

## With apologies—and thanks!—to “Weird Al” Yankovic

It's Christmas Eve in the present *Deadlands: Hell on Earth* timeline. The Pryor family was more prepared for the apocalypse than most. Dad read the signs and built a Grade A bomb shelter in the backyard. Even better, the Pryor's home town didn't get any direct hits and has become something of a well-kept secret haven in the Wasted West.

Dad, Mom, and the kids (now in their late teens), continue to live in the shelter but occasionally venture out into the town to trade for additional supplies.

Who are the player characters? Use the *Savage Worlds* rules to make the Pryor family—Dad, Mom, and any combination of Brother, Sister, Uncle, Aunt, or friend as you see fit. It's best if the “kids” are teens with the Youth Hindrance (born after the bombs fell, of course), but it's not critical to the adventure either way. Adults might carry a single pistol with one load of ammo, but the town is generally safe and most folks don't go around armed. (But that will change soon!)

Where exactly does this take place? Why, that's up to you, Marshal, but we recommend using your real life hometown. If you don't have a mall, it can be any area where people gather—a sporting event, Christmas celebration, or even Holiday on Ice. Whatever floats your boat. The event itself isn't important to the story, only that all the characters are there when it begins. And it begins... now.

## CHRISTMAS SCAVENGING

Things have been safe enough lately that the Pryors decided to venture out into the local bazaar and trade for Christmas presents. Mom and Dad even put the old plastic Santa Claus and reindeer on the roof of their home (though they mostly live in the shelter in the back yard).

It's early evening at the bazaar. Traders haggle, the local church serves up hot chocolate, and there are even carolers! There's the slightest feeling that maybe things will be okay again.

But then...the town's remaining two police cars scream past, sirens blaring. Dad turns on his portable radio and hears the following: “... unexploded ghost rock bomb has been detected on the edge of town. Crews are in the process of disarming, but urge everyone to get to their shelters. THIS IS NOT A TEST.”

## NO MORE TIME FOR LAST MINUTE SHOPPING

The Pryors get to their car just as thousands of others do the same. Dad starts the engine and aggressively moves into traffic only to quickly become stuck in the panicked jam. Horns blare, people yell, and then suddenly all goes silent.

A heartbeat later, a massive ghost rock bomb detonates on the horizon, lighting up the cloudy evening sky in a wash of brilliant jade. The blast shoots up into a glowing green mushroom cloud, then a massive, skull-like face forms in its crown. A long moment later, ragged lines materialize in the column, forming sinister teeth to complete the grim and incomprehensible visage.

The “shroom” causes the crowd to go dead silent...then a massive wave of roaring energy and screeching spirits washes over the dumbfounded crowd.

Have everyone make Vigor rolls, but don't tell them what for just yet. We'll tell you why under **New Mutations**, below, Marshal.

Most of the electronically-controlled cars are now dead from the electromagnetic blast. The only way home—and to the bomb shelter—is on foot, a journey of seven miles! Dad leads the way...

## THERE'S PANIC IN THE CROWD

Thousands of people flee the bazaar, running from the blast and back into the suburbs or one of the few public shelters at the local high schools. Some scream for loved ones lost in the clouds, and scream bloody murder when ghostly cackling figures swoop out of the green cloud and drag them off into oblivion.

The Pryors must race home to their bomb shelter as fast as they can. Dad reminds everyone that their neighbors might try to beat them to it and claim it as their own, so there's no time to lose!

The Pryors see scenes of pure weirdness as they race home. They can get involved in these if they want, but doing so delays them and adds to the possibility that other survivors will try to break into their shelter.

As the family makes their way home, the “Doomsday Counter” starts at 0. Some of the various situations they find themselves in may add or subtract from it—we'll show you what to do with it in the finale.

Run at least five encounters on the way home. Feel free to add your own ideas as well, Marshal!

- An elderly man sits on his balcony swing. Beside him is what can only be described as the green, glowing ghost of an old lady. The older man smiles and waves at the family as they pass. Then the spirit reveals a terrible toothy grin and jumps on the man, devouring him in a horrid spray of blood!





- A little boy wanders in the street, over-bundled in warm clothes. "Mommy?" he shouts. The group can take him with them or spend time finding mommy. If the latter, add +1d6 to the Doomsday Counter.
- A dead man sits behind the wheel of a racing 18-wheeler. It smashes into a line of cars and then into the glass windows of a local shop, leaving dozens of dead and wounded in its path. The heroes can race to help but if they do, add +d4 to the Doomsday Counter. After a few rounds of lending aid, the truck explodes, knocking them backward for Fatigue from Bumps & Bruises and killing all those they were trying to help.
- More explosions sound in the distance. A moment later, debris suddenly rains from the sky. Have everyone make an Agility roll at -2. Those who fail suffer Fatigue from Bumps & Bruises.
- Some in the crowd turn violent. An armed band starts rounding up everyone they see and demands their goods. There are three Raiders (see *Hell on Earth Reloaded*). Two are armed with .38 pistols and one with a shotgun. They're cowardly, and run if confronted with real trouble. Add +d6 to the Doomsday Counter if the Pryors save the crowd from getting robbed.

## YOU MIGHT HEAR SOME REINDEER ON YOUR ROOFTOP

The Pryor family finally gets to their house. The power is still on here and the Christmas lights illuminate the windows and doors. The life-size plastic "Santa and his Reindeer" still shines merrily from the rooftop, so far unphased by the growing storm.

As the family moves toward the back yard to the shed that hides their shelter, they hear a commotion on the rooftop. It's hard to see through the storm (and possibly snow, depending on where this takes place). Let them make Notice rolls to listen over the howling winds. Those who succeed hear clapping sounds—lots of them!

A moment later, they see a red light coming toward them through the blinding winds... followed by their string of plastic reindeer, whinnying with murderous intent! There's no sign of Old Saint Nick himself, but the reindeer's faces are twisted with razor-sharp buckteeth and weirdly illuminated eyes! The light bulbs inside are still lit even though they've ripped free of the electrical cord! They haven't ripped free of the cords binding each other though, and can only venture a few feet from their spot in the line (Rudolph in front, then Dasher and Dancer, Prancer and Vixen, Comet and Cupid, then Donner and Blitzen).

## ANIMATED PLASTIC REINDEER (9)

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

### Special Abilities

- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Bound:** The reindeer are tied together with electric cord and must stay in line. A deer can spend a round biting itself free if it wants—the cord is Toughness 7.
- **Rudolph's Red Nose:** When the reindeer are dealt a Face Card or higher, Rudolph uses his turn to flare his bright red nose. Everyone within 10 yards must make a Smarts roll at -2 or be Shaken.

## THE NEIGHBORS

A group of neighbors was indeed waiting for the Pryors to get home. They were hiding in the family's large shed—where the locked shelter door is concealed—waiting in ambush, but a pack of murderous manitous found them first! They killed everyone in the shed and raised them as walking dead! The number of zombies is equal to ten plus the Doomsday Counter tally from the previous scene.

The horde's appearance depends on whether you're feeling naughty or nice, Marshal. If things are going well for the Pryors, half the zombies burst forth from the shed's doors and windows in the second round of the fight with the reindeer. The other half join the fight in the third round. If the Pryors are having a tough time, the undead neighbors trickle out more slowly (d4 per round).

The Pryors are caught between the zombies and the reindeer and must somehow fight their way to the shed and the bomb shelter entrance hidden inside. Feel free to herd them harder if they try to flee the situation—manitous like those that killed the neighbors prowl the suburbs looking for most souls to take.

- **Walkin' Dead (10+ the Doomsday Counter):** Use the Walkin' Dead from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

## NEW MUTATIONS ON NEW YEAR'S DAY

The surviving members of the Pryor family make it into the shelter and shut the door.

The Epilogue takes place on New Year's Day, perhaps after most everyone's wounds have healed. The Pryors wake up on January 1st to see the family has changed. Anyone who failed the Vigor test from the beginning of the scenario (when the bomb exploded) rolls on the Mutation Table from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

Merry Christmas, wasters!



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