons that modern society has to offer. These privileges are ever guarded via CCTV camera systems, police and private security, the national guard, and numerous inhabitants that are all too happy to deliver "street justice" if the need arises. In the larger and more critical locations there's fleets of armed aerial surveillance drones ready at a moments notice.

This is also where you will find a sharp contrast between the "haves" and the "have-nots" as all who find themselves living here cling to this type of existence, this lifestyle, and will fight tooth and nail to preserve it. Here is where thousands of people crowd together and will happily sleep on the streets, in long derelict vehicles, or in makeshift shanty-towns as they attempt to pull themselves up by their bootstraps. Gambling and addiction are prevalent here, as is an irrefutable desperation for those who find their livelihoods threatened by the constant influx of both Outlander and "illegal" immigrants from the Caribbean or South America competing for resources as they have been for the last 10 years. This is also the heart of the prison industrial system, and those who get too reckless find themselves in bondage making the whole thing possible, often within a never ending cycle. This is where corruption reigns, and this is also where you can find yourself with a knife in your belly or a boot on your neck in the blink of an eye. Newcomers would do well to tread carefully, there are plenty of predators within the concrete jungles.

CHAPTER XIV: THE SECOND REALM – SUBURBAN AMERICA

The suburbs are arguably the most dangerous place to be in post war America as this is the battleground for the contest between anarchy and order. Do too well and you attract the attention of the urban underworld, do poorly and you will find yourself picked off by the bandits of the Outlands. there's also the possibility of simply pushing too far with ones neighbors. The key point to remember is if this is where you should find yourself, it is best to keep in mind that many areas have yet to regain electricity or cell phone signal to call for help. Once the sun sets, you are on your own. That isn't to say that there is not a strong sense of community in most places and they do not shy from danger. Many people set out in groups of 10 to 20 seeking better fortune just outside city limits and they maintain a close network and an ever watchful eye because the law of the land seems to be that survival depends upon forcing the predators to pick easy targets. As is the course of human nature, there is always a bigger, badder, and more organized group that preys on the weak. This is where people who work in the cities but cant afford rent disappear on their way home. This is also where packs of wild dogs and other scavengers take refuge until its time to forage for their next meal, and they don't much care if that means having to sink tooth or claw into those that still scream.

Regardless, this is also where one can hang on to nearly every cent of their hard earned dollar and stake a claim on their own house, raise their own crops and livestock, and keep everything they have scrounged since the end of days for themselves and their children, and possess a strong sense of investment toward the future. Seems everyone raises chickens these days, and those who band together tend to do exceptionally well, considering the alternatives. It is important to note that you can never forget that this is where the worst of the worst hide out, looking to swoop down on any travelers making the journey between cities and relieve them of their livelihoods and often their lives. The most common piece of advice revolves around maintaining a schedule and knowing the routes to and from the trading centers or job sites. Traveling in groups, knowing when to fight, when to run, and when to forfeit helps too.

CHAPTER XV: THE THIRD REALM – RURAL AMERICA

The Sticks, the boonies, the Outlands, the frontier, the wilds, call it what you will. Rural America, and those who claim it as home, have very few of the privileges of the Urban or Suburban realms. Here is where nature reigns supreme, be it mother earth herself or any of her children. The good news is that with so few on the roads for so long, wild game has proliferated within the trees and plains. All of the overlooked salvage and the fruits of natures bounty remain basically untouched for the better part of ten years. Should you find the right spot you could easily live a life of peace and quiet, undisturbed by the toils and troubles of today's world or the ghosts of the last. It all depends on whether or not you can embrace the environment as your guardian and provider while forsaking the drive to acquire technology, luxury, and opulence. All that was abandoned is overgrown at this point if in the right atmosphere, or merely desolate in the others; but with the right skills and know how it is a landscape of abundance for those willing to do whatever is necessary to survive and thrive.

Unfortunately, this is also where those who find themselves on the other side of the law seek to flee, performing nomadic evasion tactics, robbing and raiding along their path, and performing guerrilla warfare against their pursuers if they think the odds are in their favor. These ruthless few are quick to take what they need, and often simply whatever they want, from those who stray too far from the protection of the metros or highways. It is also all too easy for people to have a series of unfortunate events battling the elements, fail to pay attention and end up on the receiving end of a surprise dose of venom, or simply be in the wrong place at the wrong time and wind up as somethings dinner. You are on your own out here, away from any stranger or good Samaritan's help. Frontier law and survival are the only rule of the land and people can just disappear without a trace. There is an enormous amount of territory that fall into this category of environment, and should disaster strike no-one will ever know. These are the realms where the Holdout settlements shine brightest as the beacons of compromise, somewhere between wild and civil, much like their inhabitants.

CHAPTER XVI: THE FINAL REALM – INCARCERATION

Last but not least, we have the grisly underbelly of post-apocalyptic society that makes everything possible. Regardless of whether the inmate population consists of the so called "dregs of society" or the unfortunate souls who simply made mistakes like stealing to feed themselves and their family, pissed off the wrong cop, or got into a fight and things went too far; the system doesn't discriminate, at least on paper. While most petty crime was simply overlooked during the war, with its end there seems to be a gradual return towards "Zero Tolerance". No matter which way you look at it the end result is the same, prisoners are the backbone of the current labor system and with communications being what they are at this point, what happens in confinement stays in confinement. For better or worse.

The first thing that needs to be understood is that again, America is a massive nation and oddly enough the prison system remained largely unaffected by the almost all of the events that transpired. The only real difference is that instead of simply warehousing and stockpiling inmates as they had done historically, with the recovery effort in full swing they transformed into labor camps. Thanks to the sheer size of the country, the labor itself varies from place to place, but generally speaking the output is the same. In areas where the land is fertile and the prisons already reside you can expect hard labor in the fields. In some areas it is food, in others it is cotton or luxury crops like tobacco. Other regions send their inmates to mine coal for the trains or harvest timber quite literally for the reconstruction efforts. In other zones they work sorting freight or mail. Along the trade routes they get shipped out to repair roads, train tracks, or bridges. In the urban areas they perform trash collection, shovel snow, work the local gardens and nurseries, or engage in community service day in and day out. In the end the prisoners do whatever is necessary at the base level for the rest of society to build momentum in specifics. Its estimated that 60 percent or more of the current fuel consumption is dedicated solely to the transportation of this unpaid workforce.

If anything happens to you during your workday, and your odds of survival are low you are buried on site and the official statement is nearly always an "escape attempt". Both the corrections officers and the inmates themselves could care less if you fall, often there seems to be a small sense of envy. This is especially true for the lifers. To make matters worse the conditions are absolutely atrocious. Corruption among the officers runs rampant, the sense of gang solidarity even more so, push too far in one direction or the other and you're never heard from again. Food, healthcare, and common decency are barely existent and many of the particularly unhealthy frequently fall to disease, malnutrition, inclement weather, or sheer physical exertion. These cases are noted as "Natural Causes", but only if they occur within the housing facilities. Many suspect that the lighter sentences applied today were simply put in place so that the strong could get out and recover from their ailments before being put back in to work again, effectively increasing the likelihood of survival by taking a fully hands-off, zero responsibility approach. Of course it's then justified by stating "You have to be crazy to keep coming back here" and thus the cycle continues as parole violations increase. In most states, the "Three Strikes" rule still applies.

PART II: THE SYSTEM

RPGS : THE FOUR CORNERSTONES

The Aftermath is a Role Playing Game (RPG) platform. Nearly every RPG ever created functions similarly with its reliance upon a few core concepts. The games themselves require verbal exchange between the Players themselves, the Storyteller (DM for Dungeons & Dragons, GM for many others) and the Play System itself. Every participant has their own role to play in the narrative the Storyteller provides, which uses the System to represent any and every interaction between the Players and their environments. The quick and dirty version is as follows and reflect the key sections of this page:

- The System - The "Rules" used to determine success and failure for both the Players and the Storytellers interaction during the Game Narrative.
- The Storyteller – Every game needs at least one person to take the lead in delivering the Story or Game Narrative to provide both the details of the Environment and all the other Characters the Player's will interact with. The actors controlled by the Storyteller are known as a Non-Player Characters (NPCs). A Storytellers primary job is to provide the stage, setting, and plot for the Actors to interact with one another.
- The Player(s) - Each Player controls a Character in the Storytellers Narrative, essentially making them an Actor. The Players get the opportunity to create a Character and introduce them into the Storyteller's Game Narrative.
- The Setting – At the end of this book is the backstory for games set in North America after the 2012 Mayan Apocalypse to provide context and material for the Storytellers to use. The beauty of this Play System is that it is intended to be "Loosely Interpreted" which means that should the Storyteller and all Players choose, the Game Narrative can be staged however you like by modding in different abilities and skills.

ACTIVE VS. PASSIVE PLAY

One of the primary concepts regarding RPGs is the idea of Passive and Active Play. Passive play is where "immersion" factors into the account of any game. This is where the players gain insight, equipment, or otherwise become savvy to opportunities by playing their characters role in the storyteller's script. Any dice rolls or checks to determine the characters results and effects during passive play are demonstrated through the ability to dedicate extensive time and energy to achieve the results they are pursuing. In essence, passive play occurs gradually and the attention to detail focuses on the story itself, the characters in it, and the players dedication to plot development instead of the system itself. All of the time spent in games where the characters are in between adventures and developing the plot, shopping for equipment, and talking to other people is the prime example of passive play.

Active play on the other hand, is where the characters put their money where their mouth is. This would be any time a player fights, flees, sneaks around, climbs a mountain, or engages in any activity where every second and every move counts. These are the moments where the characters are really put to the test, the blood pumps and the adrenaline flows, where things get really exciting because the consequences are real but amazing things can occur. Active play happens any time the character finds themselves in danger, at which point the rule system becomes significantly more involved and complicated. What it really boils down to is the passing of time. During active play the time-frame slows down and the rules revolve around the concept of the ROUND. A round is a 3 second period where the characters and the storyteller's NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS (NPCs) maneuver with both haste and purpose, and in The Aftermath timing is everything.

SECTION I: ATTRIBUTES & CHECKS

The first thing that both the Players and Storytellers need to understand is about characters is their ATTRIBUTES. Attributes represent a characters natural developed physical and mental capacity to manipulate the world and are directly related to a new character's initial Skill Ratings. Skills represent a characters inherent knowledge, experience, and subject familiarity when performing complex tasks, whereas attributes embody a characters physical and mental prowess and potential for more generalized interactions.

- ATTRIBUTE RATINGS are determined at character creation by rolling Two Ten-Sided Die (2D10) and combining the result. Given the nature of the dice, 2 is the bare minimum to maintain core functionality. 10 is the universal average and 20 is peak performance.

RATING	RESULT	DESCRIPTION
2 – 5	Inept	Any attribute at 5 or less indicates a severe deficiency, and the character should probably consider talking to a doctor. An attribute rating of 2 means that the character can barely function in this capacity, likely due to an injury, a mental health condition, or severe malnutrition or a combination of the three.
6 – 8	Below Average	Attributes between 6 and 10 indicate a weakness. The Apocalypse was hard, and the character is definitely carrying some burdens of one form or another
9 – 11	Average	
12 – 15	Above Average	Attributes that fall between 11 and 15 are above average, meaning that the character is fully capable for feats of this particular nature
16 – 20	Impressive	Any attribute that is 16 or better means that the character is particularly impressive in this dynamic. It should be noted that an attribute rating of 20 does not necessarily mean that the character belongs in the Olympic Games or the Guinness Book of World Records. It simply indicates that the character is operating at peak efficiency in this particular regard and that no further improvement can be made in a "general" sense

- Every character is bound to be unique in their own way (just like everyone else in the world), so it makes sense that they will possess certain strengths, weaknesses, and character traits. Not to worry though, a character can always improve their Attributes through their experience and dedicated training of their body and mind
- It also stands to reason that some deficient Traits might be aided by technology or items like as glasses, medication, etc.

ATTRIBUTE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE	COMMON USE
Memory	The faculty by which the mind stores and recalls information	Do you need to remember someones name? Something they said? The formula for calculating the circumference of a sphere?	• Remembering specific details of past conversations or experiences
Logic	Reasoning conducted according to strict principles of validity	Playing chess in the park? Trying to determine someone's motives? Figuring out what went or could go wrong based on certain evidence?	• Finding alternative solutions to solve problems when you lack the skills required • Figuring out what is going on, how, and why
Perception	The ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through one of the five the senses	Do you need to know how many people are on the other side of a doorway while you listen in? Maybe you are trying to make sense of what your friend is screaming at you after the gunfire erupts? Need to assess the situation quickly?	• Using the senses to gather information
Willpower	Control or mental fortitude exerted in order to do something difficult or restrain impulses	You know those days when you just don't want to get out of bed? Got hurt yesterday so now you get to work with a broken thumb? Trying to quit smoking or workout every morning? Fighting pain, emotions, and rash decisions?	• Any effects on Willpower alter all other Mental Traits! • Facing fear • Pushing through pain • Exerting self control or discipline • Resisting the urge to rest or otherwise pass out
Charisma	Compelling social ability or charm that can inspire devotion in others	See, charisma is tricky. My personal interpretation is "the ability to persuade others to both see and agree with your line of thinking". That is basically the entire goal of communication	• Persuading, befriending, or otherwise manipulating others

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

ATTRIBUTE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE	COMMON USE
Strength	The quality or state of being strong; bodily or muscular power; vigor	Lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying, or otherwise affecting the physical world with ones own body. That is strength.	• Determining effectiveness of strikes in Melee combat • Climbing • Lifting or carrying heavy objects • Forcing things to move (objects, cars, animals, other people) • Forcing things open (doors, locks, containers)
Endurance	The ability to withstand hardship or adversity and / or sustain a prolonged stressful effort or activity	Keeping pace while running? Trying to fight off illness or infection? Maintain functionality after considerable blood loss? Carry a heavy pack long distances? Continue doing almost anything once it becomes difficult?	• Any effects on Endurance alter all other Physical Traits! • Keeping pace with intense activity • Healing or recovery from illness • Resisting infection or poisons • Maintaining body function while weak or wounded • Holding ones breath
Agility	The ability to move, change direction or body position both quickly and easily. Body awareness, flexibility, and balance in a nutshell	Need to jump over an obstacle? How about scramble up a retaining wall or fence? Catch something thrown at you? Keep your balance? Jump out of a second story window without hurting yourself?	• Keeping balance • Climbing • Jumping • Using hand-eye coordination or body awareness • Moving efficiently in general
Speed	The rate at which someone or something is able to move or operate	Need to haul ass towards or away from danger? Working on something that needed to be finished yesterday? In a standoff and want to be the first to make a move?	• Number of Combat Actions • Running • Movement rate or frequency in general • Setting the pace for physical activity
Beauty	A combination of qualities, such as shape, color or form that pleases the aesthetic senses of the beholder	This is your base aesthetic and physical attractiveness, plain and simple. Beauty as a attribute cannot be improved, only masked or modified	• Seduction or bolstering charisma if possible • Making a proposition appear more attractive

- ATTRIBUTE CHECKS are handled by rolling 2D10 and adding the result together. If the roll is under the Attribute Rating then it is Successful
- ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS can be positive or negative. For instance, say you need to perform an Agility Check to climb into a window without making a ruckus or hurting yourself (the consequences of failure):
  - If the window is low to the ground so its easy to keep balance and position yourself you might receive a significant bonus
  - If the windowsill is at about hip height or lower so you don't have to pull yourself up, you only move in and down you may get a small bonus
  - If the windowsill is about shoulder height that seems about average, just requires a little effort. No modifier
  - If the windowsill is within arms length but you have to scale the wall a bit, you may have a small negative
  - If the windowsill is at the end of your reach but you can pull yourself up with a little foot planting, you should probably get a significant negative
  - If you have to jump as high as you can, latch onto the ledge, and then scramble up and open the window, hell yes negatives apply heavily!
  - Now factor in things like injury, exhaustion, or malnutrition...
  - Add in environmental details like light level, movement speed, distance, or weather conditions and you get the idea. As a Storyteller just giving time of day, current weather, crowd size and noise, whatever information is pertinent based on the situation does wonders for players to make informed decisions. The Perception Attribute is there for a reason!
  - As a Storyteller, it's recommend simply having them roll their checks and not get bogged down in the math beforehand. If you know its going to be really difficult but they have an above average score then just see what happens.
    - IE: Player has an Agility Rating of 14, and trying to do an exceptionally difficult window entry. Roll 9 or less and the player succeeds. Roll 10 or more and its a failure, the higher the roll the worse the results of trying. If you rolled really high you probably twisted your ankle painfully when you came crashing down. If the roll is around 8 you succeed but make some noise, if the roll is around a 5 then you're good, if its below a 4 you make it look easy and keep it clean and quiet. Let the dice speak for themselves and THEN try to interpret it. That by no means play loose with your assessment though, just figure out how to keep it a game. It is highly recommended that as a storyteller that you never, ever pause the game to figure out what exact number is needed to be successful. Just roll and interpret the results, argue if you must but the storyteller always has the final say in the matter. Its called "The Aftermath" for multiple reasons!
- It may make sense to "CHAIN" ATTRIBUTE CHECKS together. For instance, these are just a few possible circumstances:
  - Having to jump long distances. IE: From one rooftop to another across a narrow alley
    - Speed Check to build up speed & then an Agility Check to make the jump
    - Maybe the Speed Check provides bonuses (low roll Success) or negatives (high roll Failures) to the Agility Check
    - If you barely fail the Agility Check, maybe then can use a Strength Check to see if you catch yourself
    - If you clearly fail, guess what? You fall and probably injure yourself in the process
  - Climbing things. IE: Rock climbing or clearing a high fence or wall
    - Agility Check to reach the needed grip then a Strength Check to make use of it
    - Bonuses or negatives from the first apply to second
    - Endurance Check to keep grip while you rest for the next move
    - Onward and upward!
  - Carrying heavy objects quickly. IE: Get your wounded friend to safety!
    - Strength Check to pick them up and then an Agility Check position them properly, followed by a Speed Check to move as fast as possible
    - Bonuses or negatives as usual
  - Moving large or heavy objects long distances. IE: Get your car out of the mud and back onto the road!
    - Strength Check to see if you can actually move it then an Endurance Check to push until the character gets it where it needs to be to gain traction
    - Bonuses or negatives as usual

- Smooth Talk. IE: Seduce or manipulate someone or talk your way out of a sticky situation
  - Beauty / Logic Check to verify you are discussing the same thing and then a Charisma Check to pull it off
  - All the usual Attribute Modifiers

INTOXICATION, PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS, & OTHER ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS:

People have their vices, sometimes it makes sense to strike when you know your target(s) will be inebriated. Sometimes it makes sense to be under the influence yourself, and sometimes the characters are just likely to need to find a way to cope or celebrate a victory. The truth is that partaking in mind altering substances is usually a social endeavor, and after so much loss and pain its likely that the characters in the Aftermath may pick up some bad habits. These things tend to affect the body in multiple ways:

- The amount consumed and refinement process drastically alter the effects. Consider the following:
  - Having a decent buzz is considerably less impairing than being hammered drunk
  - Low dose amphetamines might make the person feel sharper, though reduce appetite and feel a little jittery whereas smoking crystal meth will provide a considerably different experience
  - Prescription opiates might make help a character manage pain, but using heroin is an entirely different beast
- Generally speaking, the more a character uses the less they will be able to function properly
- Different substances vary in the amount of time that the character may be inebriated
- Tolerance, frequency of use, and the concept of addiction could easily apply as well

SECTION II: SKILLS & CHECKS

There are two main types of SKILL CHECKS. These checks are handled by rolling D100. Again you roll 2D10 but one dice serves as the 10's digit, and one dice serves as the 1's digit. SKILL MODIFIERS work exactly like they do above in the Attributes Section but instead of changing Attribute Rating, they alter Skill Rating. The main types of Skill Checks consist of GENERAL SKILL CHECKS and RISKY SKILL CHECKS. There is also Critical Skill Rolls which are a sub sect of these two.

- GENERAL SKILL CHECKS - The dice roll determines both the speed and efficiency of the task at hand. Given that with enough time anything can be accomplished, the purpose of general skill checks is to tell you how long till the goal is accomplished, and then how well the player performed the task
  - Prime example here is any type of CRAFTING, which is supposed to represent the time and effort you put into anything that you create or repair:
    - If you fail you fail. You waste a lot of time and have to try again. There's no risk other than meeting the deadline
    - Skill Modifiers are based entirely on what you are trying to do. If you are trying to stitch a patch on your jeans, no problem. Roll well and you have pretty thread work. Maybe you never stitched anything before so you get some kind of negative. If you were trying to embroider a dragon onto a suit cuff and never threaded a needle in your life, you know you are going to have some problems. Just roll and interpret
    - Unfamiliar crafts can have significant penalties based on what they are. For instance if you are just trying to fashion a spear out of a broom stick and a kitchen knife, your roll represents you using what you have available as efficiently as possible. If you barely succeed you managed to fashion a series of knots to tie the knife to the stick all hodge-podge. If you rolled somewhere in the middle maybe you took the handle off the blade and made it a little more efficient and less likely to break. If you rolled well you probably found a way to fuse the blade to the staff itself. If you did really well you reinforced the fusion points to make a quality design. That is simple enough, but now what happens if you have no background with any kind of metalwork and you are trying to weld armor to your car? You have no clue how to weld properly or even what a quality weld looks like! Storytellers should act accordingly, there are weird little nuances to every craft!
- RISKY SKILL CHECKS - This particular attempt needs to be done right the first time or there will be consequences, time is NOT on your side here and you need to succeed now. Almost all of the aforementioned Attribute Checks in the previous section qualify as "Risky"!
  - A good example of the difference between a General Skill Check and a Risky Skill Check would be trying to fashion homemade explosives or mixing volatile chemical compounds vs the spear illustration above. A better example is to address all of the TRANSPORTATION SKILLS
    - A General Skill Check on a Transportation Skill evaluates how long it took to reach the destination, knowing when to idle to conserve fuel, avoiding damage from potholes in neglected roadways, whether or not your horse needs to rest or if you need to make an Endurance Check on your bike, so on and so forth
    - A Risky Skill Check on a Transportation Skill would be like trying to perform a PIT maneuver against another car, make a horse jump a fence, roll down some stairs on a bicycle, or perform some kind of flashy trick or risky jump. Again, it is highly recommended that you don't let yourself get tied up in the math. Just roll and interpret!
- CRITICAL SKILL ROLLS - Critical Skill Rolls occur when the D100 results are doubled. IE: 33 or 66 or 99. They can be successes or failures but they always have awesome outcomes. Maybe you barely fail a Vehicle Check. Now you have a flat tire. Maybe you get yourself an 11, the best possible critical roll on that same Vehicle Check. You make awesome time, burn minimal fuel, and your long dead RPM meter came back to life! You even managed to make the meeting early and received a bonus for making things easy with time to spare. Or maybe another player was badly injured, everyone was failing their Injury Checks to stabilize him, but that 11 guaranteed his survival by getting them somewhere that could provide a fighting chance. Storytellers act accordingly!
  - CRITICAL 00 - Double zeros on D100 are intended to be the wildcard. While you almost rolled the lowest of the low, you also almost rolled the highest of the high. Double Zero should be treated as both the best possible critical success, while also being one of the worst critical failures!

- CHAINING SKILL CHECKS work just like chaining Attribute Checks:
  - SKILL TO SKILL - Trying to make a bomb? Chemistry Checks to make the compounds, Electronics Checks to wire the detonator, Crafting Checks to actually assemble the device itself.
  - SKILL TO ATTRIBUTE - Haggling prices on canned goods without labels? Negotiation Check to make the sale, Charisma Check to see if they are happy about it. Maybe in their mind it felt like they got a good deal and are eager to do business in the future; maybe they felt like you forced their hand but can respect your professionalism...at least to your face...this time
  - Storytellers don't forget that this sets up the possibility for stacking modifiers on modifiers. Again, I highly suggest rolling first, then interpreting the results. If you have to argue and the players convince you that the odds are in their favor, so be it. Just keep the story moving. In the end the storyteller always has the final say, but for the love of everything that is gaming, keep the story moving! Roll then interpret! Forget the math unless you absolutely have to face it for the sake of group cohesion!
- SKILL MODIFIERS: For simplicity's sake, the following table should be used to calculate the modifiers for Attribute Checks, General Skill Checks, or Risky Skill Checks
  - The Off-Hand Skill (always a negative number or zero) is simply the modifier you receive when you have to use your non dominant hand due to injury or loss of limb function.
- FOCUS SKILLS: Are a subclass of skills that essentially support multiple other skills, and thus perform solely as Modifiers themselves!

SIMPLE MODIFIER TABLE

COMPLEXITY	SKILL MODIFIER	ATTRIBUTE MODIFIER
Simple	75	6
Easy	50	4
Likely	25	2
Probable	10	1
Standard	0	0
Improbable	-10	-1
Unlikely	-25	-2
Difficult	-50	-4
Complicated	-75	-6
Incredible	-100	-8
"Impossible"	-125	-10

- STORYTELLERS, it is of the utmost importance that you provide the players with as much information as is relevant so that they can make an informed decision. Simple things such as these go a long way:
  - Time of day for determining light level
  - Weather, ground conditions, and any other environmental factors
    - Is it raining and muddy?
    - Icy and slick? Are you shivering?
    - Smokey as hell?
  - Ambient interference
    - Trying to make a Perception Check for hearing in a crowded, noisy place?
    - Suspect the character you are trying to communicate with already likes you or finds you attractive?
    - Are you trying to lift and carry something incredibly heavy at the end of a hard days work, or at the beginning?
    - Have you been baking in the sun all day making you sweaty, sunburned, and exhausted?
    - Maybe your Agility Check is going to be difficult thanks to an injury?
    - Are you drunk?!? Speed Checks might be complicated by needing to keep your balance with your Agility Penalty
    - Do you have the right tools needed for the job? What about the materials?

SECTION III: COMBAT - ROUNDS & ACTIONS

Now we are in to the thick of it, the "Do or Die". Every interaction in combat is a Risky Skill / Attribute Check. Now or never. Remember that each ROUND of active play is approximately three seconds. For those of you reading this with no real life experience, violence is crazy and quick, period. Every move matters and this is what they mean when they talk about "The Quick and the Dead". Everything changes right here, right now. The first thing players and storytellers need to understand is everyone gets ONE TURN PER ROUND but characters can SAVE ACTIONS to interrupt someone else's turn later in the SEQUENCE!

ORDER OF OPERATIONS:

There are generally only two combat scenarios for determining character and NPC turn order. The AMBUSH SCENARIO (Surprise Attack) and the READY SCENARIO

- AMBUSH SCENARIO: This is where one party (Offense) makes the first move in attacking an unsuspecting and unprepared party (Defense). In instances of STEALTH operations, it runs in a state of consistency until either the player(s) are discovered
  - Surgical synchronized ambushes are common with small teams (3-6 characters). The idea is "When I give the signal, ATTACK!". When this is the case, all characters of the Offense group get to perform their turns first, in the order of the HIGHEST SEQUENCE among themselves once the OPENING MOVE is made or the "signal" is given by the character initializing the assault (who always gets the first turn)
  - Large ambushes are also common, but work a bit differently. When there are more than 6 people involved in the Offense or the Defense group outnumbers the attackers, then once the OPENING MOVE is declared the TURN ORDER consists of the next HIGHEST SEQUENCE from either side. If the character that meets that criteria is in the Defense group, they have to pass a Sequence Check with Modifiers in order to become READY and take their turn. The Offense group does NOT have to do this
  - After the first round of initial combat, both the Offense and Defense groups surviving combatants are considered READY and the order of operations shifts to the READY SCENARIO
- READY SCENARIO: This is where all parties are on high alert and ready to fight. Sometimes this happens after an ambush, other times there might have been a standoff and words failed, alarms may have been raised, etc. No matter which way it went, all characters are "ready" to engage their enemies and opposition immediately
  - In this scenario the Order of Combat is determined by the character with the HIGHEST SEQUENCE ATTRIBUTE first and then the next character that gets their turn is in descending order, regardless of "team" status. If there was a standoff, whoever decided to move first (or failed their Willpower Check) should probably make a Speed Check to guarantee they get the OPENING MOVE

COMBAT TURNS & ACTIONS:

When each round of combat is only three seconds you begin to understand the value of the Speed Attribute. Your Speed divided by two (rounded down) is the number of ACTIONS that you have per turn. There are several things you can do with them, but they all revolve around MOVEMENT of some sort. On the Macro level, there are four very general ways to spend Actions:
- MOVEMENT & MANEUVERING
- ATTACKING & attempting to STRIKE a target in MELEE or RANGED combat
- SAVING ACTIONS to interrupt another character's turn (lasts until the start of their next turn or when all that were SAVED are spent)
- Ignoring combat altogether and attempting to PERFORM ANOTHER ACT as quickly as humanly possible (crack a safe, change a tire, stop the bleeding, etc...)

MOVEMENT & MANEUVERING:

The core concept is that your characters turn is everything that they get to do in 3 seconds! Every move counts! General movement is one step at a time,though this idea lays the foundation of how Combat should theoretically function in almost every scenario

- RUNNING? Left foot = One Action, Right foot = One more, Left again = Another one...so on and so forth (One Action per "Pace")
  - SPRINTING: once a character has spent all of their ACTIONS during one turn to build up speed, they are now SPRINTING until they have to spend an action to perform another MANUEVER (change direction, jump, push through something)
    - While SPRINTING a character moves 1.5 times their Action Points in "PACES"
    - Use PACES to determine whether or not a pursuing character is gaining on their target or falling behind, keeping things like the original distance between them in mind
- Ducking? Hitting the Dirt? One Action
- Drawing your weapon? Need to chamber a round? One, Two
- Taking cover? Peeking out to get a look and then readying your weapon? One, Two, Three
- Jumping over something? Agility Check to see if you have to spend an Action planting your hand first or if you can just clear it. Maybe you do but don't stick the landing...
- Getting up from the ground? Agility Check, maybe you need to plant your hand, then get your footing, then spring up rather than just springing to your feet
- Readying an item on your person? Agility Check, maybe you need to pop a button or use velcro. Is it in your backpack? You have to remove your pack – One (if its just slung over your shoulder), Two (if both arms are through the straps), then open it = Two more (grab & zip, or grab and loosen pull tie), so on and so forth. Certain ABILITIES help with this immensely, and will be discussed later. Reloading in particular can be tricky and is addressed in RANGED COMBAT further down the line
- COMMUNICATION takes CONCENTRATION (which will come up again later), and thus Action use as well! It takes at least One Action to bark out any information due to the fact you have to choose your wording in order to relay the message effectively
  - Gunfire and hearing protection go hand in hand. It seems reasonable that the characters nearby might need to make a Perception Check to hear what was said!
- Taking and manipulating COVER will also be discussed later in the RANGED COMBAT section. For now we simply need to understand Actions first!
- Every move counts! Each and every physical motion. Sometimes things are done in tandem like a two handed shove, tackle, or a pull up. Storytellers act accordingly!

ATTACKING & MELEE COMBAT:

Now that we understand general Movements and Maneuvers during a three second timeline, we can rationally discuss Melee Attacks. There are generally two types of Melee Maneuvers, the STRIKE (covered here) and the GRAPPLE (covered later). Each one relies on a Combat Skill Check for the appropriate "weapon" type:

- UNARMED – Bare handed or using the fists and feet as a striking surface
- GRAPPLING – Grabbing with the hands or wrestling. This is completely different from STRIKING (aside from the initial GRAB) and will be discussed in detail within its own section
- SHORT WEAPONS – Small one handed weapons like knives, hammers, flashlights. Anything about 2' long or less
- LONG WEAPONS – One handed weapons that have considerable reach. Usually anywhere between 2.5' to 4' long approximately
- TWO HANDED WEAPONS – Two handed weapons that have extensive reach or using both hands on a Large(r) Weapon to increase damage or effectiveness through a process known as REINFORCING THEIR GRIP (multiplies characters Strength with the weapon by 1.5x when determining effectiveness)
- CHAIN WEAPONS – Chain weapons use momentum to increase damage. Chains, nunchucku, flails, rope weapons, etc
- SHIELD - Effectively striking someone with a shield or large bulky object like a chair or bar stool

TYPES OF MELEE ATTACKS:

All melee attacks are based on the idea that the character is essentially attempting to hit or otherwise Strike your target. Usually there are only two types of Melee Attacks, THRUSTS and SWINGS. Determining the LOCATION of a successful Strike will be presented later:

- THRUSTS - are forward, direct attacks like jabs, pokes, and stabs. They cost One Action when the weapon is ready, though when successful it may take another Action to remove the weapon from the target. This is all contingent on weapon size and the effectiveness of the strike
  - On a poor Combat Skill Check (MAJOR FAILURE, see STRIKE EFFECTS Section), a Thrust may require an Agility Check to maintain balance based on the weight of the weapon or especially if it was a kick or involved significant footwork
  - You also need to spend an Action to remove and READY your weapon after a stab, particularly if the target is armored. Thrust, ready weapon, thrust, ready weapon. Maybe on a lower CRITICAL SUCCESS (later...) it gets stuck in their skull or ribs...
- SWINGS - are indirect, circular or perpendicular attacks that generally have an arc of trajectory such as slashes, chops, swats, hooks, sweeping or roundhouse kicks. They also cost One Action when the "weapon" is ready
  - On a poor Combat Skill Check (MAJOR FAILURE, covered later) a Swing may require an Agility Check to maintain balance based on the weight of the weapon or especially with a sweeping kick. Two Handed Weapons may require a Strength to Agility Chain as well when appropriate
  - On a particularly bad Combat Skill Check (MAJOR FAILURE, again covered later), your weapon might get stuck in something requiring an additional Action to perform a Strength Check to READY it again

ATTACKING & RANGED COMBAT:

Throwing, firing, or shooting attacks are the general idea behind Ranged Combat. Once again use the appropriate Ranged Combat Skill Check for the weapon type. A good rule of thumb is to think about the old adage "Ready, Aim, Fire!". You spend One Action to face your target and READY your weapon initially, then you AIM the weapon, and when the time is right you FIRE. Nice, easy Chain of events! These are the Ranged Weapon types:

- THROWN WEAPONS – Any time you throw something, but modifiers apply to different features of the weapon type. A Ball is standard, a spear is a little different, a Frisbee or Hatchet is way different!
- ARCHERY WEAPONS – Specifically Bows and Arrows. Crossbows make use of a trigger mechanism which effectively makes them a "Pistol" or "Rifle". It is a specific style, vastly distinct from the methods of using a Bow
- PISTOLS – A small, one handed weapon that uses a trigger to fire. Crossbow pistols just have increased long range modifiers
- RIFLES – A reasonably long, but easy to use, two handed weapon using a trigger to fire. Crossbows also have increased long range penalties
- BURST-FIRE – Are simply Modifiers that apply to the appropriate Weapon Skill when firing on Fully Automatic, much like the Off-Hand Skill Modifier
- WEAPON SYSTEMS – These are the modern digital systems and siege weapons of old. Equipment like anti-aircraft guns, cannons, mortars or artillery, digital or analog targeting systems, trebuchets or catapults, ballista, so on and so forth

RANGED COMBAT MANUEVERS:

There are some specialized Movements and Maneuvers that are specific to Ranged Combat and need to be addressed first. These concepts revolve around making yourself more difficult to hit seeing as no-one alive can actually dodge a bullet once the trigger has been pulled, at least not consistently!

- SITUATIONAL AWARENESS - Combat can easily become one of the most chaotic events anyone could possibly experience. It is fast! Usually it makes sense to assess the situation fairly frequently as the dynamics change
    - Characters may spend One Action to evaluate the battlefield and gather information by performing a Perception Check
    - Failure of these Checks reveals no new information for the character
- SERPENTINE MOTION – While Serpentine is a little slower than a full sprint or direct route, it can definitely reduce the likelihood of being struck by a projectile by advancing in an erratic and unpredictable manner
    - Serpentine Motion must be declared at the start of maneuvering by performing an Agility Check with Modifiers
        - If passed the Serpentine Modifier applies against striking the character, reducing an attackers likelihood to hit. The MODIFIER SECTION will extrapolate on this
        - If failed, the character must spend an additional Action at the start of maneuvering in order to CONCENTRATE to achieve the desired effect
            - If a character is going to spend several turns in motion, without pause of any kind, then only the initial Concentration Action need apply
            - CONCENTRATION is a concept that will also apply to VEHICULAR & MOUNTED COMBAT and will be covered later, we are simply laying the foundation right now
- TAKING COVER - COVER will save your life if you find yourself in a firefight! Cover Modifiers will be explained in the MODIFIERS SECTION more thoroughly but the basic idea is that you hide or obscure your body behind substantially dense material in order to reduce exposure and thus visibility. On the surface, the theory is that you cannot shoot what you can't see. Realistically there is a massive difference between Cover and Concealment. Bullets easily penetrate objects like most doors, drywall, and siding!
    - When a character is near an obstacle, barricade, or any dense material they may spend One Action to position themselves behind Cover
    - Once in Cover, they can spend an additional Action to OPTIMIZE their position. What this means is they effectively reduce their body EXPOSURE to the minimal amount necessary to continue Firing their weapon effectively
        - With Pistols this means only the Head, Neck, Shoulder(s), and Arm(s) are Exposed but varies on a case by case basis
            - For instance Firing over an vehicles engine block means that both Shoulders are exposed, whereas if Firing from the edge of a wall only one Shoulder may be (as well as the non-dominant hand stabilizing for Recoil potentially)
        - Rifles would work the same way except that the character may only be exposing one Shoulder, one Arm, their Head, Face, and Neck by being a little further away and resting their stabilizing hand just behind the surface of their position
        - Storytellers use your best judgment! This could be an excellent chance for the Logic Check to come into play!

- USING A WEAPON - Any maneuver during a Three Second Combat Round costs Actions, and using a ranged weapon is no different. While Melee Combat is fairly straight-forward, Ranged Combat requires a certain level of attention to detail and finesse.
    - READY WEAPON: If caught unprepared, a character may need to "Ready" their weapon, which usually means drawing and loading it. Usually if a character knows they are moving into a potentially hostile situation though, they can state that they want to do so before combat ever actually begins
        - Firearms are generally pretty easy to handle:
            - 1 - Draw your weapon
            - 2 - Chamber a round if necessary
            - 3 - Ready firing position (shoulder your rifle, pistol stance, etc...this stage can be done long before combat begins)
            - 4 - Aim
            - 5 - Fire!
        - The Bow & Arrow takes significantly more time, but is also infinitely quieter
            - 1 - Draw the bow (Assumes the bow is already "threaded" or "strung")
            - 2 - Draw the arrow
            - 3 - "Nock" the arrow on string (This stage can usually be done long before combat begins)
            - 4 - Ready firing position by pulling the drawstring ("Drawing the Bow")
            - 5 – Aim
            - 6 – Fire!
        - Crossbows, Special Weapons, and Weapon Systems can be incredibly complicated or surprisingly easy, Storytellers act accordingly, but you should get the general idea at this point
- RELOADING - Every weapon has its own process. Bows and crossbows are generally single shot items which require frequent reloading. Pump-action, lever-action,or bolt-action firearms require the cartridge to be loaded manually, but can hold a small reserve of ammunition. Revolvers hold 6 rounds, and semi-automatics or assault weapons use magazines. Storytellers should keep this in mind, and it is terribly important that the players are familiar with their weapons before Combat begins so they know exactly what to anticipate when all hell breaks loose!
    - Semi-Automatic Weapons are usually fairly simple:
        - 1 - Eject empty magazine
        - 2 - Grab full magazine
        - 3 - Insert magazine
        - 4 - Chamber round by releasing slide
        - 5 - Ready firing position
        - Again certain ABILITIES speed this process up once the character is skilled enough with this particular type of weapon
    - Revolvers can be particularly difficult for an unskilled hand:
        - 1 - Empty the cylinder
        - 2 to 7 - Chamber round
        - 8 - Close cylinder
        - 9 - Ready firing position
        - ABILITIES or Tactical Gear (speed-loaders) can help
    - Pump-action, Lever-action, or Bolt-action rifles:
        - 1 - Grab action (Pumps ignore this)
        - 2 - Use action to chamber round after each one fired
            - Agility Check or Sufficient Weapon Skill can ensure the weapon remains Ready at the Shoulder
        - 3 - Switch grip back to "Ready" on the Trigger if Bolt-Action
        - Once empty, you either follow Semi-Automatic Weapon Reloads or Manual Loading into a feed or tube like so:
            - +1 - Insert one round at a time until capacity is reached or you decide to stop
        - +1 - Chamber the round
        - +1 - Ready firing position
        - ABILITIES will help

- ◦ Crossbows do not load quickly but its infinitely easier to teach someone to just point and shoot
  - ▪ Drawing a Crossbow
    - • Lever / Crank / Pump action
      - ◦ 1 - Grab action mechanism (Pumps ignore this)
      - ◦ 2 - Activate triggering mechanism by drawing string with the action
      - ◦ 3 - Switch hands back to Ready
    - • Foothold
      - ◦ 1 - Plant weapon
      - ◦ 2 - Plant foot
      - ◦ 3 - Pull string (possible Strength Check)
  - ▪ "Nock" crossbow bolt
  - ▪ Ready firing position
  - ▪ ABILITIES and design specifics can help
  - ◦ Special Weapons, Machine Guns, and Weapon Systems can be incredibly complicated or stupidly simple. Storytellers act accordingly!
- • FIRING A WEAPON - Need we really discuss this further? Yes!
  - ◦ Depending on character Strength, munition caliber or type, and design specifics the firing party may need to pass a Strength Check to maintain balance against the weapons RECOIL. If they fail, an additional Action must be spent to return to the Aim position
  - ◦ If firing on the same target multiple times and Recoil or Reloading is not a factor, the Aim position is maintained until the character decides to switch targets
  - ◦ SUSTAINED FIRE - Sustained Fire only applies to Burst Fire Weapons, and thus the Burst Fire attack corresponds to the appropriate weapons Combat Skill Check.
    - ▪ Modifiers will be covered in greater detail in the MODIFIERS SECTION, but as far as Action spending is concerned only the following needs to be understood:
      - • Firing a single shot with a fully-automatic weapon uses the appropriate skill type represented by either the Pistols (if one handed) or Rifles (if two handed, carbines and SMG's included) Skill
      - • Recoil can be a major issue in controlling Sustained Fire and Strength Checks should be common, though ABILITIES and Tactical Gear can help

INTENT OF ATTACKS:

Both Melee and Ranged Combat Maneuvers have two types of strike attempts which are important to both declare when spending Actions, and understand the difference now that the general mechanics have been covered

- • QUICK / FAST ATTACKS – A Quick / Fast Strike is a general strike where the character is not concerned with where exactly they hit their mark, but need to do it fast or often. Essentially this means striking as soon as possible. When a quick strike is successful, the character then rolls D100 again on the RANDOM HIT CHART to determine where the strike lands
- • AIMED / TARGETED ATTACKS – An Aimed / Targeted Strike must be declared beforehand to specify EXACTLY what the character is aiming for. This costs an additional Action to hold the attack until the best possible moment or simply focus their aim. The MODIFIER SECTION will cover the Targeted Strike with considerably more detail

RANDOM HIT CHART

ROLL	FRONT	BACK
01 – 03	Neck [...]	Neck [...]
04 – 07	Face	Head
08 – 15	Head	Head
16 – 20	Groin [Arteries]	Rear
21 – 30	Stomach [Organs]	Lower Back [Organs]
31 – 35	Left Ribs [(31) Heart / (32-35) Lungs]	Left Ribs [(31) Heart / (32-35) Lungs]
36 – 40	Right Ribs [Lungs]	Right Ribs [Lungs]
41 – 42	Inner Left Shoulder [Arteries]	Inner Left Shoulder [Arteries]
43 – 45	Outer Left Shoulder	Outer Left Shoulder
46 – 47	Inner Right Shoulder [Arteries]	Inner Right Shoulder [Arteries]
48 –50	Outer Right Shoulder	Outer Right Shoulder
51 – 52	Inner Left Thigh [Arteries]	Inner Left Thigh [Arteries]
53	Left Thigh [Bone]	Left Thigh [Bone]
54 – 55	Outer Left Thigh	Outer Left Thigh
56 – 57	Inner Right Thigh [Arteries]	Inner Right Thigh [Arteries]
58	Right Thigh [Bone]	Right Thigh [Bone]
59 – 60	Outer Right Thigh	Outer Right Thigh
61 – 62	Inner Left Bicep	Inner Left Bicep
63	Left Bicep [Bone]	Left Bicep [Bone]
64 – 65	Outer Left Bicep	Outer Left Bicep
66 – 67	Inner Right Bicep	Inner Right Bicep
68	Right Bicep [Bone]	Right Bicep [Bone]
69 – 70	Outer Right Bicep	Outer Right Bicep
71 -- 75	Left Forearm	Left Forearm
76 – 80	Right Forearm	Right Forearm
81 – 86	Left Shin	Left Shin
87 – 92	Right Shin	Right Shin
93 – 94	Left Hand	Left Hand
95 – 96	Right Hand	Right Hand
97 – 98	Left Foot	Left Foot
99 – 100	Right Foot	Right Foot

SAVING ACTIONS & INTERRUPTIONS:

Finally, there is SAVING ACTIONS for use outside of your own Turn but still within the three second Combat Round. These are used to "interrupt" another characters Action Point spending during their regular turn. This is how you Block, Dodge, open fire when a target breaks cover, or simply perform any other actions once the timing makes sense.

- BLOCKING ATTACKS: If a character Saves an Action during their turn, and then another character SUCCESSFULLY Strikes them, the targeted character may attempt a Block Maneuver. In order to successfully perform the Block, the Defending Character determines the difference between the item used to Block's Skill Rating and the Attackers Skill Rating and applies this to the Attacking characters successful roll to Strike. If their D100 roll is under the Modified "Successful" attack roll, then the Attack is DEFLECTED and effectively ignored or transferred to the blocking utensil. For example, consider the following scenario:
  - Block = Defenders Skill Rating – Attackers Skill Rating (can be negative) + Successful Attack Roll = Likelihood of Success
    - Defenders Unarmed Skill (DS) = 92
    - Attackers Unarmed Skill (AS) = 100
    - Successful Attack Roll (Roll) = 47
    - Likelihood of a successful Block = (DS [92] – AS [100] = [-8]) + Roll [47] = 39
    - Shields and other Bulky items are primarily used for Defense rather than Attacks, so they have a natural bonus (based on item size and maneuverability) to the Shield Skill for Blocking purposes ONLY
      - Many items can be used as "Shields" regardless of its intended purpose
      - EG: Chairs, bar-stools, end tables, furniture in general, backpacks, briefcases, various large cookware, construction materials, etc. Storytellers act accordingly for unwieldiness of the item
      - Shield Type regarding bonuses to Block:
        - Tower Shield :   +20
        - Kite :   +15
        - Round :   +10
        - Buckler :   0
      - *AN EXAMPLE:*
        - Attacking character performs a successful Targeted Swing at the Defending characters head with a roll of a 44 and the Defending character has a Modified Skill Rating of 17
        - Defending character had Saved Two Actions on their turn, anticipating this possibility
        - Defending character spends One of the Two Saved Actions to attempt to perform a Block
        - This means to successfully Block, the Defending character must roll under 61 (44 + 17) to deflect the blow
          - If the Defending character fails, the Attacking characters Strike lands uninhibited
          - If the Defending character barely succeeds, the Attacking character performs a Strength Check as usual, but rather than the EFFECT (Damage) of the Strike (covered later) being applied to the intended target, it is applied to the Blocking utensil such as one of the following:
            - Defender's Shield
              - Storytellers: Defender may need to make a successful Strength Check with Modifiers (usually a significant bonus unless the Attacker is using a Weighted or Heavy Two Handed Weapon) to prevent the shield from being knocked from their hands
              - If Attacker is using an appropriate weapon and rolls well with their own Strength Check they may damage the shield itself
            - Defender's Weapon
              - Defender must make a successful Weapon Skill Check with Modifiers from the Attackers Strength Check to prevent being disarmed from the force of the attack
              - For every 2 that the Attacking character rolls under their Strength Check the Defending character suffers a -10 to their Weapon Skill Check for the purpose of being Disarmed by the Attack

            - Defender's Hand / Foot or Forearm / Shin is still better than getting nailed in the

dome...The forearm and shins seem almost designed to take impact reasonably well and heal a little quicker than the Upper Arm or Thigh
- If the roll is particularly bad the dominant Hand or Foot are struck and receives the Damage
- These are used more regularly with considerably more finesse, and injury can be more significant to the combat outcome
- If the roll is only reasonably bad, but still successful the non-dominant Shin or Forearm receive the damage
  - If the Defending character clearly succeeds then the Strike is deflected without incident
    - It is important to note that attempting to Block a Melee Weapon Strike or any incoming fire with your bare hands, may save your life by preventing the blow to the Head but unless something amazing happens you are going to end up severely injured!
    - Since the Defending character saved Two Actions and only spent One to successfully Block, they can now spend their last Saved Action to perform a Fast Counter Attack!

• DODGING ATTACKS : Similarly, Dodging Attacks functions in the exact same way. Sometimes it makes more sense to simply avoid an attack altogether instead of trying to deflect it. The tactical choice between Blocking and Dodging have obvious implications, especially when engaged with a particularly strong enemy in Melee Combat or attempting to avoid an incoming projectile
- It is of the utmost importance that you understand that no character can consistently Dodge bullets or gunfire, that is what the Serpentine Motion mentioned previously is for!
- A character CAN Dodge both Melee and Thrown Weapons Strikes
- A character CAN Dodge Arrows from Archery Weapons and Crossbow Bolts if they are fired from LONG RANGE (which will be explained in the MODIFIER SECTION)
- If the Defending character saves an Action, they may attempt a Dodge against a Successful Strike
  - Add the characters Dodge Rating to the Strike Roll, this determines the odds of success for the Dodge Check. For example:
    - Attacking character successfully passes their Modified Weapon Skill Check with a roll of 22
    - Defending character has a Dodge Rating of 10, making their odds of success 32
- On Success the Attacker's Strike is avoided entirely
- On Failure the Strike lands as normal on its intended target

VEHICULAR & MOUNTED COMBAT :

As the driver, operator, or pilot of any vehicle (or animal), Combat Maneuvers and Action spending can be tricky. A lot of your time will be spent "Waiting" until opportune moments, or adjusting speed or direction to attempt to manifest these moments altogether. Storytellers act accordingly, and always, always, always remember a Combat Round is only Three Seconds! Acceleration and "Catching up" to another vehicle might take significant amounts of time. Points to note are as follows:

• One Action will always be spent CONCENTRATING on whatever is necessary to maintain control of the vehicle, steadily assessing the situation
• Hand and Foot coordination are going to be the primary Action use
• Maintaining course (HOLDING COURSE) or turning the wheel or guiding the Vehicle (CHANGING COURSE) cost One Action
• Accelerating or Decelerating (BRAKING) will cost One Action to begin the process
• Changes between these things are often, any change uses a Vehicle Skill or Horsemanship Check with Modifiers to determine effectiveness
   • Major Success' (Low Rolls) enhance the rate that opportunity occurs, or success of a Risky Skill Check
   • Moderate Success' ("Direct" Success Rolls) guarantee gradual increase in opportunity
   • Minor Success' (High Rolls) probably means you need to spend another Action to RECOVER control of the ride, vehicle, or animal
   • Failure means you lose control! Depending on circumstances you might crash, be thrown from the animal or vehicle, or have a chance to Recover. Storytellers act accordingly!
• As long as you can spend an Action to Concentrate on maintaining control of your ride, you may spend other Actions as needed. Keep in mind:
   • Concentration is key, and has a MANDATORY single Action Cost.
   • Hand Position is critical to both Holding & Changing Course costing an additional   Action unless you are certain of your ability to Recover Control once Failure occurs
• Melee attacks from vehicles might lead to the character overextending themselves and losing their balance on poor rolls, an Agility Check might make sense to see if they are thrown overboard!
• Everything in Combat is a High Risk Maneuver, Vehicular or Mounted Skill Checks are not any different!
• High speed collisions can ruin your day! Storytellers act appropriately! Wear your seat-belt or suffer grievous injury!

SECTION IV: COMBAT - LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS

Now that we know HOW we interact with the world, we can rationally discuss WHAT we are actually doing in game. Skill Checks should be understood at this point, but Combat Skill Checks operate a little bit differently. For one they are much more complex and specific compared to the aforementioned General or Risky Skill Checks. What you actually accomplish in such extreme haste is represented here. The following applies to attempting to Strike a target by using a Combat Skill Check, the RECOMMENDED Order of Operations is as follows:

• Once Action Point cost is determined it is time for the character to Roll a Combat Skill Check in order to successfully strike the target

• The result of this role is intended to speak for itself, though in order to do that we have to cover a few key concepts first. The Modifiers here work exactly like the Modifiers mentioned previously, there is just more specific patterns with the main idea being that all of the following information about the target ALWAYS intermix to determine the Likelihood of Success:

  • SIZE : Target Size should be pretty self explanatory. It's obviously easier to hit a beach ball than an apple, no matter what tool you are using to attempt your strike, be it your fist or a firearm

  • SPEED : Both the Attacker's and Defender's movement speed affect the likelihood of success.

    • Line of Sight is highly important when calculating this modifier. For instance if a target is moving high speeds perpendicular (across) to the Attackers Line of Sight the negative modifier will be much higher than if the target is moving high speeds towards or away from the target

    • If the Attacker is moving at high speeds and trying to strike a stationary target they will have more trouble than if the target is moving in the same direction near the same rate of motion

    • If both the Attacker and Defender are moving, parallel vs. perpendicular is definitely a major factor as well as whether or not they are moving towards or away from one another

  • EMERGENCE : If the Defender is in Overwatch, emergence comes into play as a variant of the SPEED Modifier and adds an additional -20 to Strike when they make an Interrupting Attack.

  • VISIBILITY : Visibility refers primarily to light level and the presence of dust, smoke, fog, or inclement weather

    • Cover and concealment have their own effects which will be addressed shortly

  • RANGE (Distance) : Range is also fairly self evident and only applies to Ranged Combat. The idea is that if a target is exceptionally close the character may receive a bonus to strike, whereas if they are far away the Attacker receives a negative Modifier

    • Range is highly pertinent to thrown or archery weapons! This is mainly due to the necessity of the missiles Arc of Trajectory

  • ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS : Environmental Effects consist mostly of high winds, unusual circumstances like sprinkler systems, smoke, and poor weather conditions

• Once the die is cast and the Roll to Skill Check is made, record the results and determine the applicable Modifiers to the Characters Combat Skill. Based on these modifiers the Roll to Strike will either be a Success or a Failure. Now we need to determine the ROLL TYPE:

  • If the Roll is a Success, divide the Likelihood of Success (Result needed after Modifiers) by Three. IE: Characters Combat Skill is 94 but their Likelihood of Success is 64 after Modifiers. Divided by three, the Roll Type will be as follows in increments of 21:

    • MINOR (GLANCING) HIT –The character barely Strikes the target, Damage and Effects of the Strike will probably be negligible though still causing pain

      • Following the example above, this would be a Roll of: ~ 43 - 64

    • DIRECT HIT – The character lands a solid hit on the target, Damage and Effects are going to have serious implications, including severe injury or death

      • For example above, this would be a Roll of: ~ 22 – 42

    • MAJOR (DECISIVE) HIT – This is a devastating attack that strike their target, and often have the capacity to disable or remove opponents. Interpretations may vary on a case by case basis but this is where mortal wounds are inflicted, broken bones occur, gaps in the targets armor are found, entry and exit wounds happen, etc.

      • For the given example, this would be a Roll of: 01 – 21

• If the Roll is a Failure, divide the Likelihood of Failure (100 minus the Likelihood of Success) by Three. Most times it makes more sense to just treat any Failure as just that, nothing more than a missed opportunity. Sometimes though, it may make more sense for the Storyteller to actually address them! In the given example, the Likelihood of Failure would be 36, so the Failure Types occur in increments of 12

> • MINOR (SLIGHT) FAILURE – The character barely misses. In the case of Ranged Combat or a mass Melee, the character may strike a party near the intended target instead
>> • If the Storyteller decides this is appropriate, use the RANDOM HIT CHART for the receiving party
>> • In the same example, this would be a Roll of: ~ 65 - 76
> • DIRECT FAILURE – The character definitely missed their mark
>> • In Melee Combat it may be appropriate to have the Attacking Character perform an Agility Check to maintain balance if they are trying to strike from a vehicle or horseback, were running full speed when they attempted the strike, or any other similar excursion
>> • In the example, this would be a Roll of: ~ 77 - 88
> • MAJOR (DECISIVE) FAILURE – Not only did the character miss their target, but they did so in a horrible fashion
>> • Melee Attackers must make an Agility Check to maintain their balance, or additional Actions might need to be spent to recover from overextending their reach
>> • Ranged Attackers are impacted significantly less but might need to make a Strength Check to manage Recoil or something along those lines
>> • For this example, the Roll would be: ~ 89 - 100

COMPLEX STRIKING MODIFIERS

SIZE	DISTANCE	SPEED	VISIBILITY	ENVIRONS	MODIFIER
5+ ft diameter -Cow -Horse or larger	Point Blank				75
4 ft diameter -Deer	Nearby				50
3 ft diameter -Large Shield -Large Dog -Small Deer	Close Range				25
2.5 ft diameter -Small Shield -Medium dog	Short Range				10
2 ft diameter -Shoulder Width	Reasonable Range	Still or leisurely	Ample	Clear	0
1.5 ft diameter -Center Mass -Small Dog	Long Range	Jogging	Dusk / Dawn Low Light	Heavy rain	-10
1 ft diameter -Head	Down Range	-Sprinting -15 MPH or less	-Dark -Camouflage -Heavy rain	Heavy winds & rain / dust	-25
6" diameter -Face -Leg -Arm	Far away	15 – 40 MPH	-Very Dark -Heavy smoke / dust	High winds rain / dust / hail	-50
3" diameter -Groin -Joint -Hand -Foot	Extreme Range	40 – 60 MPH	-Barely visible -Strobes	Extreme winds & debris	-75
Less than 3" diameter -Eyeball -Nose	Barely Visible	60+ MPH	Blind	Gale force winds & debris	-100

- *EXAMPLE ONE:* A sharpshooter is hunting a large brown bear in the forest and declares a Targeted Strike (costing an additional action) for the animals Head from approximately 200 yards as clouds are forming while the sun sets
  - With fortune on their side, the character Rolls a 19
    - Size : 1.5' diameter = -10
    - Range : Long Range = -50
    - Speed : Still or Leisurely, the animal has no idea whats about to happen = 0
    - Visibility : Low Light = -10
    - Environs : Clear = 0
    - Total Modifiers = -70
    - Characters Rifles Skill is 104 so the Likelihood of Success = 34
      - 34 divided by 3 is approximately 11
        - Major Hit is 01 – 11
        - Direct Hit is 12 – 22
        - Minor Hit is 23 – 34
  - Character lands a Direct Hit (Rolled a 19) to the animal's Head with a high velocity, large caliber Hunting Rifle. The Bear is almost certainly killed instantly and it really is that simple!

- *EXAMPLE TWO:* It's a dark and stormy night, and the characters are chasing their target through the city streets. Two characters are in a car moving to intercept, the driver is maintaining control of the vehicle, the passenger has Saved all of their Actions until the target becomes visible. They finally sprint out of the alley at the end of the block, the driver accelerates, and the passenger makes a Targeted Strike for the leg with a pistol because they need them alive
  - Character Rolls 31 with their Pistols Skill at 126
    - Size : 6” diameter = -50
    - Range : Long Range (for a pistol) = -10
    - Speed : Target is sprinting and reasonably quick = -25
    - Visibility : Dark = -25
    - Environs : Heavy Rain = -10
    - Total Modifiers = -115
  - Characters Pistols Skill is 126 which means the Likelihood of Success is going to be 11. They inevitably miss and waste their ammunition with a Major Failure, but pass their Strength Check for Recoil and the driver is accelerating quickly
  - Character decides to try again once the vehicle is a little closer, this time for Center Mass and Rolls 25
    - Size : 1.5' diameter = -10
    - Range : Reasonable = 0
    - Speed : Target is still sprinting = -25
    - Visibility : Still Dark = -25
    - Environs : Heavy Rain = -10
    - Total Modifiers = -70
    - 126 – 70 = 56 for the Likelihood of Success
      - Major Hit : ~ 01 – 18
      - Direct Hit : ~ 19 – 37
      - Minor Hit : ~ 38 – 56
  - Target takes a Direct Hit to Center Mass so likely the Lower Ribs or Stomach (covered in further detail in Strike Effects), but they pass their Willpower Check and keep running! However now they are going to be suffering serious blood loss, which is bound to slow them down eventually. Hopefully the players can catch him in time to stabilize him!

- *EXAMPLE THREE:* Following the scenario in example two, a third character has already moved into the alley that the now wounded target is running into and has hidden themselves behind a dumpster. This character has Successfully passed a Concealment Skill Check so they can see the target continuing their adrenaline fueled rush to escape without revealing themselves. This character saves his Actions until they know the target is bottle-necked in between the dumpster with the overflowing piles of garbage and the building wall, and will make their Action use One to maneuver to block the choke point, and Two to attempt a Grab (Grappling has not been covered in detail yet, but for all intents and purposes a Grab starts a chain of events and is essentially the first "Strike" to serve as the catalyst)
  - Character has a Grappling Skill of 94 and Rolls 82, obviously this is a Failure but for arguments sake consider the following:
    - Size: The choke point is approximately 2.5' wide, and characters arm-span can easily cover this area = 10
    - Range: No effect in Melee = 0
    - Speed: Negated by the choke point = 0
    - Visibility: Very Dark (no lights in alley) = -50
    - Environs: Heavy Rain (slippery footing) = -10
    - Total Modifiers = -50
      - Likelihood of Success: 94 – 50 = 44 thus the Likelihood of Failure = 56
      - 56 divided by 3 = ~ 18
        - Minor Failure : Likelihood of Success + 18 = ~ 45 – 62
        - Direct Failure : ~ 63 - 81
        - Major Failure : ~ 82 – 00
  - This character likely slipped on some wet garbage they weren't aware of in the dark but they definitely missed the tackle, and now needs to pass an Agility Check to maintain their footing. The target shoulders past them and the chase continues!

For the sake of simplicity it is highly recommended that the Storytellers use the General Skills Modifier Table from earlier just to keep the game going! The point is that the lower a player rolls the better! If there is an argument about the Likelihood of Success afterwards then you can refer to the Complex Striking Modifier Table, but ALWAYS remember the Storyteller ALWAYS has final say. Weird shit happens all the time! If a Player can convince the Storyteller to change their position, then just consider that Fate at work! Storytellers for continuities sake, just try to complete the following sentence with the understanding you have after learning the "Hard Way" of doing things:

REMEMBER THESE "RULES" ARE MERELY GUIDELINES, NOT LAW!

"Based on what the player has told me they are trying to do and the conditions in which they are trying to do it, I would say their Likelihood of Success is _____"

COMPLEXITY	MODIFIER
Simple	75
Easy	50
High	25
Likely	10
Reasonable	0
Unlikely	-10
Low	-25
Difficult	-50
Convoluted or Complicated	-75
Unrealistic or Exceptionally Challenging	-100
Comical or Relying on Luck	-125 or more

SPECIALIZED ATTACKS:

• BURST (SUSTAINED) FIRE: Have special implications which are determined by the Roll Type, but this is entirely focused on the fact that each Burst Attack fires at least three rounds. Special Rules apply to these scenarios:
  • Roll to strike as usual for the first round using the appropriate Weapon Skill
  • Even if the initial shot was a miss, the character may begin SUSTAINED FIRE by simply CHAINING a additional Skill Checks afterwards
    • One Action to CONCENTRATE the fire (much like controlling a vehicle)
    • Another Action to Aim the weapon at the intended target(s) using the appropriate Weapon Skill with the Burst-Fire Modifier, which works in exactly the same way as the Off Hand Skill
      • "MAJOR" HITS – mean that all three rounds hit their target
      • "DIRECT" HITS – mean that two of the three rounds fired hit their mark
      • "MINOR" HITS – mean that only one of the three rounds fired hit their mark
      • MULTIPLE TARGETS – If the character is Sustaining Fire on a group of people or location, they may spread out the hits as they see fit given the proximity to the initial target:
        • EG: If there are three targets within the Target Area and the character lands a Major Hit with the Burst-Fire Check then the character may:
          • Put all three rounds in the first target
          • Put two rounds in the first, and one in the next closest
          • Put one in all three targets
      • HIT LOCATION – Due to the recoil of the weapon and the indescriminate nature of Sustained Fire, consult the RANDOM HIT CHART
      • HIT SEVERITY – For the "Actual" SEVERITY of each hit, roll once more:
        • 01 – 33 = MAJOR HIT
        • 34 – 66 = DIRECT HIT
        • 67 – 100 = MINOR HIT

• EXPLOSIVE ATTACKS: Weapons like grenades, bombs, rockets, traps, artillery, and potentially Shotguns with scattershot shells at long range also follow their own subset of rules. These operate much like the Burst Fire rules mentioned above:

> • The Attacking character Rolls the Weapon or Appropriate Skill Check as usual
>
> • "MAJOR" HITS – Means that the targets within the immediate vicinity are dead, horribly wounded, or outright incapacitated and out of the fight (unless exceptionally heavily armored, in which case the Storyteller takes control)
>
>> • Any additional targets within the Effective Radius of the Blast (Storyteller's choice) treat the Strike as though it was a Direct Hit. See below
>
> • "DIRECT" HITS – Means that the Attacking character gets to Roll D100 to determine the number of fragments from the blast that successfully Strike EACH Target within the Effective Radius of the Blast (Storyteller's choice). Personally I approve of the "Rule of Threes" but if the Storyteller decides they want more or less just Divide the Percentile Roll as appropriate
>
>> • Storyteller decides the character has potential to receive 5 hits means Percentile is based by 20
>>
>>> • 01 – 20 = 5 Strikes
>>> • 21 – 40 = 4 Strikes
>>> • 41 – 60 = 3 Strikes
>>> • 61 – 80 = 2 Strikes
>>> • 81 – 100 = 1 Strikes
>>
>> • Roll on the RANDOM HIT CHART for each successful Strike
>>
>> • Storytellers adjust as necessary! Other areas are likely "peppered" but aren't threatening to survival or functionality aside from the associated Blood Loss. Also keep in mind that the concussion of the blast is likely to put the Target into Shock...
>>
>> • Storytellers please note that it may just be easier to declare a successful explosion wreaks havoc on its victims and that should be enough said...but in the case where the players get caught in a blast, they will probably want to argue for their own survival. Try to keep it a game or at least give them a heroic death!
>
> • "MINOR" HITS – Mean that only one area for this particular character is struck. Again, multiple areas are likely "peppered" or "fragged" but won't threaten target interoperability aside from the usual Blood Loss
>
> • HIT SEVERITY – For the "Actual" SEVERITY of each hit, roll once more:
>
>> • 01 – 33 = MAJOR HIT
>> • 34 – 66 = DIRECT HIT
>> • 67 – 100 = MINOR HIT

SECTION V: COMBAT - EFFECTS & DAMAGE

Now that we understand what needs to happen in order to be successful, we can now discuss what success actually means. In many cases it should prove to be relatively simple, but there are some factors that can definitely change the outcome of the situation.

• COVER – TARGETED STRIKES: Often when a target is behind cover, the character will make attempt a Targeted Strike against the exposed area. In many circumstances there will be multiple parts of the body which are NOT in cover, so a successful Strike should speak for itself. Consider the following example:

    • A character successfully fires on a target behind cover where only their chest, shoulders, arms and head are exposed. Rather than get bogged down in where is actually struck (which you CAN do by dividing up the exposed areas using the Percentile Roll), the Storyteller should consider making full use of the Major, Direct, and Minor Hit methods described earlier:

        • A LOW MAJOR HIT could easily be interpreted that the target is struck in the head, neck, or face likely leading to instantaneous death or defeat

        • A HIGH MAJOR HIT probably means that they delivered a life threatening Strike to the chest and all of its vital organs

        • A LOW DIRECT HIT may mean that the character still landed a potentially mortal Strike on the chest or shoulders, but it might take some time for them to succumb to blood loss

        • A HIGH DIRECT HIT likely represents a bone shattering wound to the shoulders, effectively disabling their ability to wield their own weapon effectively

        • A LOW MINOR HIT could mean that the target is hit in the arm or shoulder, still suffers severe pain and blood loss from the injury, but in the end its just a flesh wound

        • A HIGH MINOR HIT hurts like hell, still bleeds, but the target can definitely still operate if they fight through the pain

        • ALTERNATIVELY you COULD do something along the following, but all its going to do is slow everything down while you are determining what the Rolls mean since the situation varies from shot to shot and cover to cover. It might be better to just use another Percentile Roll on the Random Hit Severity Table and let the dice speak for themselves!

ROLL	LOCATION
01 - 05	Neck
06 - 10	Face
11 - 20	Head
21 - 30	Left Ribs (Heart)
31 - 40	Right Ribs
41 - 50	Left Shoulder
51 - 60	Right Shoulder
61 - 70	Left Upper Arm
71 - 80	Right Upper Arm
81 - 90	Left Hand
91 - 100	Right Hand

• COVER – RANDOM HIT CHART: In the event a character is using Fast Attacks and trying to lay suppressive fire on a target and hope for the best, use the RANDOM HIT CHART as usual
> • If the RANDOM HIT CHART determines the location struck is behind dense or hard Cover, then the Strike is ignored entirely!
> • However, if the location is simply behind something penetrable (like drywall of plywood) and the weapon has sufficient power to punch through the material (like bullets) then the Strike holds true

• COVER – SHIELDS: Even when a shield is not used to successfully Block an attack, it still provides some interference for striking certain areas depending on its size
> • When held, a shield will always interfere with strikes to the Hand & Forearm, and depending on size and conditions of the attempted Strike this may extend to cover additional areas such as the Thigh, Pelvic Area, and Midsection. If it is on a characters back, then clearly the Back Shoulders, Upper Body, Midsection, and possibly Pelvic Area will be covered. Storytellers act appropriately!

• COVER – PENETRATION: While a wooden door might stop an arrow or a baseball bat, it will NOT stop a bullet unless it is a very small round. Soft cover like drywall, wooden doors, fiberglass car doors, wooden shields, so on and so forth, can easily be penetrated by gunfire! Storytellers keep this in mind at all times!

CRITICAL HITS & FAILURES:

Don't forget about Criticals (double rolls IE: 11, 22, 66, 99)! These are meant to reflect awesome and unpredictable outcomes on Combat Rolls. Generally speaking:

- 11 and 22 are the best possible criticals, and the Storyteller should represent these accordingly
- 99 and 00 are the worst possible outcomes, again Storytellers keep this in mind

DAMAGE & IMMEDIATE EFFECTS:

Damage is primarily determined by the type of Strike, be it Major, Direct, or Minor but there are also Damage Types consisting of the following (It is important to note that thrown weapons vary wildly, but will generally fall into the Melee categories and NOT Ballistic):

BLUNT ATTACKS:

These are strikes that are not intended to penetrate the targets skin, but deliver a lot of force over a reasonably small surface area

- MAJOR BLUNT ATTACKS – These will break bones, inflict significant pain, and potentially knock the wind out of a target reducing their Endurance, Speed, Agility, and thus Actions
  - Head Strikes – Have the capacity to knock a target unconscious or crush their skull
    - Attacker performs a Strength Check to render target unconscious immediately (Unarmed)
      - If using a weapon, a low roll could mean a fatal blow
    - If Attackers Strength Check fails target still performs a Willpower Check to remain conscious
    - Even if successful all Mental Traits and Actions reduced by One (or more)
    - Target is Shocked (stunned) [1/2 Actions rounded down]
  - Body Strikes – Will definitely break bones, knock the wind out of the target and damage organs
    - Willpower Check to test against Shock (1/2 Actions rounded down)
    - Physical Traits and Action Points reduced by One (or more) even if successful
    - Willpower Check against Pain anytime the Defender moves or else another Action is necessary to Force the move (serious negative Modifiers apply)
  - Limb Strikes – Broken bones or nerve damage and inhibit movement efficiency
    - Willpower Check to test against Shock
    - Willpower Check against Pain when using the damaged limb determines if the move needs to be Forced (serious negative Modifiers apply)
- DIRECT BLUNT ATTACKS – Might break bones or debilitate the limb based upon the Strength of the Attacker and the weapon used
  - Head Strikes – Will at least stun the target, and may fracture the skull
    - Target is Shocked (half actions)
    - In Melee the Attacker makes a Strength Check to induce a Willpower Check on the target to remain conscious
    - Even if the Attackers Strength Check Fails or Defenders Will Check Succeeds all Mental Traits and Actions are reduced by One (or more)
  - Body Strikes – Certainly knock wind out of target, may break bones or damage organs
    - Physical Traits and Actions reduced by One (or more)
    - Attacker makes Strength Check to determine bone / organ damage
      - If successful target must make a Willpower Check against Shock (1/2 Actions)
      - Willpower Check against Pain to Force future moves (serious negative Modifiers apply)
  - Limb Strikes – Potentially break bones or cause nerve damage
    - Attacker performs Strength Check to determine fracture or nerve damage
      - If successful target must pass Willpower Check against Shock
    - Target must test against Pain for Forcing future moves (serious negative Modifiers apply)
- MINOR BLUNT ATTACKS – The attack causes significant bruising, but otherwise is simply painful
  - Willpower Check against Pain for Forcing future moves (mild negative Modifiers apply)

EDGED ATTACKS:

Consist of any weapon or attack intended to cut, slice, slash, chop, or otherwise open up the target causing blood loss and significant bone or organ damage

- MAJOR EDGED ATTACKS – These are often fatal or severely debilitating, rendering limbs inoperable or severing them entirely
    - Head Strikes – Cleave or fracture the skull or remove the targets head entirely!
        - Attacker makes a Strength Check to confirm the kill
            - Knives probably wont kill or render the target unconscious, but may blind them or cause significant blood loss. Storytellers shine on!
        - If Attackers Strength Check fails target still performs a Willpower Check to remain conscious
        - Even if successful all Mental Traits and Actions reduced by One (or more)
        - Target is Shocked (stunned) [1/2 Actions rounded down]
        - Significant Blood Loss occurs
    - Body Strikes – Cut into or past bones to inflict mortal wounds to underlying organs!
        - Attacker makes a Strength Check to determine severity based on target location
            - Knives may only be effective against the targets underbelly for mortal wounds
            - For anything else this could easily be a kill, Storytellers act appropriately!
        - Willpower Check to test against Shock (1/2 Actions rounded down)
        - Physical Traits and Action Points reduced by One even if successful
        - Willpower Check against Pain anytime the Defender moves or else another Action is necessary to Force the move (serious negative Modifiers apply)
        - Significant Blood Loss occurs
    - Limb Strikes – Render the limb inoperable or may remove it entirely causing extreme blood loss!
        - Attacker makes Strength Check to determine severity
            - If successful target must make a Willpower Check to test against Shock
            - If failed target must perform a Willpower Check against Pain when using the damaged limb to determine if the move needs to be Forced (serious negative Modifiers apply)
            - Significant Blood Loss
- DIRECT EDGED ATTACKS – These attacks could cause vital or crippling wounds, the Attackers Strength Checks determine effectiveness
    - Head Strikes – will at a minimum Shock the target, may prove fatal
        - Attacker makes a Strength Check to determine effectiveness and whether or not its an immediate kill
            - Again with the knives, may only blind or mangle the target but won't render them unconscious or out of the fight
        - Target is Shocked (1/2 actions)
        - If the Attackers Strength Check fails, the target must perform a Willpower Check to remain conscious
        - Even if the Attackers Strength Check Fails or Defenders Will Check Succeeds all Mental Traits and Actions are reduced by One (or more)
    - Body Strikes – Can certainly cause significant organ damage
        - Attacker makes Strength Check to determine bone / organ damage and possibility of being an immediate kill
            - If successful target must make a Willpower Check against Shock (½ Actions)
                - Wound may be fatal but could take a little time to render target inoperable either from blood loss or organ damage
                - Again, knives are likely to only be this effective when targeting the midsection
                - Physical Traits and Actions reduced by One (or more)
        - Significant Blood Loss occurs
        - Willpower Check against Pain to Force future moves (serious negative Modifiers apply)

- Limb Strikes – Could easily cripple or remove the limb
    - Attacker makes Strength Check to determine effectiveness
        - If successful, the limb is inoperable
        - If highly successful the limb is severed (though not with knives)
        - Significant Blood Loss
        - Willpower Check against Pain to Force future moves (serious negative Modifiers apply)
- MINOR EDGED ATTACKS – Are going to bleed and hurt, but probably will not kill the target outright
    - Willpower Check against Pain for Forcing future moves (mild negative Modifiers apply)
    - Moderate Blood Loss

PIERCING ATTACKS:

Stabbing maneuvers, plain and simple. Be it a knife, sword, spear, or anything with a point. This also includes spiked weapons attached to a heavier base object, like a mace or baseball bat. Remember the focus here is on the Type of Damage. Ballistics are projectile piercing attacks and are covered immediately after this

- MAJOR PIERCING ATTACKS – Usually fatal or crippling and cause severe blood loss and organ damage
  - Head Strikes – Inflict fatal brain and neurological damage, and thus death
  - Body Strikes – Will cause life threatening organ damage and blood loss, often inflicting both an entrance and exit wound doubling the rate of hemorrhaging
    - Attacker makes a Strength Check to determine severity based on target location and whether or not the attack is a killing maneuver
      - If not, target performs a Willpower Check to test against Shock (1/2 Actions)
      - Physical Traits and Action Points reduced by One even if successful
      - Willpower Check against Pain anytime the Defender moves or else another Action is necessary to Force the move (serious negative Modifiers apply)
      - Extreme Blood Loss occurs
  - Limb Strikes – Cause significant blood loss and may render the limb inoperable
    - Attacker makes Strength Check to determine severity
      - If successful target must make a Willpower Check to test against Shock (1/2 Actions) and the limb is unusable
      - If failed target must perform a Willpower Check against Pain when using the damaged limb to determine if the move needs to be Forced (serious negative Modifiers apply)
    - Significant Blood Loss
- DIRECT PIERCING ATTACKS – Can easily prove fatal to their targets or cripple limbs
  - Head Strikes – May penetrate or fracture the skull depending on the circumstances
    - Attacker makes a Strength Check to determine fatality
      - If not the target must make a Willpower Check to remain conscious
      - Even if successful all Mental Traits and Actions reduced by One (or more)
      - Target is Shocked (stunned) [1/2 Actions rounded down]
      - Moderate Blood Loss occurs
  - Body Strikes – May penetrate the rib cage or stomach to cause mortal wounds
    - Attacker makes a Strength Check to determine fatality
      - If not, target performs a Willpower Check to test against Shock (1/2 Actions)
      - Physical Traits and Action Points reduced by One even if successful
      - Willpower Check against Pain anytime the Defender moves or else another Action is necessary to Force the move (serious negative Modifiers apply)
    - Significant Blood Loss occurs
  - Limb Strikes – Could render the limb inoperable and cause significant blood loss
    - Attacker makes Strength Check to determine severity
      - If successful target must make a Willpower Check to test against Shock (½ Actions) and the limb is unusable
      - If failed target must perform a Willpower Check against Pain when using the damaged limb to determine if the move needs to be Forced (serious negative Modifiers apply)
    - Moderate Blood Loss
- MINOR PIERCING ATTACKS – Are painful and cause reasonable blood loss but aren't likely to prove fatal
  - Willpower Check against Pain for Forcing future moves (mild negative Modifiers apply)
  - Reasonable Blood Loss

BALLISTIC ATTACKS:

Consist of gunfire, arrows, and crossbow bolts. Strength of the attack remains consistent with caliber size, bullet velocity based on the amount of powder in the round, arrowhead type, and / or the archery weapon itself. Strength Checks do not apply here though an exception could be made for the Short Bow potentially. Effects are very similar to Piercing Attacks. Storytellers, as always, do what you do best!

- Range always influences Ballistic Attacks effectiveness!
  - Targets struck at Point Blank or Short Range always receive more damage than they do at Long or Extreme Range except in the cases of Rifle Fire
    - Rifles at shorter ranges are infinitely more likely to penetrate their intended targets, creating an Entry and Exit wound and effectively just punching a hole through them
    - The force of the blow doesn't have time to manifest as the kinetic energy is simply moving forward too fast, however this can create severe consequences if the target is hit multiple times in succession due to pressure changes in their bodily fluids!
- MAJOR BALLISTIC ATTACKS - Usually fatal or crippling and cause severe blood loss and organ damage
  - Head Strikes – Inflict fatal brain and neurological damage, and thus death
  - Body Strikes – Will cause life threatening organ damage and blood loss, often inflicting both an entrance and exit wound doubling the rate of hemorrhaging
    - Target performs an Endurance Check to prevent instantaneous death
    - Target performs a Willpower Check to test against Shock (1/2 Actions)
    - Physical Traits and Action Points reduced by One even if successful
    - Willpower Check against Pain anytime the Defender moves or else another Action is necessary to Force the move (serious negative Modifiers apply)
    - Extreme Blood Loss occurs
  - Limb Strikes – Cause significant blood loss and may render the limb inoperable
    - Target must make a Willpower Check to test against Shock (1/2 Actions) and the limb is unusable
    - Target must perform a Willpower Check against Pain when using the damaged limb to determine if the move needs to be Forced (serious negative Modifiers apply)
    - Significant Blood Loss
- DIRECT BALLISTIC ATTACKS – Can easily prove fatal to their targets or cripple limbs
  - Head Strikes – Inflict fatal damage and death
  - Body Strikes – May penetrate the rib cage or stomach to cause mortal wounds
    - Target performs a Willpower Check to test against Shock (1/2 Actions)
    - Physical Traits and Action Points reduced by One even if successful
    - Willpower Check against Pain anytime the Defender moves or else another Action is necessary to Force the move (serious negative Modifiers apply)
    - Significant Blood Loss occurs
  - Limb Strikes – Could render the limb inoperable and cause significant blood loss
    - Target must make a Willpower Check to test against Shock (½ Actions) and the limb is unusable
    - Target must perform a Willpower Check against Pain when using the damaged limb to determine if the move needs to be Forced (serious negative Modifiers apply)
    - Moderate Blood Loss
- MINOR BALLISTIC ATTACKS – Are painful and cause reasonable blood loss but are less likely to prove fatal
  - Head strikes – Can cause significant brain damage or disfigurement but could be survivable
    - Target must make a Willpower Check to remain conscious
    - Even if successful all Mental Traits and Actions reduced by One (or more)
    - Target is Shocked (stunned) [1/2 Actions rounded down]
    - Significant Blood Loss occurs
  - Body / Limb Strikes – Hurt like hell and bleed a lot but the capacity for survival is high
    - Willpower Check against Pain for Forcing future moves (mild negative Modifiers apply)
    - Reasonable Blood Loss

SECTION VI: COMBAT - MELEE DAMAGE & ARMOR

STRENGTH CHECKS ON MELEE DAMAGE:

If a character lands a Strike in Melee Combat, they still need to drive the force of the blow in order to be effective. It seems safe to assume that the Defender will be bobbing and weaving to avoid or reduce the efficiency of the attack, and once you factor in the possibility of armor, weapon type, and quality the implications should be apparent. This factors in more when you include armor, but for the sake of the story it should always be included!

• Theoretically this should be a simple Pass / Fail matter, with a focus on how well the Roll was made (Low / High)
    • A Low Successful Strength Check Roll that proves to be a Success means that the attack was highly effective
        • Consider a Low Strength Check Roll on a Minor Hit with an Edged Weapon to the targets Head
            • While not necessarily fatal, it could easily prove incredibly damaging. This might mean the target loses their nose, ear, entire cheek, or suffers substantial damage to their jaw. Storyteller's interpretation as usual!
    • A High Successful Strength Check Roll means that the Strike proves to be effective and deliver its intent as described beforehand
    • A Low Failure Roll means that the Successful Strike still proves effective, though damage is moderately reduced
    • A High Failure Roll means that the Successful Strike is reduced in its Roll Type but proves to be of the highest caliber. This process is called a HIT DOWNGRADE
        • A Major Hit becomes a Direct Hit
        • A Direct Hit becomes a Minor Hit
        • A Minor Hit is essentially "shrugged off" or ignored though Blood Loss and Bruising still may apply

MELEE WEAPON MODIFIERS:

Melee weapons come in all different shapes and sizes, and certain weapons adopt specific tactics and striking methods. This section attempts to address that. For instance:

• Two-Handed Weapons are unique in that using both hands provides leverage and torque with their Swings and Thrusts
    • This means that wielding a Two-Handed Weapon with BOTH hands is the same as Reinforcing the Grip on a Long Weapon (1.5x Strength rounded down)
    • Alternatively a character COULD tuck a Two-Handed Weapon under their arm for single handed thrusts or move their grip higher for single handed swings (Agility Checks make sense with this scenario)
• Weapon weight plays a large part in its ability to penetrate armor or bones with Swings, but not as much with Thrusts
• Tactically, this can have serious implications with a fighters ease of movement. This is especially true when they are also wearing cumbersome armor and trying to perform high risk maneuvers within an exceptionally brief time-frame
• Additionally characters with low a low Strength Trait might have difficulty effectively wielding heavy weapons at all! Consider the idea of a Strength 6 character picking up a sledgehammer and trying to swing it at their target. Given the three second timeline this could easily impose significant negative Modifiers to their ability to strike as well as the necessity to Force the maneuver costing the character an additional Action
    • In instances where the Storyteller doubts that a character possesses the physical Strength to wield a weapon, it probably makes sense that:
        • With every attempt, the Attacker must make a Strength Check in order to wield the weapon effectively
        • If they succeed then a slight penalty to strike may apply. Their stamina may also deteriorate rapidly so increased Endurance Checks against Fatigue likely make sense
        • If they fail then they probably need to Force the Action (costing an additional Action Point), much like operating when trying to maneuver in spite of severe Pain

• WEAPON WEIGHTS, TYPES & QUALITY: Modifiers also apply to several factors when regarding weaponry. The most prevalent is weapon weight, but this section will also address the difference in type or quality in relation to the Strength Checks of Melee Combat

> • WEIGHT & QUALITY: Heavier weapons inflict more damage, plain and simple. Consider the following:
>> • DELICATE WEAPONRY – Would be things like fencing swords (Foils), rope darts, small chain weapons, or things like empty beer bottles and rotten sticks. They are considerably lighter than many of their counterparts, and as such more likely to break after a single or improper use against a target
>>> • Strength Check -2 for Damage, but Agility Check if a Major Failure occurs is +2
>> • LIGHT WEAPONRY – These are things that are intended to be lighter and quicker than their counterparts, though considerably more flimsy, fragile, or malleable. Think about machetes, weapons made of lighter wood cores, butchers knives, empty liquor bottles, or fragile / lighter deadwood sticks used as clubs
>>> • Strength Check -1 for Damage, but Agility Check if a Major Failure occurs is +1
>> • STANDARD WEAPONRY – Are heavy enough to not bend or break, reasonably balanced, but light enough to be used quickly and efficiently. These are things like quality swords, combat knives, spears, staves, or clubs
>>> • No Strength or Agility Modifiers apply
>> • WEIGHTED WEAPONRY – These are weapons that rely on their weight in order to inflict maximum damage. Weighted weapons are things such as hammers, axes, broad swords, gurkas or scimitars, or things like full liquor bottles with thick glass
>>> • Strength Check +1 for Damage, but Agility Checks will suffer -1
>> • HEAVY WEAPONRY – Exceptionally heavy weaponry that inflict their damage by heft and momentum. These include items like bastard swords, maces, pikes, battle axes, or sledgehammers
>>> • Strength Check +2 for Damage, but Agility Checks are -2

> • WEAPON TYPE: Weapon types play a role in their attack styles and efficiencies
>> • KNIVES – Will never sever a limb in one attack, and as such should always be considered Slash Attacks (weak against bone and armor) rather than Chop Attacks (standard Edged Attacks)
>>> • Slash Attacks are ALWAYS easier to Deflect and Resist Damage with armor
>>> • Always considered Blades for Piercing Attacks (which are the baseline for Stabs & Thrusts)
>> • BLADES vs. SPIKES – Surface area is highly important in determining success of Piercing Attacks
>>> • BLADES set the standard
>>> • SPIKES gain bonuses to Strength Checks on Piercing Attacks regarding Armor Penetration and Damage
>>>> • Large Spikes like the point at the end of a pole arm, axe, or well crafted spear gain +2 to Strength Checks, and are considered durable enough to not dull
>>>> • Small Spikes would be relatively thin and long like heavy duty nails or pins, gain +4 to Strength Checks but are likely to break or bend thus reducing this bonus by 1 for each hit

ARMOR & DAMAGE MODIFIERS:

Armor is a relatively tricky thing to account for in combat as so many variables exist for the possibility of defense from incoming attacks. Craftsmanship, durability, materials used, material quality, thickness of material, prior strikes reducing effectiveness, and maintenance all factor into armor efficiency and because of this Armor in the Aftermath assumes a very generalized role. Ordinarily Armor protects its user via three methods:

• DEFLECTION: Effectively means to ignore the damage, and usually occurs with Armor Plates
• DISPLACEMENT: Generally means to disperse the force of the blow among a much larger surface area, thereby CONVERTING the Damage Type to Blunt rather than Ballistic. The hope is that the round never penetrates the armor, but if it does Blood Loss is significantly reduced. Displacement typically occurs with fibrous, padded, or maille style armor.
• RESISTANCE: Usually armors can Resist some of the Damage inflicted upon the wearer even when it is penetrated. Damage Resistance has three generalized types:
> • LIGHT RESISTANCE: A small amount of the inflicted Damage is absorbed, but can make the difference between whether or not a Limb is Severed or determining the Blood Loss Rate
> • MEDIUM RESISTANCE: A reasonable amount of the Damage is absorbed, meaning that this could potentially prevent multiple organs from significant threat or seriously reduce Blood Loss
> • HEAVY RESISTANCE: Means the majority of the Damage is absorbed and substantially reduces Blood Loss

• MATERIAL THICKNESS: Describes density and weight of the material and applies to nearly every component imaginable. Thickness directly correlates to effectiveness in protection from damage for ALL types of protection, be it Deflection, Displacement, or Resistance
> • LIGHT – The thinnest of material quality and exceptionally light and flexible
>> • Minimal Protection
> • THIN – Thin, light, and flexible but still reasonably protective
>> • Less Protection
> • AVERAGE – Thick and dense enough to be effective
>> • Average Protection (Matches listing in Armor Materials Table)
> • THICK – Thicker and more durable than average, and thus heavier
>> • More Protection
> • HEAVY – Considerably effective, thick, and cumbersome
>> • Maximum Protection

• LAYERED ARMOR: Armor will often consist of many different layers to accomplish maximum protection
> • For Example: Medieval Heavy Plate Mail was often comprised of thick steel plates over chain mail that rested on a cuirasse of thick cloth padding
>> • The Plates would Deflect damage
>> • The Mail would displace any piercing attacks that penetrated or landed between the plates
>> • The Padding would reduce the effects of the displaced force of the blow
>> • This was highly effective until humanity reached the age of the gun, but also significantly restricted the wearers Agility and Speed
> • Modern Armors usually consist of thick ballistic fiber with many harnesses or attachments for tactical gear and are designed with pockets for Ballistic Plates consisting of steel, ceramic, or treated metallurgic alloys
>> • The Plate Deflects most lower velocity rounds and Fragmentation, and provide significant Resistance against those that may still bore through
>> • The Ballistic Fiber material then Displaces the remaining damage or provides additional Resistance against the hit

• BALLISTIC WEAPON TYPES: Since firearms and other Ranged Combat Weapons rely primarily on craftsmanship and types of munitions fired, they NEVER require Strength Checks since the resulting Damage remains logically consistent with Range and Munition type (Hollowpoint, Armor Piercing, etc) being the only variables. Unfortunately this means each type of munition must be addressed for every Armor Material (covered below). Storyteller's need to really pay attention here! The following munitions are examples of the most conventional weaponry your characters are likely to encounter:

- MISSILES = Arrows and crossbow bolts or anything thrown and pointy
- FRAGMENTATION (Frag) = .22 caliber firearms, scattershot shotgun rounds (Bird, Buck), explosives and debris
    - Remember that Range always factors into effectiveness
        - IE: Point Blank Buckshot will almost certainly shatter a targets Ribs even when Displaced, but from afar the pellets can easily be Deflected or Displaced entirely
- SMALL PISTOL ROUNDS = Low velocity, Small caliber (.32, .380, 9mm)
- LARGE PISTOL ROUNDS = Low velocity, Large caliber (10mm, .38 SPL, .44, .357, .45)
- SMALL RIFLE ROUNDS = High velocity, Small caliber [.30 carbine / BLK, 5.56x45mm(.223)]
    - Only Thick Ballistic or Heavy Steel Plates are known to stop these rounds
- LARGE RIFLE ROUNDS = High velocity, Large caliber [7.62x39mm, 7.62x51/54mm(.308), .30-06]
    - Only Average Ballistic or Thick Steel Plates are known to stop these rounds

• SPECIALIZED MUNITIONS: Use the right tool for the job! There are a wide variety of ammunition types available in the world today, and most were already available well before the Aftermath. Here are a few samples:

- SHOTGUN SHELLS:
    - BIRDSHOT – Fires a large volume of small, soft pellets
        - Only "effective" at short range
        - Very weak against armor and bone, but highly effective against soft targets
    - BUCKSHOT – Fires a reasonable number of small, hard pellets. The most reasonable case for declaring scattershot ammunition as Fragmentation weaponry
        - Only "effective" at short range
        - Weaker against armor, though still very forceful
    - SLUG – Fires a large caliber bullet with impressive force, the word "Cannon" comes to mind
        - Though not necessarily more likely to penetrate armor, the effects of Displacing the round are significantly reduced. Bones will break!
    - FLECHETTE – Fires multiple sharp steel barbs or darts, intending to cause massive damage to a targets flesh and increased blood loss
        - Only "effective" at short range
        - Very weak against armor, but even more damaging than Birdshot against unarmored targets
    - INCENDIARY – Fires a chemical composite intended to set a target ablaze
        - Only "effective" at short range
        - Very weak against armor, not intended to penetrate for the most part
        - Fire!
    - SHOTSHELL ROUNDS – Typically Pistol rounds that fire Birdshot, though the volume of pellets is considerably less than its shotgun counterpart
        - Only "effective" at short range
        - Very weak against armor and bone, but highly effective against soft targets and small game
- HOLLOWPOINT ROUNDS (EXPANDING) – These are rounds that sacrifice penetration power in order to spread and effectively "mushroom" causing a larger injury. Are available in nearly every shape and size of caliber
    - Less effective against armor
    - Causes more physical damage, and an incredibly large exit wound, thus more blood loss

• ARMOR PIERCING ROUNDS – Fire a chemically treated or specifically designed alloy round with the sole purpose of penetrating armor and thus negating Damage Displacement. Also are available in nearly every shape and size
  • Negates armor
• FRANGIBLE ROUNDS – Fires a "soft" round designed to disintegrate into tiny particles upon impact to minimize their penetration but cause exorbitant internal damage to a target
  • Incredibly ineffective against armor
  • Causes exceptional physical damage and internal bleeding
• TRACER ROUNDS – Fires a bullet coated in a chemical compound that allows the flight path of the round to become visible
  • Increases accuracy with Sustained Fire
  • Reveals both the shooters and their targets position
• EXPLOSIVE ROUNDS – Fires a bullet that encases a small amount of explosives that detonate on impact
  • Intended to be highly effective against soft targets, inflicting maximum damage
  • Can shred armor, reducing its effectiveness significantly
  • Often used against aircraft and vehicles in hopes of disabling maneuvering components and machinery
• NON-LETHAL ROUNDS – Fires projectiles intended to cause significant pain or injury, but not death
  • Rocksalt
  • Rubber or Plastic
  • Chalk

ARMOR MATERIALS & BASELINE PROTECTION

MATERIAL	BLUNT	EDGED	PIERCING	BALLISTIC
PROTECTIVE CLOTHING		Light Resistance		
CLOTH PADDING	Light Resistance	Medium Resistance	Light Resistance	Light Resistance (Missiles & Frag)
TREATED LEATHER	Light Resistance	Medium Resistance	Light Resistance	Medium Resistance (Missiles & Frag)
BALLISTIC FIBER	Medium Resistance	Displacement	Light Resistance	-Displacement (Missiles, Frag, Small / Large Pistols) -Light Resistance (Large Rifles)
MAILLE (Riveted, Chain, Scale, etc.)	Light Resistance	-Displacement -Deflects Minor Hits	Medium Resistance	Displacement (Missiles & Frag)
POLYMER PLATES (Plastic, Composites, Fiberglass, etc.)	-Heavy Resistance -Deflects Minor Hits	-Heavy Resistance -Deflects Minor Hits	-Heavy Resistance -Deflects Minor Hits	Deflects Minor Hits (Missiles & Frag)
METAL PLATES	-Heavy Resistance -Deflects Minor Hits	Deflects Direct Hits	-Medium Resistance -Deflects Minor Hits	-Deflects Minor Hits (Missiles & Frag) -Heavy Resistance Direct Hits (Missiles & Frag)
BALLISTIC PLATES	-Heavy Resistance -Deflects Minor Hits	Deflects Direct Hits	-Heavy Resistance -Deflects Minor Hits	-Deflects Direct Hits (Missiles, Frag, Small / Large Pistols) -Heavy Resistance (Small / Large Rifles)

This is where Material Thickness, Material Type, and Layering really comes into play! Consider the following:

- Heavy Steel Plates likely provide the following additional protection:
    - Deflect Blunt Direct Hits
    - Displacement of Edged Major Hits
    - Deflect Direct hits from Small & Large Pistols, Missiles, and Frag
    - Medium Resistance to Small & Large Rifles
- Whereas Thin Steel Plates over Average Treated Leather probably only provide:
    - Light Resistance to Blunt Attacks
    - Displacement of Direct Edged Attacks
    - Deflection of Minor Edged Attacks
    - Heavy Resistance to Missiles
    - Medium Resistance to Frag
- Then a Thick Treated Leather Jacket with Average Cloth Padding might allow:
    - Medium Resistance to Blunt Attacks
    - Deflection of Minor Edged Attacks
    - Heavy Resistance to Direct Edged Attacks
    - Light Resistance to Direct Piercing Attacks
    - Deflection of Minor Piercing Attacks
    - Displacement of Missiles, Frag, Small Pistols
- MAJOR (DECISIVE) HITS are called so for a reason! These are usually the ones that find a gap in the armor or capitalize on some sort of weakness, but the bottom line is that they have the ability to turn the tides of battle!
- As always, the Storyteller has the final say! Don't get too wrapped up in over-complicating your reasoning, just think it through and tell the tale! Rules are guidelines, not set in stone!

SHIELDS - MATERIAL, THICKNESS, & EFFECTIVENESS:

Much like armor, shield effectiveness relies heavily upon the material, thickness, and craftsmanship of the equipment. Shields can definitely shatter from Major Hits, effectively wielding Two Handed weapons like battle axes, and bullets still punch through softer materials not designed to withstand ballistic impacts. Storyteller's use your best judgment!

SECTION VII: COMBAT - GRAPPLING & HOLDS

Grabbing or wrestling with your opponent. If you are trying to get a grip using your hands, then use a Grappling Skill Check. Some weapons like axes, hammers, glaives, pikes and spears provide an edge or hook that can be used against limbs or shields as well. In these instances use the appropriate Combat Skill Check! The severity of grapples really depends on how far you want to take it. Sometimes you need to tackle and wrestle somebody on the ground, sometimes you might just try to grab their weapon arm so they can't use it against you, or maybe you just want to put someone on their ass and keep running! Maybe once you grab them you pull them into your own weapon, providing a positive modifier for a strike as described above. Storytellers act accordingly, but remember it always starts with One Action, the first GRAB

- As always, a character can perform a Fast Grab which determines the Location with the RANDOM HIT CHART or a Targeted Grab by spending another Action
- When you successfully Grab an opponent the Location is rendered inoperable as long as the character maintains their GRIP. Each successful Grab transforms into a Grip, and in order to maintain it on the next turn the character spends One Action there as well. This also costs the target character One Action while any Grip is held
- While standing, a character can only grab with each hand, assuming its free. You may have to holster a weapon or drop it first in order to do this but that means that when the characters are on foot only Two Grips can be held at a given time
- Once on the ground, the character can begin to use their legs to perform additional Grabs and / or Grips. Again, its One Action per limb. The maximum is Four per character, given that human beings have two arms and two legs
- DOMINANCE MANEUVERS - are single Action moves that attempt to re-position their targets entire body by Chaining a Grapple Skill Check with a Strength Check. A few examples:
  - Once you have a reasonable Grip, you can spend another Action and pass Grapple Skill Chain to a Strength Check to make the Takedown. Tackles should probably consist of a Speed Check to Grapple Chain to see if its going to be One Action or Two. A good roll on the Strength Check means the Takedown was probably painful, possibly knocking the wind out of the target
  - Taking them to the Ground as mentioned before, but not intending to continue the Grapple. This would be an example of a SLAM MANUEVER. A character can also Slam a target into any opportune object or surface, such as a rough corner, furniture edges or an allies Ready weapon! The character is going to perform a Strength Check to ensure that the target doesn't "hold on" and pulls the attacker with them. Slams consist of the following considerations on the Strength Check:
    - Remember the Major, Direct, and Minor Rolls? Same applies here with the attackers Grappling Skill Check except for a few things:
      - The type of Attack depends on what the attacker Slams their target into. Most times it will be Blunt, but if they successfully Slam them onto a Spike or someone else's weapon it can become a Piercing or Edged Attack
      - The Random Hit Chart is used to determine where the Slam Effects are located
      - Major Slam Rolls will always "Downgrade" to Direct Strikes based on the surface that the target is slammed into
  - Simply "throwing" their target thereby just moving them out of the way, again Strength Checks determine effectiveness and distance

- CONTORTION MANUEVERS - are moves that attempt to use the characters Agility Trait to "writhe" or "squirm" into position rather than using brute force by Chaining an Agility Check to lead to the Grapple Skill Check

• BREAKING A GRIP - requires a successful Grappling Check while spending an Action. Strength is a key factor here, so for simplicity's sake its recommended using a 2:10 Modifier Ratio (for every 2 Strength the character is above / below their opponent give them plus / minus 10 Modifier to their Grapple Skill Check)
  • Even if the defending character has Zero Actions thanks to multiple Grips on their person, they always get One attempt to Break a Grip
  • Much like Strikes, the Roll is broken down into the three categories previously listed:
    • MAJOR ROLLS: Indicate that the Grip is actually Reversed, with the character Breaking the Grip now having a Grip on the limb previously used to hold them
    • DIRECT ROLLS: Show that the character successfully Breaks the Grip
    • MINOR ROLLS: Mean that the character still needs to Force the Maneuver (costing an Additional Action)

• REINFORCING A GRIP - requires that you use another limb to Grab onto your existing Grip, thus another Action to ensure that the Modifier is altered by effectively multiplying your Strength! This can seriously help you in dealing with a stronger opponent!
  • A Reinforced Grip grants the Holder 1.5x their Strength Trait for Strength Checks, rounded down just like when used on a Long or Two Handed Weapon (If a character with a Strength of 11 Locks their Grip, future Strength Checks are performed as if their Strength is 16)

• RELEASING A GRIP - in some cases a player may decide that they have enough Grips on their opposition and want to Strike a now "open" target. Simple enough, all the character has to do is declare another Action with the Limb maintaining the Grip
  • IE: The character isn't worried about the Grip they have on their Targets Midsection anymore, and decides they want to start Punching instead. The Grip is Released, and the character is free to Roll to Strike as usual!

• CHOKING someone takes a long time and proves fairly difficult! If an attacker got the jump on someone and are trying to be quiet then that first Grip on the Neck Location is crucial. Usually it makes more sense to stab them or cut their throat but if that's not what your trying to do then this is how Choking works
  • If the attacker manages to get a Grip on the target's NECK then Choking begins, with the Target having to make Endurance Checks every turn after 10 rounds (UNLESS the attacker performs a Strangle Maneuver) until the Grip Breaks or they pass out
    • Each round that the Grip is in effect the Grip Holder gets a chance to "Strangle" their target by crushing their windpipe with a Strength Check. This is done by using another Action after maintaining the Grip. Modifiers still apply for the Holder, and an attacker can only Strangle ONCE PER ROUND!
      • A successful Strength Check from the Holder hastens the process by forcing the Targets Endurance Check immediately
      • A failed Strength Check just means that they hold their Grip for another of the 10 rounds it takes before Endurance Checks are automatically required
    • Each failed Endurance Check reduces the Targets current Endurance by One
    • If the Target manages to Break the Grip / Lock at this point, Endurance to Strength / Skill Chains are expected
    • If the Target reaches Zero Endurance, then they have to make Willpower Checks to remain conscious. Even if successful, the Targets Willpower reduces by One
    • Once unconscious, the character has to continue Choking the Target as their Willpower deteriorates
    • If Willpower reaches Zero after Endurance reaches Zero, the Target is effectively "Strangled" and likely dead or very near death. CPR is their only hope and must occur immediately!

• LIMB LOCKS / BARS – A character may also attempt to injure a joint by performing specialized maneuvers that leverage one section of a limb in opposition to the other. These maneuvers are exceptionally painful, and can lead to dislocation, fractures, and tears in the ligaments
  • If the attacker has control of both "sides" of the joint (Forearm & Bicep, Thigh & Calf, Bicep & Shoulder) OR can position their body so that their own shoulders or legs can be used as a leverage point, they may attempt a Lock / Bar Maneuver with Modifiers
    • MAJOR ROLLS: Can cause immediate fractures if the character so chooses, crippling the limb and causing the target to perform a Willpower Check against Shock
    • DIRECT ROLLS: Can inflict immediate dislocations if the Attacker decides to do so, crippling the limb in a less damaging fashion but still cause the target to perform a Willpower Check against Shock and cripples the limb until it can be relocated
    • MINOR ROLLS: Do not cripple the joint, but are exceptionally painful and a good way to force submission of a target. Defender must make a Willpower Check against Pain
  • It is important to note that in Do or Die scenarios, a character can always attempt to break a targets Neck or Back to remove them from the fight!

• Wrestling is a great way to burn a lot of energy very quickly and accomplish little real damage. A particularly good or even a Critical Grappling Check might break a bone or dislocate a joint but its mostly about restraining the target. Endurance to Strength Chains should start to occur after about 10 rounds

A FEW EXAMPLES:

We should probably run through a couple of examples to demonstrate exactly how this system of play is intended to function. These will be randomly determined Rolls used in per-determined scenarios to represent the reality of the situation. Lets begin:

• *EXAMPLE ONE:* An unarmed player has been attacked by a lone gunman who missed their initial shot. The player has been running for a few turns now but the gunman is only slightly slower than they are, so they have decided that the next time an opportunity presents itself they are going to attempt to Ambush the gunman. The player spends two actions on their next turn to turn into a narrow alley, and then hold position behind the wall and Save their remaining 4 Actions till the gunman rounds the corner and attempt their ambush

    • The gunman steps into the alleyway. Player declares his first "Interrupt" Action is to Grab the gunman's wrist. This is a Targeted Grab so it costs 2 of their 4 Actions, and their Grappling Skill is a 96

        • Player rolls a 58. Storyteller determines that Grabbing the wrist / forearm falls somewhere between the 3" and 6" target size, so imposes a negative 60. 96 - 60 means the Likelihood of Success is 36 (Player swears they will upgrade their Grappling Skill if they survive this). 58 proves to be the highest possible Minor Failure, so the Storyteller says there is no consequence.

        • Player decides they are going to just Tackle the gunman. Rolls a 92, obviously a Minor Success. Storyteller tells them to Chain a Strength Check. Player has a Strength of 13 and Rolls a 14. Storyteller decides that they don't make the full Takedown, and only get one RANDOM HIT CHART Roll to determine where they have a Grip.

            • The RANDOM HIT CHART determines that the Player has a Grip on the gunman's Left Calf with their Right Hand (dominant)! The player is definitely in big trouble here but has been proven to be faster than the gunman, so maybe his Sequence is high enough that they will get the first Turn next Combat Round!

        • The Player decides they are going to try to Takedown the gunman again. Percentile Roll this time is a 67, clearly a Minor Takedown but successful none the less. Storyteller decides they should Strength Check again. This time the Player Rolls a 9! A solid Slam occurs and the Storyteller Rolls an Agility Check to see if the gunman (Agility of 10) drops the weapon, and the 2D10 roll is a 12! Now its Mano-a-Mano and the Storyteller informs the player that they have an additional Grip from the successful Takedown. Use the RANDOM HIT CHART

            • The Players Random Hit Result turns out to be a newfound Grip (with their Left Hand) on the gunman's Pelvis (Groin / Rear). He has him by the balls now!

• Next Combat Round:The Player has a Sequence of 13 whereas the gunman has one of 10, so the Player gets the first Turn

> • Maintaining his Grip on the gunman's balls, hes down to 5 Actions. First he twists and pulls. Storyteller says Strength Check: Player rolls 8 (of his 13). Clearly a Direct (and thus decisive*) Strength Check! This puts the gunman into Shock (1/2 Actions rounded down, of his 5 that means he has 2 now) and he screams in agony
>
> • The Player then Grapples with his Left Leg, says he doesn't really care where. Percentile Roll is 68, pretty close to a Direct Hit. Random Hit proves to be the Left Ribs. Now the gunman is pinned down with a knee on his chest and the Player still has him by the balls
>
> • The Player decides to Grapple with his Right Leg, again doesn't care where. This will be his 3rd of 5 Actions. Percentile says 51, definitely a Direct Hit. Random determines the Pelvis again! Now the character could really pull!
>
> • The Player decides to do just that. Storyteller, laughing at his poor subjects misfortune, tells the Player to perform a Strength Check. Player's 2D10 reveals that they have Rolled a 14, which is just outside their Strength BUT their pinning the target down at the Pelvic Bone means its still just as painful as the first time! Storyteller makes a Willpower Check (gunman has a Willpower of 13) for the gunman to see if he still wants to fight (not mentioning this to the player really, just doing it) and Rolls a 9... This is where being a Storyteller gets a little personal
>
> • Knowing that the gunman is severely hurting, and only going to have one Action to Break one of his Grips, the Player decides with their last Action they are going to raise their right fist and tell the gunman "I could rip your jewels off and wear 'em around my neck if I wanted to! I've got no beef with you! Why the FUCK are you trying to kill me?!?". Everyone laughs, and the story continues!

• This was definitely one of those cases where the Player was in some serious trouble, and the Random Hit RANDOM HIT CHART ended up saving their life! Proper Action management and being tactically fluid is how you survive the Aftermath!

• *EXAMPLE TWO:* This time a Player has been engaged with an Opponent for a few rounds in Melee Combat, but the last time they Blocked the Attackers Two Handed Axe Swing they became Disarmed from the blow. Fortunately this Player is very familiar with Grappling (Grappling Skill of 113) and always carries a Combat Knife on their belt. In this instance, both the Player and the NPC have 5 Actions...

    • First, the Player declares that they will spend one Action to draw their knife. Then they will spend another Action to step up to the Axeman. Third they will attempt a Tackle Maneuver All well and good...The Storyteller declares that since it is a Short Weapon they can do so, but they will only be able to successfully Grab a single Location on their target if successful. Percentile Roll is 07, clearly a Major Hit with the Tackle Maneuver Strength Check for the possibility of additional Damage proves to be an 11, which is just under the Players Strength of 12.

        • Storyteller says that the Major Hit drives the Axeman down hard, but doesn't do much more than superficial damage. However they certainly dropped their axe, and the success of the Tackle lets the Player roll twice with the RANDOM HIT CHART. First for their Left Hand, and second for their Right Leg.

            • First Roll reveals that the Players Left Hand has control over the Axeman's Left Calf? Strange but alright. Second Roll shows that the Players Right Leg is pinning the Axeman's Right Thigh to the ground. Clearly the Player lifted the Axeman into the air before coming down on top of them, and then took them to ground by pinning the legs and still has a knife in their dominant hand. Not bad for 3 Actions!

• With two Actions remaining the Player decides its time to start Thrusting the blade into their opposition and declares a Fast Stab with a Short Weapons Skill of 92. Percentile says 52, which is a Direct Success. Random Hit reveals that the Strike lands in the Right Shoulder. Unfortunately for the Player the Axeman is wearing a Thick Leather Pauldron, so they get some negatives to the Strength Check. 2D10 turns out to be 13, so it just glances off the Armor.

• With their last Action the Player "Stabs" again, this time the Roll is 14 and a Major Hit. Random Hit tells us it lands in the Midsection, so right in the belly. Strength Check shows an 18, well above the Players Strength, so it is Downgraded to a Direct Hit. Still gets under or through the armor though, so that's acceptable. It isn't going under the Ribs to the Heart, but they still have to test against Shock and suffer Significant Blood Loss

    • Axeman performs their Willpower Check against Shock, with a 2D10 Roll of 10 which still passes. No Shock, but they do lose an Action and the Storyteller decides his adrenaline is high so only one to their Physical Traits

• The Axeman lost one Action from the stab to their gut, one from the Left Calf being pinned, and one from the Right Thigh, meaning 3 of their 5 Actions are gone. With only Two left, the Storyteller says that they are going to make a Targeted Grab for the Knife Arm of the Player. D100 shows 45, and with the -50 Modifier for the Arm the Storyteller decides that it is a successful Minor Grab for someone clearly conditioned to Melee Combat. The struggle is real!

• Next Combat Round: The Player Maintains their Grip on both Legs, costing 2 Actions. They are also under the Axeman's Grip for their Right Arm, costing an additional Action. This means now the Player has 2 Actions themselves The Player decides that they want to try to Break the Grip on their Right Arm with their Left Hand. Storyteller says that the Axeman has a Strength of 14 and the Player has 12 so that's a difference of two...Roll Percentile. Dice show that the Player rolls 80. With the -10 from the Strength difference and the -38 for the Off Hand its a definite Failure.

• The Player decides that they know if the Axeman holds his Grip on his Knife Arm they will only have One Action to use against him. The decision is clearly to Reinforce their Grip on the Knife and try to force it down with both hands.

• The NPC only has one Action, so his answer is also clear. He decides to Reinforce his Grip on the Knife Arm. Now the Strength for the NPC is 21 and the Strength of the Player is 18, but the Axeman is still bleeding and the need for Willpower Checks is bound to catch up to him eventually

• Next Round: In a moment of clarity, the Player decides to Release the Grip on both Legs and the Reinforced Knife Hand to switch the Knife to the Off Hand. This gives him back 3 of the Actions, meaning that only his Right Arm is Gripped which costs them only One of their Five Actions! First move is the switch itself, followed by an Off Handed Fast Stab. Percentile says 56, Likelihood of Success is 92 (Short Weapons) - 38 (Off Hand) = 54. Barely a miss!

• Player tries again and Rolls a 92, terrible miss!

• Now or never! Last Roll is an 84?!? It was a clever idea, but it didn't work. The Axeman now has only One Action missing from the Stab Wound, and can choose to Maintain or Release his Grip with both hands on the Players dominant arm. The fight goes on! Here would be an excellent opportunity for the Axeman to attempt to make a Targeted Grab with one of his legs for the Upper Arm or Shoulder and attempt an Arm Lock Maneuver..

SECTION VIII: INJURY & STATUS EFFECTS:

Surviving Combat can prove exceptionally challenging once a character has become seriously injured. Even if they manage to pull through there is always a chance that they may succumb to their wounds later. This section will address how to deal with situations involving pain, blood loss, shock, being short-winded from trauma, broken bones, burns, panic, and everything in between.

• Storytellers: When a Player is Wounded it is important that you update the ID Marks of the Character by clicking the Blue ID Marks Button on their character Row!
 • Fill in any pertinent information for the Location of the Hit
  • Short abbreviations are highly recommended. Things like "GSW" for Gun Shot Wound, or simply "Stab", "Cut", "Bruise"
  • To signify old injuries, once they heal just leave "scar". Old injuries can definitely hinder future performance!
  • This is also how you give a character a haircut or tattoo!

• BLOOD LOSS: A character suffering blood loss will lose an Endurance Point according to the rate listed below until they are "stabilized" with First Aid treatment. In the case of INTERNAL BLEEDING thanks to organ damage they may need either professional medical treatment and / or surgery
 • Once a characters Endurance reaches 3 they will have to make Willpower Checks to remain conscious
 • If the character fails one of these Willpower Checks or their Endurance Trait reaches Zero, they will become UNCONSCIOUS and unable to treat their own injuries
  • Once Unconscious, the deterioration of the Endurance Trait shifts to the Willpower Trait much like "Choking" under the COMBAT: GRAPPLING & HOLDS Section
  • If both Endurance and Willpower reach Zero, the character has "Bled Out" and dies
  • It is important to note that multiple injuries can speed up Blood Loss exponentially
  • The severity of the wound should be noted in order to determine the Modifiers for the use of the First Aid Skill when trying to Stabilize the wounded character
   • Once a character is Stabilized they are no longer at risk of bleeding to death, but they will still need significant medical attention and ample time in order to begin the healing and recovery process!

TERM	ENDURANCE LOSS RATE
Mild	1 Endurance every Hour
Moderate	1 Endurance every 30 Minutes
Heavy	1 Endurance every 15 Minutes
Severe	1 Endurance every 5 Minutes
Extreme	1 Endurance every Minute

• RECOVERY: SHOCK - A character that falls into Shock (see Strikes: Effects & Damage) remains in Shock until they pass a Willpower Check
- Action Points remain at Half of their normal Rating (rounded down)
- Mental Traits are significantly impaired, along with their Associated Skills
  - Storytellers use your best judgment here!
- Every failed Shock Check further reduces Willpower by One
  - A Major Failure on the Willpower Check may cause the character to Panic!
- If Willpower reaches Zero, the character is rendered Unconscious
- If the character is receiving help or medical attention, the administering party can keep them from slipping further into Shock as they try to Stabilize them. Often just keeping the wounded talking is enough!

• RECOVERY: CONCUSSION - A character that suffers a Concussion (any Attack that results in the reduction of Mental Traits and Actions in the Strikes: Effects & Damage Tab) from a Head Wound will suffer these negatives until they pass a Willpower Check to regain "Focus"
- Concussions are essentially a watered down version of Shock
- Every failed Concussion Check further reduces Willpower by One
- If Willpower reaches Zero, the character is rendered Unconscious
- If the character is receiving help or medical attention, the administering party can keep them conscious preventing further injury or systemic failure. Often just keeping them talking and alert is all that needs to happen! After enough time, the confusion will pass and they will eventually "snap out of it"

• RECOVERY: WINDED - A character that becomes Winded (any Attack that results in the reduction of their Physical Traits and Actions in the Strikes: Effects & Damage Tab) from a Body Wound will suffer those negatives until they pass an Endurance Check to "Catch their breath" or they stop ALL strenuous physical activity to do so
- Traumatic injury to the Lungs from Strikes to the Ribs or Chest (and potentially upward strikes to the Midsection) may make this impossible until they receive proper medical care
- If a character continues exerting themselves, each failed Endurance Check will result in an additional reductions to their Physical Traits (including Speed, which directly translates to Actions at a 2:1 Rate!)
- If Endurance reaches Zero the character becomes IMMOBILE for a brief period of time, focusing all of their effort just to maintain critical body function. Severe negatives to Willpower begin to occur once this happens!
  - Storytellers, this is where Boxers and Professional Fighters get "Knocked Out" after fighting several rounds!

• PAIN: As a general rule of thumb, Pain only affects its body Location when the injury is "fresh" or when it is used while still damaged or early in the Healing process.

  • Pain will cause significant Physical Trait penalties on the affected area

    • For instance: If a character has an injured Right Arm, their Strength, Endurance, Speed, and Agility with that Limb will be severely reduced. However, if they are Running their Speed and Endurance aren't going to be affected

    • This can be really problematic when the Storyteller factors in circumstances like Leg or Body wounds!

      • Damage to the Torso will likely impact any lifting, twisting, or general weight shifting

      • Leg injuries can affect Upper Body maneuvers like Swinging or Thrusting a weapon as balance and footwork play a major role in performing effectively

  • The same is true for Skill Checks as well, but only when they make sense

    • IE: A character with a leg injury may suffer Penalties to their Melee Weapons Skills when fighting on foot, but not any if they are Striking from a vehicle or on Horseback

    • Another Example: If a character has bloodied up and bruised their knuckles by fighting Unarmed they may suffer significant penalties trying to Pick Locks, but it wont really affect their Computers Skill unless they are testing to find out how many Words Per Minute they can type!

  • As mentioned before, some maneuvers can require that the character pass a Willpower Check to fight through the Pain in order to do whatever it is that they actually need to. If they Fail the Willpower Check it will cost them an additional Action to "Force the Move"

• FEAR & PANIC: If a character finds themselves in a situation where they doubt their ability to survive, it makes sense that on a General Overview of their situation "Adrenaline" can come to life in an all consuming "Fight or Flight" response. This is particularly true when a person is in Shock

  • If a character Fails a Willpower Check for Shock particularly horribly, the "Flight Response" takes over. They will spend all of their Actions attempting to either Run or Hide until they pass a Willpower Check to Recover from Panic

  • Additionally, whenever the Storyteller deems Necessary the character may have to Pass a Willpower Check in order to maintain the "Fight Response"

    • The basic idea is that the character has to reflect on the idea that if they want to live they have to decide whether or not it makes more sense to just GTFO PERIOD!

    • This will vary from character to character. One person may freak out and try to find a tree to climb if they are surrounded by 6 dogs when they are all alone, another might decide they can take them with their baseball bat and their wits at the cost of a few dozen stitches (six dogs will feed six families...)

    • Being pinned down by Sustained Fire might make some people curl up into a little ball and pray, while others might keep their heads and low crawl away

    • Being engulfed and physically ON FIRE is likely to cause most people to Panic and try to put themselves out or strip their clothing off; some might stop, drop, and roll; while some deranged few might decide its more important to keep shooting! For a lot of people just being inside of a burning building is enough to inspire the "Flight Response". Fire is a marvelous tool for inspiring fear in people and animals alike

    • Storytellers be advised: cases may vary but Shock can easily lead to irrational decisions!

• OTHER STATUS EFFECTS: There are about a thousand other possible Status Effects that the characters might find themselves experiencing. Here are just a few:

- Blinded
- Choking on Tear Gas or Smoke
- Deafened
- Off Balance or Dizzy
- Enraged
- Shaky, Shivering or Twitchy
- etc. etc.
- Storytellers should have a decent grasp of how to accommodate for these things at this point, if not you can just omit them. Tell your Story!
    - A "Black Out" can be particularly useful when a character is clearly doomed and the Storyteller decides to spare them. Instead of dying it's always possible to have them wake up with grievous injuries and a serious gap in their memory...some sort of "Miracle", if you will. Even if they are obviously too far gone to save, it still gives the Player a chance to have their last words, and share any information that the others in the group aren't aware of before succumbing to their injuries

SECTION IX: HEALING, REHABILITATION, & RECOVERY TIMES:

Healing takes time! This time might be sped up with proper medical care, or slowed down with inadequate supply and expertise. The severity of injury determines the amount of time it takes. Some points to note:

- BRUISING AND MINOR INJURY – Likely only take about a week (at most) to recover to full functionality
- SERIOUS FLESH WOUNDS, DEEP CUTS, MUSCLE INJURY, AND HAIRLINE FRACTURES – Take a little more time, but usually less than a month. Two weeks should be about standard for a character with Average Endurance
- SERIOUS FRACTURES, SEVERE BONE DAMAGE, AND MINOR ORGAN DAMAGE - Can take several weeks (spanning into the 1 - 3 month range) to heal properly
- COMPOUND FRACTURES, EXTENSIVE TRAUMA, AND SERIOUS ORGAN DAMAGE – Usually take months to heal properly and require extensive rehabilitation to return to full functionality
  - Endurance Checks can be performed daily to represent the potential for a speedy recovery and Pain reduction
  - Storytellers may consider "Fast Forwarding" through the healing process for the players at SIGNIFICANT opportunity cost for "Time-Sensitive" windows. If necessary, the characters can still operate with injury though, and this could afford some unique scenarios for the plot line and frequent use of the Pain examples set earlier...Dealers choice!
  - Seriously injured characters can always be substituted out for new characters (ideally with the same Total Experience and unused Experience Pool) to represent friends, like-minded allies, or at least interested parties that the character has made along the way! The new character takes the injured characters place in the story-line (at least until the first one heals, or the new one gets their turn to rest)
    - Depending on the level of "Realism" that the Storyteller decides to use, it is reasonable to expect that a Player may NEED to rotate out Two or Three individuals with the First One setting the baseline for TOTAL EXPERIENCE before suffering "Serious Injury or Death"

SECTION X: EXPERIENCE - GAINING & SPENDING

Experience (EXP) is the currency of character development. The Aftermath does not use a leveling system, and spending experience points can be performed whenever the Storyteller sees fit, but should generally occur whenever the players are at rest, healing, have some post operation downtime or are simply preparing for future endeavors. Overall, experience is used to increase a characters Traits, Skills, learn new Skills (including languages), and develop new Abilities (Abilities vary far and wide, so it is best to just check out the Abilities section under Character Management)

- Any Experience earned is added to BOTH the Total Experience of the character as well as their "remaining" Experience Pool
- Spending Experience is subtracted from the Experience Pool only
- Total Experience is used to establish the Highest Point that a character reaches to allow the Storyteller to assess the proficiencies of Future Characters that the Player might build
- EARNING EXPERIENCE: The Storyteller is responsible for distributing all Experience as it is earned. They do this by filling in a numeric value in the characters row under the Earned Exp column and then pressing UPDATE. As usual they always have the final say in how much is earned and why. The following table is provided to give a point of reference as to how this system is intended to be used:

EVENT	DESCRIPTION	REWARD
CRITICAL SKILL USE	Successfully performing a Skill Check that either directly advances the Plot of the Story or saves a characters life (including their own)	**500**
MAJOR SKILL USE	Successfully performing a Skill Check that grants a significant advantage or opportunity to advance the plot	**250**
DIRECT (RISKY) SKILL USE	Successfully performing a Skill Check that grants a small advantage or opportunity to the player. This also includes effective Combat Maneuvers!	**100**
MINOR SKILL USE	Successfully performing a Skill Check that is neither mission critical nor time sensitive	**50**
DEFEATING DANGEROUS OPPOSITION	Eliminating a major threat that is a combination of better trained, better equipped, or proves themselves highly capable. This is not limited to Combat!	**1000**
DEFEATING SUPERIOR OPPOSITION	Eliminating a significant threat that is either better trained, better equipped, or highly capable but not all three. Also not limited to Combat. Storytellers, it is important to note that as a character becomes more capable, the gap between Dangerous Opposition and Trivial Opposition will grow ever tighter. IE: A highly capable character will be more likely to encounter Inferior Opposition than Superior Opposition	**750**
DEFEATING "EQUAL" OPPOSITION	Eliminating a threat that could be considered relatively "equal" to the characters own prowess or ability. Again not limited to combat!	**500**
DEFEATING INFERIOR OPPOSITION	Eliminating a threat that is clearly inferior to the character, but still poses a significant threat. As usual, this is not limited to Combat alone	**250**
DEFEATING TRIVIAL OPPOSITION	Eliminating a threat that doesn't pose a serious risk, but is more just in the way of the characters goals. Not limited to Combat	**100**
ADVANCING THE STORY OR PLOT	Anything that moves the plot line forward. Intended to include accomplishing major milestones for the story	**STORYTELLERS CHOICE**
GOOD JUDGEMENT OR IDEA	A reward for putting considerable thought or effort in solving problems that the character may face	**STORYTELLERS CHOICE**
BRAVERY, COURAGE, OR HEROISM	Performing risky behavior for the good of others or self, successful or not	**STORYTELLERS CHOICE**
ENTERTAINING THE PLAYERS	A reward for keeping the other players happy and engaged. Usually the "Comedians" reward	**STORYTELLERS CHOICE**

• TRAINING: PRACTICE & EXERCISE - If a Player has some free time, and knows they need to prepare for future engagements it makes sense that they may "Exercise" or "Practice" certain Skills. This should be treated as a Good Idea and reward some Experience for them to spend later! As usual it is the Storytellers Choice on how much to Reward, but it should be noted that improving these things takes significant time and effort!

> • It is recommended that when a Player decides to do this they perform a Willpower Check to determine how much effort and mindfulness they put forth to improve these things. A particularly low Success Roll might mean they put forth a lot of effort, so the Experience Reward should be higher. If they barely succeed, a Moderate Reward. If they Fail, then they are just "Going through the Motions" and receive nothing!

> • It is also important to note that Bullets are incredibly expensive at this point, so Practicing these Skills is incredibly costly and supply may not even be available to achieve significant reward!

> • This may also present unusual "Target Opportunities" for the characters enemies. For instance if they learn that the Player goes jogging every morning to work on their Endurance Trait, it might give them a chance to ambush the Player while they are away from the party!

• SPENDING EXPERIENCE: When deemed appropriate, a Player can spend their Experience by hitting the Character Management Button either "In Game" or from the Home Screen. From there the Player can spend their Experience Points however they see fit, although some Skills & Abilities have "PRE-REQUISITES" that the system will force the Player to achieve before granting their request. Generally speaking though, the Experience Point Cost follows the following guidelines to increase by ONE:

   • A Player can also learn ABILITIES by meeting their PRE-REQUISITES and spending the appropriate amount referenced by PART V: ABILITIES

RATING	RANGE	COST
ATTRIBUTES	Less than 5	**5000**
	Between 5 and 15	**2500**
	Between 16 and 20 (20 is the Maximum)	**5000**
STANDARD SKILLS	Less than 25	**250**
	Between 25 and 74	**100**
	Between 75 and 100	**250**
	Between 101 and 124	**500**
	Between 125 and 150 (150 is Maximum)	**750**
ADVANCED SKILLS	Less than 25	**500**
	Between 25 and 74	**250**
	Between 75 and 100	**500**
	Between 101 and 124	**1000**
	Between 125 and 150 (150 is Maximum)	**1500**
FOCUS SKILLS	Less than 10	**200**
	Between 10 and 19	**100**
	Between 20 and 29	**50**
	Between 30 and 39	**100**
	Between 40 and 50 (50 is Maximum)	**200**
DODGE	Less than 10	**100**
	Between 10 and 19	**200**
	Between 20 and 29	**500**
	Between 30 and 39	**1000**
	Between 40 and 50 (50 is Maximum)	**1500**
OFF HAND	Less than -51	**100**
	Between -50 and 41	**200**
	Between -40 and -31	**400**
	Between -30 and -21	**500**
	Between -20 and -11	**1000**
	Between -10 and 0 (Zero equals "Ambidextrous" and the Off Hand no longer suffers any penalty)	**1500**

SECTION XI: ANIMALS & NPCs

This section is prominently for the Storytellers, though Players should understand that "Knowledge is Power". As the actor for All Roles in the world, it is up to you to define every character that the Players will encounter in your Story. Often it makes sense to develop a few "Key" characters in your minds eye (Maybe even build them) and have them operate as either Protagonists or Antagonists in your Tale. That's all well and good, but there will be times that various "Generic" Henchmen or aggressors come into play. This Table is here to help you create enemies and opposition on the fly:

ROLL	ASSESSMENT	ACTIONS	SKILL	ATTR	CLASS
01 - 10	SMART, FAST, AND CAPABLE	8	125 CUNNING	20 - D10 (Divide 2D10 Roll by 2) ~14	DANGEROUS OPPOSITION
11 - 20	SMART & FAST	8	85 CUNNING	20 - 2D10 ~10 - 12	SUPERIOR OPPOSITION
21 - 30	FAST & CAPABLE	8	125	20 - D10 (Divide 2D10 Roll by 2) ~14	SUPERIOR OPPOSITION
31 - 40	SMART & CAPABLE	6	125 CUNNING	20 - D10 (Divide 2D10 Roll by 2) ~14	SUPERIOR OPPOSITION
41 - 50	ABOVE AVERAGE	6	100	2D10 ~12	"EQUAL" OPPOSITION
51 - 60	AVERAGE	5	100	2D10 ~10 - 12	"EQUAL" OPPOSITION
61 - 70	BELOW AVERAGE	4	85	2D10 ~8 - 10	INFERIOR OPPOSITION
71 - 80	SLOW BUT SMART	4	85 CUNNING	2D10 - 2 ~8 - 10	"EQUAL" OPPOSITION
81 - 90	SLOW BUT CAPABLE	4	100	20 - D10 (Divide 2D10 Roll by 2) ~12 - 14	INFERIOR OPPOSITION
91 - 100	INEPT	3	85	~6 - 8	TRIVIAL OPPOSITION

• CUNNING: means that the Storyteller should "Actively" try to both harm and outsmart the Players as much as possible (as if they were Playing themselves). Bottom line is that "Cunning" enemies are dangerous whereas others are relatively predictable!

ANIMALS & DANGEROUS WILDLIFE:

There are many forms of dangerous wildlife that exist in North America that pose significant risk to human life, especially now that the majority of the population has become centralized and humanities "Infinite Growth Model" no longer inhibits Natures "Darwinism" and unfettered population growth and thrival. From predatory species like bears, wolves, dogs, coyotes, cougars, and mountain lions to herbivores like cattle, goats, deer, elk, moose, horses, and even large gangs of vicious wild turkeys (known fact on both the East and West Coast!); each one has developed means to either Attack or Defend itself. This section addresses some of the differences between man and animal, primarily the following things to consider:

• ANIMAL SIZE: Animal size is the first consideration Storytellers need to take into account. Larger creatures such as bears, horses, and cattle will be considerably easier to Strike than a human being or a small dog or raccoon. Smaller creatures like medium sized dogs, cats, opossums, snakes, birds, and rodents will obviously be more difficult to hit. Storytellers act accordingly!

• RANDOM HIT CONSIDERATIONS: Throughout the ages, animals have learned that their necks and their bellies are the "Soft Spots" that they need to protect. Aside from Apes who could follow the given Random Hit Results, Storytellers should just do their best to relate the Random Hit Result to the part of the animals body
  • It seems pertinent to point out that most of the creatures the Players might encounter will likely walk on all four legs unless they "Stand Tall" in order to kick or come crashing down on their opponent. This means that the Arms will be the Front Legs, and the Legs will be the Back legs. It also means that more often than not Strikes to the Ribs can also damage the animals Shoulder Blades
  • Additionally there is a lot of marine life that have tails rather than legs, and creatures like alligators have both. For creatures like the shark, dolphin, whale, seal, or sea lion it may make more sense to treat the Upper Arm and Forearm Strikes shots to the Ribs, and the Hands as the creatures Fins. In the case of the alligator it might make more sense to consider the Tail the "Legs", and their actual Legs the "Pelvic Region" given body proportions...

• TRAIT VARIANCE: Many animals are considerably faster, stronger, and more enduring than the typical human being. In the wild they NEED to be in order to survive. This means that the Maximum Value of 20 for Traits does not apply to them! However, for realities sake Trait Checks should NOT be forfeited either, just give them significant bonuses and use the dice to determine the creatures effectiveness. For simplicity's sake no creature should ever have more than 10 Actions when attacking, though they may run considerably faster than the typical rules allow (2x Actions in Paces rather than 1.5x)!

• OFFENSIVE ADAPTATIONS: Most wildlife has evolved specialized attack and self defense adaptations to make them efficient killers. Be it tooth, claw, horn, tusk, or powerful limbs; they can definitely inflict a lot of damage to a human being. Most animals will attempt to take their target to the ground, increasing their ability to cause further injury
  • TOOTH & CLAW: These are most prevalent in predatory species, though even omnivores and herbivores are known to bite their attackers. Its important to note that most animals wielding these survival tools possess impressive jaw strength
    • BITING vs. MAULING - An animal is usually known to either "Snap" at a target with quick strikes to break the skin and cause blood loss, or "Lock" onto their target and then shake their heads back and forth to break bones, rip the flesh from their target effectively crippling movement, or perform a "Death Roll" to accomplish the same feat. This can cause exceptional Blood Loss! In the instance of Mauling a target in this way, Action spending should be used every time the creature changes direction of the pull

    • CLAWING vs. GRABBING - Many creatures also have claws that they will either Slash (treated as an Edged Swing) or Grab onto their target to either Pin or Pull them into their Jaws to make Biting Attacks more effective. In the case of Grabs, just treat it as Grappling Attacks that can cause Blood Loss

• HORNS & TUSKS: These types of attacks can either be used as Piercing or Blunt Strikes depending on the animal

> • THRUSTS vs. SWINGS - These creatures will either use their horns to attempt to impale their target or knock them away in order to create enough range to attack again or maximize the effectiveness of kicking or stomping their target

• KICKING & TRAMPLING: Many behooved animals have the ability to either kick or stomp the ever lasting hell out of their opposition, shattering bone so they can either make the kill themselves or run for their lives

• VENOM & POISONS: There are also many forms of reptile or insect in North America that use chemical means to incapacitate, kill, inflict incredible amounts of pain, or make their target incredibly sick. This should be considered a direct assault on a characters Endurance Trait, and can easily prove fatal with a dramatic reduction of anti-venom being produced in the Aftermath!

• DEFENSIVE ADAPTATIONS: Many species have evolved natural "armor" against their predators. For instance thick fur and loose skin is present on lots of dogs, wolves, and bears; whereas the alligator or crocodile has incredibly tough scales, the shark has thick sandpaper like skin, and cattle, buffalo, bears, whales, seals, and sea-lions have a dense protective layer of "blubber" protecting many parts of their body. All of these things should be considered ARMOR

> • THICK FUR, LEATHERY SKIN, & BODY FAT: Can easily protect against most Minor or Glancing Hits, with extra defense against Edged or Blunt attacks
> • BONE DENSITY: Many larger creatures possess the benefit of greater bone density. Bears, horses, and cattle have been known to have small caliber rounds be deflected by their skulls and ribs frequently! In these cases, repeated Strikes on the same target area may be necessary to fracture the bone enough to allow penetration to the vital organs underneath

• UNIQUE PERSONALITIES: Every life is "unique" in how they approach and tackle survival issues. With this in consideration, its recommended that Storytellers use the aforementioned NPC Generation Table when contemplating animals! It makes sense that maybe some of the Inferior Opposition might be interpreted as malnourished or starved creatures

• OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Most animals don't care much for anything other than the survival of themselves and their offspring, and can easily be persuaded to just leave to find easier prey. Bottom line is that no human being can "reliably" predict animal behavior, just look at how many times Steve Irwin was bitten or attacked on camera!

> • MANUEVERABILITY - Most creatures are exceptionally limited by their evolution on what they can or cannot do given their absence of thumbs and the ability to grip things. For instance: many species are incapable of climbing trees, only birds can fly, and alligators, crocodiles, and sharks can't effectively swim backwards (though the reptiles technically CAN using their feet, just not very fast)! Some animals will almost never "Rear Up" or "Stand Tall" because of the risk of exposing their underbelly. Knowing these things can save your life!
> • FIRE - Nearly every creature on the planet (other than those with specific training and exposure) is absolutely terrified of fire. Smoke hurts their heightened sense of smell, it is incredibly painful, fur catches easily, and generally they just don't seem to understand anything more than the fact that it's a threat. Players can use this to their advantage!
> • GUNFIRE - Like the flame, most creatures have enhanced sense of hearing and gunfire can be exceptionally painful to their ears. Without specific exposure and training, most animals will simply flee from the noise itself! This is a prime example of when animals would take a Willpower Check when humans would not need to.

• HUMAN INTERACTION: Of course, not every experience dealing with wildlife will be hostile and as such, several variables come into play. Consider the following:

• PERSUASION vs. DECEPTION: Trying to coax your friends dog to come with you while they walk away is infinitely different than trying to convince a bear to not to attack you if it stumbles into your camp. On one hand you are trying to persuade them to listen to you, on the other you are trying to convince them that you aren't worth the trouble by being loud and imposing (pretending to be more dangerous than you actually are in that moment).

• FAMILIARITY: Wild creatures are particularly wary of human beings more times than not, while domesticated animals are conditioned to dealing with people. Pets are even more inclined to be agreeable than livestock. Your own pet will have a unique relationship with you and is infinitely more likely to cooperate than someone elses. This is definitely an important distinction to make!

CIRCUMSTANCE	MODIFIER
Wild Animal	-50
Domestic Animal	0
Pet	25
Aggressive	-25
Neutral	0
Familiar	10
Friendly	25
Strong Bond	50

• COMMANDS & TRAINING: Issuing commands is definitely an attempt at persuasion, but if the animal doesnt actually know them and understand what you are telling them, then the odds of success are incredibly low. This Modifier should be entirely based upon the commands frequency of use

• CHARACTER'S MODIFIERS: Knowledge about animal behaviors also play a big factor into effective engagement, which is where the Animal Focus Skills really shine!

SECTION XII: TIPS ON BUILDING YOUR FIRST CHARACTER

The Aftermath is intended to be a group oriented Role Playing Game whose central theme revolves around Survival, Realistic Combat (and its associated horrors), while also exemplifying the absolute best and worst of humanity. The bottom line is that a "Starving America is a Dangerous America". After intense research and countless hours of study, it is my personal opinion that should this country find itself unable to meet its "On Demand" Freight requirements, things would get complicated quickly. Combine that with the fact that rather than ever spending the time or effort to develop any sort of "Civil Defense" strategy and instead rely on exorbitant military spending to ensure that any enemy of the state has to contend with the concept of "Mutually Assured Destruction"; it seems to me that it may only be a matter of time before someone develops the technological advances to challenge this theory. It is my hope that this game might teach others to learn some measure of self-reliance, how to keep calm when shit hits the fan, pick up a few survival skills, appreciate time-sensitive windows of opportunity, and discover the ability to realistically assess their own strengths and weaknesses to both survive and thrive should the supposedly impossible occur.

That said, there are many things to take into account when operating on the stage of The Aftermath. First and foremost...SURVIVE! It is highly imperative that Players understand that the threat of Death or Dismemberment are very real in this game. You are not going to have epic adventures against unparalleled odds and walk away unscathed. The minute any man, woman, or child decides to embark on a journey of Violence the rest of their lives are almost certainly going to be "Brief and full of excitement"! You will have beloved characters die because dice are cruel! Best to just get that out of the way now! Each characters "purpose" is to ensure that their lives, sacrifices, and suffering mean something! Now that that is established, here are a few tips for keeping your first character alive:

- A NEW CHARACTER'S SKILLS ARE DETERMINED BY THEIR ATTRIBUTES: You will notice that the first page of creating a new character only has a few options in the beginning. Once you use ALL Attribute Points on the green buttons, the rest of the page will open itself up to you after determining your universal "standard" skills
    - Academic Skills - are highly reliant upon Perception, Logic, and Memory; with minor ties to other Attributes
    - Melee Combat Skills - are generally a melting pot of Agility, Strength, and Speed
    - Ranged Combat Skills - are primarily determined by Perception and Agility
    - Vehicle Skills - are mostly focused on Perception and Speed (reaction times)
    - Survival Skills - vary widely but tend to revolve around Perception and Logic
    - Every skill available directly reflects on how the Traits determine the initial values! Use your head! If you score really low on Charisma you likely wont be very persuasive or manipulative. Low Agility means low physical prowess and body awareness. Low Perception means a distinct lack of alertness. Etc etc...
- SPEED is basically the "God Stat"" for combat effectiveness! Hesitation means failure, and Fear is the Mind-Killer!
- It is absolutely imperative that if you intend to survive long, a Player should get at least one Ranged Combat Skill and one Melee Combat Skill above 100 ASAP. You will also find yourself Grappling and Wrestling with your enemies often if the Storyteller decides they are realistically trying to fight for their lives, mostly because it is a great way to make sure your opponents can't hit you! With this in mind, you either need to be so formidable up close that they never get the chance, or you need to spend a fair amount of Experience rounding out your characters abilities to react to a variety of engagements!
- Bullets and Food are the new currency of America. They are both exceptionally difficult to acquire because the demand is incredibly high now, especially after learning that the government can only do so much to meet their needs. Winter is difficult no matter where you are in the US thanks to rapidly advancing climate change. Because of this, protecting your food supply (or hunting) is critical to everyone's likelihood of survival. With this in mind, it is infinitely easier to fashion arrows than make chemical compounds, but archery weapons are definitely less concealable than firearms. That said, you should either prepare to make every single round count (100 or more on the Skill) or learn not to rely on the "Way of the Gun" quite so heavily. There are about a thousand ways to solve most problems, violence "theoretically" should be the last resort! Remember that most of your "enemies" are only doing what they are doing because they are starving as well or just trying to feed their families
- TAKE COVER! You are much more likely to survive if you never get hit at all! Keep calm and take your time, save that last action to hide behind the cover entirely and then the first action to pop out via Maximizing! As long as you don't let yourself get "Flanked" or Overrun this is your safest bet!

• When questing for violence, you should absolutely expect to receive injury yourself! The First Aid Skill is how you can ensure your first character will live to fight another day. You have seen how the Modifiers work! Get this life saving skill above 100 ASAP so Blood Loss is less likely to claim their life!

• Learn to pick your battles, and only strike when the time is right! Gather information, learn strengths and weaknesses, habits, tools, thoughts, and methods! Knowledge is power, and if given the chance you don't want to reveal your intent too early.

• Which leads to the next point: Learn to work together! Every character varies significantly from one to the next, and well rounded units are much more adaptable. Also try to recruit NPC support from the Storyteller when discretion isn't really necessary in the game-plan! Help enough people, and they will to help you, especially if you achieve any measure of success. Morale takes care of itself once you prove you get results, and every advantage helps!

• A Jack of all Trades is better than a Master of One: You have no idea what the Storyteller might be planning to put you and the team through. Your team mates may make rash decisions and get themselves killed. If you can remain reasonably self sufficient, you are much more likely to accomplish your own objectives; which frees you up to help others! You will not make it long if you do not learn to take care of yourself first. The chain is only as strong as its weakest link!

• Learn to save Actions! Saving Actions to Interrupt your enemies WILL save your life! Remember that each Combat Round is only 3 seconds! Most of it will be over in 2 minutes or less! Take your time to ensure your success unless you know you will be overwhelmed and outnumbered in the IMMEDIATE future! Risking grievous injury to close out combat to save yourself 3 seconds almost NEVER makes sense!

• The most concrete way to ensure you Survive any conflict is to eliminate or disable those who means you harm as quickly as possible! Given that you were just told to SAVE actions to protect your own neck, the real trick is finding the best "balance" between the two, but this is where spending additional actions for Targeted Strikes establish their importance.

• For fresh campaigns, it is almost guaranteed that your first character will sustain severe injury at some point. It probably makes sense to build two or even three characters and decide beforehand how and why your group is affiliated as well as how they work together in order to improve their odds of survival. After that, all that you really need is to set up where they are, what they are doing, and how this small group keeps in touch. This strategy also provides a way to gather more information about the plots setting as these "inactive" characters could still be used to advance the Storyteller's tale behind the scenes without taking "direct" action in the campaign.

> • The occasional skill checks and objectives that these behind the scene operatives assist with could easily earn them a small amount of experience in wait until it is their turn to be deployed
>
> • Should the Storyteller prevent this, having this backstory and relationship to the primary character still provides ample means for new character integration if the character is horribly injured, incarcerated, or otherwise meets an untimely end

• Good luck, and Good Hunting!

PART III: CHARACTER CREATION

ATTRIBUTES (2D10):
- Each attribute has a direct impact to all of your characters skills
- Each attribute also contributes heavily to the characters ability to engage the plot
- Once all attributes are rolled, the character gains CHARACTER POINTS to be distributed freely to any attribute other than Beauty
  - CHARACTER POINTS are calculated by dividing Willpower by two, rounded down (Willpower / 2)

RANDOMIZED DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:
- A little random magic to help everyone get into character!
- Establishes the characters starting skills
- Can spend a CHARACTER POINT to Re-Roll any single table

BIRTHDAY: MONTH TABLE [D100]

ROLL	RESULT
01 – 08	January
09 – 16	February
17 – 24	March
25 – 32	April
33 – 40	May
41 – 48	June
49 – 57	July
58 – 66	August
67 – 75	September
76 – 84	October
85 – 92	November
93 – 100	December

DAY = D100 / 3 (round down) [Rollover for February]

YEAR = 2012 – 4D10

- Minimum Age at Game start is 16

SEX TABLE [D100]

ROLL	RESULT
01 – 49	Male
50 – 100	Female

ETHNICITY (WHITE [D100]) & HAIR (GRAY [D100]) TABLE

ROLL	RESULT
01 – 58	CAUCASIAN
01 – 25	Black
26 – 40	Dark Brown
41 – 65	Brown
66 – 90	Dirty Blonde
91 – 99	Blonde
100	Red
59 – 62	MIDDLE EASTERN
01 – 80	Black
81 – 90	Dark Brown
91 – 99	Brown
100	Red
63 – 80	HISPANIC
01 – 70	Black
71 – 90	Dark Brown
91 – 99	Brown
100	Red
81 – 86	ASIAN
01 – 75	Black
76 – 90	Dark Brown
91 – 100	Brown
86 – 99	AFRICAN AMERICAN
01 – 92	Black
93 – 99	Brown
100	Red
100	NATIVE AMERICAN
01 – 95	Black
96 – 100	Brown

EYE COLOR TABLE [D100]

ROLL	RESULT
01 – 12	Green
13 – 44	Blue
45 – 59	Hazel
60 – 75	Light Brown
76 – 100	Dark Brown

HABITAT TABLE [D100]

ROLL	RESULT
01 – 31	Urban
32 – 80	Suburban
81 – 100	Rural

REGION TABLE [D100]

ROLL	RESULT
01 – 06	New England
07 – 18	Mid-Atlantic
19 – 22	Appalachia
23 – 37	Bible Belt
38 – 43	Eastern Mississippi
44 – 47	Western Mississippi
48 – 53	Gulf Coast
54 – 55	High Desert
56 – 63	Great Plains
64 – 77	Great Lakes
78 – 80	Rockies
81 – 93	West Coast
94 – 100	Pacific Northwest

WORK SECTOR (WHITE [D100]) / HISTORY TABLE (GRAY [D100])

ROLL	RESULT	AFFILIATION FOCI [D100]
If character's age is less than 18 at 2012	Child of the Apocalypse	
01 – 13	Production Sector	Production*
01 – 31	Construction	
32 – 96	Manufacturing	Corporate, Distribution
97 – 100	Mining	
14 – 98	Service Sector	
1	Utilities	Civil Service, 01 – 33 = Distribution 34 – 66 = Energy 67 – 100 = Water Supply
02 – 04	Information	Communications
05 – 08	Transportation	Civil Service, 01 – 12 = Rail & Subway 13 – 40 = Naval 41 – 90 = Transportation 91 – 100 = Airline
09 – 23	Healthcare	Medical
24 – 40	Hospitality	Corporate
41 – 57	Government	Civil Service, 01 – 33 = Executive 34 – 66 = Legislative 67 – 100 = Judicial
58 – 72	Business	Corporate
73 – 85	Retail	Corporate
86 – 92	Financial	Corporate
93 – 97	Wholesale	Distribution
98 – 100	Education	Civil Service
99 – 100	Agriculture Sector	01 – 66 = Agriculture 67 – 100 = Meat and Dairy

STRATEGY (WHITE [D100]) & BACKGROUND (GRAY [D100])

ROLL	RESULT
01 – 20	ORDER
01 – 20	Soldier
21 – 40	Police Officer
41 – 60	Militia
61 – 100	Guard
21 – 40	EXCHANGE
01 – 10	Medic
11 – 25	Technician
26 – 45	Craftsman
46 – 70	Courier
71 – 100	Trader
41 – 60	INDEPENDENCE
01 – 20	Outdoorsman
21 – 40	Handyman
41 – 80	Scavenger
81 – 100	Farmer
61 – 100	ANARCHY
01 – 20	Bandit
21 – 50	Gang Member
51 – 90	Opportunist
91 – 100	Prisoner

BACKGROUND SKILLS TABLE

BACKGROUND	TRAINING	SKILLS	AFFILIATIONS
Soldier	Unarmed, Grapple, Pistols, Rifles, Sneak, Conceal, Navigation, Forage	Radios, Surveillance	Military
Police Officer	Unarmed, Grapple, Pistols, Long, Deception, Navigation	Automobiles, Radios, Forensics	Emergency Response, Civil Service
Militia	Unarmed, Grapple, Choice[Combat], Sneak, Conceal	Surveillance	
Guard	Unarmed, Grapple, Choice[Combat]	Surveillance	
Medic	Injury, Illness	Biology, Internal Med	Emergency Response
Technician	Craftsman	Choice[Tech] + 2 Focus,	
Craftsman	Craftsman, Short	2 Focus	
Courier	Navigation, Conceal	Driving, Bicycles	
Trader	Persuasion, Deception, Conceal	Negotiation	
Outdoorsman	Forage, Navigation, Sneak, Conceal, Choice[Combat]	Choice[Survival], 2 Focus	
Handyman	Craftsman, Construction, Short	2 Focus	
Scavenger	Scavenge, Forage, Navigation, Conceal	Negotiation	
Farmer	Craftsman, Forage, Two-Hand	Plants, Domestic	
Bandit	Unarmed, Grapple, Sneak, Conceal, Deception, Choice[Combat]	Surveillance	Criminal
Gang Member	Unarmed, Grapple, Choice[Combat]		Criminal
Opportunist	Sneak, Conceal, Persuasion, Deception		
Prisoner	Conceal, Persuasion, Deception	Surveillance	Criminal, Corrections

SKILLS:

- Once all CHARACTER POINTS have been spent, it's time to calculate skills (Do the math once...)
- UNIVERSAL SKILLS are immediately calculated and established at no cost
- BACKGROUND SKILLS are distributed freely according to the following tables
  - WORK SECTOR / HISTORY
  - STRATEGY / BACKGROUND
  - This is a prime example of a "chain", D100 for the first (white) then D100 for HISTORY or BACKGROUND
  - CHOICE SKILLS are limited to their specific type according to the SKILLS TABLES below
- SKILL POINTS can be spent freely to round out one's character
  - SKILL POINTS are calculated by dividing Willpower by two, rounded down (Willpower / 2)
  - SKILL POINTS can be used to learn new skills or train existing once to help specialize
    - STANDARD SKILLS cost 1 SKILL POINT
    - FOCI (focuses) cost 1 SKILL POINT
    - ADVANCED SKILLS or ADVANCED FOCI cost 2 SKILL POINTS
    - TRAINING an existing skill also costs 1 SKILL POINT:
      - Adds D10 to ADVANCED SKILLS & FOCI or 2D10 to all others!
  - Some Skills have PRE-REQUISITES which must be met before selection

UNIVERSAL SKILLS	AUTOMATICALLY CALCULATED		
STANDARD SKILLS	COST ONE SKILL CHOICE		
[Focus Skills]	COST ONE SKILL CHOICE COMPLEMENT OTHER SKILLS		
-[Advanced Focus Skills]-	COST TWO SKILL CHOICES COMPLEMENT OTHER SKILLS		
-ADVANCED SKILLS-	COST TWO SKILL CHOICES		
SKILL	PRE-REQUISITES	BASE SKILL (+D10)	DESCRIPTION
UNIVERSAL SKILLS			
SCAVENGING		(2 * PER) + (2 * LOG)	Art of inspecting an area for anything man-made and useful
NAVIGATION		(3 * MEM) + LOG	Art of traveling without getting lost
FORAGING		(2 * MEM) + (2 * PER)	Art of inspecting an area for anything produced by nature and useful
SNEAK		(2 * AGL) + PER + LOG	Art of moving stealthily and undetected
CONCEAL		(2 * PER) + (2 * LOG)	Art of hiding things on ones person or otherwise obscuring a position
PERSUASION		(2 * CHA) + LOG + PER	Art of convincing others of ones viewpoint
DECEPTION		(3 * LOG) + PER	Art of convincing others of false or misleading information
GAMES		(2 * PER) + LOG	Ability to play and win a single round in "simple" games
INJURY		MEM + LOG + PER	Ability to treat injury
ILLNESS		MEM + LOG + PER	Ability to treat illness
CONSTRUCTION		(2 * LOG) + MEM + PER	Ability to create or enhance load bearing structures
CRAFTSMANSHIP		(2 * LOG) + PER + WILL	Ability to create or fashion tools and items for personal use
COMBAT ATTRIBUTES			
OFF HAND		5*(AGL - 20)	Penalty for using the non-dominant hand with any skill
DODGE		(PER – 10) + (SPD – 10) + (AGL - 10) [no D10 addition]	Ability to evade incoming attacks
SEQUENCE		(PER & SPD) / 2 [no D10 addition]	Determines characters turn in combat order once all parties have reached the "Ready" scenario

MELEE SKILLS				
UNARMED		(2 * SPD) + (2* AGL) + LOG	Art of fighting bare handed or using the fists and feet as a striking surface	
GRAPPLE		(2 * LOG) + (2 * AGL) + STR	Art of restraining ones opposition or wrestling.	
SHORT WEAPONS		(2 * SPD) + (2 * AGL) + LOG	Art of fighting with small one handed weapons like knives, hammers, or flashlights. Anything appx 2' long or less	
LONG WEAPONS		(2 * AGL) + SPD + STR + LOG	Art of fighting with one handed weapons that have considerable reach. Approximately 2.5' to 4' long	
TWO HANDED WEAPONS		(2 * STR) + (2 * AGL) + LOG	Art of fighting with long weapons that require two hands to wield	
CHAIN WEAPONS		(3 * AGL) + (2 * LOG)	Art of fighting with weapons that use flexibility to increase momentum	
SHIELDS		(2 * STR) + (2 * AGL) + LOG	Art of striking with a shield or large bulky object	

RANGED SKILLS			
THROWN		(2 * STR) + (2 * LOG) + AGL	Art of throwing items or weapons accurately
ARCHERY		(3 * AGL) + PER + LOG	Art of wielding the Bow & Arrow effectively
PISTOLS		(3 * AGL) + (2 * PER)	Art of effectively using small, one handed weapons that operate with a triggering mechanism
RIFLES		(3 * PER) + (2 * AGL)	Art of effectively using longer, two handed weapons that operate with a triggering mechanism and typically rest upon ones shoulder
BURST-FIRE		(STR – 20) + (PER – 20) + (LOG – 20)	Art of maintaining accurate and effective sustained fire with automatic weapons
[Arc of Trajectory]		LOG + PER	Focus on improving effectiveness with weapons that use an arc of trajectory to increase range
WEAPON SYSTEMS		(3 * LOG) + PER	Art of using modern digital or manually operated weapon systems that typically fire from a fixed location. AA guns, Cannons, Mortars or Artillery, Trebuchets or Catapults, etc.

NATURE SKILLS			
[Plants]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of plant life
[Fungi]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of mushrooms and fungi
HUNTING		(2 * PER) + LOG + WILL	Art of hunting, skinning, and preparing animals for consumption
TRACKING		(2 * PER) + LOG + WILL	Art of tracking and recognizing game trails
FISHING		(2 * PER) + LOG + WILL	Art of fishing, skinning, and preparing fish for consumption
BIOMES			
[Salt Water]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of salt water life forms
[Fresh Water]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of fresh water life forms
[Tundra]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of life in the tundra
[Taiga]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of life in the cold, sub arctic forests of taiga
[Temperate Forests]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of life in the temperate forests
[Jungle]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of life in the tropical rain-forests and jungles
[Grassland]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of life in the plains and grasslands
[Desert]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of life in the desert

ANIMALS			
[Birds]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of birds and avian life
[Insects]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of insect life
[Reptiles]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of reptile life
[Small Game]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of small game such as rabbits, squirrels, and other various mammals
[Big Game]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of large game such as deer, elk, moose or bears
[Canines]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of dogs, wolves, coyotes or foxes
[Felines]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of cats, bob-cats, lynx, cougars or panthers
[Domestic]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the study, behaviors, and necessities of domestic animals such as horses, cattle, goats, chickens, etc

TRANSPORTATION SKILLS			
SKATE / SKI		(3 * AGL) + PER	Art of skating or skiing
BOARDING (SKATE/SNOW/SURF)		(3 * AGL) + PER	The art of boarding: be it skate, snow, or surf
BICYCLES		(2 * AGL) + (2 * PER)	Art of riding a bicycle
HORSEMANSHIP	Animal Handling >= 75	(2 * AGL) + PER + LOG	Art of riding a mounted animal
PERSONAL RECREATION (MOTORCYCLE/JET SKI)		(2 * AGL) + PER + SPD	Art of maneuvering motorcycles or jet skis
AUTOMOBILE		(2 * PER) + SPD + LOG	Art of driving
[Oversized]	Automobile >= 50	LOG + PER	Focus on driving oversized vehicles such as 18-wheelers, dump or garbage trucks, busses. Also applies to oversized heavy equipment such as cranes
HEAVY EQUIPMENT		(3 * LOG) + PER	Art of maneuvering heavy equipment ranging from forklifts to industrial cranes or farming equipment
-AIRPLANES-		(2 * PER) + MEM + LOG	Art of piloting airplanes
-HELICOPTERS-		(2 * PER) + MEM + LOG	Art of piloting rotary aircraft
-AIRSHIP- (BLIMP/BALLOON)		(2 * LOG) + (2 * PER)	Art of piloting minimally powered aircraft such as hot air balloons or blimps
BOATS		(2 * LOG) + (2 * PER)	Art of piloting naval vessels
[Sailing]	Boats >= 50	PER + LOG	Focus on maneuvering wind powered vessels
-SUBMARINES-		(2 * LOG) + (2 * MEM)	Art of piloting sub surface naval vessels

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS			
MECHANICAL		(3 * MEM) + LOG	The art of mechanical engineering
[Energy]	Mechanical >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on mechanical energy
[Combustion]	Mechanical >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on mechanical combustion systems
[Hydraulics]	Mechanical >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on mechanical hydraulics systems
[Transmission]	Mechanical >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on mechanical transmission systems
[Controls]	Mechanical >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on mechanical control systems
ELECTRICAL		(3 * MEM) + LOG	The art of electrical engineering
[Power]	Electrical >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on electrical power
[Circuitry]	Electrical >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on electrical circuitry
[Signals]	Electrical >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on electrical signals
DIGITAL		(3 * MEM) + LOG	The art of digital engineering and software, particularly the use of computer systems
[Hardware]	Digital >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on digital hardware
[Programming]	Digital >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on digital programming
[Exchange (Data)]	Digital >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on digital exchange systems
[Security]	Digital >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on digital security
RADIO		(3 * MEM) + LOG	The art of radio transmission and its related systems
CELLULAR		(3 * MEM) + LOG	The art of cellular transmission and its related systems
REFRIGERATION		(3 * MEM) + LOG	The art of refrigeration systems

SOCIAL SKILLS			
PSYCHOLOGY		(2 * LOG) + (2 * PER)	The art of human behavior
LANGUAGES		(4 * MEM)	Select any language you wish to speak or read
-[Criminal Law]-		(2 * MEM)	Focus on criminal law
-[Civil Law]-		(2 * MEM)	Focus on civil law
-[Business Law]-		(2 * MEM)	Focus on business law
[Negotiation]	Persuasion >= 50	CHA + LOG	Focus on the art of negotiating for beneficial exchange
-VISUAL ARTS-		(2 * PER) + WILL + LOG	The art of delivering entertainment or aesthetics visually
-PERFORMANCE ARTS-		(2 * CHA) + PER + WILL	The art of delivering entertainment or aesthetics through stage performance
-MUSIC-		(2 * MEM) + CHA + WILL	The art of delivering entertainment or aesthetics through music
[Christianity]		(2 * MEM)	The art of relating or recounting Christian Scripture
[Islam]		(2 * MEM)	The art of relating or recounting Islamic Scripture
[Hinduism]		(2 * MEM)	The art of relating or recounting Hindu Scripture
[Buddhism]		(2 * MEM)	The art of relating or recounting Buddhist Scripture
[Judaism]		(2 * MEM)	The art of relating or recounting Jewish Scripture

COVERT SKILLS			
SLEIGHT OF HAND		(2 * AGL) + PER + SPD	The art of theft or sleight of hand
SURVEILLANCE	Conceal >= 50	(3 * PER) + LOG	Art of knowing where to position ones viewpoint in order to gather as much information as possible over any given period of time
LOCKPICKING	Mechanical >= 25	(2 * AGL) + PER + LOG	Art of bypassing a lock without damaging it
TRAPS	Craftsmanship >= 75	(2 * PER) + LOG + AGL	Art of setting and disarming traps and alert systems
-COUNTERFEIT-	Craftsmanship >= 75 & Deception >= 50	(3 * PER) + WILL	Art of creating or replicating counterfeit items or objects
-DISGUISE-	Craftsmanship >= 75 & Deception >= 50	(3 * PER) + WILL	Art of creating disguise and behaving in such a way as to not draw attention to the deception
CRYPTOGRAPHY	Deception >= 50	(4 * LOG)	Art of encoding or decoding messages or other information

CRAFTSMANSHIP SKILLS			
[Ropework]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the use of ropes, twine, wire, cable, or chain during craftsmanship or construction
[Fabric]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the use of fabrics or cloth during craftsmanship or construction
[Animal By-Products]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the use of animal byproducts such as bone, furs, organs, or sinew during craftsmanship or construction
[Stone]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the use of stone or masonry during craftsmanship or construction
[Polymers]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the use of polymers such as plastics, insulation, styrofoam or fiberglass during craftsmanship or construction
[Metals]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the use of all metals and metallurgy during craftsmanship or construction
[Wood]		MEM + LOG	Focus on the use of wood during craftsmanship or construction
[Fermentation]	Chemistry >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on the process of fermentation to achieve brewing, wine making, or various other chemical reactions
[Distillation]	Chemistry >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on the process of distillation for liquors and various other chemical reactions
-NARCOTICS-	Chemistry >= 75	(3 * MEM) + LOG	Art of creating mind altering substances
[Preservation]		MEM + LOG	Focus on various methods to preserve food and supplies
-EXPLOSIVES-		(2 * MEM) + (2 * LOG)	Art of creating explosives and explosive devices

CONSTRUCTION SKILLS			
[Residential]		MEM + LOG	Focus on residential construction methods and best practices
[Commercial]		MEM + LOG	Focus on commercial construction methods and best practices
[Industrial]		MEM + LOG	Focus on industrial construction methods and best practices
[Infrastructure]		MEM + LOG	Focus on infrastructure construction methods and best practices
[Millworks]		MEM + LOG	Focus on creation and installation of materials related to doors, windows, trim, and cabinets
[Framing]		MEM + LOG	Focus on framing methods and best practices
[Plumbing]		MEM + LOG	Focus on plumbing methods and best practices
[Roofing]		MEM + LOG	Focus on roofing methods and best practices
[Ventilation]		MEM + LOG	Focus on HVAC methods and best practices

INFRASTRUCTURE & AFFILIATIONS SKILLS			
[Criminal]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the criminal underworld within the united states
[Energy]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the energy sector within the united states
[Water Supply]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the water supply sector within the united states
[Development]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the development sector within the united states
[Rail & Subway]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the rail and subway sector within the united states
[Transportation]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the transportation sector within the united states
[Airlines]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the airline and air travel sector within the united states
[Naval]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the naval sector and maritime trade within the united states
[Emergency Response]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of emergency response within the united states
[Civil Service]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the civil service sector within the united states
[Military]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the military within the united states
[Communications]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the communications sector within the united states

[Corrections]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the criminal corrections sector within the united states
[Medical]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the medical sector within the united states
[Govt - Executive]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the executive branch within the united states
[Govt - Legislative]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the legislative branch within the united states
[Govt – Judicial]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the judicial branch within the united states
[Corporate]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the corporate sector within the united states
[Distribution]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the distribution and warehousing sector within the united states
[Agriculture]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the agriculture sector within the united states
[Meat & Dairy]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the meat and dairy sector within the united states
[Production]		MEM + LOG	Focus and awareness of terminology and concepts of the production sector within the united states

SCIENCE SKILLS			
BIOLOGY		(3 * MEM) + LOG	Art and study of biology and its related processes
CHEMISTRY		(3 * MEM) + LOG	Art and study of chemistry and its related processes
PHYSICS		(2 * LOG) + (2 * MEM)	Art and study of physics and its related processes
-FORENSICS-	Psychology >= 25	(2 * LOG) + (2 * PER)	Art and study of forensic sciences. Determine what, when, and how an event occurred as well as possibly why
HISTORY		(4 * MEM)	Art and study of history and its related information
MEDICAL SKILLS			
-[Internal Medicine]-	Biology >= 75	MEM + LOG	Focus on internal medicine, cardiovascular, and various organ systems
-[Disease]-	Biology >= 75	MEM + LOG	Focus on bacterial, viral, or genetic diseases and infections in the treatment of illness
[Rehabilitation]	Biology >= 25	MEM + LOG	Focus on rehabilitation of body function after injury
-TOXICOLOGY-	Biology >= 50 & Chemistry >= 50	(3 * MEM) + LOG	Art and study of poisons, venom, chemicals, and narcotics
-PHARMACOLOGY-	Biology >= 50 & Chemistry >= 50	(3 * MEM) + LOG	Art and study of various medical treatments for a variety of conditions
MEDICAL EQUIPMENT		(3 * MEM) + LOG	Art of proper utilization of various advanced medical devices and equipment

PART IV: ABILITIES

- As your character gains real world experience, they may realize that SKILLS and ATTRIBUTES can only go so far and specialization can increase their odds of survival
- ABILITIES represent experience within highly specialized scenarios
- Every ABILITY has a PRE-REQUISITE but can be incredibly effective when used properly

NAME	EFFECTS	PRE-REQS	COST
HAND TO HAND (UNARMED, SHORT WEAPONS, GRAPPLING)			
Aerial	-Automatically pass Agility check on landing -Upgrades Strike (Minor/Direct/Major) by one level on success	- 100 Unarmed || Short || Grapple - 12 Agility	2500
Akimbo-Short	-Perform two attacks for the price of one -Random Hits for Off-Hand on Aimed Attacks	- -10(+) Off Hand - 100 Short - 10 Agility	5000
Blitz	-No Speed penalty when attacking from high speeds (Riding, Horseback, Vehicle)	- 100 Unarmed || Short - 10 Agility	2500
Cripple	-Successful Aimed Strike to target area (knee || ankle) guaranteed to disable leg at cost of One Additional Action	- 100 Unarmed || Short - 12 Strength	5000
Disarm	-Successful Aimed Strike to target area (weapon || hand || wrist) guaranteed to disarm at cost of One Additional Action -If using Grapple, Major Success means character is now holding the weapon!	- 125 Unarmed || Short || Grapple - 12 Speed - 12 Agility	5000
Evasion	-Attempt an Automatic Dodge when being attacked with Hand to Hand	- 100 Unarmed || Short || Grapple - 10(+) Dodge - 10 Speed	5000
Feint	-Re-Roll Random Hits (Fast Attacks) at cost of One Action when attacking with Hand to Hand	- 100 Unarmed || Short || Grapple - 10 Speed - 10 Agility	2500
Finesse	-Aimed attacks cost No Additional Actions but a -20 Modifier is applied	- 125 Unarmed || Short || Grapple - 10 Speed	10000
Knockdown	-Successful Aimed attacks to the Legs knock down target depending on success level at the cost of One Additional Action (knee : minor || back : direct || face down : major)	- 100 Unarmed || Short || Grapple - 12 Strength	2500
Momentum	-For one additional Action, gain opportunity to strike multiple targets when performing swings at penalty of -20 each	- 100 Unarmed || Short - 12 Strength - 12 Agility	2500
Parry	-Attempt an Automatic Block for No Action Cost against Hand to Hand attacks	- 125 Unarmed || Short || Grapple - 10 Speed	5000
Primed	-No negative modifiers for using saved Actions to attack once a target is within range	- 100 Unarmed || Short || Grapple - 10 Speed	2500
Riposte	-Automatically attempt a counter attack for No Action Cost after a successful Block	- 125 Unarmed || Short - 10 Speed	5000

Rogue	+20 to strike the first target when Ambushing with Hand to Hand attacks	- 100 Unarmed || Short || Grapple - 100 Sneak	2500
Roman-Short	-Ready weapons after thrust attacks with blades for No Action cost	- 100 Short - 10 Speed	2500
Rush	-No speed penalty for attacking while running	- 100 Unarmed || Short || Grapple - 10 Agility	2500
Stun	-Successful Hand to Hand strikes to the Head, Face, or Neck reduce targets Actions by one	- 100 Unarmed || Short || Grapple - 10 Speed	2500
Torque	-Successful Aimed Grab at target area (Hand || Wrist || Forearm) guaranteed to Cripple arm at Elbow for One Additional Action	- 100 Unarmed || Short || Grapple - 12 Strength	5000
Twist-Short	-Automatically twist blades on successful thrust attacks to increase blood loss	- 100 Short - 10 Speed	2500

LONG WEAPONS			
Aerial	-Automatically pass Agility check on landing -Upgrades Strike (Minor/Direct/Major) by one level on success	- 100 Long - 12 Agility	2500
Akimbo	-Perform two attacks for the price of one -Random Hits for Off-Hand on Aimed Attacks	- -10(+) Off Hand - 100 Long - 12 Agility	5000
Blitz	-No Speed penalty when attacking from high speeds (Riding, Horseback, Vehicle)	- 100 Long - 10 Agility	2500
Cripple	-Successful Aimed Swing to target area (knee || elbow || wrist || ankle || hand || foot) guaranteed to cripple limb at cost of One Additional Action	- 100 Long - 10 Strength	5000
Disarm	-Successful Aimed Strike to target area (weapon || hand || wrist) guaranteed to disarm at the cost of One Additional Action	- 125 Long - 10 Speed - 10 Agility	5000
Evasion	-Attempt an Automatic Dodge when being attacked with Long Weapons	- 100 Long - 10(+) Dodge - 10 Speed	5000
Feint	-Re-Roll Random Hits at cost of One Action when attacking with Hand to Hand	- 100 Long - 10 Speed - 10 Agility	2500
Finesse	-Aimed attacks cost no additional Actions but a -20 Modifier is applied	- 125 Long - 10 Speed	10000
Fluid Stance	-Reinforcing and Releasing Grip cost no Actions but must be declared before Attacks are made	- 100 Long - 10 Agility	2500
Knockdown	-Successful Aimed attacks to the Legs knock down target depending on success level at the cost of one additional Action (knee : minor || back : direct || face down : major)	- 100 Long - 10 Strength	2500
Momentum	-For one additional Action, gain opportunity to strike multiple targets when performing swings at penalty of -10 each	- 100 Long - 10 Strength - 10 Agility	2500
Parry	-Attempt an automatic Block against Long Weapons attacks	- 125 Long - 10 Speed	5000
Primed	-No negative modifiers for using saved Actions to attack once a target is within range	- 100 Long - 10 Speed	2500
Riposte	-Automatically attempt a counter attack for no Action Cost after a successful Block	- 125 Long - 10 Speed	5000
Rogue	+20 to strike the first target when Ambushing with Long Weapon attacks	- 100 Long - 100 Sneak	2500
Roman	-Ready weapons after thrust attacks with blades for no Action cost	- 100 Long - 10 Speed	2500

Rush	-No speed penalty for attacking while running	- 100 Long - 10 Agility	2500
Stun	-Successful Long Weapon strikes to the Head, Face, or Neck reduce targets Actions by one	- 100 Long - 10 Speed	2500
Twist	-Automatically twist blades on successful thrust attacks to increase blood loss	- 100 Long - 10 Speed	2500

TWO HANDED WEAPONS			
Aerial	-Automatically pass Agility check on landing -Upgrades Strike (Minor/Direct/Major) by one level on success	- 100 Two Hand - 12 Agility - 10 Strength	2500
Blitz	-No Speed penalty when attacking from high speeds (Riding, Horseback, Vehicle)	- 100 Two Hand - 10 Agility	2500
Cripple	-Successful Aimed Swings to Limbs guaranteed to Cripple Limb	- 75 Two Hand - 10 Strength	5000
Defenders Stance	+10 to block with two handed weapons	- 100 Two Hand - 10 Agility	2500
Disarm	-Successful Aimed Strike to target area (weapon || hand || wrist) guaranteed to disarm for One Additional Action	- 100 Two Hand - 12 Speed - 12 Agility	5000
Evasion	-Attempt an Automatic Dodge when being attacked with Two Hand Weapons	- 100 Two Hand - 10(+) Dodge - 10 Speed	5000
Feint	-Re-Roll Random Hits at cost of one Action when attacking with Two Handed Weapons	- 100 Two Hand - 10 Speed - 10 Agility - 10 Strength	2500
Finesse	-Aimed attacks cost no additional Actions but a -20 Modifier is applied	- 125 Two Hand - 10 Speed - 10 Strength	10000
Knockdown	-Successful Aimed attacks to the Legs knock down target depending on success level (knee : minor || back : direct || face down : major)	- 100 Two Hand - 10 Strength	2500
Momentum	-For one additional Action, gain opportunity to strike multiple targets when performing swings at no penalty	- 75 Two Hand - 10 Strength - 10 Agility	2500
Parry	-Attempt an automatic Block against Two Handed Weapon attacks	- 125 Two Hand - 10 Speed	5000
Primed	-No negative modifiers for using saved Actions to attack once a target is within range	- 75 Two Hand - 10 Speed	2500
Riposte	-Automatically attempt a counter attack for no Action Cost after a successful Block	- 125 Two Hand - 10 Speed	5000
Roman	-Ready weapons after thrust attacks with blades for no Action cost	- 100 Two Hand - 10 Speed	2500
Rush	-No speed penalty for attacking while running	- 100 Two Hand - 10 Agility	2500
Stun	-Successful Long Weapon strikes to the Head, Face, or Neck reduce targets Actions by one	- 75 Two Hand - 10 Speed	2500

Twist	-Automatically twist blades on successful thrust attacks to increase blood loss	- 100 Two Hand - 10 Speed	2500

CHAIN WEAPONS			
Aerial	-Automatically pass Agility check on landing -Upgrades Strike (Minor/Direct/Major) by one level on success	- 100 Chain - 12 Agility	2500
Akimbo	-Perform two attacks for the price of one -Random Hits for Off-Hand on Aimed Attacks	- -10(+) Off Hand - 100 Chain - 12 Agility	5000
Blitz	-No Speed penalty when attacking from high speeds (Riding, Horseback, Vehicle)	- 100 Chain - 10 Agility	2500
Cripple	-Successful Aimed Swing to target area (knee || elbow || wrist || ankle || hand || foot) guaranteed to cripple limb at cost of One Additional Action	- 100 Chain - 10 Strength	5000
Disarm	-Successful Aimed Strike to target area (weapon || hand || wrist) guaranteed to disarm for One Additional Action	- 125 Chain - 10 Speed - 10 Agility	5000
Evasion	-Attempt an Automatic Dodge when being attacked with Chain Weapons	- 100 Chain - 10(+) Dodge - 10 Speed	5000
Feint	-Re-Roll Random Hits at cost of one Action when attacking with Chain Weapons	- 100 Chain - 10 Speed - 10 Agility	2500
Finesse	-Aimed attacks cost no additional Actions but a -20 Modifier is applied	- 125 Chain - 10 Speed	10000
Momentum	-For one additional Action, gain opportunity to strike multiple targets at no penalty	- 75 Chain - 10 Strength	2500
Primed	-No negative modifiers for using saved Actions to attack once a target is within range	- 75 Chain - 10 Speed	2500
Proficient-Extensive	+20 when using exceptionally long chain or rope weapons that require two hands or target is further than Long Weapon range	- 50 Chain - 10 Agility	1000
Proficient-Short	+20 when using short chain or rope weapons (EG nunchuku) or target is within Hand to Hand range	- 50 Chain	1000
Proficient-Long	+20 when using long chain or rope weapons (EG flails) or target is within Long Weapon range	- 50 Chain	1000
Proficient-Weighted	+10 when using chain or rope weapons that have a weighted striking surface at its end	- 75 Chain - 10 Agility	1000
Riposte	-Automatically attempt a counter attack for no Action Cost after a successful Block	- 125 Chain - 10 Speed	5000
Rogue	+20 to strike the first target when Ambushing with Chain Weapon attacks	- 100 Chain - 100 Sneak	2500
Rush	-No speed penalty for attacking while running	- 100 Chain - 10 Agility	2500

Stun	-Successful Long Weapon strikes to the Head, Face, or Neck reduce targets Actions by one	- 100 Chain - 10 Speed	2500
Wrap	-Performs a Grab attack with the Chain Weapon on successful strikes to Limbs for One Additional Action	- 100 Chain - 10 Agility	5000

SHIELDS			
Aerial	-Automatically pass Agility check on landing -Upgrades Strike (Minor/Direct/Major) by one level on success	- 100 Shields - 12 Agility	2500
Blitz	-No Speed penalty when attacking from high speeds (Riding, Horseback, Vehicle)	- 100 Shields - 10 Agility	2500
Bulwark	-Automatic Block on Ranged Attacks	- 125 Shields	5000
Feint	-Re-Roll Random Hits at cost of one Action when attacking with Shields	- 100 Shields - 10 Speed - 10 Agility	2500
Finesse	-Aimed attacks cost no additional Actions but a -20 Modifier is applied	- 125 Shields - 10 Speed - 10 Agility	10000
Knockdown	-Successful Aimed attacks to the Legs knock down target depending on success level (knee : minor || back : direct || face down : major)	- 75 Shields - 12 Strength	2500
Rebuke	-Automatic Block on Melee Attacks	- 100 Shields	5000
Shieldform-Archery	-Negates penalties to Strike or Block when wielding Bow and Arrow and a Buckler or Strap Shield	- 75 Archery - 75 Shields - 10 Agility	2500
Shieldform-Pistol	-Negates penalties to Strike or Block when wielding Pistol and a Shield	- 75 Pistols - 75 Shields	1000
Shieldform-Rifle	-Negates penalties to Strike or Block when wielding Rifle and a Shield	- 75 Rifles - 75 Shields - 10 Agility	1000
Shieldform-Thrown	-Negates penalties to Strike or Block when wielding Thrown weapons and a Shield	- 75 Thrown - 75 Shields	1000
Shieldform-Two Hand	-Negates penalties to Strike or Block when wielding Two Handed Weapons and a Buckler or Strap Shield	- 75 Two Hand - 75 Shields - 10 Agility - 10 Strength	2500
Stun	-Successful Shield strikes to the Head, Face, or Neck reduce targets Actions by one	- 100 Shields - 10 Speed	2500

THROWN WEAPONS			
Adept	-Automatically Optimize Cover when wielding Thrown Weapons	- 100 Thrown - 10 Agility - 10 Speed	5000
Akimbo	-Perform two attacks for the price of one -Random Hits for Off-Hand on Aimed Attacks	- -10(+) Off Hand - 100 Thrown - 12 Agility	5000
Blindfire	-75 Strike Modifier for Attacks performed without Aiming (Fast Attacks only) or Breaking Cover, which now cost One Action	- 125 Thrown - 12 Perception - 10 Speed	5000
Blitz	-No Speed penalty when attacking from high speeds (Riding, Horseback, Vehicle)	- 100 Thrown - 10 Perception	2500
Marksman	-Aimed Attacks cost one less Action with a -20 modifier	- 125 Thrown - 10 Speed	10000
Overwatch	-No Emergence modifier (-25) for using saved Actions to attack once a target is within range or exposes themselves	- 100 Thrown - 10 Speed - 10 Perception	2500
Proficient-Bolas	-Negates penalties due to awkwardness of weapon dimensions for Bolas (two weights at either end of rope, intended to hinder target movement)	- 75 Thrown	1000
Proficient-Heavy	-Negates penalties due to awkwardness of weapon dimensions for stones or grenades	- 50 Thrown	1000
Proficient-Hatchets	-Negates penalties due to awkwardness of weapon dimensions for hatchets and tomahawks	- 75 Thrown	1000
Proficient-Javelins	-Negates penalties due to awkwardness of weapon dimensions for Javelins	- 75 Thrown	1000
Proficient-Knives	-Negates penalties due to awkwardness of weapon dimensions for throwing knives	- 75 Thrown	1000
Proficient-Nets	-Negates penalties due to awkwardness of weapon dimensions for nets	- 50 Thrown	1000
Rogue	+20 to strike the first target when Ambushing with Chain Weapon attacks	- 100 Thrown - 100 Sneak || Conceal	2500
Rush	-No speed penalty for attacking while running	- 100 Thrown - 10 Agility	2500
Snapshot	-One less Action to Throw on Fast Attacks at -20 Modifier	- 125 Thrown - 10 Speed	7500

ARCHERY WEAPONS			
Adept	-Automatically Optimize Cover when wielding a Bow and Arrow	- 100 Archery - 10 Agility - 10 Speed	5000
Blindfire	-75 Strike Modifier for Attacks performed without Aiming (Fast Attacks only) or Breaking Cover, which now cost One Action	- 125 Archery - 12 Perception - 10 Speed	5000
Blitz	-No Speed penalty when attacking from high speeds (Riding, Horseback, Vehicle)	- 100 Archery - 10 Perception	2500
Marksman	-Aimed Attacks cost one less Action with a -20 modifier	- 125 Archery - 10 Speed	10000
Overwatch	-No Emergence modifier (-25) for using saved Actions to attack once a target exposes themselves	- 100 Archery - 10 Perception - 10 Speed	2500
Rogue	+20 to strike the first target when Ambushing with Archery attacks	- 100 Archery - 100 Sneak || Conceal	2500
Rush	-No speed penalty for attacking while running	- 100 Archery - 12 Agility	2500
Speedload	-Reload Archery weapons for half Action Cost	- 100 Archery - 12 Agility - 10 Speed	5000
Snapshot	-One less Action to Fire on Fast Attacks at -20 Modifier	- 125 Archery – 10 Speed	7500

PISTOLS			
Adept	-Automatically Optimize Cover when wielding a Pistol	- 100 Pistols - 10 Speed	5000
Akimbo	-Perform two attacks for the price of one -Random Hits for Off-Hand on Aimed Attacks	- -10(+) Off Hand - 100 Pistols - 10 Agility	5000
Blindfire	-75 Strike Modifier for Attacks performed without Aiming (Fast Attacks only) or Breaking Cover, which now cost One Action	- 125 Pistols - 12 Perception	5000
Blitz	-No Speed penalty when attacking from high speeds (Riding, Horseback, Vehicle)	- 100 Pistols - 10 Perception	2500
Guerrilla	+20 to strike the first target when Ambushing with Pistol attacks	- 100 Pistols - 100 Sneak || Conceal	2500
Marksman	-Aimed Attacks cost one less Action with a -20 modifier	- 125 Pistols - 10 Speed	10000
No-Scope	-Negates penalties for Firing at Short Range and weapon is equipped with a Scope	- 100 Pistols - 10 Perception	2500
Overwatch	-No Emergence modifier (-25) for using saved Actions to attack once a target exposes themselves	- 100 Pistols - 10 Perception	2500
Proficient-Pistolwhip	-Use Pistols Skill rather than Short Weapons skill when attempting to strike a target with the pistol	- 100 Pistols	2500
Revolver Fan	-Assuming the Characters other hand is free and the weapon is full, they may perform "Sustained Fire" with Revolvers until the chamber is empty for 6 Actions	- 100 Pistols - 12 Speed - 10 Agility	5000
Rush	-No speed penalty for attacking while running	- 100 Pistols - 10 Agility	2500
Single Handed	-Negates modifiers to handle weapon recoil when using pistols single handed	- 100 Pistols - 10 Strength	2500
Snapshot	-One less Action to Fire on Fast Attacks at -20 Modifier	- 125 Pistols - 10 Speed	7500
Speedload-Crossbow	-Half Action Cost to Reload Crossbow Pistols	- 100 Pistols - 10 Strength - 10 Speed	5000
Speedload-Magazine	-Half Action Cost to Reload Pistol Magazines	- 100 Pistols - 10 Speed	5000
Speedload-Revolver	-Half Action Cost to Reload Revolvers	- 100 Pistols - 12 Agility - 10 Speed	5000
Spray and Pray	-Allows a character to perform "Sustained Fire" with semi-automatic pistols	- 75 Pistols - 10 Speed	2500

RIFLES			
Adept	-Automatically Optimize Cover when wielding a Pistol	- 100 Rifles - 10 Speed - 10 Agility	5000
Blindfire	-75 Strike Modifier for Attacks performed without Aiming (Fast Attacks only) or Breaking Cover, which now cost One Action after positioning the Weapon	- 125 Rifles - 12 Perception	5000
Blitz	-No Speed penalty when attacking from high speeds (Riding, Horseback, Vehicle)	- 100 Rifles - 10 Perception	2500
Guerrilla	+20 to strike the first target when Ambushing with Rifle attacks	- 100 Pistols - 100 Sneak || Conceal	2500
Marksman	-Aimed Attacks cost one less Action with a -20 modifier	- 125 Rifles - 10 Speed	10000
No-Scope	-Negates penalties for Firing at Short Range and weapon is equipped with a Scope	- 100 Rifles - 10 Perception	2500
Overwatch	-No Emergence modifier (-25) for using saved Actions to attack once a target exposes themselves	- 100 Rifles - 10 Perception	2500
Proficient-Bayonet	-Use Rifles Skill rather than Two Hand Weapons skill when attempting to strike a target with a bayonet	- 100 Rifles	1000
Proficient-Buttstroke	-Use Rifles Skill rather than Two Hand Weapons skill when attempting to strike a target with the shoulder-stock of the Rifle	- 100 Rifles - 10 Agility	1000
Rush	-No Movement Modifier for attacking while running	- 100 Rifles - 10 Agility	2500
Snapshot	-One less Action to Fire on Fast Attacks at -20 Modifier	- 100 Rifles - 10 Speed	7500
Speedload-Belt Fed	-Half Action Cost to reload Belt Fed Rifles	- 100 Rifles - 10 Agility - 10 Speed	5000
Speedload-Bolt Action	-Half Action Cost to reload Bolt Action Rifles	- 100 Rifles - 10 Agility - 10 Speed	5000
Speedload-Crossbow	-Half Action Cost to reload Crossbows	- 100 Rifles - 10 Strength - 10 Speed	5000
Speedload-Feed Tube	-Half Action Cost to reload Rifles with Feed Tubes	- 100 Rifles - 10 Agility - 10 Speed	5000
Speedload-Magazine	-Half Action Cost to reload Rifle Magazines	- 100 Rifles - 10 Speed	5000
Spray and Pray	-Allows the Character to perform "Sustained Fire" with semi-automatic Rifles	– 75 Rifles – 10 Speed	2500

MANUEVERS			
Commit-Agility	-Gain one re-roll for any Agility checks (for One Action Cost if appropriate)	- 12 Agility - 12 Willpower	10000
Commit-Charisma	-Gain one re-roll for any Charisma checks (for One Action Cost if appropriate)	- 12 Charisma - 12 Willpower	7500
Commit-Endurance	-Gain one re-roll for any Endurance checks (for One Action Cost if appropriate)	- 12 Endurance - 12 Willpower	10000
Commit-Logic	-Gain one re-roll for any Logic checks (for One Action Cost if necessary)	- 12 Logic - 12 Willpower	7500
Commit-Memory	-Gain one re-roll for any Memory checks (for One Action Cost if necessary)	- 12 Memory - 12 Willpower	7500
Commit-Perception	-Gain one re-roll for any Perception checks (for One Action Cost if necessary)	- 12 Perception - 12 Willpower	7500
Commit-Speed	-Gain one re-roll for any Speed checks (for One Action Cost if necessary)	- 12 Speed - 12 Willpower	10000
Commit-Strength	-Gain one re-roll for any Strength checks (for One Action Cost if necessary)	- 12 Strength - 12 Willpower	10000
Commit-Willpower	-Gain one re-roll for any Willpower checks (for One Action Cost if necessary)	- 14 Willpower	10000
Conditioning – Light	-Negates Attribute negative modifiers when wearing "Light" Armor	- 10 Agility	5000
Conditioning – Medium	-Half Attribute negative modifiers when wearing "Medium" Armor	- 10 Agility - 10 Strength	5000
Conditioning – Heavy	-Half Attribute negative modifiers when wearing "Heavy" Armor	- 10 Agility - 12 Strength	5000
Pack Dump	-Drop any equipped backpack for One Action regardless of how well it is affixed to the character	- 12 Agility	1000
Pack Master	-Half Action Cost to recover any item from one's OWN pack	- 10 Agility - 12 Memory	2500
Quickdraw-Large Back	-Half Action Cost to draw large items from one's back (grab at neck)	- 12 Agility - 10 Speed	1000
Quickdraw-Large Hip	-Half Action Cost to draw large items from one's hips	- 10 Agility - 10 Speed	1000
Quickdraw-Large Shoulder	-Half Action Cost to draw large items from one's shoulders	- 12 Agility - 10 Speed	1000
Quickdraw-Small Ankle	-Half Action Cost to draw small items from one's ankle or boot	- 12 Agility - 10 Speed	1000
Quickdraw-Small Back	-Half Action Cost to draw small items from one's back (grab at neck)	- 10 Agility - 10 Speed	1000
Quickdraw-Small Chest	-Half Action Cost to draw small items from one's chest	- 10 Agility - 10 Speed	1000
Quickdraw-Small Hip	-Half Action Cost to draw small items from one's hips	- 10 Agility - 10 Speed	1000

Quickdraw-Small Rear	-Half Action Cost to draw small items from one's rear or lower back	- 10 Agility - 10 Speed	1000
Quickdraw-Small Shoulder	-Half Action Cost to draw small items from one's shoulders	- 10 Agility - 10 Speed	1000
Quickdraw-Small Thigh	-Half Action Cost to draw small items from one's thighs	- 10 Agility - 10 Speed	1000
Rebound	-Get to ones feet for 2 Actions if successfully check against Agility	- 12 Agility - 12 Speed	5000
Roll	-Anytime character falls, is thrown, or is generally caught off balance they may attempt a "Roll" to regain footing or prevent injury for the cost of 3 Actions to perform an Agility Check	- 12 Agility - 12 Speed	5000

TRANSPORTATION			
Biker	-Grants one re-roll when attempting to Recover Control of Personal Recreation Vehicles	- 100 Personal Rec - 12 Agility - 10 Speed	5000
Boarder	-Grants one re-roll when attempting to Recover Control of Boards (Skate / Snow / Surf)	- 100 Boarding - 12 Agility	5000
Climber	-Grants one re-roll when attempting climbing maneuvers to prevent falls	- 10 Strength - 10 Agility - 10 Speed	5000
Cyclist	-Grants one re-roll when attempting to Recover Control of Bicycles	- 100 Bicycles - 12 Agility	5000
Driver	-Grants one re-roll when attempting to Recover Control of Automobiles	- 100 Automobiles - 10 Speed	5000
Mariner	-Grants one re-roll when attempting to Recover Control of Boats	- 100 Boats - 10 Speed	5000
Rider	-Grants one re-roll when attempting to Recover Control when engaging in Horsemanship	- 100 Horsemanship - 12 Agility	5000
Runner	-Grants one re-roll to Endurance when attempting to maintain pace or speed	- 10 Endurance - 10 Speed	5000
Skater	-Grants one re-roll when attempting to Recover Control of Skates / Skis	- 100 Skates - 12 Agility	5000
Swimmer	-Grants one re-roll when attempting swimming maneuvers or holding ones breath	- 10 Endurance - 10 Agility	5000
MISC			
Commander	-Can communicate in combat for No Action Cost	- 12 Perception - 12 Speed - 12 Willpower	5000
Persistent	-Grants one re-roll when attempting any communication based skill such as Persuasion / Deception	- 12 Charisma - 12 Willpower	5000
Tactician	-Can perform Situational Awareness "scans" during combat for No Action Cost	- 12 Perception - 12 Speed - 12 Willpower	5000
GRAPPLING ABILITIES (MORE TO COME...)			
Flip	-Grants opportunity to achieve dominant position or Break Grip (via Takedown if standing) by performing a Strength Check with modifier of -2 per location held	- 100 Grapple - 12 Strength - 12 Agility	5000

PART V: PLOTLINES

PLOT I : EVICTION NOTICE

- **First:** Choose a refugee city that is still standing. Tech level can be however you see fit appropriate to timeline or location

- **Team-building:** All players, no matter their background, live in the same (very) large squat on the outskirts of town. Building type can be whatever you like, but it's a shared space and houses appx 60. All players are loosely affiliated because of this, but each has been keeping the details of their lives to themselves for whatever reason. Determine what little they have scrounged or stashed in their sleeping area.

In the very small hours of the morning, the local police department forces their way into the building, block the doors, and begin banging loudly on their riot shields (legit or recently made but of high quality) and exclaiming over the bullhorn that you are all hereby trespassing on city property and must vacate the premises. This is your official Eviction Notice! You have five minutes to comply! Pack your stuff and GTFO. A quick glance outside shows they are definitely there in force and have a single prison van at each entrance. Inform them that there are several entrances to the building, and they fortunately live more towards the center, so if they start to storm the place they will probably have a little more time than those right near the doors. Give them five minutes (literally time it) to decide what they want to do. Once it's up, inform them that they can hear the typically loudest, drunkest of the squat's Karens is arguing with one of the cops. All the typical "Rah Rah...you fucking pigs cant do this" type of thing. Then they hear them bust her ass, followed by them beginning the beat down of her lover and their teenage kid(s). Then someone jumps in to help them, then another fight breaks out near another entrance. Cops yell something along the lines of "Alright round all of these motherfuckers up! If you don't want to be a statistic get your ass on the ground with your hands behind your head! We're coming in and we will open fire!"

- Ask each player what they are trying to do, they can communicate because they are all huddled up in a shared "common area"

- They have a couple options here, but the bottom line is that the cops are coming in and there is definitely at least a dozen at each door. If you have a preference, just voice it through another NPC within the shared space

- If they fight, the game starts with a royal rumble with the police in a poorly lit squat-house! If it goes in their favor, they are now going to be hunted fugitives cause it's caught on CCTV as they flee. They probably at least have a few bruises to help ID them, if not a gunshot wound. If it goes poorly, everyone gets to go to jail together and bond that way! Prison break? Just try to survive together? It's their call now...

- If they comply, they will all be rapidly frisked, have their bags checked (if they actually packed anything) and then hauled outside and instructed to lie face down on the pavement. If they tried to stash anything and it gets found when they search (failed Concealment roll) they simply empty their pockets and haul them out with nothing other than the clothes on their back. From there, they get to hear some more scuffling inside as some further in the building decide to fight back. More and more people get lead out the peaceful ones with the ones who complied, the bloody ones are separated. Then a gunshot and "I'm hit, I'm hit!". The cops fire off a few rounds themselves, clearly trying to conserve ammunition. One outside asks "He dead?!?"...BANG..."Is now!". A few more of the squatters get lead out, peaceful as can be. Then the one who seems to be in charge informs them that the peaceful ones are free to go, he doesn't care where just start walking, but if you stick around you might as well just hop in and pick your seat in that paddy wagon over there. No one's going back into that building anytime soon except maybe the coroner...

- **Plot twist:** If for some reason the plot stalls (because being destitute and homeless never leads to weird encounters), have them run into one of Karen's kids later on. Beaten and bruised (or worse) they tell you that there was a lucrative black market stash hidden in the building and needs their help breaking in to recover it. They had been cutting the cops in to keep them looking the other way but they broke the deal. She knows they didn't find it because she was the last one they questioned, and when they let her go she snuck off and kept an eye on the place. They sent in a guy to lock everything up and then he set up cameras aimed at each door to see who tries to get back in there and whether they come out with the goods. Bike cops have been rolling by ever since. Make the prize particularly lucrative, and tell them the kid offers an even split cause all she knows is she doesn't want to end up working the streets now that she's got to take care of her younger siblings and her parents are locked up...

PLOT II : THE FLOOD

- **First:** Choose a either a refugee city or a large settlement in the south-east or near the gulf. Tech level can be however you see fit appropriate to timeline or location

- **Second:** Determine each players starting equipment, but commit to the idea that they all live on the ground level so any permanent or semi permanent objects, like furniture, transportation, or living arrangements should be expected to be in serious jeopardy

- **Team-building:** All players, no matter their background, live in this area. As the catalyst unfolds they will inevitably see one another performing their daily tasks to mitigate the circumstances

Hurricane "Anonymous" Inbound! High winds, broken windows, power outages, and tons upon tons of water. After day one, the winds calmed down but the rain never stopped. On day two its still raining and everything is flooded, and there is no end in sight...

- When the game starts, have it begin with some sort of neighborhood meeting during day three and discussing "the plan" for this particular block or area of town that all players reside in, regardless of background. Some may be refugees and homeless, some may have a nice setup, doesn't really matter cause it's getting worse and the talk seems to be focused on whether or not to evacuate on foot as it's still coming down hard and the water is already two feet deep

- Allow them to collaborate and manage the crisis on their own terms, but keep an eye out for any curve balls you can throw at them if it seems like they are stabilizing or collaborating just a little too well

- The next day, have them wake up to three feet of water. Add about 6 inches daily after that as the rains slowly wind down. Onward and upwards until it's four and a half feet deep and most ground levels of buildings are basically half submerged. If they decided to leave, they need to head to high ground. If they decided to stay, things are getting difficult. Either way, once it gets to about to chest height, have the rain stop but the depth remains for a few days while the uphill runoff makes its way back down

- Now that the desperation has really set in knowing that supplies already reasonably scarce and nothing is coming in, the looting begins! If they are on evacuate mode, have the group get robbed. If they are on bunker down mode have other NPC's in their area start doing it as supplies dwindle, if they refuse to engage, have the NPCs "accidentally" bring trouble back home. If its a hold-out settlement and not a city, just send in some bandits that are convinced that this is the best way to make the most of the situation. Whatever works, just remember that this happens annually in some areas so the looting is going to be much more scarce than present day. This means they have to do more of it, more frequently, to achieve their objectives. If they are working with a "relief organization" have them get hit by a well-organized and well-armed group... with civilian casualties

- Gradually reduce water level as the plot thickens but don't forget about the mosquitoes, leeches, snakes, fish, frogs, and all other manner of wildlife that are in the muck with you! Could be prime time to introduce alligators!

PLOT III: MONGRELS

- **First:** The players are a rag-tag group of the lucky few who have been interviewed multiple times, passed, and promised housing and a promising future in an up and coming Hold-Out settlement a few days walk from whichever Refugee City you choose. Determine their starting equipment based on their skill-set, and their basic provisions for foot travel. None of them have met before

- **Second:** The two men who are leading the expedition to their new home are skilled hunters, capable of defending themselves, and long time residents of this new community. They were tasked with vetting possible additions to their community, and then bagging game on their way back

- **Team-building:** The first two days are reasonably uneventful by nature. This allows the group to talk, bond, and establish backstory with one another and the storyteller to enrich the environment of their potential new homes

On the third day of the journey, the hunters will attempt to track deer during the early afternoon. Players will be encouraged to either assist, or set up camp and prepare a location to butcher the kill and prep the meat for travel (salting, smoking, parceling, etc) The hunters will be successful in taking down one animal on their own, with any assistance from the players opening the possibility of additional game as well. Everyone feasts and the hunters open a bottle of wine or two to celebrate a successful hunt. Everyone falls asleep with high spirits and full bellies. However, in the middle of the night after the fire simmered down, the players awaken to screaming as one of the hunters is being mauled by wild dogs. The other hunter will initiate combat, but essentially the dog to human ratio should be 2 : 1 **(remember this total)**. No matter if the group successfully defends the camp, or is forced to flee as the dogs are most interested in the deer carcasses, the first hunter dies of his injuries. With the remainder of the group intact (and obviously one or more likely injured as well) the other hunter will insist that they need to travel to a small settlement a few miles away (two hours if no leg wounds) where he knows has a doctor and veterinarian. If nothing else to determine if they are now infected with rabies cause dogs aren't usually that aggressive, but also to get help burying his friend as he doesn't even have a shovel. Depending on the severity of the players injuries, or those inflicted on the other hunter this should be a reasonably easy sell to the party. After everyone receives treatment, the second hunter will leave with two of the settlers (small group, a three family community) to bury the fallen hunter, recover any lost gear, and with any luck kill the dogs. The party is told to rest up there, and they will be back by dark. They never return...

- There are two choices here:
  - You can decide that the small settlement that they went to for medical attention is responsible for the dogs and this suddenly turns into a crazy, sadistic, knockout, torture, escape plot. God knows what happened to the other hunter, but the party can learn that there's another person involved from another homestead who cut the dogs loose on you. Effectively opens a vengeance plot line

  - You can decide that the dogs are actually being used as a tool in a divide an conquer tactic for some particularly nasty bandits (all further bullet points follow this line of thinking)

- The bandits take out the group that went back to bury the fallen hunter. When they don't return, a father and his two sons gear up for combat that night and question the players on where they were coming from. Unfortunately the other hunter was the only one familiar with the area, so the team will have to do their best to guide them back to their abandoned camp properly. The Trio say they will rotate shifts on taking watch, either for the missing recovery party or anything else, and that the group should rest up as best they can. They will head out in the morning...
  - If the players are in reasonable condition and decide to go with the father and son group, they will find nothing of the first group that went back and the corpse of the first hunter will be half eaten, but all of his camping gear will be gone. Shortly thereafter, they hear gunfire coming from the direction of the homesteads. Upon arrival, two bandits will be there finishing up and covering their tracks. The doctor is dead, there's a dead bandit (who conveniently has a map to the hideout hidden away on his person), the houses are on fire, there is zero sign of the women, and two surviving bandits are loading up the last of the spoils into a small trailer attached to a four wheeler. They will attempt to escape rather than engage. No matter what happens, the Father Son Trio will insist of saving the ladies of the homesteads; stating that there are fates worse than death...

- ○ If anyone in the party has questionable combat inhibiting injuries, the father son group will insist that they stay and keep watch over the rest of the settlement while they go handle some flea ridden curs. They take all the best gear they have, aside from the doctor's old revolver, and set off. A few hours later the party will hear a bunch of gunfire, and shortly thereafter the father will return with a gunshot wound to the leg and dragging only one son, who has several arrows embedded in his torso. Hes frantic at the loss of his boys, but says they got several of the dogs and hes not sure how many of the bandits he actually hit. Determine as you see appropriate, but remember the dogs were bum rushing three armed men. They definitely took most of the incoming fire.

- No matter which way the plot unfolds, the bandits will be determined to keep picking the survivors off. Either en masse in a final attack, or constant harassment since the entire settlement is now on foot until the group locates where the women were taken and then a final showdown is clearly inevitable. Either way, the bandits are involved in a rather large dog fighting ring with multiple other desperado groups that maintain a lawless peace. The host of these fights got the bright idea to start training dogs as man hunters to make their own clashes a little easier. Needless to say, sneaking in isn't much of an option but the ladies are being held in the kennels at a particularly nasty off-grid gambling locale.

- Should the players survive the remainder of the homesteaders will accompany them to the original destination and vouch for them with the highest praise. Needless to say, they will have skilled friends and allies for life! Be it a bad-ass combat vet, his wife and two sons, plus the nurse and a couple of young girls OR a now enraged combat vet with his equally furious wife, a doctor, his assistant, and the other young women. Either way that is a solid support crew for future escapades within the same region.

PLOT IV: JAILBREAK

- **First:** All players, regardless of their background, find themselves serving various sentences for everything from petty to serious crimes depending on their backgrounds. Determine why they have been incarcerated

- **Team-building:** All of the team has just received their sentencing, they are shackled together in their jumpsuits and are about to be loaded into a prison bus. The journey is going to be a 6 plus hour ride, providing ample time for bonding and information exchange

    A few hours into the voyage, a group of bandits eliminate the escorts and run the bus off the road. They snatch up all of the pertinent police or national guard equipment, and then make their way down the bus unlocking everyone's shackles. They were clearly there to free several of their rank that had been locked up and put on this particular prisoner transport, and the affiliates exclaim that they had their doubts as to whether or not they could pull it off. The team is now stranded in the middle of nowhere mid-west USA, just plains and grass, ruined roads, and has no idea where they are or where any civilization might be. Additionally, they have no idea if or when a prison recovery team may arrive and there is zero food or water on the bus. The bandits tell the remaining prisoners that they have a choice to make: come with them and embrace a life of liberty and true independence but earn your keep, or try your luck in the wild during the summer droughts. Most, if not all the remaining NPC's take the offer and side with the bandits. The bus is totaled, as is one of the escort vehicles, but the other escort still runs and they are currently figuring out seating arrangements...

- If the players decide to go with their newfound brothers in bonds, welcome to the wonderful world of banditry! There are half a million moral conundrums that can be thrown at them. Do they embrace the brutality? Do they find a way to make themselves useful without engaging in violence? Do they decide to betray the gang and bring them to justice or just rob them blind and set off on their own once they have their bearings? Just throw some questionable decisions their way and see how they lead the script!

- If the group decides they don't want to be associated with a bunch of hardened cop-killers they are going to find themselves in a serious conundrum. It suddenly becomes an extreme worst-case survival scenario. With no survival provisions, no idea where they are, a couple ruined vehicles, and a lot of dead bodies that have already had their best gear stripped, the only thing they have going for them is knowing which direction they were heading. Do they try to remain put in order to turn themselves in, and if so what happens when the inevitable scavengers come for the corpses? Do they get to start a prison campaign when a recovery team finds them? Do they set off towards their original destination only to run into some vary wary travelers, or an incredibly uneasy Hold-Out settlement? Does desperation eventually drive them to a life of crime in spite of their best efforts? Only time will tell...

PLOT V : WE GOT US A CONVOY

- **First:** All players have been fortunate enough to acquire passage on a merchant convoy (A bus, a few vans or pickup trucks, and a two vehicle National Guard or Police escort). Determine whether they ply their trades with the convoy or are merchants themselves (and thus have made friends with some of the NPCs), or if they lack any particular skill-set simply assume that they paid for passage to the next stop on their trade route

- **Second:** Choose a geographic region of the continental US to establish the environment. If you want to throw in some added difficulty to the catalyst, you can decide that it's a riverboat convoy maneuvering the Mississippi

- **Team-building:** Start the game a day or two before the convoy is going to disembark. It should be either a few days before Christmas eve, or right after new years, but the Convoy should be preparing to head "home" after a very successful run. Spirits are high, people are happy knowing they will have a good winter, and all seems right with the world. Try to emphasize particular roles each player could have in a merchant convoy:
  - Combat oriented players could easily serve as bounty hunters for the settlements along the route, or the security force for the convoy itself

  - Skill centered players ply their trades as well. Mechanics do machine repairs, Construction types do home repairs, Medics offer their services, Drivers obviously pilot one of the convoys vehicles, so on and so forth

  - Any scavenger or outdoorsman focused players may simply have chosen to try a different approach because they weren't particularly successful before the cold started setting in. After convincing the convoy they have only the hope for a better future where ever they are heading, they sealed the deal by trading something acquired from their skill-set to secure a seat on that bus

Loaded up with the almost all of the available merchandise sold, stacks of cash, fat digital crypto accounts, snacks for the road, plus enough gas to get where ever they call home; the crew packs up an heads out as happy as can be. All players should be placed within the bus (or largest boat) as it is the only one with a functional heater. A few hours into the trip, they know they are in the home stretch, and light snow begins to fall. Shortly after it actually begins to stick, the convoy is ambushed!

- Depending on region, adjust the ambush tactic. If they are in a wooded area or along the Mississippi river somewhere, have the attackers use felled trees to eliminate the front escort immediately (nets lift downstream as well). If in open plains or desert regions, use IED's and make the onslaught more vehicular based along with emergence from foxholes by the road or river side. Either way have all but one vehicle get trapped or crash into the obstacles, the one that doesn't evades the trap and leaves the party behind! The ambusher's are well defended, clearly professional, and all hell breaks loose!

- Fortunately for the party, the attackers concentrate their fire (bullets and arrows) on the escorts and the caravan leaders vehicle which establishes quickly that they are the primary targets. The only attention they pay to the players vehicle is they make sure to bombard it with molotovs or flaming arrows (or both) in order to induce panic. Once the rear escort has been dispatched, have everyone check against Willpower immediately as it is apparent that you are all now severely outgunned and outnumbered!

- As the players vehicle continues to burn, and if the players keep their wits about them and don't attempt to flee immediately, they can see that the attackers have shifted their focus to the remaining smaller vehicles or boarding the escort vehicles to seize their weaponry (if boats, these have mounted machine guns with ballistic shields above the cabin). Now is their chance! If anyone has the bright idea to try to fight their way out, have an NPC physically stop them. In the case of the River Convoy, have them check physical traits as they swim to the shoreline. Any failed check means they lose clothing or get mild injury (get their jacket ripped off, lose a shoe, smack into a rock or some driftwood)

- Now the characters are stranded, on foot, with little more than whatever they managed to grab during their escape. If the party lacks strong survival skills, keep one NPC alive to assist in their growth in this field. However, they should be suffering severe injuries and not much use other than guidance (and effectively slow the party down, presenting a whole other issue). Otherwise have the remaining NPCs killed or captured as they made their escape attempt. Once the crew manages to relocate one another and determine who's still alive, the snowfall is getting heavier as the sun sets. If running the riverboat scenario, everyone is also soaking wet and hypothermia begins to set in as the adrenaline tapers off.

- **Potential Plot Twists:** here are just a few things to consider. Obviously it throws the team right into a nasty survival scenario with the cold setting in, miles from civilization, shorter daylight hours, and potentially starting injured and under-equipped but it never hurts to add a little more flavor:
  - Do the attackers make a point to track the team down in order to ensure there's no witnesses? Now it's a survival AND evasion scenario!
  - With their focus on the caravan leaders vehicle, was there any motivation other than greed?
  - Did the vehicle that escaped run to get help, or were they the ones who tipped the attackers off on where to hit them?
  - How long will the injured NPC survive without medical attention? Are there animals trailing the team, hungry for blood?
  - Smaller settlements are naturally wary of strangers during the winter, as everyone is well aware that this is when people become the most desperate. Larger settlements are more stingy because they have to make sure their supply lasts. Its a bad time to be broke (or have a wet phone when all of your money is in a crypto account)

PLOT VI: COMPLICATIONS

- **First:** All players, regardless of their background, have an immensely strong bond with a middle aged, mutual friend that played a critical role in each players survival of the apocalypse. Determine how this "Good Samaritan" has helped each player and built their relationship up since then

- **Team-building:** The entire party is loosely associated through this man, and he has requested urgent assistance at his homestead. Unable to refuse, everyone arrives at a reasonably successful plan for the future which is just a few miles outside the nearest refugee city of your choice, during late fall. However, noone had any idea what they were being summoned for until they arrive

The entire time this man has been a part of the players' lives, he has always expressed that his greatest fear is that he will never get the opportunity to be a father. Fortunately for him, that was not the case. His wife's is due any day, and shortly after the "last" player arrives her water breaks. He has sent word to each of the players because he knows he needs their help in assisting in their home birth. Mostly because he has no idea what to expect, but also to celebrate the birth of his first born! They have a decent homestead a few miles outside of city limits, and power is creeping towards the house every week. The future looks incredibly bright, but they were unable to find any sort of mid-wife or medical professional to assist. Everything seems to be going according to plan, until some serious complications occur in the middle of the night...

- So begins the scramble to save this woman's life during childbirth! If she dies, their entire plan was to sustain the child on breast-milk so the scramble could easily shift to finding another food source. However with winter drawing near, it adds additional complications in acquisitions as most people have already stockpiled their own supplies and the players have no connections in the immediate area

- The "Good Samaritan" refuses to leave his wife's side, and is clearly in a state of panic as her health deteriorates

- If none of the players have any serious medical proficiency, the issue becomes clear mid day after the complications start. The child is caught in the umbilical cord, and unable to be forced out. She is also losing a concerning amount of blood from internal bleeding as the child squirms or adjust positions. If no solution can be found within the next few hours, she demands that the team cut their baby out of her as shes going to die anyway. "Good Samaritan" is now exceptionally erratic and indecisive, and will adamantly refuse to be the one to kill his wife

- Should they have to pursue this course of action, the "Good Samaritan" becomes all but catatonic. Unable to speak or interact any more than stating that "We have to find a way to feed the baby"

- There's only a couple of days to find a solution. If the child dies, the "Good Samaritan" will pull a pistol out from under the dead newborn and attempt an enraged, adrenaline fueled, and utterly frantic murder-suicide of the party for failing him

PLOT VII: HARVEST TROUBLES

- **First:** All players, regardless of their background, are members of a small farming settlement deep in the Outlands. Each of them is attempting to leave their former lives behind and try their luck at self sufficiency. Determine the origins of their backstories and why they have chosen to generally shun society, as well as their roles in this small community. Two NPCs also reside here, a brother and sister, who's primary role has been teaching the party advanced farming techniques and they serve as the core founders of this Outland Oasis.

- **Second:** Determine the geographic region for the settlement

- **Team-building:** The entire party is loosely associated as neighbors trying to cooperate to build a better life together without the toils and troubles of the modern world. The primary goal is survival and sustainability, but that is about it. Each can hold their own ideals as to what else they want for their lives, but they have essentially bonded loosely by surviving a winter successfully together and raising crops through the course of the year without any major incidents

The game should begin about halfway through harvest, the yield is higher than expected so the team is tasked with preparation for long term storage and surplus past their available supply. There is a small town nearby, and sparse housing but the salvage theoretically should remain decent as the group has not had much need to scavenge themselves and as far as they can tell the only other community is of a similar size and miles away in the opposite direction. Picture a rural town center, with the occasional house or small community spread over every quarter mile to a mile away. True "small town america". The Siblings have invited some of their extended family to come help with the harvest, like they had last year, and they seem trustworthy enough as everything worked out then and there's no indication of that having changed. Once they arrive, everyone celebrates a good harvest, and the next day the community meets to discuss their unexpected problem of excess surplus as there is zero electricity what-so-ever.

- Players should be encouraged to chime in on what to do with the excess fruits of their labors. Do they try to package it up for travel and try to trade with the neighbors? Do they know of any advanced preservation techniques for long term storage? Should they buy time, collect the seeds and compost the rest and have an even bigger output next year but with more time to prepare for this problem? Should they try to use the extra food to bring on additional hands now, and begin growing a larger community and try to establish trade with anyone that is around them? Maybe get a route established as more and more people press into the wilderness?

- No matter what the consensus is, one thing is definitely clear. It's time to scavenge anything that could assist with this decision. Send the party out on a scavenging runs for a week or so while the Siblings and Family finish the harvest and begin the standard curing processes. Throw some encounters at them as well to improve the teams cohesion. Doesn't matter if they are hostile, comedic, strange, sad, or just plain weird. The point is to build up their bonds from loose affiliates to friends, rivals, or even enemies. They will choose their own paths given enough stimuli

- Once the loot begins to pile up, have the party begin their winterization prep for the settlement and their homes. Give them a few days to get organized, begin their storage procedures, and plan for the typically dormant winter months. Spur this behavior forward by having the Siblings and Family start talking about plans for Thanksgiving and the amazing feast that they will prepare!

- Cue natural disaster! Choose the most appropriate for the region:

  ◦ If in a wooded environment, have heavy rainfall begin to cause roof leaks. After about a day of ever increasing drippage and high winds, the roof collapses on one house rendering the upstairs useless and risks entire structural failure. It doesn't stop there though, the storms don't let up. Another home has a massive tree crash on top of it, rendering a solid 1/3 of the house uninhabitable. Neither will be able to retain heat during the harsh winter months. The greenhouses are also damaged from flying debris like branches, and the storage shed has collapsed as well, meaning much of the produce is now damaged and must be recovered before spoiling

  ◦ If in the plains, same deal minus the tree fall. Have another roof collapse but have heavy hail break most, if not all of the windows of every structure that were facing one direction (typically east or west) and cause the damage to the greenhouses and storage shed

  ◦ If in the desert, the stakes are even higher. The well runs dry! Add in a blinding sandstorm that rips the greenhouses up and persists for half a day or so though, just for good measure!

- If you are feeling exceptionally mean, tornadoes are a frequent occurrence as well. Have the damage be severe, but not irreparable!

- Now the race is on. The team must consider one of the following options, but the future plans are essentially put on hold as the snows will come soon. The further north they are, the less time they have. However, the general idea is that there is about a month before things begin to get dangerous:

  - Scavenge the necessary materials to repair the damage or otherwise make the living arrangements acceptable (water storage for the desert)

  - Relocate and haul all that wonderful food and gear to a suitable new location

  - Negotiate shared space and continue working on the plans for the future, in order to get a head start in the spring

  - Develop their own solution

- **Plot Twists:** this is typically the point where Outlanders have to determine how they make or break it if they aren't prepared for the harsh winters. Consider the following:

  - That other settlement mentioned in the very beginning probably has similar problems to the team. Were they anywhere near as successful as the Siblings and crew? Do they try to work out a deal? If they weren't, do they try to just raid their neighbors? Are they crafty and employ a divide and conquer strategy by isolating targets as they try to solve their own problems?

  - This is the prime hunting season for bandits. They have to stockpile as well, but their lifestyle doesn't typically allow them to sit in one place and grow crops

  - Wildlife are also preparing for the cold, and having a bunch of damaged food trapped in a fallen shed will inevitably attract any scavengers appropriate to the region. Vermin and insects may become a problem, not to mention the more dangerous animals like bears, hogs, or wild dogs

PLOT VIII: WILDFIRE

- **First:** Determine players general backstory and starting equipment. All players will start in a successful and ever growing trading settlement of approximately 60 to 80 people. Skill oriented characters likely either already reside there, or are attempting to integrate themselves into the community. Nomadic or Outdoorsman types just tend to trade there frequently

- **Second:** Decide if the area is a woodland or plains environment, and the commodities available within town. An old motel, bar, mechanic, and grocery store (with an open flea market style trade center in the parking lot) should be emphasized as staples of the community. Various other shops and businesses are present as well, decide what they are appropriate to the environment

- **Team-building:** It is late July and the droughts are becoming nearly unbearable. All of the nearby streams are bone dry, and the town has resorted to having to walk a couple of miles daily to fetch water from the nearest river, making clean water a trade commodity once again. The assorted wells and water sources are currently under strict rations, but the mayor assures the town that they are currently negotiating for relief from the nearest Hub city, but the terms of the exchange are still being established. The crops from the supporting farms on the outskirts of town are beginning to suffer immensely. Many of those who don't hold consistent or stable work have resorted to setting up camps near the river bed, as those who do are seeking more permanent solutions. The team will frequently encounter one another and various NPCs as they work towards either solving or enduring this issue

Provide a week or two of game time to allow the players to integrate with the environment and make the best of the situation and pursue their own objectives. Emphasize that they frequently encounter each other as well as opportunity with the NPC population at the river banks or along the trail as people are physically carrying water back home at least every other day. When the time seems right, and none of the characters are near the river, establish that there is smoke on the horizon...coming from the direction of the river no less!

- Apparently an NPC camping near the river lost control of their campfire, but the blaze is spreading quickly. No matter what happens following this point, the town basically wants this persons head on a pike. Adjust the story accordingly...

- The blaze is spreading rapidly! The town has a few hours tops to prepare for their strategy. The farms on the outskirts are the life blood of their stability and are at highest risk due to the lack of fire-barriers like concrete and steel. The town is mobilizing to establish fire lines in order to preserve them, which may open some interesting opportunities for the players, as well as any thieves in the area

- Should the players involve themselves in the defense of one of the farms, whether they succeed or not the other farms will not be so lucky. Now the town itself is under direct threat. The battle continues

- Without ready access to gasoline, chainsaws, or vehicles this is a serious problem. Innovative strategies need to be discovered quickly and the intensity should be reinforced as now the smoke has become unbearably thick. Those who don't hold property in the town are beginning to evacuate, and with the fire originating from the water source things are looking particularly dire. This presents a key decision for the party, keep fighting or run?

  - Should they keep up the fight, even in the worst case scenario they will have the opportunity to be the last to leave which may mean significant goods and materials that had to be abandoned in a hurry. Not to mention the fact that if they successfully defend the town they will be seen as the heroes of the day. You can never have too many friends post-apocalypse!

  - Should they flee, or help convince the town that evacuation is the only option (depending on the circumstances) this will provide additional opportunity and integration as well. Where does one go, on foot no less, after losing everything to a wildfire that is right on their heels?

- There is also the very high likelihood that any bandits in the region will see the blaze from afar and attempt to rob the residents and travelers as they make their escape attempt or swoop in and snatch anything that was left behind. Maybe both?

PLOT IX: MURDERERS!

- **First:** Determine players general backstory and starting travel equipment. All players will begin this story in a large and reasonably successful Hold-Out settlement and are there to either ply their trades or are simply resting up between their travels. All players are currently residing at the local inn / hotel / motel and have paid for a weeks stay (give or take) in advance while they figure out their next move

- **Second:** Decide on the geographic location, the town size and general layout, as well as the commodities that it offers to travelers. The only staples of the community that are absolutely necessary for this particular plot are the hotel, the grocer, and an old dog kennel that has been converted to serve as the town jail

- **Third:** The premise of this campaign is that the players are being framed for murder. There are definitely at least two killers. Choose a general theme:

  ○ Are these caused by particularly crafty bandits who are simply trying to sow chaos before they strike?

  ○ Is it a traditional psychopathic murder mystery that is completely random? Is it some racist nonsense? Are there old secrets and grudges involved? Cultists or just a general horror theme?

  ○ Or is it a power shift to change the towns leadership? Black ops by the local Hub City to bring this "independent" Hold-Out fully under heel? Someone running for a local election trying to frame the players, while they take out the current sheriff and mayor? Maybe vice versa and the sheriff is involved somehow?

- **Team-building:** Allow the players a few days to interact with each other, pursue their own objectives, and get familiar with the town before a resident NPC is found brutally murdered. Once the murder occurs, emphasize that there is a growing suspicion towards outsiders. Allow another day to pass, and reveal that another random NPC suffered the same fate the next evening. Have a town meeting called and all peoples encouraged to attend. At this point a curfew is put into effect at sunset. That night, the players are the only ones residing in the hotel. Once they fall asleep have them all rounded up by the local law early next morning for the murder of the hotel owner. Players are all locked in uncomfortably small quarters within the dog kennel / jail conversion. Having nothing better to do, provide a solid two days of communication between each of them and the deputies who rotate shifts while each one is being individually interrogated by the sheriff

The sheriff makes no secret that he is absolutely convinced that one, if not all of the players are involved in these horrific killings, he is going to find out who and can not wait to be the one who puts that noose around their neck. Clearly he had personal relationships with each of the victims (who were each killed in horrific ways, go as dark as you like...it's intended to be as chilling as possible but each was definitely up close and personal, with additional postmortem mutilation) and he is furious that this is happening in his otherwise peaceful and stable little town. Once all the interrogations are complete, have the team be served their meager evening rations and get very sleepy. The meals were heavily drugged!

- Have each player check against Perception at this point with a severe (but not unattainable) penalty. If they pass they wake up to being dragged and carried out of their cell and may be able to recall details about who, or what they saw with successful checks against Memory with equally severe penalty before one of the two carrying them sets them down and stomps them hard in the face. Assign each character an injury to the head but nothing too debilitating (split eyebrow or lip, broken nose, huge knot, etc), another bruise inflicted at a random location from one of the deputy's batons, and determine if they get one of their hands stomped bad enough to cause injury as well (50:50 chance at being either severely bruised or fractured) If they fail the Perception check, they simply are not privy to the details on whoever was kicking them while they were down

- Have the player with the highest perception wake up first as the first of the morning light strikes their face. The scene is absolutely brutal and a veritable bloodbath. The deputy on duty has been brutally beaten to death, broken teeth, broken bones, the whole nine. Another deputy is located near the entrance, bowels spilled on the floor at his feet and a hunting knife embedded in his neck and collar bone. All the players have been positioned very near the two dead deputies and covered in the eviscerated ones blood. Both of their bloody batons, clubs, whatever seems appropriate are on the floor nearby. The gutted one even still has his pistol in his holster. Grant the first conscious player the first decision on what to do as the other players slowly stir to consciousness based on their Sequence

- Decision time! There are only a few options that become evident when waking up to this nightmare:
  - If ANY player decides to flee the scene before the town rises to greet the day, they will be assumed to be the culprit. Whenever the National Guard or Highway Patrol next roll through town, the sheriff will declare they are wanted for the murder of all of the victims and a manhunt will be issued while he and the remaining deputies secure the town and put the citizens on high alert. Any that stayed behind now have the option of either letting them take the fall for this, tracking them down themselves (for whatever reason), or attempt to find the real killer themselves as the murders will inevitably continue
  - If the players choose to flee together, they will be hunted relentlessly by the National Guard and Highway Patrol for unspeakable crimes. There will be vehicles and dogs on their heels within two days. It may make sense after a few close encounters to decide to throw their pursuers off by circling back and finding additional evidence to prove their innocence, especially since more murders have been occurring while the party has been on the run. Otherwise it can just devolve into how they all ended up fugitives and their background story on why they are outlaws
  - If the players choose to remain at the location and proclaim their innocence, they will find themselves tasked with proving their innocence. There should be plenty of evidence available to a keen eye or sharp mind, and when paired with the fact that they could have (and maybe should have) fled they chose to stay and help bring the real killers to justice. It shouldn't be a particularly easy sell though, they might easily end up back in those kennels for a bit while they reason with the sheriff, but eventually they should either succeed, have a large group of bandits roll through town in force and escape during the chaos, or have someone successfully defend themselves. The sheriff should apologize profusely and offer to deputize the party seeing as he's now down several good men
- Develop the narrative based on whichever premise you established for yourself earlier!

PLOT X: RIVERBOAT BLUES

- **First:** Determine players general backstory and starting travel equipment. Any characters that possess any skills that could be related to riverboat transportation, either as a security force, machine operation, or just as an insurance policy should something go wrong should be assumed to be members of the original crew. Anyone who's skill-set is outside of this realm of expertise should be assumed to be trying their luck in a new career and is a new hire. The captain is more than capable of managing a vessel of this size, he simply needs extra hands cause he can't be two places at once and these are dangerous times

- **Team-building:** Start the campaign with the Captain having provided room and board at a inn near the docks of St. Louis. The team is sharing dinner and gets an opportunity to introduce themselves and explain their roles on the ship to one another. During the course of the meal and the drinks afterwards, the captain explains that after such a successful run during the fall last year he has reached out to them, and any new hires, to announce that after his calculations he will be offering an even profit split after he takes a 33% cut for himself, boat maintenance, fuel and food costs, and docking fees. Any remainder of the percentage split will be contributed to a "bar budget" when they are at port, but half of the crew must remain with the boat at all times. The run will be from St. Louis to Baton Rouge, distribute the first half of the journeys pay, dock until the rains come, then back up once the river swells. If all goes well, they vacation and wait out the dry season and do it again when the fall storms hit.

- **The Boat:** The boat is a large, three tube pontoon style vessel with two outboard motors and a removable overhead canopy, two unused mast housings for the possibility of adding sails for near shore voyages, and an extension bar in the rear that will allow the attachment of two additional 8 foot inflatable rafts for any goods that don't necessarily have to remain dry or otherwise just provide additional tow capacity. The plan is for the crew to sleep in hammocks that are attached to the canopy frame while in port, and store the dry goods and majority of the cargo in the center of the vessel underneath the overhead canopy. Should heavy rain occur, the canopy walls can be unrolled along the sides of the boat. There are also an ample amount of handheld oars and assorted flotation devices in case of engine failure

The majority of this campaign will involve very minor issues while on the river in the beginning, with the team basically just building trust. Most of the campaign should revolve around when they dock. The return journey is where the trouble sets in, as the Captain will inadvertently get the boat stuck trying to maneuver back up river due to overestimating the rainfall before departure. Having a ship loaded with goods between Greenville and Memphis, the crew gets placed in a troubling predicament as they are approximately 2 / 3 of the way through the voyage and has to figure out how to proceed. However, the events leading up to this could easily prove to be defining milestones in the final outcome, so they should be established before the catalyst actually occurs

- Most of the journey on river should be reasonably uneventful aside from flavor script. The occasional alligator sighting, an engine running out of fuel, having to row a little bit, towed rafts getting twisted up, a snake in the boat, meeting other riverboat people, bandits taking pot shots with bows and arrows, National Guard patrol boats handling them, a dead body floating, minor improvements to the ship itself...take your pick!

- The real fun happens when the crew gets to dock. It should be noted that these are brief encounters though, as the crew is only planning to stop until sunrise. The stops include the following locations between St. Louis and Baton Rouge:
  - Cairo
  - Caruthersville
  - Memphis
  - Helena
  - Rosedale
  - Greenville
  - Vicksburg
  - Natchez
  - Fort Adams
- There should be a single random encounter each night at each port, assuming noone is injured severely or they make concerted effort to avoid them. Possible scenarios revolve around typical sailor cliches:
  - Drunken bar brawls
  - Accused of cheating while gambling
  - Thieves, Pickpockets, or Bandits
  - Attempted Stowaways
  - Pissed off dock workers
  - Drunken Fishermen
  - Witnessing a murder or body dump in the river
  - Wildlife on the boat
  - Crew getting lost or arrested after getting black out drunk
  - Delays for medical treatment
  - Bad seafood
  - Smuggler or Passenger Propositions
  - Sob stories leading to tricks and traps
  - Angry Rivals
  - Etc.

- Once the group gets to Baton Rouge the scene changes. The voyage is half complete, but they have to wait a couple of weeks for the big rains to roll through and force the river to swell. However, they should have plenty of money in their pockets and be free to get themselves in any kind of trouble they see fit. At this point there should be plenty of material to work with, or you might choose to switch the script entirely. It doesn't much matter, remember that this build-up was just to get the flow going. Plot critical options might include any of the following:
  - Bandits kidnap one of the crew, or even the Captain, and demand ransom
  - The boat gets stolen!
  - Revenge - someone the party pissed off earlier eventually catches up to them
  - The return cargo never arrives, figure out what happened
  - A new opportunity - present a grand offer to make the journey to New Orleans or elsewhere in the Gulf
  - An completely different storyline with the rushed timeline of approximately two weeks
- On the return voyage, repeat the process until they hit Greenville on the way back up. Then, due to reduced rainfall have the boat get stuck. Make the Captain curse himself for not buying a winch stuck. Now they are seriously behind schedule and need to come up with a solution. This should be the crux that determines whether or not the players secure their futures as a riverboat crew. If you don't quite have an idea yet:
  - Abandon ship and attempt to find a method of transport via the roads, then return for the boat
  - Turn it into some horrible "Deliverance" scenario
  - Throw in some predictably aggressive banditry
  - Find some way to convince another riverboat crew or the National Guard to take on the risk of helping them during low water
  - Consistent wildlife harassment
- Continue and adjust as necessary!

PLOT XI: CASINO HEIST

- **First:** Determine each players starting travel equipment and whether or not they already have associations with one another

- **Team-building:** This campaign begins on "Easter Sunday" in an old multi-story Holiday Inn right off the highway deep in the Outlands and miles away from any other civilization. An enterprising group decided that it was the best location around to ride out the apocalypse, and as such scavenged far and wide to establish both power and running water to the facility. Once this was accomplished, they converted the entire location into an enormous casino, with the first three floors providing gambling and services of all sorts, restaurants with full menus, bars that never run dry, several resident physicians, and all manner of illicit activity, open to the public both civilian, military, or outlaw alike as long as you play by their rules and check your weapons at the door. Over the years it has become an immensely successful tourist attraction for anyone traveling within the region. Not only is it one of the few places where one can exchange salvage of all sorts, find anything ones heart desires, including an entire black market within the hotel itself, be guaranteed a shower, air conditioning, and running water, but it also functions as a safe haven for anyone within it's walls regardless of their criminal history. If you can pay, you can play! Each player should be granted a few days to bask in the luxury and network among those who patronize this gem of the Badlands. This is "The Holiday"! Their characters worked hard to get to this moment, and this is their vacation before they start their summer grind

  Whenever seems appropriate, make a point to establish that business is beginning to slow down. The National Guard clear out, the criminals wait a day or two after and follow suit. Random groups of rough looking Outlanders check in, but other than that, it seems like business as usual. People just like the players are the only ones left, just coming in wanting a shave and a shower, to sell a little scrap, spend a little money, and then head back out into the real world. The staff are clearly exhibiting some level of leisure as well, drinking at the same bar as the patrons after their shifts, casually walking the floor, the entire atmosphere seems to relax without dropping any level of professionalism. Inform the characters that they are starting to hit their budget limit and should probably consider what they are going to do once they decide to check out. When the time is right, and noone has any real business to engage in within the establishment, have them wander down to the bar in the ridiculously small hours of the morning. That point when everyone is typically passed out drunk, or damn near but there still could be some exchange occurring? That's the time! Even if they don't particularly want to, tell them that they just cant sleep and want to hear the juke box once more before having to embrace nothing other than bird song. Once everyone is at the bar for whatever reason, let them know there's two bartenders and a couple of NPCs, plus one guy who is falling asleep in the corner booth. Everyone's looking rather bleary eyed, but the bartenders are doing their best to finish up their shifts and brewing coffee. Whenever the conversation stalls, inform the party that there is suddenly dozens and dozens of rounds being fired off outside, followed by the immense roar of a large engine, and then an enormous crash that shakes the entire building. The guy that was falling asleep in the booth mutters something under his breath, jumps up from the booth with a pistol in hand, and shoots one of the bartenders in the chest. He then takes aim at the other bartender, misses, and begins advancing. At this point, another of the NPCs that was closer to the register casually hops over the bar to the other side. He reaches underneath the counter and pulls out a shotgun that was hidden under the register and tells the crowd "Relax, motherfuckers! We aren't here for you! Get your hands up, get on the floor, give us a minute, and you'll walk away from this! Capiche?!?". He then blows the other bartender away, they can just barely hear her gurgling death gasps over the ringing in their ears...then more gunfire echoes throughout the building

  - The players are unarmed, and it would be a terrible idea to start a campaign with a gunshot wound. You should encourage compliance, but if the players are bound and determined to be reckless have the two execute the NPC's nearest the bar first, in order to give them a fighting chance. If they somehow manage to stop "Capiche" before he flees, drag out the fight until someone rescues him or he is killed. If he somehow miraculously falls here, assume he has trained a second in command for the remainder of the plot and adjust dialogue as necessary. If they comply and submit, have the two assailants snatch the register, throw it in the garbage can along with the other pistol hidden behind the bar, remove the bag from the can, and then each grab a bottle of their favorite top shelf liquor and flee the scene

  - Once the chaos in the bar settles, have them check against Perception to hear tires squealing as the culprits escape the parking lot and gunfire erupts as the buildings security tries to disable the vehicles. No matter what, the robbers should escape the scene mostly unharmed (though they may find a vehicle stripped later on down the road if they choose the appropriate path). This is the point you tell the party that they can hear all the doors automatic locks engage, and they are now effectively trapped as the entire building is essentially "locked down"

- After about 10 to 15 minutes the security detail will enter either the bar or casino room floor (whichever the players end up in before the doors lock) and check to make sure the survivors need medical attention, if the players don't have any injuries they will be lead to the casino floor. If they do, they will be carried to the nearest doctors office on the ground level. Either way, the players can hear people screaming as the injured are ushered off towards the elevators, presumably to a triage wing previously unknown to the party. There are bodies of dead security being taken away as well

- At this point, the PA system clicks on and a man clearly out of breath states "Attention dear friends and honored guests of The Holiday! I am sure that most of you may just be waking up, or were rudely awakened by the battle that just occurred on the ground floor. We apologize for the inconvenience! Please remain calm, and stay in your rooms until the facility is secured and we are certain the danger has passed. We know this is an enormous hassle and are currently crediting your accounts for last nights stay, which will be comped free of charge. We will also be moving from room to room to provide you with a complimentary breakfast and discuss whether or not you were able to see anything from your wonderful vantage point within this fine establishment. The entire process should not take more than a few hours, so please feel free to fill out your room service requests now, located in the drawer of your nightstand and just slide them underneath the door at the entrance to your room. We will accommodate your needs as best as we are able in this current moment, chaotic as it may be!" Shortly thereafter, smooth jazz begins playing softly...

- After a few uneasy moments, an exceptionally well-groomed, middle-aged man of color will walk into the casino room floor and look over the survivors. He carries himself with a distinct sadness, and seems to be attempting to stare into each players (and any surviving NPCs) souls as he walks from one person to the next, maintaining eye contact, holding perfect military poise, and generally just passing judgment unto each individual before him. Once he is satisfied with himself, he simply says "Come with me". He leads the group to the elevator, and after a long and uncomfortable ride to the top floor, leads the party plus any additional survivors into his penthouse. Two well armed men stand guard at the window, overlooking the parking lot. An incredibly attractive assistant stands near the mans desk, and through a doorway you can see another girl sobbing softly in a bathrobe while sitting on the bed. He takes a seat, and the guard behind the group motions for them to position themselves in front of the desk. First he offers a drink, any who oblige will be served by the assistant. He lights a cigarette, rubs his brow and then glances up at each individual once again. Takes a long drag, exhales, and simply says "Tell me what happened"

- Each player should test against Memory to be able to question you on as many details of the engagement as they can think of. What the one in the booth said? What he looked like? what he was wearing? One by one, player to player, one question at a time. Award experience for every detail or pertinent question successfully answered by a check against Memory. Whenever someone says the word "Capiche", stop the questioning. The man looks down, pulls a small bottle of expensive whiskey from the desk, takes a long swig, looks up and says "Well shit..."

- He will then ask if "anyone has anything promising going on out there, or are you any good with a gun?" At this point the NPCs will back out for whatever reason (family, farm, some other life) and be told they are free to leave. None of the players should have any reason to leave without at least hearing what he has to say so he will tell the party that despite the shitshow this morning was, it might end up being the best day of their lives. "How would you fine ladies and gentlemen like to be rich, make a friend for life, and always have a place to stay with a doctor in the house and an open tab whenever you roll through my neck of the woods?" He then begins to tell his tale:

  - He served with "Capiche" during the Battle for British Columbia, they were both "Pardon Privates" originally

  - They both got injured during a particularly nasty battle after Vancouver fell, but they managed to disable several APC's and some Armor together after losing most of their unit. Both men earned several medals for their valor, had their felonies pardoned, and split ways. Mr. Holiday decided that was enough for him and accepted his discharge gratefully at the end of his tour of duty, but "Capiche" renewed his enlistment and went back for blood. They didn't see each other again for years

  - Mr. Holiday just wandered around until he found this place, and then everyone knows what he decided to do. A couple of years later "Capiche" walked through those very same doors with very different plans

  - "Capiche" was always smart. He was doing a stint for some big hacker crime he committed while he was figuring out how to pay for college. Came in talking about all this crazy computer gibberish and using the cell phone towers nearest here to track the winners once they left, then they could just steal the money back and grow exponentially. Only if they didn't like them though, of course...

- After a few drinks he started talking about "indentured servitude" no limit gambling, and letting them rack up debt and then work it off rather than being a cash, and eventually crypto, only business. Mr. Holiday didn't like that much either, told him to just enjoy his time right now. They'll talk about business more later if he really wants, but for now they should just enjoy the bounties of peace

- After several days of feasting, drinking, and enjoying the working girls "Capiche" eventually convinced Mr. Holiday to come with him to one of those cell phone towers. He laid out this elaborate plan that involved pinging cell phones within range, but without actually providing service, just so they could get their latitude and longitudes. All they had to do was get the towers some power and configure their output signal directly. Mr. Holiday again declined

- After a month or so, we had some troubles with the water system thanks to the droughts. "Capiche" told me that we could make more money if we set up other games, away from the actual casino of course, just a little more extreme. Cock fights, dog fights, bare knuckle boxing, gladiator matches, all "blood sports"...Again, Mr. Holiday told him that isn't what he wanted to be known for

- When winter hit and everyone stopped traveling, supplies got a little low at one point or another. In a drunken rage "Capiche" exclaimed his frustration with the situation. Was talking all sorts of crazy nonsense about how the entire world is right at our fingertips, how they just need to take it. There was no reason they couldn't just snatch the prettiest girls and put them to work, might as well make sure they get paid well and have a safe place to do it, if they are just going to end up having to do it anyway. They could just round up all the worst desperadoes and murderers and make them ""make us rich while they pay for their crimes", and we could...blah blah blah

- When everything thawed, Mr. Holiday sent "Capiche" on his way. A few months later the National Guard started coming to collect their "Road Safety Tax", no big deal, Mr. Holiday knew that would be coming. What he wasn't expecting were the reports that every single settlement that tried to establish a route to or from the Holiday after that was getting picked off, no survivors, no witnesses. The next year reports started coming in that every robbery on the roads always seemed to be heading away from the casino, rather than towards it. That last batch of Guard was here to share that every operation in the last six months, intended to track these killers during the dead of winter, always turned up short. They said it was almost like they knew they were coming, that they would sometimes find places where the chimneys were still smoking...

- Bottom line, Mr. Holiday offers top dollar for "Capiche" and he will grant anything within his power if you can bring him back alive. He doubts that it's even possible, the man is a force to be reckoned with, but the war clearly twisted his genius into something sinister. He wants the team to accompany his security detail to check out that cell phone tower, and bring anything they find back to him. In the meantime he is going to try to find a programmer, if "Capiche" has his crypto exchange terminal, the whole state might be in for a hell of a lot of trouble if hes been assembling a mercenary army under the radar... upon leaving the casino, the party will see that the enormous crash they heard earlier was in fact a semi-truck that ran through the wall of the check in where the guests must store their weapons. A small taste of things to come

  - If the group agrees, Mr. Holiday will gear them up with whatever suits their skill-set and wasn't stolen from the weapons check. Upon arrival to the access road of the cell tower, they will be greeted by attack dogs first, and then ambushed by half a dozen incredibly well armed Outlaws standing guard over a small encampment that hosts a laptop and a generator. On return with the laptop and as injuries heal, the programmer will determine that several of the Highway Patrol and National Guard are actually working with "Capiche" and getting rich doing so. Its up to the team to either track them down and make them talk, or they can slowly discover bandit camp after bandit camp as the programmer whittles away at the encryption protocols. Either way, "Capiche" has somehow unified several of the outlaw gangs, corrupt cops, and crooked soldiers in the immediate area with a shaky "cat and mouse" truce that has been working to drive all travel and commerce to The Holiday, and then pick off any competition or high stakes winners that walk out. Adjust course as necessary to narrow down his location(s)!

- Alternatively, the party might decide that "Capiche" actually has the right idea and could have some insight as to how to establish some longer term solutions for his strategy. Some that come to mind might be how to set up trading posts to gather more information on those heading to and from The Holiday in order to determine better scores. Maybe set up some farming communities to provide produce for the restaurants located within The Holiday as well as make the journey a little less of a burden for those on foot. Maybe even putting the bandits to work as deputized "Highway Patrol" as well, so that the likelihood of Uncle Sam setting up refueling stations along the way increases. If the entire region could grow, and then all you have to do is pick the low hanging fruit while you operate behind the scenes. Just a thought of course...

- If they don't agree to help and decide they want no part of this weird, psychotic, and semi-parasitic symbiosis between these two combat-hardened veterans, so be it. They will definitely get ambushed by a well equipped hit-squad wherever they decide to go and the only doctor known for at least 50 miles in any direction is located back at The Holiday. Good luck!

ALTERNATE PLOTS: COMMON ORIGINS

(simple beginnings to bring diverse groups together)

If you already have an idea of a plotline, but are simply looking for a way to introduce the players to one another then this card is for you! Listed below are a few of the most common ways that people might encounter one another in different environments within the world of The Aftermath. They also address specific commonalities between human beings, which can prove infinitely useful should you simply be searching for a little inspiration. Each scenario has its likelihood of occurrence within certain population densities listed in parenthesis, as in some environments the concept may be more or less likely than others. If you still aren't sure just keep in mind that no matter what, everyone has to trade or work for something eventually. Small Hold-Outs and Suburban trading centers dot the landscape, which effectively makes them the gate between the Hubs and the Wilds. Even if the campaign is set on scavenging and foraging in the deepest of the wilds, it always makes sense to prepare for the journey, and there's bound to be one little single shop somewhere to sell you lost label canned mysteries or lighters and matches!

- **TRAIN HOPPERS (ALL):** Trains are a major means of transportation both to Hub Cities themselves and the Outland Settlements between them or along the tracks. Even those that find themselves deep in the wild have grown used to this fact and have learned to try to board where the tracks curve and the train needs to slow down. A Storyteller could easily start a campaign with players hopping on trains one by one, and coincidentally landing in the same car or hearing one another slam their gear into a mostly empty freight bucket. Maybe even just overhear their excited celebration calls or yelps of pain or surprise after successfully accomplishing the exhilarating experience of boarding a moving train!

- **THIRST (RURAL / SUBURBAN):** Traveling in the Outlands is usually a long and slightly uncomfortable process. It's only natural that people will get thirsty, or wont miss an opportunity to refill their water bottles even if they are not. Add in the fact that whenever a water source is available, it usually provides an ample line of sight both up and down stream or across and suddenly everyone might just happen to be in the right place at the right (or wrong) time!

- **CROSSROADS (RURAL / SUBURBAN):** Much like thirst, the open road also provides significant lines of sight when on foot. When traveling a long distance, on foot, with limited supplies, and no GPS it only makes sense that staying on or near roads that are well known is usually the best course of action. The entire premise is essentially chance encounters based on timing. Fate brought us together, sort of thing.

- **RUN RABBIT RUN (RURAL / SUBURBAN):** For a little extra flavor or if the players are actively trying to avoid major roads, have them accidentally cross paths with some wild dogs or wolves. The players don't necessarily need to be put in any danger, the Storyteller could just begin the tale with one particular character stuck with a few dogs (They don't even have to be particularly big, just numerous) barking endlessly at them while they are trapped:

  - Up a tree

  - In an abandoned house

  - In an abandoned car

  - On top of something tall

  - Halfway across a river, lake, or pond

- **BREADLINES (URBAN / SUBURBAN):** In the post-apocalypse, a free meal is a free meal! Be it a bread line, a soup kitchen, or a local butcher that cleans the game and hands out the organ meat, what it always holds in common is waiting in line. This could be the perfect opportunity for players to introduce themselves to one another and recognize that the people they just met are more likely to be responsive to whatever crazy scheme one might be planning. You know how sometimes you can just look at someone and tell, those are the types of people the player's characters are.

- **UNEMPLOYMENT (URBAN / SUBURBAN):** Much like the breadlines, if a person doesn't have stable income or is just looking for any opportunity for a better life after the loss of the internet, they will likely find themselves checking in with a local job board, recruitment center, or unemployment office. These places also tend to form lines, and there's no longer any real reason to stare at ones phone and pretend that you're busy

- **OPEN MARKET (ALL):** Again, everyone has to sell their salvage somewhere and flea-market style, open air shopping centers are the place to do it. These are also the kinds of places where people market their skills for the future, and may place help wanted posters, personal bounties, or anything in between. Factor in that the characters tend to stand out, at least more so than the usual "just trying to survive" types, and it could easily be a place that all parties find themselves in between adventures

- **PHONE REPAIR (ALL):** Another easy sell for places people will inevitably run into each other is small phone repair locations. With the rise of the crypto accounts, it only makes sense to keep a phone. If only for the opportunity to be paid in something other (and lighter), than salvage. Screens crack all the time even today, imagine how often it could happen if you frequently find yourself in places without ample lighting once the sun sets!

- **SHARED SPACE (ALL):** Squatting and homelessness in the Cities and Suburbs is basically standard fare, so anyone who has spent any significant amount of time in an area is likely to learn where they can go should their preferred location reach full capacity (or any other reason). Even in the deepest reaches of the Outlands there are locations that function like common area Campgrounds or Hostels so that travelers can exchange with one another and pay a small fee in order to have a "safe" place to sleep. Usually the host makes their living simply by maintaining their reputation and keeping the peace

- **SCAVENGERS (ALL):** Almost everyone has to scavenge since production and freight has been at a standstill for nearly a decade. Even in the areas where the idea is that they have already been all but picked clean, there is always a little something left to find if one knows HOW to look. Simple everyday things are enough of a universal problem that may cause players to run into one another. Need to replace your shoelaces or find something to repair the soles cause they are starting to look more like flip flops. Need to find something that can be used as antiseptic or de-greaser. Need to try to find something to use as a flat-head screwdriver. Need to find a way to keep a jacket closed cause it's freezing and the zipper broke. One player meets the other, they decide to help each other, then the two of them run into a third who is looking for something completely different

- **GAMBLERS (URBAN / SUBURBAN):** Games of all sorts have been critical for people to maintain morale during times of crisis since the beginning of human history. The post apocalypse should be no different. It's a simple enough way to maintain hope, and possibly score ones next meal. More than that though, they almost always possess a certain level of invitation whenever the stakes aren't particularly high due to their inherently competitive nature. "Yea, sure. Ill be happy to take your money"

- **LOST SOULS (ALL):** In these hard times, even the non-believers may begin to question their faith. If nothing else they are usually quiet, and no matter how far one's beliefs might vary from the next they could simply find themselves wandering into an old church, if only to curse a "false" god. No matter one's opinions on the matter, it is simply accepted that these locations are to be recognized as a place of solace and peace, which might be enough reason to walk through the doors, especially given the hardships of the outside world

- **CAMPFIRE STORIES (RURAL):** This one is definitely geared more towards rural environments, but the premise is simple. If a person hasn't encountered anyone for days and days, has already endured sleeping rough for several nights and is growing particularly keen to the surrounding dangers, and then suddenly spots a campfire, there is just a certain appeal to no longer being "alone in the dark". Its an age old premise, but the logic is sound. "Hey, I can see you, which means others can see you. We are here now, and because there is no trust between us, you will keep an eye on me and I will keep an eye on you. Neither of us are going to rest, but when day breaks, we both will know we have inadvertently watched each others backs successfully". It's a strange encounter, certainly, but assuming there is even an ounce of shared reasoning it can serve as a decent segway to building trust eventually. Words are funny that way

DEMOGRAPHIC INFO		PHYSICAL TRAITS			
NAME		MEMORY		STRENGTH	
BACKGROUND (HISTORY)		LOGIC		ENDURANCE	
REGION		PERCEPTION		AGILITY	
ETHNICITY		CHARISMA		BEAUTY	
HAIRSTYLE		WILLPOWER		SPEED	
FACIAL HAIR		DERIVED ATTRIBUTES			
HAIR COLOR		EYE COLOR		SEQUENCE		ACTIONS	
AGE		SEX		OFF HAND		DODGE	

SOCIAL / INFRA. SKILLS			COMBAT SKILLS		
PERSUASION		DECEPTION		UNARMED		THROWN	
GAMES				GRAPPLE		ARCHERY	
				SHORT W		PISTOLS	
				LONG W		RIFLES	
				TWO HAND		BURST-FIRE	
				CHAIN			
				SHIELD			

SCIENCE SKILLS			MEDICAL SKILLS		
				INJURY		ILLNESS	

NATURE SKILLS			COVERT SKILLS		
SCAVENGE		FORAGE		SNEAK		CONCEAL	
NAVIGATION							

CRAFTSMAN SKILL(S)			CONSTRUCTION SKILL(S)		

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS			TRANSPORTATION SKILLS		

RANDOM HIT CHART

ROLL	FRONT	BACK
01 – 03	Neck [...]	Neck [...]
04 – 07	Face	Head
08 – 15	Head	Head
16 – 20	Groin [Arteries]	Rear
21 – 30	Stomach [Organs]	Lower Back [Organs]
31	Left Ribs [Heart]	Left Ribs [Heart]
32 – 35	Left Ribs [Lungs]	Left Ribs [Lungs]
36 – 40	Right Ribs [Lungs]	Right Ribs [Lungs]
41 – 42	Inner Left Shoulder [Arteries]	Inner Left Shoulder [Arteries]
43 – 45	Outer Left Shoulder	Outer Left Shoulder
46 – 47	Inner Right Shoulder [Arteries]	Inner Right Shoulder [Arteries]
48 –50	Outer Right Shoulder	Outer Right Shoulder
51 – 52	Inner Left Thigh [Arteries]	Inner Left Thigh [Arteries]
53	Left Thigh [Bone]	Left Thigh [Bone]
54 – 55	Outer Left Thigh	Outer Left Thigh
56 – 57	Inner Right Thigh [Arteries]	Inner Right Thigh [Arteries]
58	Right Thigh [Bone]	Right Thigh [Bone]
59 – 60	Outer Right Thigh	Outer Right Thigh
61 – 62	Inner Left Bicep	Inner Left Bicep
63	Left Bicep [Bone]	Left Bicep [Bone]
64 – 65	Outer Left Bicep	Outer Left Bicep
66 – 67	Inner Right Bicep	Inner Right Bicep
68	Right Bicep [Bone]	Right Bicep [Bone]
69 – 70	Outer Right Bicep	Outer Right Bicep
71 -- 75	Left Forearm	Left Forearm
76 – 80	Right Forearm	Right Forearm
81 – 86	Left Shin	Left Shin
87 – 92	Right Shin	Right Shin
93 – 94	Left Hand	Left Hand
95 – 96	Right Hand	Right Hand
97 – 98	Left Foot	Left Foot
99 – 100	Right Foot	Right Foot

EARNING EXPERIENCE

EVENT	DESCRIPTION	REWARD
CRITICAL SKILL USE	Successfully performing a Skill Check that either directly advances the Plot of the Story or saves a characters life (including their own)	**500**
MAJOR SKILL USE	Successfully performing a Skill Check that grants a significant advantage or opportunity to advance the plot	**250**
DIRECT (RISKY) SKILL USE	Successfully performing a Skill Check that grants a small advantage or opportunity to the player. This also includes effective Combat Maneuvers!	**100**
MINOR SKILL USE	Successfully performing a Skill Check that is neither mission critical nor time sensitive	**50**
DEFEATING DANGEROUS OPPOSITION	Eliminating a major threat that is a combination of better trained, better equipped, or proves themselves highly capable. This is not limited to Combat!	**1000**
DEFEATING SUPERIOR OPPOSITION	Eliminating a significant threat that is either better trained, better equipped, or highly capable but not all three. Also not limited to Combat. Storytellers, it is important to note that as a character becomes more capable, the gap between Dangerous Opposition and Trivial Opposition will grow ever tighter. IE: A highly capable character will be more likely to encounter Inferior Opposition than Superior Opposition	**750**
DEFEATING "EQUAL" OPPOSITION	Eliminating a threat that could be considered relatively "equal" to the characters own prowess or ability. Again not limited to combat!	**500**
DEFEATING INFERIOR OPPOSITION	Eliminating a threat that is clearly inferior to the character, but still poses a significant threat. As usual, this is not limited to Combat alone	**250**
DEFEATING TRIVIAL OPPOSITION	Eliminating a threat that doesn't pose a serious risk, but is more just in the way of the characters goals. Not limited to Combat	**100**
ADVANCING THE STORY OR PLOT	Anything that moves the plot line forward. Intended to include accomplishing major milestones for the story	**STORYTELLERS CHOICE**
GOOD JUDGEMENT OR IDEA	A reward for putting considerable thought or effort in solving problems that the character may face	**STORYTELLERS CHOICE**
BRAVERY, COURAGE, OR HEROISM	Performing risky behavior for the good of others or self, successful or not	**STORYTELLERS CHOICE**
ENTERTAINING THE PLAYERS	A reward for keeping the other players happy and engaged. Usually the "Comedians" reward	**STORYTELLERS CHOICE**

RATING	RANGE	COST
ATTRIBUTES	Less than 5	**5000**
	Between 5 and 15	**2500**
	Between 16 and 20 (20 is the Maximum)	**5000**
STANDARD SKILLS	Less than 25	**250**
	Between 25 and 74	**100**
	Between 75 and 100	**250**
	Between 101 and 124	**500**
	Between 125 and 150 (150 is Maximum)	**750**
ADVANCED SKILLS	Less than 25	**500**
	Between 25 and 74	**250**
	Between 75 and 100	**500**
	Between 101 and 124	**1000**
	Between 125 and 150 (150 is Maximum)	**1500**
FOCUS SKILLS	Less than 10	**200**
	Between 10 and 19	**100**
	Between 20 and 29	**50**
	Between 30 and 39	**100**
	Between 40 and 50 (50 is Maximum)	**200**
DODGE	Less than 10	**100**
	Between 10 and 19	**200**
	Between 20 and 29	**500**
	Between 30 and 39	**1000**
	Between 40 and 50 (50 is Maximum)	**1500**
OFF HAND	Less than -51	**100**
	Between -50 and 41	**200**
	Between -40 and -31	**400**
	Between -30 and -21	**500**
	Between -20 and -11	**1000**
	Between -10 and 0 (Zero equals "Ambidextrous" and the Off Hand no longer suffers any penalty)	**1500**

ROLL	ASSESSMENT	ACTIONS	SKILL	ATTR	CLASS
01 - 10	SMART, FAST, AND CAPABLE	8	125 CUNNING	20 - D10 (Divide 2D10 Roll by 2) ~14	DANGEROUS OPPOSITION
11 - 20	SMART & FAST	8	85 CUNNING	20 - 2D10 ~10 - 12	SUPERIOR OPPOSITION
21 - 30	FAST & CAPABLE	8	125	20 - D10 (Divide 2D10 Roll by 2) ~14	SUPERIOR OPPOSITION
31 - 40	SMART & CAPABLE	6	125 CUNNING	20 - D10 (Divide 2D10 Roll by 2) ~14	SUPERIOR OPPOSITION
41 - 50	ABOVE AVERAGE	6	100	2D10 ~12	"EQUAL" OPPOSITION
51 - 60	AVERAGE	5	100	2D10 ~10 - 12	"EQUAL" OPPOSITION
61 - 70	BELOW AVERAGE	4	85	2D10 ~8 - 10	INFERIOR OPPOSITION
71 - 80	SLOW BUT SMART	4	85 CUNNING	2D10 - 2 ~8 - 10	"EQUAL" OPPOSITION
81 - 90	SLOW BUT CAPABLE	4	100	20 - D10 (Divide 2D10 Roll by 2) ~12 - 14	INFERIOR OPPOSITION
91 - 100	INEPT	3	85	~6 - 8	TRIVIAL OPPOSITION

• CUNNING: means that the Storyteller should "Actively" try to both harm and outsmart the Players as much as possible (as if they were Playing themselves). Bottom line is that "Cunning" enemies are dangerous whereas others are relatively predictable