

Add One Thing Damage Cannot Solve

A quick combat prep printable for making fights feel like scenes, not just hit point math.

Before initiative, place one visible thing in the scene that asks for action other than attacking.

PICK ONE LEVER

RESCUE

Someone is in danger right now.

PROTECT

Something fragile must survive.

INTERRUPT

A ritual, escape, or message is underway.

EXPOSE

A truth is hidden in the battlefield.

AWAKEN

Something old stirs when disturbed.

SEAL

A door, wound, portal, or curse is opening.

ESCAPE

Winning may mean getting out alive.

BARGAIN

Someone can be turned, spared, or bought.

MAKE IT MATTER

1. Make it visible

Put the lever where players can see, hear, or feel it. A ringing bell, cracked bridge, caged witness, glowing altar, panicked horse, or bleeding shrine all invite action.

2. Put it under pressure

Give it a timer, threat, cost, or temptation. It should feel like something will happen if no one touches it.

3. Let it change the aftermath

The choice should leave a mark: a saved ally, lost clue, escaped villain, grateful witness, sealed curse, ruined road, or rumor that follows the party.

QUICK PREP LINES

The thing damage cannot solve is: _____

Players notice it because: _____

If they ignore it: _____

If they act on it: _____

A fight becomes memorable when the players choose what matters besides winning.