CREATING A CHILD-THING

To create your child-thing, choose name, look, stats, moves, gear, den, wolves, and Hx.

NAME

Nif, Scab, Spot, Poka, Hey, Jarb, Oler, Koo, Bist, Eefa, Tat.

STATS

Choose one set:
- Cool-1 Hard=0 Hot-1 Sharp+2 Weird+2
- Cool=0 Hard-1 Hot+1 Sharp+1 Weird+2
- Cool+1 Hard-1 Hot=0 Sharp+1 Weird+2
- Cool+1 Hard+1 Hot-1 Sharp=0 Weird+2

MOVES

You get all the basic moves. Choose 2 child-thing moves.

You can use all the battle moves, but when you get the chance, look up ***baiting a trap***, ***escaping a hunter***, and ***keeping an eye out***.

GEAR

In addition to your den, detail your personal belongings. You get:
- 2 low tech weapons
- fashion suitable to your look, including at your option a piece worth 1-armor (you detail)
- crap you've picked up worth 1-barter

Low tech weapons (choose 2):
- cutting edge (2-harm hand)
- cudgel (2-harm hand messy)
- thrown stone (2-harm hand)
- chopper (2-harm hand messy)
- boomerang (2-harm hand slow)
- spear (2-harm hand)

IMPROVEMENT

Whenever you roll a highlighted stat, and whenever you reset your Hx with someone, mark an experience circle. When you mark the 5th, improve and erase.

Each time you improve, choose one of the options. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

LOOK

Boy, girl, ambiguous, or concealed.

Scrounge wear.

Pretty face, misshapen face, eerie face, innocent face, inhuman face, or funny face.

Pale eyes, black eyes, wrong eyes, clear eyes, wise eyes, cruel eyes, or bright eyes.

Child's body.

HX

Everyone introduces their characters by name, look, and outlook. Take your turn.

List the other characters' names.

Go around again for Hx. On your turn, ask each other character in turn:
- *Are you a wolf of the maelstrom?*

If they say yes, tell them what they look like under their disguise, and write Hx-2.

If they say no, write Hx-1.

If they say anything else—that they don't know, that they'd rather not say, anything—write Hx+1 and keep your eye on them.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

At the end, find the character with the highest Hx on your sheet. Ask that player which of your stats is most interesting, and highlight it. The MC will have you highlight a second stat too.

Introducing

THE CHILD-THING

We are coming. We are the future. We are what you made.

a character playbook for

APOCALYPSE WORLD

CHILD-THING

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BARTER

At the beginning of the session, spend 1- or 2-barter for your lifestyle. If you can't or won't, tell the MC and answer her questions.

If you need jingle during a session, tell the MC you'd like to work a gig. Your gigs:
- *Scavenge and sneak-rob from a wealthy population.*
- *Serve a wealthy NPC as a messenger.*
- *Serve a wealthy NPC as a lookout, spy, and peeper.*
- *Others, as you negotiate them.*

As a one-time expenditure, and very subject to availability, 1-barter might count for: *any weapon, gear or fashion not valuable or hi-tech; repair of a piece of hi-tech gear; a session's hire of a violent individual as bodyguard; the material costs for crash resuscitation by a medic; a few sessions' tribute to a warlord; a few sessions' maintenance and repairs for a hi-performance vehicle well-used; bribes, fees and gifts sufficient to get you into almost anyone's presence.*

For better stuff, you should expect to make particular arrangements. You can't just wander around the commons of some hardhold with oddments ajangle and expect to find hi-tech or luxe eternal.

THE

CHILD-THING

NAME -

YOUR DEN

You have a den, a secret(ish), secure(ish) place you can live and hide in. In it, you have (choose 3):

- ○ *The gutted shell of a Cessna, Piper, Cirrus, or some other single-engine plane.*
- ○ *Hundreds of dead smart phones, cemented as tiling into the walls.*
- ○ *Crooked, labyrinthine, interconnected tunnels and boltways.*
- ○ *A calendar, perfectly preserved, showing beautiful people in beautiful places.*
- ○ *An unexploded artillery shell. It is (circle 1): live, not live, who knows.*
- ○ *A carefully-kept stockpile of canned and shelf-stable food, worth 5-barter in sum:* ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- ○ *A radio that still works, hand-cranked, if anyone's broadcasting.*
- ○ *A radio that speaks only to you.*
- ○ *A pipe that drips clean water into a polished basin.*
- ○ *Some uncertain number of your siblings and kind, no two alike.*
- ○ *A way into ancient underground vaults, cavernous, echoing, and endless*
- ○ *A way into a terrifying place of death, where countless skeletons lie.*
- ○ *A way into an alien place of unscratched glass, shifting luminosity, and symbols of unguessed meaning.*
- ○ *Ways into basically everyone's spaces, even if they've taken pains to close them off.*

THE WOLVES OF THE MAELSTROM

The maelstrom's wolves are hunting you.

Under their disguises, they look like (choose 1):

○ *people* ○ *birds* ○ *beasts* ○ *insects*
○ *angels* ○ *shadows* ○ *machines*

But (choose 2):

○ *they have no faces*
○ *they have human faces*
○ *they have wolves' faces*
○ *they have empty holes for eyes*
○ *they have no expression*
○ *they're dripping gore*
○ *they only howl*
○ *they don't stand on the ground*
○ *they make terrible grinding noises*
○ *they are made of metal and plastic*
○ *they have awful voices*
○ *they come and go impossibly*
○ *they're invisible*

Tell the MC the above, and that they're perversions of birth. She'll know what you mean.

GEAR & BARTER

LOOK

STATS — MOVES

COOL ○ highlight
do something under fire

HARD ○ highlight
go aggro; sucker someone; do battle

HOT ○ highlight
seduce or maniuulate

SHARP ○ highlight
read a sitch; read a person

WEIRD ○ highlight
open your brain

HX

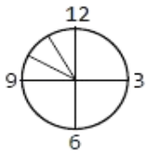
help or interfere; session end

CHILD-THING SPECIAL

In addition to food, you eat bizarre things: metal, people, plastic, minds, electricity, art. At the end of the session, if you've eaten something from this list that belongs or belonged to another player's character, you know them better, and get +1Hx with them. If this brings you to Hx+4, reset to Hx+1 and mark experience as always.

HARM

countdown



○ stabilized

when life becomes unteneable:

○ come back with -1hard
○ come back with +1weird (max+3)
○ change to a new playbook
○ die

IMPROVEMENT

experience ○○○○○ ***>>improve***

__ get +1weird (max weird+3)
__ get +1cool (max cool+2)
__ get +1hard (max hard+2)
__ get a new child-thing move
__ get a new child-thing move
__ get a gang (you detail) and ***pack alpha***
__ get a move from another playbook
__ get a move from another playbook
__ get a move from another playbook
__ get a move from another playbook

__ get +1 to any stat (max stat +3)
__ retire your character (to safety)
__ create a second character to play
__ change your character to a new type
__ choose 3 basic moves and advance them
__ advance the other 3 basic moves

CHILD-THING MOVES

○ ***Mercurial***: whenever you want, change any or all of your looks. Those who know you can still recognize you, but only if they look closely.

○ ***Sniffing the air***: when you read a situation, ask 1 of these questions, in addition to the other questions you ask:

- *Who here is most afraid?*
- *Who here is keeping secrets from the rest?*
- *How close are the wolves?*
- *What or who is the source of the most pain or fear here?*
- *Who here would do what I ask?*

○ ***The mother's heartbeat***: when you withdraw into the world's psychic maelstrom, roll+weird. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7–9, choose 1. You emerge again, about an hour later, and...

- *...Meanwhile, you can still watch and hear what's happening where you were.*
- *...You can re-emerge in a different place altogether.*
- *...You are healed of all harm.*
- *...You can bring someone in and out with you.*

On a miss, you are in the dark and warm, listening to the mother's heartbeat, and many hours pass.

○ ***Feral***: at the beginning of the session, you can choose to spend 0-barter for the equivalent of a 1-barter lifestyle. You can survive happily on whatever you can find.

○ ***Ferocious, snarling, shrieking, biting, and quite possibly rabid***: when you go aggro on someone, roll+weird instead of roll+hard.

OTHER MOVES