

THE WALKING DECK

A SPLIT-SECOND STORY GAME FOR MANY PLAYERS

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SET UP: Shuffle a regular deck of cards, no jokers. Set a timer on a phone for 17 minutes. The first time this timer runs is Act One. The second is Act Two, the third Act Three. Set a timer on another phone with a different sound, for a time based on the number of players: 2 – 12 mins, 3 – 8 mins, 4+ 6 mins. You can play with as many players as you can fit around a table.

Make sure the alarms can be heard and easily restarted but the countdowns **cannot be seen**.

Everyone draws a card to find their character. Keep that card in front of you, out of play.

A	The child, full of hope
2	The lover, of another character
3	The teacher, building hope
4	The doctor, helping others
5	The soldier, armed and ready
6	The scientist, who knows
7	The celebrity, loved by all
8	The pariah, hated or feared
9	The leader, important to society
10	The millionaire, powerful and rich
J	The artist, who can tell the story
Q	The everyday person, unremarkable
K	The criminal, armed and dangerous



Note: it doesn't have to be zombies. It could be snakes on a plane or a towering inferno or anything you like, as long as it is an ever-present, relentless force.

The last player to watch or read something with zombies goes first.

PLAY: Each player takes turns clockwise around the table. On their turn, they draw a card and place it face down in the middle of the table. If it matches the value of another player's character card, describe what their character does, based on the suit drawn.

Hearts	They put themselves at risk to help others
Diamonds	They are saved or protected by someone else
Clubs	They cause violence and tragedy by accident
Spades	They deliver violence and tragedy deliberately

No limits, except that character cannot die. If it is not one of the other characters, describe something about the zombies and what's going on, or about *your* character. In Act One, say something about **the past**, where the zombies might come from and how you got here. In Act Two, say something about **the future**, a plan to escape or defeat the zombies. In Act Three, say something about **the present**, how the world is reacting to the zombies and becoming worse. It can be dialogue your character says or a fact of the story. **Use the tables on the next page for ideas.** When you've finished describing, pass the deck to the next player. Don't talk too long.

Every time either timer goes off, the zombies surge and danger and death is prominent. If you are holding the deck, you die and become a zombie or other kind of threat. Use the most recent scene to decide how. From now on, when your card comes up you describe aggression towards the characters and things getting worse. If you were already a zombie, simply describe the surge. Either way, pass the deck. If the deck ever runs out, shuffle it and keep going. Don't stop the timers.

If everyone dies, you all lose. When the very last timer goes off at the end of Act Three, if a living character is holding the deck, they and any other survivors make it through the film. If a zombie is holding the deck, you all die in an ever-growing tide.

Movie Hook, draw twice:

Talk About:

A	Fast zombies	...on a plane
2	Slow zombies	...on a boat
3	Shapeshifters	...in an elevator
4	Small animals	...in a high-rise
5	Big animals	...on a train
6	Plants/spores	...in an old house
7	Insects	...in a store
8	Kaiju	...in a hospital
9	Troops	...across the city
10	Disease	...in the woods
J	Natural Disaster	...in a lab
Q	Freak Accident	...in a bunker
K	Demons	...in a spaceship

Hearts	Who I am
Diamonds	What I need
Clubs	What I hide
Spades	What I'm doing

I'm Expressing:

Hearts	Denial
Diamonds	Anger
Clubs	Depression
Spades	Bargaining

Something happens:

	Act One/Hearts	Act Two/Diamonds	Act Three/Clubs	Any Time/Spades
A	Smoke	Explosions	Ashes	Fire
2	Sirens	Alarms	Bells	Silence
3	Gash	Gouge	Guts	Gorge
4	Corpse	Murder	Execution	Judgement
5	Shatter	Collapse	Ruin	Falling
6	Flight	Fight	Freeze	Fawn
7	Pray to God	Fear God	Become God	Oh God
8	Noone	Everyone	Someone	Loved One
9	Screaming	Yelling	Weeping	Whispering
10	Guns	Germs	Steel	Bone
J	Heaven	Hell	Purgatory	Revelation
Q	Death	Dying	Rebirth	Age
K	Liberty	Equality	Fraternity	Parody

Establish something:

	We Need/Hearts	We Have/Diamonds	We Can't/Clubs	We Mustn't/Spades
A	Medicine	A Gun	Breathe	Be Heard
2	Bandages	A Knife	Swim	Trust Them
3	Information	A Baby	See	Say That
4	Bullets	A Rope	Leave	Be Seen
5	Food	A Moment	Reach	Be Left Behind
6	Water	A Promise	Fit	Be Too Late
7	Drugs	A Pile of Money	Open	Bleed
8	Rest	A Cellphone	Hear	Get Hurt
9	Petrol	A Distraction	Carry	Be Exposed
10	Transport	A Rare Skill	Stop	Expect Help
J	Teamwork	A Crowbar	Find	Follow Them
Q	Normality	A Bible	Close	Become Monsters
K	Order	A Contact	Control	Give In