

A stylized illustration of Glenn from The Walking Dead, wearing a grey cap and a dark jacket, holding a handgun. The background is a fiery orange and red sky with falling debris.

# BEHIND THE SCENES: DESIGNING GLENN, FROM THE WALKING DEAD - PART 1

WRITTEN BY: TY BERTRAND

\*Glenn's design and concept was created by: Ty Bertrand concept and character edits by the Overpower design team. A special thank you for editing assistance goes to the 'Starcrammers' for saving us with an unreal effort at the finish line\*

## WHAT IS GAME/CHARACTER DESIGN?

How on earth do you take a character, distill them down to what makes them feel like who they're supposed to be, during the time of reference, make their stats represent them, their specials be fun to play and accurate and help them balance the game or be a cool addition we haven't played before?

## SYSTEMS AND WORKFLOWS - WHAT WE DO

Process, research and a team is the answer. While card design can feel like a party and a job that's just fun all the time, it is still a creative process and you can hit creative blocks, feel uninspired or like nothing you're coming up with fits the design you're trying to achieve. Our process has evolved since even I began as a designer and I'm sure by next year, it'll evolve further. Here's a behind the scenes look at how we handle things as a group and how I personally wanted to balance elements from the game and how I achieved what I hope will be a successful design.

- 1) who is Glenn? Aka flavor or if you're a fellow Canuck flavour
- 2) what mechanics represent Glenn and make it feel like you're playing the version we decided to create
- 3) Overall balance. The team uses an algorithm in a spreadsheet that puts the new designs into a system, then applies a relative score. The score comes from relative weights of the strength of other cards within the set, from previous sets and even goes back to legacy then spits out a number that we use to determine if the character has too much relative to their cost. I'll let the creator (Mr Rules himself, Dave M) of the system explain how it works in a later article.
- 4) Finally I personally like to look at what mechanics or designs have been complained about, don't have enough answers, or could become problems if they're not addressed.
- 5) Then we playtest and revise and the rinse and repeat as necessary

The reason for this system is we want to give you all the most diverse and interesting toolbox as we can and never want one strategy to run away as being too good or without options.

## GLENN'S PROFILE:

Glenn is a scavenger, like most of the humans left in the WD universe, he's the heart of the team and the most loyal friend/asset; who will sacrifice for the people he cares about. He devotes himself to Rick and especially Maggie. Combat wise he's a resource engine, a slippery character and always seems to get away with close calls a lot of the time. He's not going to take one on one Omni-Man or battle the Lizard League, but he will sabotage their plans, or steal a key item, or make sure his team has what they need to succeed, even if he needs to steal it from the opposition. Glenn is the friend that wouldn't hesitate to jump on a grenade or take an energy blast for his team or Maggie. He also makes a big impact on the series but no spoilers here...even for the almost decade old series. Google Glenn's legacy if you're curious :)

## THE DESIGN CONCEPT:

Glenn is more a normal guy physically but his super attributes have to do with his heart and grit. The scavenger profile screamed reserve to me and we felt like most of the WD characters would only tackle the horde when they were armed to do so. This is a hint to expect at least a few cards affecting Universe cards. His grid is extremely low at max 5 but this contributes to his low threat cost of 16 while in Reserve, making him an easy choice for any team needing his stolen resources.

At this point we need to consider the meta and game environment and the impact of making a Reserve character. Since most decks contain an 8 character and a Reserve and since there are fewer of these characters than standard designs, it means these characters are going to be overrepresented due to the deckbuilding rules, usually containing one of these subgroups.

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## THE DESIGN CONCEPT - (CONTINUED):

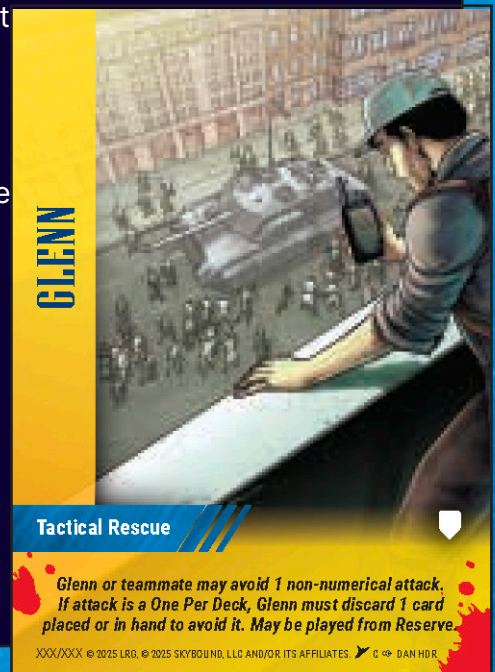
This means that not only will Glenn see more play than average but so will his specials. This is perfect for when there's an issue that I want to address within the game because the solution or counter-play will always see some play and this prevents having to errata.

Keeping this philosophy in mind, we decided the perfect character to beat the Reaper wasn't Battle Beast or the universe's strongest creatures...no, we chose an ordinary human guy in a baseball hat, whose professional credentials are less assassin and more pizza delivery driver. Lesson here is to always tip your driver because you never know when you'll need help dealing with the physical manifestation of death itself!

## THE AVOID - THE ANTI-REAPER:

I wanted a defensive Reserve character because we didn't really have any yet but didn't want to relive the days of the default pics of Spiderwoman or Sable that us older players know too well. We know how strong defensive Reserve cards are so we were very careful about the balance but still needed more counter mechanics for non-numerical, target based attacks. This would reflect Glenn's ability to be sneaky and to get away from crazy situations, mostly unscathed. The design I settled on was "Glenn or teammate may avoid 1 non-numerical attack. If attack is a One Per Deck, Glenn must discard 1 card placed or in hand, to avoid it. May be played from Reserve"

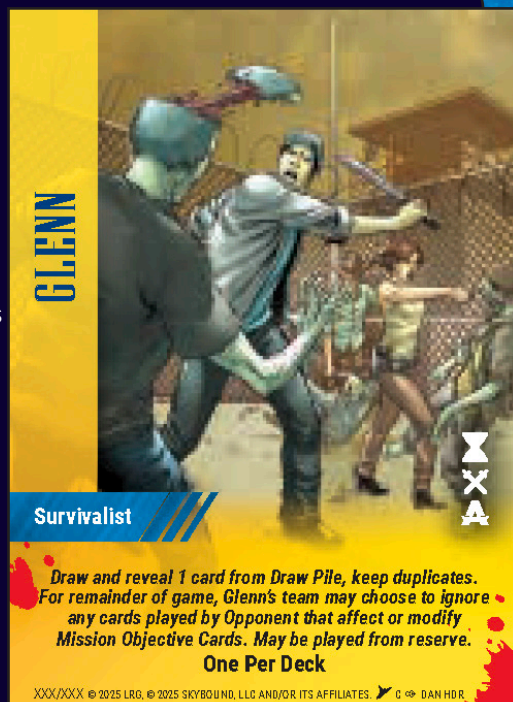
Because he's cheap, you can play as many copies as it takes to never get hit by the Reaper again. Glenn will be there to rescue you each time Death comes knocking. If you want a magic number, mathematically for how to manage player against the Reaper, it's usually 5-6 defensive cards to generally avoid being hit by it in most games. Three of defensive cards from your team, plus your Any-Heroes, should work in most builds.



## SLOW ME DOWN?? I DON'T THINK SO BUB!

For the second card design tease we're giving for Part 1 is a different type of card that we're used to, but one that should be fun and reveal a bit more about our new philosophy. This is a perfect example, of how we can counter mechanics with a whole range of other card designs, rather than the current crutch that is the full negate. I'm not a fan of the general full-negate design and believe they feel necessary only because they were the default way of stopping certain cards in Legacy.

The mechanic given to Glenn is designed to protect from your opponent messing with your Missions and Venture progress. I'm a giant hypocrite because I hate the design of cards that reset Venture and Missions and yet I did play multiples in one of my builds this season. Thanks to Glenn, you can now stop most of the slow down effect and counter players like me! If you don't what card I'm referring to, it's the ones that say, "move all missions back to the middle" which Zeus has. The other less annoying but still affected cards are Zorro's popular 7i attack and the Any-Character that gives both players a free concede, "Hades." These cards have the habit of erasing multiple battles worth of progress. Glenn says no to this! He insists we deal with this battle here and now, not in the Power Pack (especially because he's a Max 5!). Glenn lives in a world where there no luxuries like 'later' because there's a bunch of zombies running around. So whether you wanna call it Zombie PTSD or not Glenn's Missions aren't to be messed with. The opponent still gets some benefit from their card though and still play out their side of it. So if Hades is played, they don't lose any Missions.



## AND FINALLY SOME ART!

That's our part 1 of the Glenn reveal and our behind the scenes. You'll see a fun timeline of the art and card design on the final page too so don't go by too fast!

The reason for this series is that we want all of you to know that we are listening...we love all of the feedback and are hoping to respond to most game mechanics with other counter-mechanics. Sometimes it may take some time to address things with new cards but we strongly believe that's a much better way of handling other strong cards vs banning or hitting characters over and over again with nerf bats...Err, I mean...No pun intended....sorry Glenn! I'm gonna pretend Lucille is made of Nerf and carry on.

Here's some Glen art, from sketch and design concept to final card for you all...Enjoy!  
Most of the Specials were done by the incredible Dan HDR, check out more of this work.

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## ART EVOLUTION

