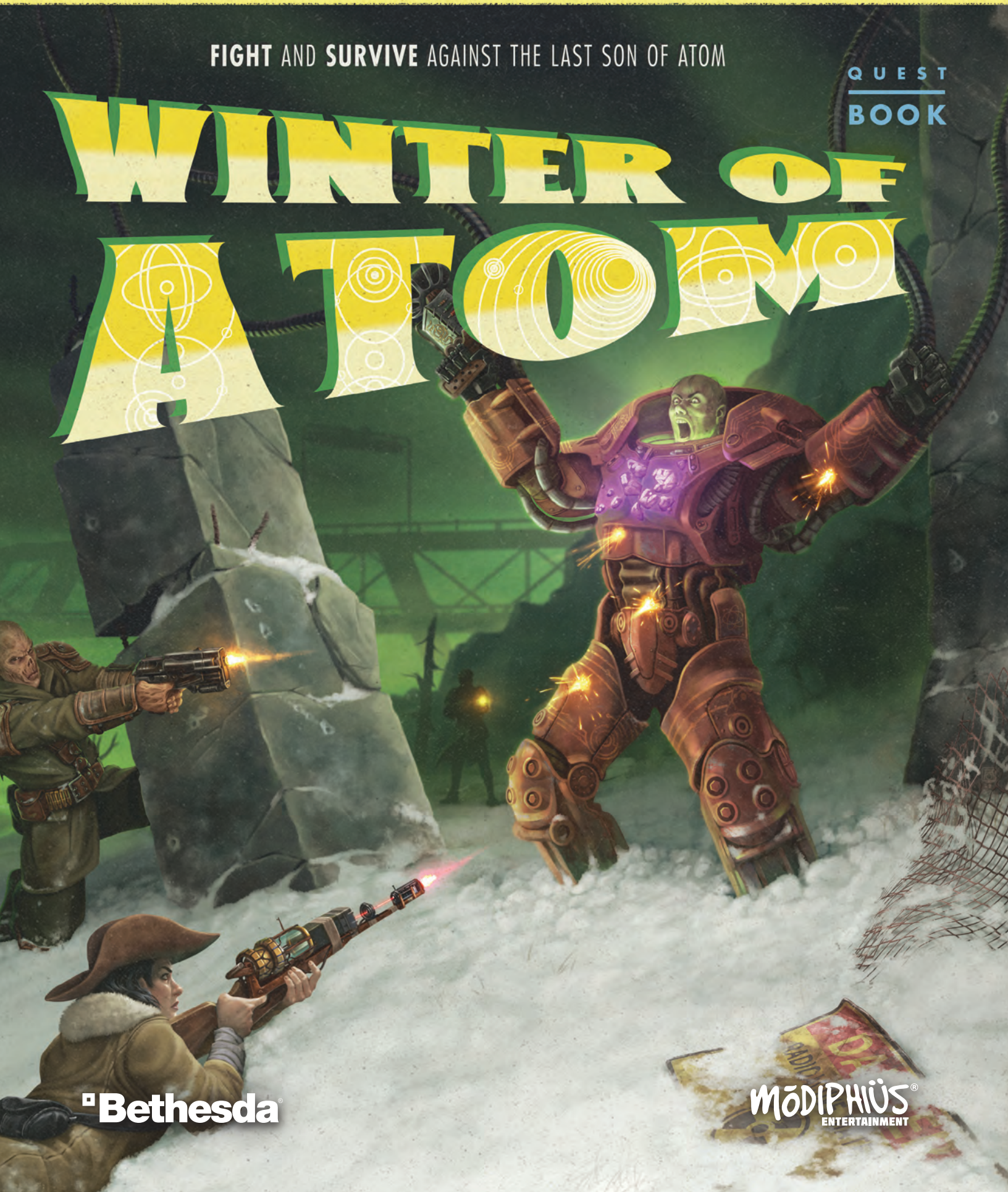
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FIGHT AND SURVIVE AGAINST THE LAST SON OF ATOM

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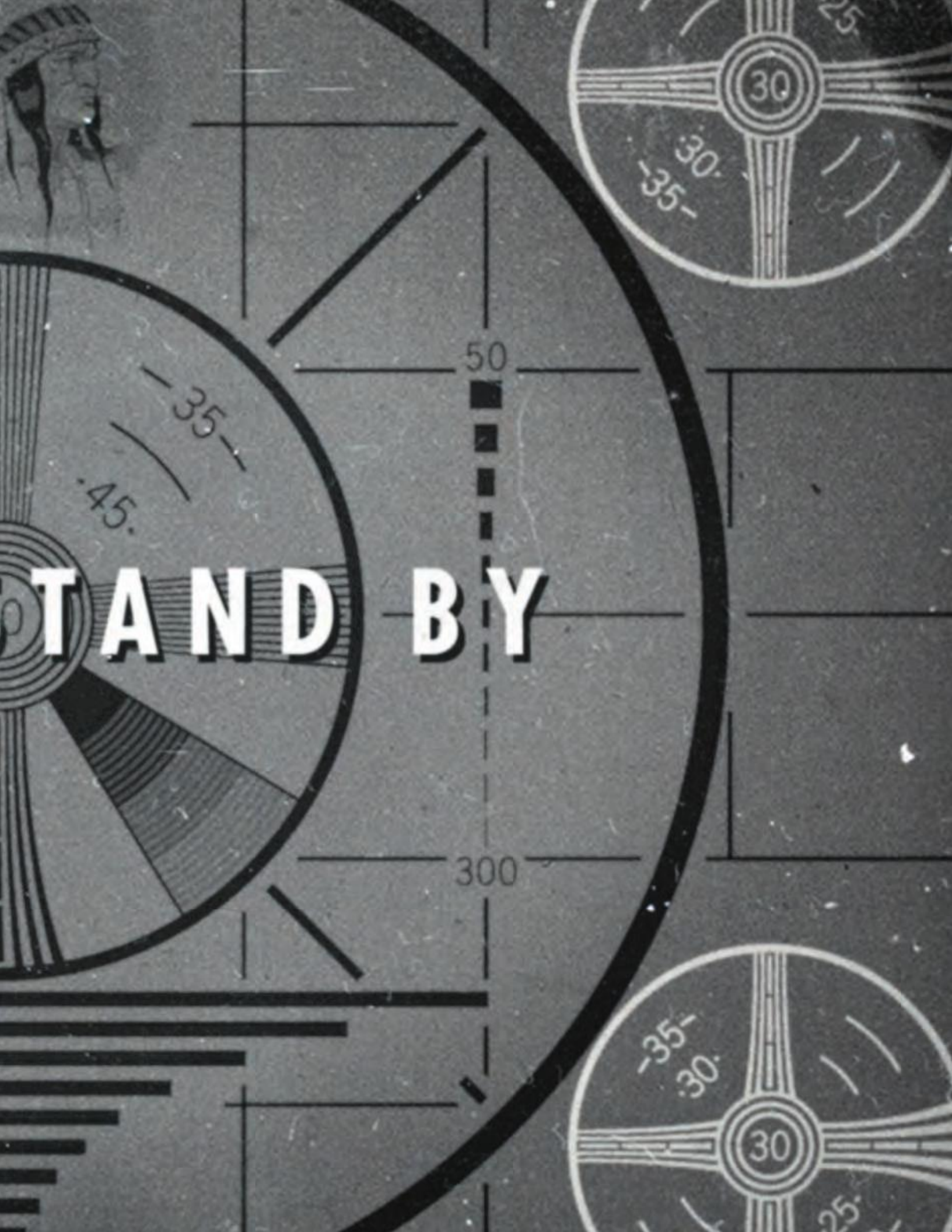
WINTER OF ATOM



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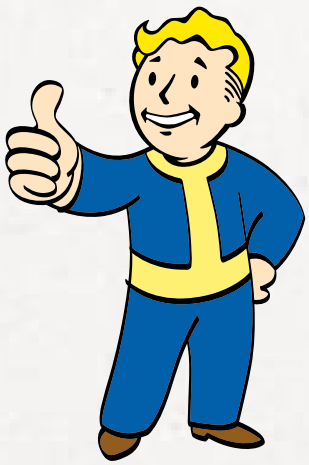
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Introduction

WELCOME TO THE WASTELAND

WAR. WAR NEVER CHANGES

War. War never changes. The United States of America died generations ago when the Great War ended civilization as we knew it. The atomic bombs fell. The radioactive dust settled over sprawling ruins, and the world fell quiet over the bones of all we lost.

But life did not end there. America became the dominion of mutated beasts, terrifying monsters, weird and irradiated plants, wandering robots free from their creators, and surprising new forms of humanity. And the people who survived the nuclear apocalypse did what folks have done for thousands of years—they adapted and survived. They salvaged, rebuilt, and reclaimed what they could of the old world. Over the years, pockets of civilization began to take hold in the wild wastelands across America, fighting with each other for control of what little they had left.

There are many stories of humanity's attempt to cling to life and build a new future amidst the ashes. This book contains one such story, and the ending has yet to be recorded.

In the ruins of old Boston, the Commonwealth settles in for a long, deadly winter. As its hungry communities do their best to find food and survive the cold, a new sect of the Church of the Children of Atom arrives. Their flock grows as they spread their worship of nuclear division and radiation across the region. Led by an enigmatic prophet calling himself the Last Son of Atom, the Church's army plans to ignite an all-out winter war with the settlements that dare reject their Atomic God. A group of ragtag survivors must do whatever it takes to protect their communities and keep the Commonwealth from becoming ground zero… again.

RETURN TO THE COMMONWEALTH

Winter of Atom takes place in the Commonwealth, the same setting as the *Fallout* 4 video game. By default, the locations, characters, and aspects of the Commonwealth in this book take place before the start of the video game, and those events are not impacted by the choices you make in this book.



ABOUT THIS BOOK

Winter of Atom is an action-packed, non-linear sandbox questline for *Fallout*: The Roleplaying Game that can take new level 1 characters to level 17 and higher. This book details the Commonwealth as a setting, focusing on a mix of several canonical locations from *Fallout* 4—and many brand-new settlements and locations. It provides a variety of quests related to the main story of Winter of Atom, with additional lore and information for locations and non-player characters (NPCs) so you can create new quests too. *Fallout*: The Roleplaying Game Core Rule Book, Chapter 8: The Commonwealth offers additional resources, including other canonical locations and settlements.

Major themes of Winter Atom include exploring frozen wastelands, harsh winter survival, building relationships with communities, explosive action against terrifying monsters, high-stakes warfare against a relentless foe, and weird and unexplainable supernatural horrors.

However, the most significant theme of Winter of Atom is the narrative power of choice and consequence. The player characters (PCs) become the protagonists of Winter of Atom. The outcomes of their actions during many quests will have an incredible impact on the settlements and people of the Commonwealth. As an open-ended sandbox story built around a strong main quest, Winter of Atom provides you with all the tools you need to understand and play out a myriad of potential outcomes—and empowers you to imagine your own.

WINTER OF ATOM OVERVIEW

This section provides you with an overview of the contents of each chapter of ***Winter of Atom***. The back of this book contains an index to help you quickly reference helpful information, including rules, settlements, quests, and a large variety of new items and NPC or creature stat blocks.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces you to the ***Winter of Atom*** quest line. It summarizes the book's story and offers guidance on running the quests as written—or remixing elements to use in other settings and quests.

NEW OPTIONS, RULES, AND TOOLS

This chapter presents new player options, rules, and advice on using this book at your gaming table. Tools provided in the chapter include the following:

- New playable character origins for Generation 3 Synths, Protectrons, and Children of Atom
- New winter wasteland rules for terrain, obstacles, hazards, environmental conditions, and cold exposure
- Self-contained, narrative-driven rules for traveling in the Commonwealth, including creating random encounters and scavenging locations
- Rules for building dynamic campsites to survive out in the wild wastes
- Rules to track PCs' reputation with various settlements and partake in downtime tasks
- Rules and advice for allowing PCs to survive defeat or flee when they become overwhelmed
- Guidance on designing balanced combat encounters appropriate for your party's size and level, including new rules for quickly adjusting an encounter's difficulty and creating Minion NPCs

The rules and tools provided in this chapter can be used in any quest for ***Fallout: The Roleplaying Game***.

WELCOME TO THE COMMONWEALTH

This chapter introduces the characters to the Commonwealth setting and major settlements featured in ***Winter of Atom***. It provides details for each settlement, its significant NPCs, and at least one side quest specific to that location. The chapter's three main quests become accessible as the characters grow in level and renown, progressing the main story of ***Winter of Atom***.

Welcome to the Commonwealth is the most open-ended chapter, allowing PCs to explore freely, culminating in a desperate battle for food supplies during an epic mid-quest line finale.

QUEST SUMMARY

During the ***Main Quest: The Train Job***, the PCs arrive with a horde of refugees at the outer gates of Diamond City, only to learn that the settlement is overpopulated and running short on food supplies. To gain entrance, they take a job from the Mayor to investigate a supply train that was robbed outside the Boston ruins and try to recover its stolen food and water. While tracking down the culprits, the PCs meet a Child of Atom who recently arrived in the Commonwealth, searching for a beloved prophet calling himself the Last Son of Atom.

As the characters explore the Commonwealth, get more involved with its people, and complete side quests, the coming winter grows crueler. During ***Main Quest: Cleansing Fire***, an ally approaches them with a lucrative mission—help them establish a safe trade route through an underground sewer so they can help deliver food to needy settlements. When the PCs explore the sewer, they encounter two very different sects of the Church of the Children of Atom and must decide how to deal with them to secure a safe trade route for the nearby communities.

While the Last Son of Atom's followers grow increasingly influential and distrusted across the region, the worst months of winter arrive. During ***Main Quest: A New Eden***, the PCs share a campfire with a brave band of Minutemen who might have secured a new food source from a marooned shipping freighter, the USS *Germination*. Soon it becomes clear that the vessel settlement's leader, Dr. Yarrow, has poisoned the Minutemen and others who ate his ghastly flesh fruit. The strange fruit's effects cause all who eat it to grow very sick from starvation and slowly mutate into something monstrous. In a race against time, the PCs must try to cure the sickness and possibly make the USS *Germination's* massive food source safe for the settlements to eat. To succeed, they must survive a prolonged battle against the ship's mutated mariners—and the Last Son of Atom's soldiers. As they come to claim the freighter and turn it into a fortified stronghold for their growing army.

THE WINTER WAR

This chapter introduces the most terrifying foe the PCs have faced yet—the Gigapede—and details an ongoing war that threatens the entirety of the Commonwealth. It provides a sandbox-style toolset for running a war as a series of battles that significantly impact settlements. The chapter also offers guidance on managing battles in each major settlement and then dealing with the many possible outcomes.

The Winter War is mostly open-ended, allowing PCs to travel freely between its three major battles. After each battle, new side quests become available, giving the group a chance to secure new supplies or allies to turn the tide against the Last Son of Atom's army and the Gigapede. It leads to a bloody battle in the snow that returns peace to the Commonwealth—possibly at great cost.

QUEST SUMMARY

Sometime after experiencing the horrors of the USS *Germination,* the group visits a settlement that comes under siege by the Gigapede, a giant and seemingly invincible mutated centipede led by a small unit of the Last Son of Atom's soldiers. As ***Main Quest: A Thousand Feet of Terror*** begins, PCs fight to defend the settlement and capture one of the Atomite soldiers for questioning. They can learn the location of the next settlement to be attacked by the Atomites, giving them time to travel and prepare for the upcoming battle.

During the second battle against the Gigapede, the group faces a better-trained unit of cultists hellbent on destroying the settlement in the name of their atomic god. During the encounter, PCs learn that the Gigapede's handlers command the siege monster using American Sign Language. In the aftermath, the PCs have only a few days to decide how to prepare for the coming full Atomite invasion. They may rally allies from settlements, scavenge for powerful weapons and armor, or learn enough American Sign Language that they might communicate with the Gigapede themselves.

The chapter culminates with a third and final battle against the Gigapede. The PCs rally their allies to make a final stand against the Last Son of Atom's army in the settlement they care about the most. They become all that stands between the Atomites, the Gigapede, and their home. Should they fail, many of their allies sacrifice their lives to drive back the Atomites. With the promise of a better spring to come, the Commonwealth embraces a hopeful peace and begins to rebuild.

THE DAY OF DIVISION

This chapter allows the PCs to explore a deadly new region—the Glowing Sea. It provides adjusted travel rules and tables for navigating the most irradiated wasteland in the area. The chapter also introduces a new settlement known as the Crater of Atom, wherein the PCs meet a sect of the Church of the Children of Atom who are vehemently opposed to the Last Son of Atom and his cult.

The Day of Division begins open-ended, but the story narrows the closer the PCs get to the conclusion of ***Winter of Atom***. Once the PCs enter the Glowing Sea, they cross a point-of-no-return. When they reach the Crater of Atom, a final selection of new side quests become available. The quest culminates when the group finally confronts the Last Son of Atom, far beneath the haunted ruins of Whately Research Facility. The PCs' final choices promise to forever change themselves and the Commonwealth—for better or worse.

QUEST SUMMARY

As peace returns to the Commonwealth, the Last Son of Atom continues to pursue his true goals beneath Whately Research Facility in the Glowing Sea. He successfully excavates an ancient, buried city that may pre-date known human history. There, he locates the strange relic that has plagued his dreams for years. He calls the crystalline device Atom's Glow and begins to experiment with its mind-altering power—in hopes he can use it to usher in the self-prophesized Day of Division. As he gets closer to his goal of indoctrinating the entire Commonwealth to his beliefs, his experiments begin to drive his remaining followers and the beasts of the Glowing Sea mad.

Meanwhile, after time passes from the previous chapter, the PCs come into contact with a devout worshipper of Atom. Who has been searching the wastes in hopes of delivering a message to the group. During the ***Main Quest: Into the Glowing Sea***, they receive the message sent by Mother Isolde. Isolde is the leader of a sect of the Children of Atom that opposes the Last Son. Isolde claims to know where the cult leader's hidden base of operations is and offers to help the PCs if they travel to her settlement at the Crater of Atom. After preparing for their most arduous journey yet, they trek across the extremely irradiated and monster-infested Glowing Sea. Before they arrive, the PCs must survive a harrowing encounter with Sister Dawn—Isolde's lost daughter, transformed into a gargantuan Glowing One ghoul by the Last Son's experiments.

After the PCs reach the Crater of Atom, they have their last chance to rest in the relative safety of a settlement and learn more about the Church and the Last Son of Atom. It becomes apparent that the settlers are peaceful and want nothing but to make things right in the Commonwealth. However, they fear confronting the violent cult leader themselves. Armed with the knowledge of the Last Son's beliefs and location, the PCs journey across the Glowing Sea in search of the Whately Research Facility.

During the ***Main Quest: The Buried City***, the group explores the ruins of a pre-war chemical weapon research facility. There, they encounter a legendary deathskull radscorpion and the remaining followers

of the Last Son, driven mad by his use of Atom's Glow. As they explore the Whately Research Facility, they encounter unexplainable supernatural phenomena. The PCs learn that the facility's founder and the Last Son's ancestor, General Whately, was also a cult leader who worshipped a cosmic god he believed to be sleeping in an ancient city far beneath the earth.

To confront the Last Son of Atom and end his plans for the Commonwealth, the PCs descend to the excavation site and the buried city. As they do, Atom's Glow causes their minds to become trapped in cycling visions of utopias and nightmares. Those who manage to escape their mental prison must face the Last Son of Atom—and any companions who have fallen under his thrall. When the cult leader explains his true motives and makes them an offer, the PCs must choose to accept his vision for the future, fight him, or flee.

The **Epilogues** section further explores outcomes and their impact on the Commonwealth. The **Future Quests** section presents plot hooks and guidance for developing new, high-level quests to continue the PCs' stories after the end of the atomic winter.

RUNNING WINTER OF ATOM

To run ***Winter of Atom***, you need the **Fallout: The Roleplay Game** to reference the full game rules, player options, and items. You may also find the additional tools from the ***Gamemaster's Toolkit*** useful. Where possible, ***Winter of Atom*** uses self-contained rules and tables for scavenging, travel, and random encounters to make running it more accessible.

NPC stat blocks and new items are provided in the narrative portions of the book when the PCs are most likely to encounter them. This index in the back of the book offers quick references for page numbers to look up specific stat blocks and items.

Winter of Atom is designed for groups of 4–5 players. Some of its encounters might prove quite challenging, often encouraging groups to plan well or find alternate methods of achieving their goals beyond combat. Adjust the number of enemies to suit your quest's needs for smaller or larger groups. Consider reducing the Health Points or damage dealt by Legendary or Major enemies for smaller groups. You can also change the difficulty of group tests in the same way. Refer to *Designing Combat Encounters* (see p.41) for guidance on balancing and adjusting encounters. Remember that in *Fallout*, survival is a success, and running away to fight another day should almost always be an option.

UNDERSTANDING THE LAST SON OF ATOM

The Last Son of Atom is an enigmatic figure who serves as the central antagonist of ***Winter of Atom***. The few people in the Commonwealth who have met him often describe feeling changed and spiritually invigorated by the experience. The Last Son sends his most devout followers to grow his Church, advance his plans, fight his battles, and spread the word of Atom. The mystery surrounding the Last Son only fuels his growing myth as a true prophet of Atom.

While the various sects of the Church of Atom follow similar religious beliefs, they often act on them very differently. The Children living in the Crater of Atom are mostly non-violent and merely wish to worship their god in peace. However, the Last Son's flock is far more militant and dangerous than the others. Their most essential beliefs include the following:

- Within every atom exists an entire universe created by the god Atom. When an atom is split, the universe within divides, creating a new universe.
- Creating a new universe through nuclear fission is a holy act. Events like the Great War or the detonation of a nuclear device are revered for creating numerous new universes.

- Radiation, or Atom's Glow, transforms this world into something better and should be worshipped. Irradiated areas are holy, and removing radiation is a profane act. However, anti-radiation medicine is acceptable as it allows its users to live a longer life in Atom's Glow.
- Dying by natural causes or radiation is a fine death. Dying by nuclear explosion is a truly great death, allowing the Child of Atom to achieve Division and release all the countless worlds within them.
- The Last Son is a great prophet created by Atom to reward the Church for its devotion. His destiny is to lead his flock to the Day of Division. On the Day of Division, Atom's faithful will be able to travel to any of the countless universes and live in eternal happiness. War, violence, and other drastic actions are justified if they bring more people into the flock in preparation for the Day of Division. While the sect's other beliefs are shared amongst all groups of the church, this prophecy is unique. Other sects might see the Last Son's teachings as complete heresy.

The Last Son spends most of ***Winter of Atom*** working beneath Whately Research Facility, a hidden underground pre-War military base in the Glowing Sea. He keeps the facility's location a secret to all but his most trusted followers. The PCs should not uncover the facility or confront the Last Son until *Chapter 4: The Day of Division*. If they encounter him in the Commonwealth before their final confrontation, present the Last Son as charming, helpful, and humble. Should the PCs somehow defeat the Last Son before the final chapter of ***Winter of Atom***, invent a new cult leader to take his place and continue his schemes for the remainder of the quest line.

A summary follows, describing the Last Son of Atom's general activities up to the start of the quest line:

- A former genius geneticist, he joined the Church of Atom while living in the Capital Wasteland. He left his group and began to travel the country after receiving painful nightly visions about a buried city where he believes an object he calls Atom's Glow to be located. He is convinced the object will allow him to bring about the Day of Division.
- He attempted to create a flock once before, but his violent actions caused his followers to either be killed or abandon the cause. He escaped after stealing massive wealth from a large settlement, providing him with resources to grow his church again.
- Shortly before winter began, he and his current flock reached the Crater of Atom and lived with the Atomite sect there for a time. When he learned the location of the Whately Research Facility in the Glowing Sea, he moved to the underground military base.
- He began to excavate deep tunnels far beneath Whately Research Facility, where he believes he will find the ancient city from his visions. At first, he made trips to the Commonwealth settlements to preach to its people and gain new followers. During some of his travels, he struck deals with the leaders of Mirage and the USS *Germination*. Now, he rarely leaves the excavation site.
- While he continues his holy work in the Glowing Sea, his followers continue to spread the cult's influence throughout the Commonwealth. In some communities, the sect uses its resources to help needy settlers prepare for winter. In other locations, the Atomites use coercion and more violent means to gain power.

The Atomites' primary objective is to increase their influence and the size of their flock. The Last Son's secret goal is to finish excavating the buried city beneath Whately Research Facility and discover how to use the strange crystalline device he calls Atom's Glow. Additionally, the Last Son is very interested in genetic engineering and has been experimenting with creating new and dangerous mutated creatures. He plans to ignite a war in the Commonwealth and use his creations as weapons to ensure his Church takes control of the region.

QUEST STRUCTURE

This book's **three narrative chapters**—*Welcome to the Commonwealth, The Winter War,* and *The Day of Division*—begin with several sections to help you prepare to run those quests. Common elements in these chapters include:

- **Running This Chapter** sections give you an overview and specific guidelines to follow before beginning a new chapter.
- **Leveling Up** sections provide detailed guidance on the chapter's difficulty levels and what benchmarks to use when deciding when you allow PCs to level up. This book uses Milestone Progression to reward players for completing quests and achieving significant accomplishments. If you use Experience Points to determine when PCs level up instead, you may need to adjust some encounters' difficulty levels.

Quests contain an introduction and plot hook to help you get started. Other common elements in quest structure include the following:

- **Quest Objectives** detail the key goals the group will likely need to accomplish to complete the quest.
- **Content Warnings and Changing Scenes** sidebars warn you about content that might be uncomfortable for some people. Additionally, the sidebars suggest how to easily modify specific content without disrupting the overall arc of the quest line.
- **Scenes** break up main quests into smaller chunks with their own beginning, middle, and end. Most scenes can be completed in one or two sessions.
- **The *Fallout*** section at the end of every quest presents some of the most likely outcomes of a quest. *The Fallout* offers guidance on how the PCs' actions might impact settlements, their relationships, and future storylines. Since predicting the choices PCs will make during a quest is not always possible, you can also use these sections as a guide to creating quest outcomes that make sense for your story.

Settlements detail their community's important people, significant locations, relationships with other groups, and the current situation at the start of atomic winter. Details on the Crater of Atom settlement can be found in *Chapter 4: The Day of Division*, while all other settlements are explored in-depth in *Chapter 2: Welcome to the Commonwealth.*

Each settlement also features several **settlement variables** that change due to quest outcomes and PCs' actions. Settlement variables include the following:

- **Defenses (0-5):** *None, Very Weak, Somewhat Weak, Moderate, Somewhat Strong,* or *Very Strong.* A settlement's defenses determine how well positioned it is to defend itself from outside threats, whether by geography, armed defenders, or other means. When a settlement's defenses reach 0, its people are utterly helpless against threats.
- **Food Supply (0-5):** *None, Scarce, Limited, Just Enough, Stocked,* or *Very Strong.* Due to winter scarcity, food shortages are the most immediate threat to settlements in ***Winter of Atom***. When a settlement's food supplies reach 0, people disband to move elsewhere or starve.
- **Denizen Outlook (0-5):** *Done, Very Grim, Somewhat Grim, Satisfied, Somewhat Happy,* or *Very Happy*. Food and security do not always make for a happy settlement, and vice-versa. When a settlement's denizen outlook reaches 0, its people might mutiny or abandon the community en masse.
- **Settlement Reputation (0-5):** *Hostile, Cautious, Neutral, Friendly, Trusting,* or *Allied*. Unlike other variables, a settlement's reputation rank relates directly to the community's overall trust and relationship with the PCs as a group. The better their rank, the more support PCs receive from a settlement. When their settlement reputation rank reaches 0, the residents refuse to grant PCs entry or are outright hostile towards them.

Keep track of settlement variables as the quests progress. Their purpose is to help you describe and roleplay constantly changing communities to immerse your players and help them enjoy their characters' impact on the world around them. Settlement variables sometimes change the difficulty of tests or allow for alternate options to advance the story.

SHOPS, LOOT, AND EQUIPMENT UPGRADES

A fun part of the *Fallout* experience is allowing your players to save up caps and scavenge, so they can buy fun equipment or upgrade their weapons. ***Winter of Atom*** does not present shops or merchants in its settlements. You should allow PCs to purchase items and mods available in this book or **Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook*** where you believe it makes sense. Consider the scarcity of winter and the resources of a given merchant or settlement to adjust cost and the rarity of items available—PCs are more likely to find good weapons and armor in Diamond City or Mechminster Abbey, while Goodneighbor might offer them access to a variety of chems at a reasonable price.

If PCs are struggling with the difficulty of encounters, consider creating a side quest or other means for them to gain more caps, improved armor, weapon, and mods before continuing the ***Winter of Atom's*** main quests. You are also encouraged to create short side quests, scavenging locations, and bargains with NPCs to allow characters to resupply on essential items like food, beverages, Stimpaks, and RadAway. Pursuing additional settlement tasks and doing favors for NPCs not covered in *Winter of Atom* might also provide PCs an opportunity to make settlement reputation tests that improve their standing with communities.

Being well equipped can make encounters much easier. Weapons like the *Fat Man* or armor like *Power Armor* can completely change the game's balance. A few general guidelines for appropriate gear include the following:

- Avoid introducing shotguns until characters reach levels 3-5 and have upgraded their armor.
- Armor and armor mods that provide Damage Resistances of 2-3 are appropriate for most level 2-4 characters.
- Armor and armor mods that provide Damage Resistance 4-5 are appropriate for most level 5-9 Human characters.
- Armor and armor mods that provide Damage Resistance 6-7 are appropriate for most level 10-12 Human characters.
- Avoid introducing incredibly powerful items like the *Fat Man* or *Power Armor* until characters reach level 13 or even higher. They will fundamentally change the way PCs experience combat in the game. Or give them everything and enjoy watching the world burn!

The Golden Rule

Fallout: The Roleplaying Game and ***Winter of Atom*** present many rules for playing out long quests in the nuclear wasteland of your dreams. Some groups may love using the system's detailed rules for travel, scavenging, crafting, survival, and modifying equipment to create awesome combinations of weapons and armor. Other groups may prefer their ***Fallout*** game to be less mechanically crunchy or enjoy some of the rules and not others.

Before running ***Fallout: The Roleplaying Game***, review the rules and talk to your players about what you are most interested in as a group. The golden rule is simply this—use the rules that are right for your group and *your* story.



QUEST FLOWCHART

While Winter of Atom is a non-linear sandbox quest line, this section provides a quick guideline on the generally recommended flow of quests. If PCs undertake quests you design yourself, or accomplish significant feats unaccounted for in this book, use the advice in each chapter's Leveling Up section as a guide to reward them appropriately.
Depending on the characters' level or specialities, some quests may be more or less challenging. You may want to adjust the difficulty of encounters and tests to make them appropriate for your players.

MAIN QUEST: THE TRAIN JOB (suggested level: 1)

- **SIDE QUEST:** Diggin In and **SIDE QUEST:** We Got the Beat
- **SIDE QUEST:** The Illustrated Man and **SIDE QUEST:** Forged in the Dark

MAIN QUEST: CLEANSING FIRE (suggested level: 3+)

- **SIDE QUEST:** Midnight at the Oasis
- **SIDE QUEST:** Beat It

MAIN QUEST: A NEW EDEN (suggested level: 6+)

None

MAIN QUEST: A THOUSAND FEET OF TERROR (suggested level: 7+)

- **A THOUSAND FEET OF TERROR, SCENE ONE:** The Gigapede Rises
- **SIDE QUEST:** We Need Bigger Guns and **SIDE QUEST:** The Blow-Off
- **A THOUSAND FEET OF TERROR, SCENE TWO:** Signs Coalescing
- **SIDE QUEST:** Higher Learning
- **A THOUSAND FEET OF TERROR, SCENE THREE:** Showdown

MAIN QUEST: INTO THE GLOWING SEA (suggested level: 12+)

- **SIDE QUEST:** In the Light of Day, **SIDE QUEST:** One Last Memento, and **SIDE QUEST:** A Dividing Detonation

MAIN QUEST: THE BURIED CITY (suggested level: 15+)

None

BLOW THIS BOOK UP AND LOOT THE SCRAPS

Many gamemasters (GMs) prefer to run ***Fallout: The Roleplaying Game*** in settings they create themselves or even in their hometown. This book and its story were lovingly designed as an epic Commonwealth quest line, but none of it is sacred. You can break apart the rules, settlements, NPCs, quests, and ideas that are useful to you. The following sections provide some brief guidance and ideas for how to hack ***Winter of Atom***.

HACK THE RULES

You can easily adjust the narrative-driven rules for *Traversing the Commonwealth* (see p.29) for other settings by changing its tables for Travel Complications, Random Encounters, Scavenging Tables, and AP Spending. You can simplify or design additional rules to suit the level of gameplay you desire at your table.

Likewise, you can easily reskin the rules for *Winter Wasteland* (see p.27) for other settings that deal with different but similar environmental obstacles. Radioactive blizzards can become irradiated sandstorms, snowdrifts reimagined as desert dunes, and cold exposure tweaked to manage heat exhaustion.

Additionally, you can easily repurpose any stat block or item in this book. Remember to use the guidelines to scale stat block levels to make them balanced for your group.

REMIX SETTLEMENTS AND QUESTS

Winter of Atom features canonical settlements like Diamond City, Goodneighbor, and the Crater of Atom. By reskinning the NPCs, locations, and side quests, you can take the ideas presented in the book and set them anywhere you can imagine. Likewise, brand new settlements like Beatsville, Big Top, Mirage, Mechminster Abbey—and locations like the USS *Germination* or Whately Research Facility—are even easier to transplant to another setting. Whenever you reskin a settlement, consider what makes your setting unique. Use local geography, famous landmarks, climate, regional history, the aftermath of the nuclear apocalypse, and satirical 1940s–1960s pop culture to

flavor how you reimagine borrowed locations from ***Winter of Atom***.

You can use the same principles to borrow this book's main quest and side quests. Most of the quests in ***Winter of Atom*** are easily simplified to remove them from the main story and the Commonwealth. For quests that involve the Last Son of Atom or canonical groups like the Minutemen, you can imagine other factions and individuals specific to your story and adjust their motives and actions appropriately.

You can also use this book's format for side quests and main quests to design your own quests. Side quests may only take a session or two to complete, while main quests usually require multiple sessions to finish and have more impactful outcomes.

RIP OUT THESE TOOLSETS

Throughout the quest portions of ***Winter of Atom***, you will use new toolsets designed explicitly for this quest line. These toolsets can be mercilessly ripped from the spine of this book and used in any way you want. The most helpful toolsets and where to find them include the following:

Clearing Areas of Radiation Sources. Refer to *Main Quest: Cleansing Fire* on p.65. You can use this system to allow PCs to make locations safe from radiation or other ambient effects. You might also use its ideas for Exploration Turns to help track time and activities while exploring an area.

Creating a Complex Disease. Refer to *Main Quest: A New Eden, Famished Fever* on p.84. You can use the scaling duration effects and recovery as a skeleton to create your own complex diseases.

Hunting a Subject Across Settlements. Refer to *Main Quest: A New Eden, Hunting the Flesh Fruit* on p.86. You can use this system to let PCs hunt down elusive items or characters that keep moving between settlements.

Exploring a Location or Vault Crawl. Refer to *Main Quest: A New Eden, Exploring Below Decks* on p.88. You can use this system for exploring large locations you have not prepared in full detail or when you want to share narrative storytelling responsibility with your players. For ideas on how to format and design a detailed location with traps, enemies, and atmosphere, refer to *Main Quest: The Buried City, Scene One Whately Research Facility* on p.216.

Staging Settlements for Battle. Refer to *Chapter 3: The Winter War,* Staging the Gigapede Attacks on p.160. You can use the format and ideas presented to stage various battles in different locations. For ideas on running big battles that involve numerous enemy and ally groups with varied outcomes, refer to *Main Quest: A Thousand Feet of Terror, Scene Three: Showdown* on p.182.

Surviving Extreme Radiation. Refer to *Chapter 4: The Day of Division*, Surviving Extreme Radiation on p.192. You can use these rules when PCs travel through a highly-irradiated region for prolonged periods to simplify tracking damage and manage compromised protective gear.

Nightmares and Weird Visions. Refer to *Main Quest: The Buried City, Scene Two: Descent Into Madness* on p.266. You can adjust the ideas presented to play out dreams with narrative and mechanical consequences—or present PCs with strange visions when they encounter supernatural locations like Dunwich Borers.

Horde Encounters. Refer to *Side Quest: Forged in the Dark, Frost Feral Ghoul Horde* on p.150. The systems presented can be easily adapted to manage large hordes of low-intelligence Minion creatures in various ways.

Gambling. Refer to *Chapter 2: Welcome to the Commonwealth, Playing the Slots* on p.126 for rules on using slot machines, S*ide Quest: Midnight at the Oasis* on p.126 for a way to play blackjack, or to *Side Quest: The Blow-Off, The Big Game* on p.173 for a format to play a bluffing card game like poker.





★ *Chapter One* ★

NEW OPTIONS, RULES, AND TOOLS

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Chapter One

NEW OPTIONS, RULES, AND TOOLS

NEW CHARACTER ORIGINS

In addition to the character origins from the *Fallout: The Roleplaying Game* *Core Rulebook*, players may choose from the following options. Their origin describes their character's background, defines their abilities, and gives them a unique trait to help them survive in the wasteland. The new options presented provide additional plot hooks and ideas for playing the character in ***Winter of Atom***.

Atomic Winter Survival Pack

Surviving the harsh realities of atomic winter is daunting, and no one can make it out there on their wits alone. At your discretion, you can let players choose two items from the following list to add to their starting equipment regardless of their character origin: beer, bourbon, gas mask, heavy coat, hood or cowl, molotov cocktail, Pork 'N' Beans, RadAway, or Stimpak.

GENERATION 3 SYNTH

You are a bio-synthetic humanoid nearly indistinguishable from humans. Created by a secret scientific organization known as the Institute, you were designed to integrate into human society. Your lab-grown body is made up of real human flesh, bones, and organs—with an undetectable cybernetic implant in your brain that contains your programming. Your bio-engineered upgrades make you hardier than humans, and you do not age or change weight. Your capacity to keep going for extended periods without needing rest is an excellent advantage in the harsh wasteland. Additionally, your body can survive synthetic implants and cybernetic modifications without complications.

Gen 3 Synths are not homogenous. You may cross paths with other synths, but they might not automatically be friendly. You might have escaped the Institute to make a life on your own terms, been released into human society for a secret purpose, been programmed to genuinely believe you are human, have no idea who you are, or suffer from amnesia. Because many fear synths and the Institute, keeping your identity a secret is a key to survival. You may have more than one name you go by—your human identity and your synth identification. Your search for purpose and identity in a world that fears or misunderstands you is essential.

Trait: More Than Human

Though you appear mentally and physically human, your bioengineering makes you something entirely new and, in many ways, improved. You gain one additional tag skill. You cannot suffer from starvation or dehydration and do not need sleep; you also do not gain any benefit from consuming food or beverage items. When you rest, instead of sleeping, you can engage in minor activities such as crafting, reading, or light scouting. Additionally, you are immune to Poison and Radiation damage and disease. You do not age, nor do you gain or lose weight.

When interacting with NPCs who know you are a synth—unless they are sympathetic towards synths—the difficulty of CHA tests made by you or your allies increases by 2. When a complication is rolled, they either become hostile, or your faction reputation or settlement reputation decreases by 1 per complication generated due to their fear of the Institute.

The Institute has given you a unique recall code—an unalterable verbal command that resets your personality and memories. When you hear the code spoken, you become incapacitated until you are retrieved and restored by the Institute.



Synths In Winter Of Atom

Wild rumors abound in Diamond City about synthetic replicants kidnapping and replacing citizens, making it a dangerous place for you. The underground movement known as the Railroad works to help free synths from Institute control. Depending on your loyalty to the Institute, the Railroad could be a potential ally or enemy to you. The Children of Atom have no strong feelings towards synths and may even accept you openly into their fold, so long as you embrace their radioactive ideology.

Recall Codes And Player Consent

Discuss the nature of your synth character's recall code with your gamemaster if you are uncomfortable with the idea of your character's personality and consciousness suddenly becoming erased. Determine collaboratively whether recall codes might be used in your game and how they can affect your character. An example of an alternative might be that your synth's recall code does not permanently erase their synth's personality but incapacitates them until a unique restore code is spoken.

Characters who choose the Generation 3 Synth origin can choose one of the following equipment packs:

SYNTH INFILTRATOR

You were created initially to infiltrate one of the Commonwealth's settlements to serve the interests of the Institute. Your task may have been information gathering, protecting an asset, or assassinating the Institute's numerous enemies.

You receive the following equipment:

- Tough clothing
- Baseball bat *or* switchblade
- Pipe gun with 10 + 5 rounds of .38 caliber ammunition *or* 10mm pistol with 8 + 4 rounds of 10mm ammunition
- One personal trinket
- **2 rolls on the Chems, Food,** *or* **Beverages loot tables (*Fallout*: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook*,** *Chapter 5: Survival,* p.200)

SYNTH SEEKER

You were initially designed to travel the byways of the Commonwealth in search of resources, new settlements, and sometimes fugitives from the Institute. You can easily embed yourself with traders, scavengers, or mercenaries.

You receive the following equipment:

- Tough clothing
- A leather armor chest piece *or* a leather armor arm and a leather armor leg (your choice as to which arm and leg)
- Knuckles *or* lead pipe
- **One ranged weapon from the following:** 10mm pistol, flare gun, hunting rifle
- 3 + 3 ammunition for the chosen ranged weapon
- **2 rolls on the Ammunition, Chems,** *or* **Food loot tables (*Fallout*: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook*,** *Chapter 5: Survival,* p.200)

PROTECTRON

Manufactured by Robco Industries as an inexpensive work drone, your model was one of the company's most popular robots that put many Americans out of work before the Great War. Protectrons were built for various construction, security, and administrative tasks. Factory models were used for manual labor. Office models were programmed with integrated administrative software. Firefighter models used internal cryojets to suppress dangerous flames. Medic models featured built-in defibrillators. Police models contained stronger armor and enhanced tasers for crowd control. You might have come from one of these manufacturing lines or another entirely.

Your body is humanoid in shape and covered in light armor plating. Not initially designed for combat, the wasteland is full of resources you can use to protect yourself and others. Unless you have received software or hardware upgrades, you speak in a robotic monotone like other Protectrons. Most Protectrons do almost anything to defend those their programming determines to be allies.

A long time has passed since your creation. You may have been a worker drone, but now you are much more. Your original programming still drives your behavior and actions, though it might have decayed or become twisted. You could be one of the few Protectrons to achieve true self-awareness and resist your programming. In the wild wasteland, it is up to you to decide whether your ancient programming will define you—or whether you define who you are by your own directives.

Protectros In Winter of Atom

Protectrons are common in the Commonwealth and tend to cooperate well with groups aligned with their programming. Their robotic bodies and internal heating source make them better able to survive the winter than nearly anything else that walks. With less personality than a Mister Handy, Protectrons are often treated with the same reverence one would afford a toaster. However, the Children of Atom, led by the Last Son of Atom, view Protectrons as angels of their atomic god who have forgotten their way. The church collects wayward Protectrons and offers them upgrades and a new purpose. Over time, they have secretly built a small army of radiation-immune robots programmed to be faithful to the Church's ideology. Your unit could be escaped from one of their hidden reprogramming factories, a faithful member of the religion, or searching for a fellow model who the Children have reprogrammed.

Trait: Protect Or Destroy

You were built to survive in harsh environments. Once per scene, you may reroll a test to overcome an environmental **hazard** and use the new result. You are also immune to disease and Radiation and Poison damage, but you cannot use chems, nor can you benefit from food, drink, or rest. You cannot recover from your injuries or heal health points without receiving repairs (see ***Fallout*: The Roleplaying Game *core rulebook***, *Chapter 2: Combat, Healing Robots*).

Protectrons are designed for a specific purpose and contain additional mechanisms to support their programmed tasks. You cannot have more than two robot mods installed simultaneously. You may be a Fire Brigadier, Law Enforcer, Construction Worker, Medical Responder, or a model of your own invention. When making a test directly related to your model's purpose, the first d20 you buy using Action Points costs 0. Additionally, your carry weight is 225 lbs. and cannot be increased by your Strength or perks, but it can be increased by modified armor.



Protectron Weapons

WEAPON	EFFECT
Claws	You make unarmed attacks with a pair of opposable claws. The claws inflict 3 Physical damage and can benefit from your melee damage derived statistic and perks for unarmed attacks.
Cryojet	You can fire a jet of cryogenic spray, rapidly cooling targets. The cryojet uses cryo cells for ammunition, **PER + Energy Weapons** for attacks, and causes 3 Energy damage. More information on the cryojet can be found on p.23.
Self-Destruct	You explode and are destroyed in the process, and cannot be repaired. When you make this attack you make a ranged attack using **END + Explosives**, dealing 6 Energy damage, with the Blast effect, at Close range.
Shock Hand	You make unarmed attacks with a pair of statically-charged defibrillators. These hands inflict 4 Energy damage and can benefit from your melee damage derived statistic and perks for unarmed attacks. You cannot manipulate objects that require fine dexterity due to the lack of claws.

PROTECTRON EQUIPMENT

Characters who choose the Protectron origin can choose one of the following equipment packs:

PROTECTRON

You were designed to be baseline security or a general-purpose laborer for a specific location. Thanks to some clever programming, you are now free to fulfill your function in the Commonwealth at large.

You receive the following equipment:

- Standard plating
- Claws
- Two laser guns integrated into your claws
- A fusion cell containing 14 + 7 shots
- Recon sensors
- Hazard detection mod
- Robot repair kit
- 20 caps

PROTECTRON FIRE BRIGADIER

Your model line was created to suppress fires. More than a walking fire extinguisher, you identify fire hazards and notify humans in the vicinity so they can correct the problem. These days, you have to be more proactive in preventing blazes from getting out of control.

You receive the following equipment:

- Standard plating
- A cryojet integrated into the left hand
- A cryo cell containing 14 + 7 shots
- An axe as a right hand
- Hazard detection mod *or* sensor array
- 1 stimpak
- 10 caps

CRYOJET

Ammunition: Cyro cell

WEAPON NAME	WEAPON TYPE	DAMAGE RATING	DAMAGE EFFECTS	DAMAGE TYPE	FIRE RATE	RANGE	QUALITIES	WEIGHT	COST	RARITY
Cryojet	Energy Weapons	3	Stun, Persistent	Energy	4	C	Debilitating, Inaccurate	6	156	4

A cryojet can accept one each of the following mods, which are unique to cryojets and installed with the repair skill:

MOD	NAME PREFIX	EFFECTS	WEIGHT	COST	PERKS
FUEL MOD					
Liquid Nitrogen	Sub-Zero	+1, Piercing	+8	+80	Gun Nut 2
BARREL MOD					
Compressed Tubing	Calibrated	Removes Inaccurate	+1	+28	Gun Nut 1
TANK MODS					
Large Tank	High Capacity	+1 Fire Rate	+3	+28	Gun Nut 1
Huge Tank	Max. Capacity	+2 Fire Rate	+6	+34	Gun Nut 2
NOZZLE MODS					
Wide Diffusion	Spray	Gains Burst, Unreliable	+2	+65	Gun Nut 1
Aerosolizer	Vaporizing	Gains Spread, Unreliable	+2	+65	Gun Nut 1
Bladed Exhaust	Battle	+1, Gains Close Quarters	+1	+65	Gun Nut 2

PROTECTRON MEDIC

Medic Protectrons were designed to provide an emergency medical response. They come equipped with a unique built-in defibrillator to revive unconscious patients and subdue unruly charges in a pinch.

You receive the following equipment:

- Standard plating
- Shock Hands
- Diagnosis mod
- 2 stimpaks
- 1 RadAway

UTILITY PROTECTRON

Utility Protectrons are meant for heavy-duty work. Reinforced armor helps you survive the hazards of factory work. Police departments purchased some utility models for riot suppression, modifying them with enhanced sensors to detect and neutralize hidden weapons.

You receive the following equipment:

- Factory armor (main body and arms)
- Claw
- **One of the following weapons:** sledgehammer, baton, *or* railway rifle with 6 + 3 railway spikes (ignoring the two-handed quality)
- Hazard detection mod *or* sensor array
- Robot repair kit

NUKATRON

A custom Protectron model created in collaboration by RobCo and Nuka-Cola resulted in the novel Nukatron—part bottling plant worker, part soda machine, *all* party automaton. Charged with refreshing the consumers of fine Nuka-Cola products, you wander the Commonwealth, bringing drinks to the drinkless, righting parties most foul, and delivering justice against crimes of flat flavor.

You receive the following equipment:

- Standard plating
- Claw
- Behavioral analysis mod *or* integral boiler mod
- 1 Perfectly Preserved Pie
- 4 Nuka-Colas *or* 2 Nuka-Cherrys

PROTECTRON X

Your unit was modified from standard factory lines. You might have been created as a prototype for an unrealized RobCo line, a specialty model designed to suit a wealthy purchaser's needs, or a hobby inventor's experiment. Your unique appearance stands out from your silicon kindred.

You receive the following equipment:

- Standard plating
- Claws
- **One of the following:** factory armor (main body and arms), behavioral analysis mod, diagnosis mod, hacking module, *or* hazard detection mod.
- **One of the following:** radiation coils, recon sensors, *or* sensor array
- **One of the following weapons:** machete, aluminum baseball bat, *or* a syringer with 10 shots of Bleed-Out
- **One roll on the Oddities and Valuables loot table (*Fallout* the Roleplaying Game *core book*,** *Chapter 5: Survival, Loot Tables*) *or* 1 robot repair kit

CHILD OF ATOM

Radiation is a gift from your atomic god, and you gladly share that gift with the Commonwealth. As a member of the Church of Atom, your body and mind are blessed by radiation. While many you meet are wary of you and see your blessing as a curse, you know you are chosen. The closer you get to Atom's embrace, the greater you find yourself thriving in the face of the wasteland's hardships. You understand that radiation is dangerous to those who have yet to embrace its divine truth, and do not look down on them for using RadAway and other treatments. You merely seek to help them achieve enlightenment.

Your religion believes that an entire universe exists within every atomic mass in all of creation. When a mass becomes split, the universe within divides and becomes two. Atom is revered as a benevolent god who uses Division to create new worlds. As such, the Great War is considered a holy and wonderful piece of history by the Children. They worship Atom by worshipping radiation—His Glow—and the newly created universes it represents. The Children make their homes in irradiated regions, building worship centers and settlements. While the Church is not often violent, they consider attempts to stop radiation from spreading as blasphemy. They oppose such efforts, though each member and sect's tactics vary. The Children do not hold strong attachments for possessions or their bodies and are sometimes very generous to others in need. They follow the loose hierarchy of their sect, centered around spiritual leaders known as mothers or confessors.

You may have been born into the Church or come from a completely different life before witnessing the atomic truth. You might have traveled from a faraway sect on a holy pilgrimage or hail from the Crater of Atom in the Glowing Sea. If you keep your faith, share the Glow with those you meet, and show your dedication to Atom, you may prove your worth and achieve a higher rank within your sect.

Children Of Atom In Winter Of Atom

You do not follow The Last Son of Atom or his newly arrived sect in the Commonwealth. However, their growing presence in the region affects your relationship. Some may look to you for aid or offer you shelter, while others might be hostile or wary towards you. In particular, the Minutemen are outraged about the increasing influence of the Children in the surrounding settlements. The Last Son of Atom, a prophet to his people, might be an enigmatic figure that you wish to seek out and learn from—or you may have heard horror stories about other sects of the Church that were torn apart by the prophet's teachings and the actions of his zealous followers. As tensions rise, you might find yourself choosing sides or playing the part of mediator. Navigating the political storm while pursuing your holy journey will prove difficult.

If you use the optional **faction reputation** rules from the ***Gamemaster's Toolkit***, start with a faction reputation rank of 2 for the Last Son of Atom's sect of the Church of Atom. Though you do not follow their sect, they are likely to initially be more open to you than outsiders to their religion.

Trait: Rad Sponge

Your unusual life experience grants you an extra perk at level one. Additionally, you were given a gift by Atom, unique even amongst other members of the Church. You can resist, store, and even channel radiation through your body. Though Atom has blessed you with his glow, you must be careful. Non-believers may not understand your gift and might be frightened when they witness it.

Your base Radiation damage resistance is 1 and can be increased further by armor and perks. Once per scene, when someone in Close range to you would take Radiation damage, you can choose to take it instead. Whenever you take Radiation damage (minimum of 0), gain one **Radiation Point** up to a maximum of 5. When you hit with a melee attack, you may spend stored Radiation Points—for every point you spend, deal an additional 2 Radioactive Energy damage applied separately after inflicting the attack's other damage. When you sleep, you lose 1 Radiation Point.



CHILD OF ATOM EQUIPMENT

Characters who choose the Children of Atom origin can choose one of the following equipment packs:

MISSIONARY

You wander the wasteland, helping the needy, and delivering the good word to them. In time, your good deeds may help unbelievers recognize Atom's Divine Glow for themselves.

You receive the following equipment:

- Tough clothing
- Walking cane
- Gamma gun with 4 + 2 gamma rounds
- 1 stimpak
- 10 caps
- 1 roll on the Random Food table **(*Fallout*: The Roleplay Game *Core Rulebook*, p.202)**

ZEALOT

Whether on a quest given to you by your sect's elders or Atom's holy revelations, you left your community to seek out the Church's enemies. Zealots bring Atom's wrath upon those who oppose his Great Division—be they heretical competing sects of the Church or non believing settlers who oppress the Children of Atom.

You receive the following equipment:

- Tough clothing *or* drifter outfit
- Machete
- Gamma gun with 4 + 2 gamma rounds
- Gas mask
- 2 rolls on the Random Food table (**_Fallout_: The Roleplay Game *Core Rulebook*, p.202)**



WINTER WASTELAND

The icy winter brings additional challenges and dangers while exploring the Commonwealth. Aside from typical dangers from the local inhabitants, roaming creatures, traps, and abandoned technology, the region suffers from a long and harsh radioactive winter. Navigating the Bostonian ruins requires caution to survive irregular weather patterns and terrain concealed by snow and ice.

ADJUSTING FOR TERRAIN AND OBSTACLES

New terrain types provide the Action Point cost players spend to move through the area, reflecting the costs found in *Fallout*: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook*, *Chapter 2: Combat*.

WINTER TERRAIN	AP COST
Wet snow, soft snow, muddy snow	1
Collapsed building, potholes, snow-covered rubble	2
Snow-covered slope, ice spikes, sinkholes	3

WINTER OBSTACLE	AP COST
Waist-height snow, snow flurry, frostbitten moose carcass	1
Frozen river or small lake, chest-height snow, fallen tree	2
Frozen ruin, collapsing bridge, snow covering a hidden powerline	3

WINTER ENVIRONMENT CONDITIONS

Winter conditions can impact a character's Perception, gear, ranged attacks, and more. Conditions the **characters might encounter while exploring the Commonwealth in winter include the following:**

CONDITION	EFFECT
Flash Freeze	**END** tests increase in difficulty by +1, +2, or +3, depending on the length of time exposed to the elements.
Snow-Covered	Tests to spot or avoid dangerous objects or hazards increase in difficulty by +1, +2, or +3, depending on snow height.
Icy Surfaces	When a creature takes the Sprint action, they must make an **AGI + Athletics** test with a difficulty of 1-3, determined by the amount of ice. If the test fails, they cannot move, fall prone, and become stunned until the start of their next turn.
Blizzards	**PER** tests that rely on vision and attacks made at Medium range or further increase in difficulty by +1, +2, or +3, depending on the storm's severity.
Rad-izzard	At the start of a creature's turn, if they are without shelter, they must make an **END + Survival** test with a difficulty of 1-3, determined by the severity of the radioactive ice storm. If the test fails, they gain 1 Fatigue and are inflicted with 2 Vicious Radiation damage.

EXPOSURE TO COLD WEATHER

Rules regarding exposure to extreme temperatures can be found in **Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook***, *Chapter 5: Survival*. Finding shelter and providing ample warmth is paramount for surviving the wasteland during the harsh winter. Even synthetic beings may suffer malfunctions from the cold interfering with chemical and electrical reactions necessary to keep them functioning.

Alternatively, you can use the following rules to manage cold exposure during camping and travel with fewer calculations. At the end of a scene or leg of travel, you can choose to require PCs who became exposed to cold weather to make an END + Survival test with a difficulty of 1. You can adjust the difficulty of the test (minimum of 1) at your discretion and may use the following guidelines:

- Increase the difficulty by 1 for every 12 hours they were exposed.
- Increase the difficulty by 1 if they were not wearing warm clothing.
- Increase the difficulty by 1 if they encountered particularly extreme cold.
- Decrease the difficulty by 1 if they spent considerable time around a significant heat source or inside a warm shelter.
- Decrease the difficulty by 1 if they consumed hot food or beverages.
- Decrease the difficulty by 1 if they engaged in physical activity such as heavy travel or combat.

If a PC fails their test, they gain 1 Fatigue for every hour they were exposed to cold (up to a maximum equal to half their current HP, rounded up). If they roll a complication (20), they cannot remove Fatigue gained this way until they rest for 24 hours in a warm shelter. Otherwise, PCs can remove Fatigue gained this way after they rest for 6 hours in a warm shelter.

NEW HAZARDS

Due to frigid temperatures and the snowy terrain, creatures may suffer damage from prolonged exposure to the elements. In addition, the snow can conceal other hazards and other threats.

HAZARDS	EFFECT
Falling icicles	3 Piercing Physical damage
Irradiated snow	2 Vicious Radiation damage
Snowslide	2 Stun Physical damage
Poisonous plants	2 Persistent Poison damage

Green Snow

Snow can be easily converted into water or just eaten for immediate hydration. Unfortunately, some of the snow might be irradiated or contaminated. If a character consumes irradiated snow, they follow the same rules for consuming irradiated food or drink, as shown in **Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook***, *Chapter 4: Equipment*.



NEW DANGEROUS OBJECTS

Many potentially dangerous objects lie hidden underneath layers of ice and snow until an unsuspecting victim comes across them and suffers a bad day.

OBJECT	TRIGGERED BY	TEST TO SPOT	DAMAGE/EFFECT
Rad beacon	Close proximity (action, entering a zone)	PER + Survival difficulty 2	4 Persistent Radiation damage
Anti-Rad dissembler	Close proximity (action, entering a zone)	PER + Survival difficulty 2	4 Vicious Energy damage, or 6 Vicious Energy damage to creatures suffering from Radiation damage and irradiated creatures
Chemical dispersal unit	Pressure plate (action, entering a zone)	PER + Survival difficulty 2	4 Persistent Poison damage
Spike pit	False covering (action, entering a zone)	AGI + Athletics difficulty 2	4 Vicious Physical damage

TRAVERSING THE COMMONWEALTH

Traversing the Commonwealth is inherently dangerous. The constant below-freezing temperatures of the crushing winter mean that a painful death from exposure is always knocking at the door. And that is before dealing with the usual hazards of the wasteland—raiders, mutants, radiation, and worse.

While Diamond City, Goodneighbor, and the Crater of Atom feature in the video game *Fallout 4*, many settlements and locations in ***Winter of Atom*** are entirely new. When referring to the map of the Commonwealth during travel, allow PCs to stumble onto these new settlements as they explore, wherever it makes sense for your quests. It is essential that PCs find most or all of the settlements during their quests.

Large portions of this adventure require traveling the wasteland and searching for people or places, often with only minimal information to go on. This section provides rules for determining the outcome of long journeys. Whenever the PCs set out into the Commonwealth with a destination in mind, they will need to **Navigate the Wasteland** to decide whether or not they find what they're looking for—and how long it takes.



Making Travel Interesting

Exploring the wasteland is an opportunity for you and the other players to highlight the parts of the world that are important to you. As the group explores—before making navigation tests—you should encourage them to roleplay the quiet, personal moments between characters as they talk on the road. Not everything has to be gunfire and fighting all the time, and these smaller vignettes make the meat of the adventure more meaningful.

Giving your players some input on travel narration allows you to share some of the work for worldbuilding and make the players more invested in the setting. As the group travels between destinations, think of some interesting—and leading—questions to engage the players in the world.

Some examples could be:

- What do you see at the side of the road that shows the harshness of winter? What about what you see suggests the winter will get worse before it gets better?
- Which of you has walked this road before? What were you doing last time you were here?
- What do you see on the horizon that makes you take extra care on your journey?
- What relic of the old world do you pass on your journey?

Similarly, when the group returns to a settlement they are familiar with, asking them to tell you what's changed since they were last there can be a powerfully immersive GM tool.

This procedure uses the rules in the **Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook***, *Chapter 5*: *Survival*. In particular, pay attention to the rules for Fatigue, Hunger, Thirst, and Cold Exposure as detailed in *Exposure to Cold Weather* (p.28). Keep track of the state of each of these considerations while the PCs explore the wasteland.

Follow this simple procedure when PCs Navigate the Wasteland:

1. Choose a destination and determine how arduous the journey will be to set the base difficulty for the test.
2. The PCs decide who will lead the expedition (the navigator).
3. Navigator decides if the journey will be Cautious, Normal, or Hurried.
4. The navigator and their allies assemble the test's dice pool.
5. The navigator rolls the dice, and you determine the result.

STEP 1: JOURNEY DIFFICULTY

The base difficulty of a navigation test is 0. When assessing the difficulty of a journey, consider the following questions. Increase the navigation test difficulty by 1 for each 'no' answer, with a maximum difficulty of 5.

- Is the journey along established routes between settlements?
- Are the PCs familiar with the area?
- Is the area under the control of a friendly faction?
- Has the group been given good directions, or do they know of prominent landmarks to aid navigation?
- Are obstacles in the path (high mountains, sucking swamps, irradiated wastes, hostile settlements, terrible winter weather) easily avoided or circumnavigated?

Long Journeys And Winging It

Most journeys to explore new locations should take between 12–24 hours, encouraging PCs to camp once or twice to avoid cold exposure before they hopefully reach their destination (see *Building Campsites,* p.35). If you think a journey should be longer, split it into multiple smaller legs with distinct goals—or increase the navigation test difficulty by 1 for every additional 24 hours spent traveling.

If you are unsure or need to decide quickly to keep the story moving, assume a default difficulty of 3. As a general rule, journeys closer to the more settled areas of Boston will be shorter since roads are better maintained, and the PCs are more likely to be familiar with the region.

STEP 2: CHOOSE A NAVIGATOR

The players decide among them who will lead the expedition. They may choose a consistent navigator or choose one based on the fiction. For instance, if a PC has been to the location before, it makes sense that they might lead the journey.

Because the navigation test uses the **Survival** skill, players may decide that the PC with the best Survival will always be the navigator unless stated otherwise.

STEP 3: DECIDE JOURNEY SPEED

The navigator decides on the speed of the journey, with the following results:

- **Cautious:** Double the journey duration. Decrease the navigation test difficulty by 2. PCs cannot roll complications.
- **Normal:** Do not change the journey duration. Decrease the navigation test difficulty by 1 and set the complication range to 2 (19-20).
- **Hurried:** Half the journey duration. Set the complication range to 4 (17-20).

STEP 4: PREPARE THE TEST

By default, navigating requires an **END + Survival** test with a difficulty set in step one and modified in step three. The navigator can make a case for using an attribute other than Endurance for the test so long as you agree.

The navigator cannot spend AP to roll more dice for the test, but they can spend AP to reduce the test's difficulty. You may allow groups to reduce the difficulty of the navigation test by 1 per 2 AP spent if the PCs come up with clever plans to help them during their wintery trek.

Additionally, the navigator's allies can assist the test per usual and should describe what their character does to help during the journey. Assisting allies may act as scouts keeping watch for raiders, scavengers looking for supplies, or other roles to aid the group's success.

STEP 5: THE NAVIGATION TEST

The navigator makes their navigation test to resolve the final phase of their travel after camping, roleplaying the journey, and preparing the test's dice pool.

Navigation Success. For each complication rolled, add 2 AP to the GM's pool. Alternatively, you can roll 1d20 on the following table and apply the result—or create a more fitting complication of similar impact.

The PCs arrive at their destination once they resolve all complications. Adjust their Hunger, Thirst, and Fatigue levels gained from cold exposure based on the length of the trip and their preparations.

JOURNEY COMPLICATIONS

1D20 ROLL	COMPLICATION
1-2	The group reaches their destination particularly hungry. Each PC moves down the Hunger track one step.
3-4	The group arrives in low spirits. Increase the difficulty of the PCs' **CHA** tests involving social interaction by 1 until they rest.
5-6	An essential piece of gear broke during the journey.
7-8	The group encounters an obstacle in their path—a fallen tree, a broken bridge, a rockslide, etc. They must work together to clear the way by making a group **STR + Athletics** test with a difficulty of 3. If the test fails, the group removes the obstacle, but each PC suffers a point of Fatigue.
9-10	The group witnesses an ominous sighting, weird phenomenon, or ill-omen. Add 2 AP to the GM's pool.
11-12	All food and drink carried by the PCs become **Irradiated.**
13-14	The group passes through an irradiated area. Roll a number of  equal to the navigation test difficulty; each PC suffers that much Radiation damage.
15-16	Roll on the Commonwealth Winter Random Encounters Table (p.33). PCs reach their destination after resolving the encounter.
17-18	Choose and apply a *Winter Environment Condition* (p.28).
19	The journey takes a heavy toll on the group. Each PC must succeed on an **END + Survival** test with a difficulty of 2 or suffer a point of Fatigue.
20	The wasteland's cold proved particularly dangerous during the journey. Each PC must succeed on an **END + Survival** test with a difficulty of 3 or increase their Cold Exposure state one step.

Navigation Failure. If the navigation test fails, the group becomes lost in the wasteland. Adjust their Hunger, Thirst, and Fatigue levels gained from cold exposure based on the length of the trip and their preparations.

For each navigation complication, roll a random encounter using the ***Commonwealth Winter Random Encounter Table*** **or add 2 AP to the GM's pool. Alternatively, you can create your own random encounter (see Fallout: The Roleplaying Game** ***Core Rulebook****, Chapter 10: Denizens of the Wasteland*)—and determine the XP budget for the encounter's difficulty (see *Balancing Encounters for Party Size and Level*, p.42).

You are encouraged to prepare a few possible balanced encounters before running a game session to keep play moving quickly at the table.

After resolving any encounters, the PCs can once again attempt to travel onward to their destination or choose a new destination. Decide how many hours travel they are away from their destination based on the story, then reduce the navigation test difficulty by 2 for their next test.

COMMONWEALTH WINTER RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE

1D20 ROLL	ENCOUNTER
1-2	A wandering merchant crosses the group's path, willing to trade goods and share news from a nearby settlement.
3-4	A roaming Protectron is lost and can't get back to the site it's programmed to protect.
5-6	The group stumbles across a ruined campsite showing clear signs of having been attacked by Raiders recently.
7-8	A Deathclaw charges the group but doesn't stop to fight; it's fleeing from something even scarier.
9-10	A Minutemen patrol stops to question the group, wanting to know what they're doing in the area.
11-12	A group of wastelanders approaches the group asking for help. They're freezing and desperate.
13-14	Survivors claiming to be from a nearby Vault are conmen trying to lure the group into an ambush.
15-16	A pack of feral ghouls spot the party and make a beeline for their position.
17-18	A group of Super Mutants spot the group and charge them.
19	A Super Mutant riding a harnessed and muzzled deathclaw demands that the group hand over their food and caps.
20	Followers of the Last Son of Atom wish to recruit the group to the cause.



Bookkeeping And Fun

Using navigation tests requires more tracking for the GM and possible outcomes that players can't directly influence. Negative consequences for poor rolls can sometimes feel punishing or unfair, especially if a few results go badly in sequence.

Ultimately, nothing should stand in the way of your group enjoying the game. Some groups may use fewer survival rules like hunger, thirst, and temperature in their games—and that's okay. If you find parts of or all of this system doesn't work for you, feel free to disregard it or invent your own story of what happens during travel. You may lose some of the danger of exploring the Commonwealth during nuclear winter, but ***Winter of Atom*** is still dangerous enough without it!

SPENDING ACTION POINTS DURING TRAVEL

Players may spend their Action Points at any time while traveling to find a point of interest, an opportunity to better their situation, or a scavenging location. Allow the players to describe what they locate this way, though as GM, you have the final say and can modify or add to their descriptions.

AP COST	EFFECT	BENEFIT
1+	Ideal Campsite	PCs find an ideal place to set up camp. Reduce the test difficulty to build a campsite by 1 for every AP spent, to a minimum of 1.
2+	A Clever Plan	Reduce the difficulty of the next navigation test by 1 for every 2 AP spent.
3	Lucky Break	Safely avoid a random encounter that occurs as a result of a complication.
3	Treasure From Trash	PCs come across a location they can scavenge (see ***Fallout: The Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook***, *Chapter 5: Survival, Scavenging* and ***Fallout: Gamemaster's Toolkit,*** *Chapter 1: Gamemaster's Options, Creating Scavenging Locations).* For a simpler alternative, you can describe the location PCs find and allow them to make a group **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty you choose. If they succeed, they find an item of your choice or roll once on the *Winter Wasteland Scavenging Table*. For each additional success, they find another item.

WINTER WASTELAND SCAVENGING TABLE

2D20 ROLL	2D20 ROLL	2D20 ROLL	2D20 ROLL
2	Heavy dog armor	22	5+5 Common Materials
3	10mm pistol	23	Yum-Yum Deviled Eggs
4	Addictol	24	Lab Coat
5	Day Tripper	25	Iguana Bits
6	Machete	26	Potato Crisps
7	Sledgehammer	27	Flare (2+1)
8	Healing Salve	28	Syringer Ammo (2+2)
9	.45 rounds (9+4)	29	Pre-War Money worth 4d20 Caps
10	3+5 Uncommon Materials	30	Toolkit
11	Pork 'n' Beans	31	First Aid Kit
12	1+2 Signal Flares	32	Lantern
13	Holotape Player	33	Stimpak
14	2+1 Tomahawks	34	RadAway
15	Pool Cue	35	Knuckle Dusters
16	Hard Hat	36	Tire Iron
17	Military Fatigues	37	Super Stimpak
18	Flapper Dress	38	Buffout
19	Well-Preserved Athletic Clothes	39	Jet
20	Wine	40	1+5 Rare Materials
21	1+2 glass bottles (junk, scavenge for 2 Common Materials each)		

BUILDING CAMPSITES

The wasteland is full of dangers, and characters will need a safe place to rest to survive traveling across the radioactive landscape. Outside of settlements or fortified buildings, building campsites is the next best thing. Characters will find plenty of resources that can be repurposed for a makeshift shelter during their journey. Campsites might even attract visitors, though they may not always be friendly. A Super Mutant passing through might be starving and all too happy to wander into a camp full of meat popsicles. You can imagine their own camp visitors or roll on the following table to see if a site receives a visitor while the characters camp. Roll a d20 and consult the table below for campsite visitors.



CAMPSITE VISITORS

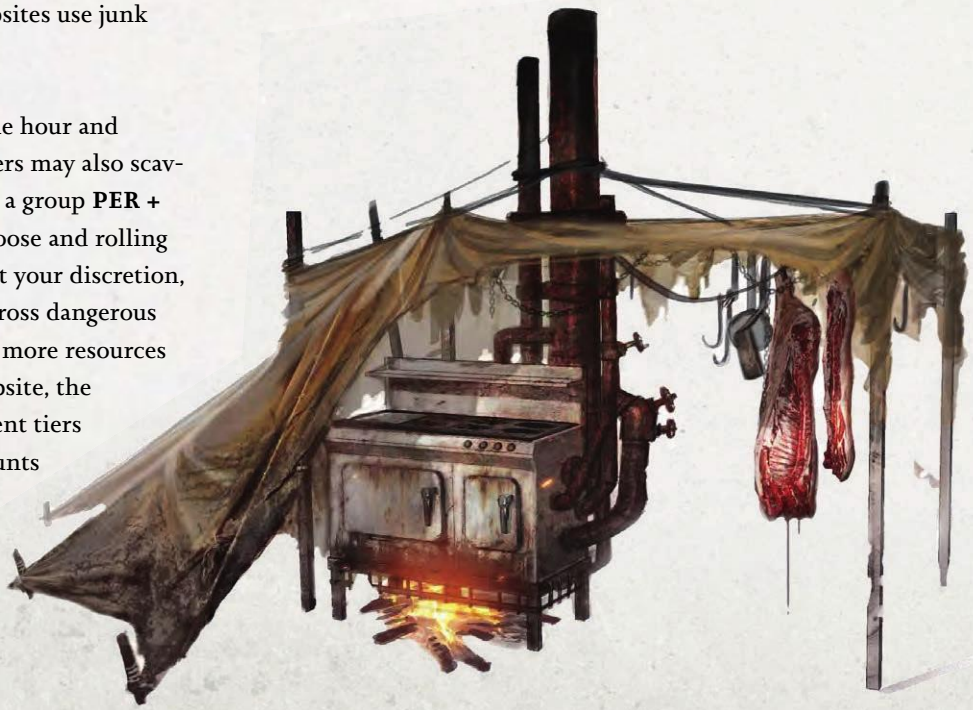
D20 ROLL	VISITOR TYPE
1-10	It is just you and the frigid wind out here tonight. Stay warm and sleep tight.
11-12	Someone spots a hooded stranger nearby, wandering close to camp. They appear to be searching for something—or someone.
13	A starving Super Mutant arrives and demands food. Whatever their meat preference might be, they might be bargained with.
14	A trader approaches the campsite looking for a bit of shelter and safety. They carry a handful of goods with them and may be willing to trade the party something they need.
15	A mysterious stranger—secretly a synth— from a nearby settlement comes seeking shelter. They are cautious and withdrawn unless they identify another synth in the party.
16	A small band of raiders are fleeing an environmental hazard or monstrous threat. They approach the campsite warily.
17	A small horde of ghouls roam close to camp but have not noticed the party. *Yet.* They may move past the camp if their attention isn't drawn to the party.
18	A family of refugees finds the campsite, bringing with them a bundle of supplies and caps. They are lost, moving from their old home to a new location, and seek the party's help.
19-20	Camp is quiet and uneventful until there resounds a loud bang and crash in the distance. Afterward, the air is still and deadly silent. Something is out there.

SETTING UP A CAMPSITE

Campsites can be built inside closed structures or out in the wild, though building them inside a settlement might earn characters strange looks from the locals. Especially in the harsh winter, shelter and warmth are paramount to survival. The best campsites use junk items as flair to decorate.

Setting up a proper campsite takes one hour and requires spending resources. Characters may also scavenge the surrounding area by making a group **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty you choose and rolling on an appropriate scavenging table. At your discretion, scavenging might risk PCs coming across dangerous foes or winter hazards (see p.28). The more resources the characters use to build their campsite, the warmer and safer they will be. Different tiers of campsite will require varying amounts of materials and determine which bonuses a campsite provides.

Taking down a campsite takes one hour. Characters gather their junk and decorations, then gain materials equal to half the material cost of their campsite (rounded up).



CAMPSITE TIERS

Campsites can range from a simple fire and cooking pot huddled beneath the shadow of a hillside to a small mobile settlement with makeshift defensible walls and multiple shelters within. To build a campsite, characters decide on the **tier** of site they want to build and spend materials, as noted in the following table. After spending materials, characters make a **group INT** test using appropriate skills to contribute to building the site. On a failure, the characters may still build a campsite two tiers lower than the tier they attempted (minimum of tier 1).

TIER	DIFFICULTY	MATERIALS REQUIRED
1	0	2 Common Materials
2	2	3 Common Materials
3	3	4 Common Materials 2 Uncommon Materials
4	4	5 Common Materials 3 Uncommon Materials
5	5	6 Common Materials 4 Uncommon Materials 2 Rare Materials
6	6	7 Common Materials 5 Uncommon Materials 3 Rare Materials

CAMPSITE FEATURES

Finished campsites have a number of features equal to their Tier, plus one extra for every 3 AP they spend after resolving the test. When they finish building, the characters choose which features to include in their campsite. Features include the following:

- **Campfire:** Provides warmth to help protect characters from **cold exposure** for short periods.
- **Shelter:** Provides shelter to protect characters from weather **hazards**. When combined with a campfire or heat source, warm shelters allow characters to sleep, rest, and recover from Fatigue gained from cold exposure.
- **Comfortable Bedding:** Bedrolls or makeshift cots provide better rest. Characters who sleep on them wake up **well rested** and gain +2 Maximum HP until they sleep again.
- **Cooking Station:** Provides a temporary **cooking station** with an open flame and tools necessary to craft food and beverages.
- **Alarmed Site:** Anyone attempting to enter the camp must make an **AGI** test with a difficulty equal to your campsite's tier or set off an alarm that alerts you to their presence.
- **Cleaned Site:** The surrounding area has been cleared of any sources of disease or poison, and irradiated spots are marked so characters can easily avoid them.
- **Concealed Site:** The campsite has been disguised, making it harder to spot. Survival checks to track characters to the site increase their difficulty by 2. When the GM rolls on the **Campsite Visitors** table (p.36), they roll twice and use the lowest result.
- **Defensible Site**: The site has makeshift walls and other structures built to provide optimal cover from attacks. While making use of your defenses, characters gain 2 **cover**. This feature may be chosen multiple times, increasing cover by 1 (to a maximum of 4) for each instance after the first.

Campsites in easily accessible areas, which feature open flames or make a lot of noise, may encourage the GM to roll on the **Campsite Visitors** table (see p.36). In addition to the campsite features, characters may use traps and other objects to fortify their campsite from outside threats. Attacks against a campsite might damage their walls, shelter, or other features—possibly exposing characters to deadly winter hazards.

SETTLEMENT REPUTATION

During their travels, characters will encounter various settlements across the Wasteland. Each of these settlements has its views, preoccupations, and troubles. This section builds on the optional **faction reputation** rules found in the ***Fallout Gamemaster's Toolkit*** by providing additional guidance on how characters' actions may impact their standing within settlements in the Commonwealth. Faction reputation and settlement reputation are different—a character may have a Neutral reputation with the Minutemen, but a Friendly reputation with the people of Diamond City, for instance. Settlements can be home to multiple factions.

The characters' relationships with settlements will directly impact the events that take place during ***Winter of Atom***. The more characters interact positively within a settlement, the more welcome they will become. Some settlements may be hostile towards outsiders, while others welcome newcomers with open arms. Settlement reputation may impact the cost of items and can unlock new quests or safe places for characters to rest.

For ease, GMs and players can choose to track settlement reputation as a group rather than as individual characters—the actions of one character impact how settlements look at their close associates too. A character or group of characters maintains a settlement reputation rank for each settlement: Hostile (0), Cautious (1), Neutral (2), Friendly (3), Trusting (4), Allied (5). When a character makes a test to interact with someone based on their reputation in the settlement, they roll **Charisma + reputation rank**

REPUTATION RANK	INFLUENCE
0 Hostile	A hostile settlement will not help you and may attack on sight. They try to block you from entering and alert guards if they find you sneaking around. Do not expect them to treat you with kindness or mercy.
1 Cautious	The settlement is not sure if they can trust you. Citizens charge you very unfair prices for their services and are wary of speaking openly to you. The guards are not immediately hostile towards you but might keep you out of certain places and may not allow you to rest overnight in the settlement. You might have luck getting something you need here if you really make it worth someone's while.
2 Neutral	You are either not particularly interesting to the people of this settlement, or your previous actions have given them conflicting feelings towards you. You will not get any special treatment but won't be treated with undue hostility. The people are far from considering you one of their own, but there is still an opportunity to change their minds. You may be able to shelter or buy goods here if the denizens have them to spare, but cannot expect special treatment.
3 Friendly	You are seen as a friend to the folks in this settlement. People recognize you when you're around and frequently greet you when they see you. You may be able to find free or discounted shelter in the settlement, and its people are open to trading all manner of goods with you. Getting information and work from the locals here is easy for you now.
4 Trusting	You have made quite a name for yourself in the settlement. People trust you and your judgment. They are willing to offer you a discount on goods—or even loan you caps or specific equipment if they have them to spare, knowing you will pay them back. Some merchants even offer you rare items they only sell to people they want to impress. Most importantly, if you are in danger, the people of this settlement care about you enough to do what they can to keep you safe.
5 Allied	People here see you as their closest allies, almost family. They offer you gifts when you leave to make your journey easier—a good home-cooked meal, an old tarp, a fire starter, or a tool that is hard to find but could save your life out in the wasteland. If they hear you are in trouble elsewhere, they may even put together a party of found family to cross the wastes and come to your aid.

GAINING OR LOSING REPUTATION

Characters can increase their settlement reputation in several ways, such as finishing quests that help a settlement, completing **settlement tasks**, or saving a settlement from a threat like raiders or ghouls. Moving into a settlement and spending time building relationships with its people could also improve the characters' reputation.

Quests and their outcomes should positively or negatively impact characters' reputations. It is entirely possible for a quest to positively impact their reputation with one settlement or faction but negatively impact their reputation with others. Negative actions the characters take in a settlement can also impact their reputation directly. Repeatedly lying, cheating, and stealing will likely decrease their reputation by 1 if word gets around. Attacking civilians or committing a more heinous act like cold-blooded murder could reduce their reputation by 2. The worse their reputation is, the less people trust them.

The GM should consider how impactful the characters' actions are. Completing a main quest may directly increase or decrease settlement reputation if the PCs' actions make a significant impact, while finishing less consequential side quests may require PCs to make a **settlement reputation test** to determine whether or not their reputation changes. The GM is the arbiter of when reputation changes directly or should be resolved with a settlement reputation test, though ***Winter of Atom*** offers recommendations for specific quests and outcomes.

Settlement Reputation Tests

To make a group or individual settlement reputation test, count the positive and negative influences relating to the settlement in question at the end of a quest they are involved in or at a meaningful milestone in your story. Resolve this with a skill test in the following way:

- **Target Number:** Your target number for the test is your CHA + your current settlement reputation rank. If you make the test as a group, use the highest CHA out of the PCs present to determine the target number.
- **Set Difficulty:** The difficulty of the test is equal to 1 + the number of negative influences you have.
- **Assemble Dice Pool:** Roll a number of d20s equal to 2 + the number of positive influences you have. You cannot spend AP to add more dice to the pool.
- **Check for Successes:** Each d20 that rolls equal or less than your target number generates one success. Any d20 that rolls equal or less than your reputation rank generates two successes.
- **Determine Outcome:** If your test succeeds, increase your settlement reputation rank by 1. If your test fails and you have more negative influences than positive influences, reduce your settlement reputation rank by 1. Each complication generates 2 AP for the GM's pool.

Making Allies

Winter of Atom is, first and foremost, a story about communities struggling to come together and survive a brutal winter, dwindling food supplies, and the Last Son of Atom's megalomaniacal schemes. Encourage your players to make allies with factions and settlements. Even unsavory groups may have invaluable resources or connections that PCs can use to further their goals. Remind your players—the fastest way to die in nuclear winter is to face the cold alone.

SETTLEMENT TASKS

When characters reach a reputation rank of (3) **Friendly** in a settlement, they gain access to downtime activities called **settlement tasks**. Use settlement tasks to allow PCs to become more involved in settlers' lives, gain access to resources they need to survive their adventures in the wasteland, and generate plot hooks for new quests.

A character may undertake one settlement task per day during downtime. Characters make a test with a relevant skill to complete tasks. You choose an appropriate difficulty for the test and may offer rewards for success—caps, trade opportunities, information, new allies, etc. If they fail their test, you might choose to treat the result as a negative influence the next time the PCs make a reputation test for the settlement.

SETTLEMENT TASK	DESCRIPTION
Construction Work (Strength)	Something is always breaking down in settlements, and construction never ends. You lend a hand, whether repairing walls, fixing machines, or helping to build a new structure.
Town Militia (Perception)	Settlements are always on high alert to keep out dangers, whether by putting guards in watchtowers or organizing regular patrols.
Courier (Endurance)	You spend the day delivering packages, letters, information, and messages to others in the settlement. Hopefully no one shoots the messenger.
Merchant Assistant (Charisma)	You spend the day working as a shop assistant or aiding a merchant. Your work may be managing the register, taking inventory, or serving customers.
Science Assistant (Intelligence)	Stimpaks, chems, and old-world technology are vital to survival in the wasteland. You spend the day assisting a local expert in replenishing their stock or working on one of their totally safe experiments.
Supply Runner (Agility)	It is cold and dangerous, but someone must brave the winter wastes. You spend the day scavenging the surrounding region for much-needed supplies to help the settlement.
Gambler (Luck)	Whether or not a settlement has a local casino, there are always those looking to play games and hopefully win a few extra caps.





DESIGNING COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

This section contains a toolkit to design a variety of combat encounters to suit your game's needs. You can use it to determine a combat encounter's difficulty and which NPCs to use, adjust NPCs to pose a balanced challenge for the party, and incorporate other environmental factors into the scenario.

Groups in *Fallout*: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook* will range vastly from one table to the next regarding combat preparedness and capabilities. Use this toolkit for guidance, adjust combat encounters based on how well your group has handled previous encounters, and give PCs opportunities to escape and fight another day when possible.

BALANCING ENCOUNTERS FOR PARTY SIZE AND LEVEL

Encounter level represents the estimated difficulty for a combat encounter. The easiest way to adjust the difficulty is to reduce or increase the number of enemies in an encounter. Use the following guidelines to adjust the encounters presented in the quests to your party's size and level. When building your encounters:

1. Choose the difficulty of the encounter. Encounters are relative to the number of player characters in the party and their average level (rounded up).
   - Simple encounters are one or two levels lower than the party's levels.
   - Average encounters are at the same level as the PCs or one level higher.
   - Hard encounters are two to five levels higher than the PCs.
2. Determine the XP budget by multiplying the number of characters in the party by the XP baseline.
3. Create an encounter roster. Spend the XP budget for each threat or NPC based on their XP rewards.
4. Remember that certain enemies with high damage resistance or health points may be unfun to encounter for groups without the ability to meaningfully hurt them, regardless of the NPCs' XP values.

Example: A GM is building an average encounter for five 7th-level PCs. They set the encounter level to 7 with an XP baseline of 80, which results in a total XP budget of 400.

ENCOUNTER LEVEL (DETERMINED BY DIFFICULTY)	XP BASELINE	3 PCS	4 PCS	5 PCS	6 PCS
1	20	60	80	100	120
2	30	90	120	150	180
3	40	120	160	200	240
4	50	150	200	250	300
5	60	180	240	300	360
6	70	210	280	350	420
7	80	240	320	400	480
8	90	270	360	450	540
9	100	300	400	500	600
10	110	330	440	550	660
11	120	360	480	600	720
12	130	390	520	650	780
13	140	420	560	700	840
14	150	450	600	750	900
15	160	480	640	800	960
16	170	510	680	850	1020
17	180	540	720	900	1080
18	190	570	760	950	1140
19	200	600	800	1000	1200
20	210	630	840	1050	1260
21+	+10 per level above 20	+30 per level above 20	+40 per level above 20	+50 per level above 20	+60 per level above 20

Adjusting For Allied NPCs

Allied NPCs can provide an advantage to PC groups that impact the difficulty of an encounter. At your discretion, you can count some or all allied NPCs as PCs to determine your XP Budget if you believe they might contribute significantly to an encounter.

MANAGING NPC ALLIES

Most of the time, you control the quest's NPCs, including the group's enemies and allies. If an allied NPC with a stat block joins the party on their journey for a time, you can run them normally or allow one of your players to control them as a secondary character.

Alternatively, you can manage NPCs more abstractly to keep the story moving quickly and the focus on the PCs. The more NPCs are involved in combat, the longer encounters take to resolve. While abstracting large groups of allies is explored in the major battles of *Winter of Atom*, a few ideas for how to handle NPCs without tracking their health points or stat blocks include the following:

- Allow an allied NPC to generate 1–2 AP to the group's pool at the end of a round, representing their assistance.
- Allow an allied NPC to treat PC's injuries with a limited number of Stimpaks or other consumables at the end of a round or after combat.
- Allow a capable allied NPC to automatically defeat 1 Normal or Minion NPC at the end of a round.
- Allow a capable allied NPC to add 1d20 when they assist a PC in making a test.

When abstracting allied NPCs during combat, briefly narrate what they do at the end of each round. Remember to put them in danger when the situation warrants it! Abstracted allies can be wounded, taken out of a fight, or even killed. Allow the PCs to come to their rescue or leave them to fend for themselves, which can help develop the relationship between those characters.



CREATING YOUR ENCOUNTER ROSTER

Refer to the following table to quickly reference NPCs' XP costs. **Minions** are a new type of NPC further described in *Scaling Encounters,* p.46.

XP BY NPC LEVEL

NPC LEVEL	XP (NORMAL)	XP (MINION)	XP (MIGHTY/NOTABLE)	XP (LEGENDARY/MAJOR)
1	10	3	20	30
2	17	6	34	51
3	24	8	48	72
4	31	10	62	93
5	38	13	76	114
6	45	15	90	135
7	52	17	104	156
8	60	20	120	180
9	67	22	134	201
10	74	25	148	222
11	81	27	162	243
12	88	29	176	264
13	95	32	190	285
14	102	34	204	306
15	109	36	218	327
16	116	39	232	348
17	123	41	246	369
18	130	43	260	390
19	137	46	274	411
20	144	48	288	432
21+	+7 per level above 20	+3 per level above 20	+14 per level above 20	+21 per level above 20

You can now spend your XP budget on NPCs to approach the general range of the encounter difficulty you have in mind. You can scale individual NPCs in various ways to adjust their XP and challenge levels (see the following section *Scaling Encounters,* p.46).

Some general tips when creating encounter rosters:

- For a quick encounter, set the number of enemies to be similar to the number of allies. In most circumstances, PCs will have an easier time against single enemies or small groups, regardless of XP value.
- Focus on selecting any Legendary, Major, Mighty, and Notable NPCs first, followed by the Normal NPCs, then Minion NPCs.
- Adjust NPC levels or add Minion NPCs if there is unspent XP from the budget.
- Group NPCs (p.46) belonging to a similar faction or type, such as the Brotherhood of Steel, mutants, or radroaches. Going alone (even for NPCs) is dangerous in the wasteland.

Example: *The XP budget for a 7th-level encounter for five player characters is 400. The GM decides that a band of raiders consists of a Raider Veteran (120 XP), a Raider Psycho (52 XP), a Raider Scavver (52 XP), and seven level 3 Raiders (24 XP each). The roster's total XP is 392 out of the allotted 400.*

PREPARING THE ENVIRONMENT

Beyond mutated monsters and explosive gunfights, the wasteland itself can provide additional challenges to PCs that might increase the XP value of an encounter. When determining the environment for a combat encounter, consider the location, such as a ruined building, a desolate street, a wooded area, or underground caverns. Individual zones can introduce a variety of additional challenges, as detailed further in **Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook***, *Chapter 5: Combat, Environmental Conditions.*

When preparing individual zones for a combat encounter, consider the following:

- **Zones:** Consider the Zones and Ranges relative to the PCs to be used in your encounter *(Close, Medium, Long, and Extreme)*. Place characters and environmental challenges in each you use. Determine what makes each zone a fun, unique set piece amongst the surrounding area.
- **Terrain:** When moving from one zone to another, you can require a PC to spend between 1 and 3 AP to pass through difficult terrain—such as winter environments or obstacles. PCs can always use the **Rally** action or generate AP for the GM's pool if they do not have enough AP to spend.
- **Cover:** Determine environmental elements that can provide cover from attacks. A dense forest's trees may provide 1 cover, while a concrete wall might provide 3 cover.
- **Environmental Conditions, Hazards, and Dangerous Objects:** You can increase the XP value of an encounter by introducing these additional challenges (see *Scaling Encounters, Quick Scaling Method*, p.46). Keep the total number of these challenges lower than half the size of the party (rounded up), and avoid using challenges with similar effects.
- **Triggering Hazards and Dangerous Objects:** Determine what triggers the environmental challenges you have prepared—such as traps, avalanches, or thin ice. If multiple challenges are present in an area, consider whether triggering one might set off another nearby.

RESKINNING NPCS

When you cannot find the right stat block for your encounter or want to create something original, you might need to adapt an existing stat block for your purposes. A few simple guidelines follow to help you quickly reskin existing stat blocks.

- **Convert NPCs that are already similar.** For example, do not reskin a Character stat block to make a new Creature, or vice-versa. If you are creating a unique Mutated Insect, look first at other Mutated Insect stat blocks to find a base.
- **Remix weapons, tag skills, and special abilities.** You can borrow and exchange from multiple existing stat blocks. Try to remove an equal or similar number for each of these elements you add to your NPC. For instance, if you reskin a Mercenary stat block to serve as a combat-oriented Children of Atom NPC, you might remove its Let Rip ability, Small Guns tag skill, and *molotov cocktail* attack—exchanging them for the *Atom's Glow* ability, Energy Weapons tag skill, and *gamma gun* attack.
- **Adjust Derived Statistics.** If you change any S.P.E.C.I.A.L. or Mind and Body attributes, adjust any derived statistics such as target numbers, health points, initiative, and skills .

GROUPING NPCS

To simplify running combat encounters, GMs can group NPCs together and allow whole groups to act simultaneously. A group consists of 2-5 identical creatures.

- **Making a Test:** When a group makes a test, select a single NPC to be the leader and use their stats to determine the outcome. Their roll gains an additional d20 for each other NPC in their group, which does not count towards the normal limits on buying bonus d20s with Action Points.
- **Attacking:** When the group attacks, add +1  to the leader's damage roll for each other NPC. The GM can then spend 2 AP to allow the group to make another attack, increasing the difficulty of their test by 1 for each previous attack made on their turn.
- **Targeting a Grouped NPC:** When attacked, the NPCs within the group are targeted and take damage individually.
- **Defeating a Grouped NPC:** When an NPC in the group is reduced to 0 health points, they are defeated, but any remaining damage from the attack is lost—extra damage does not carry over to other NPCs in the group.

SCALING ENCOUNTERS

This section provides various approaches to scaling encounters to make them more appropriate for higher or lower-level parties. It explores quickly adjusting NPC difficulty by creating Minion NPCs and using the quick scaling method—or more thoroughly by leveling up NPCs and making NPCs unique. ***Fallout:* The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook****, Chapter 10: Denizens of the Wasteland,*** provides the most detailed rules for adjusting levels and types (Normal, Mighty, Legendary, etc.).

Consider which of the following approaches best suit you, your preparedness, and your style of gamemastering.

CREATING MINIONS

Minions are a new type of NPC most often encountered in groups (of 2–5) that you can add to an encounter to increase its XP budget while still providing an exciting challenge to the PCs. Minions can make large-scale combat scenes more manageable, reducing the information you track and dice you roll.

Minions fight loud and die fast, usually no match for the prowess of PCs and more powerful characters. Whether the PCs face a horde of ghouls, insectoid swarms, or an army of raider grunts, Minions are most dangerous in large groups and at the start of combat.

You can quickly use these guidelines to turn any Normal NPC into a Minion to lower an encounter's XP budget. When creating Minions, follow the same rules as Normal NPCs with the following exceptions:

Minion XP. Minions are worth one-third XP for their Level (rounded up).

Minion Health Points. Minions only have one HP but are immune to damage from non-attacks like winter hazards and environmental conditions. Additionally, Minions take no damage from attacks with the Blast effect. When a Minion should take damage from a successful Blast attack test, instead roll 1  —on an Effect, they are defeated.

Minion Attacks and Damage. Minions' attacks do not generate AP for the GM's pool and do not roll damage. Their attacks deal base damage equal to half their Level (rounded up) and automatically trigger all their attack's Damage Effects once. For each additional success above the target's Defense, increase the damage by 1.

Minion Groups. When a group comprised entirely of Minions attacks, add +1 to the leader's base damage for each other Minion in the group.

Example: *A group of five Level 10 Mutated Mariner Minions rolls 6d20 to attack as a group with Starving Bite, resulting in 4 successes against a target with Defense 2. The attack deals a total of 11 Physical damage (5 base damage + 4 additional grouped Minions + 2 additional successes) with the Piercing 1 effect.*

Adding More Minions. For each AP you spend at the start of a combat round, you can choose to add 1+1 more Minions to an encounter unless noted otherwise.

QUICK SCALING METHOD

The shifting narrative within the wasteland often leads to sudden, unexpected encounters that don't give you much time to manually adjust NPC levels and types. Once you have determined the XP budget (your **base encounter XP**) and the enemy roster, you can use the **quick scaling method** to adjust the encounter's difficulty.

Choose from the following options to add to your **final encounter XP**. Avoid choosing the same effects more than once and note which options you applied.

- **Add or Subtract 10% XP (from the base encounter XP) for each effect:**
  - Increase or decrease all NPCs' target number for attacks by 1 (max 16).
  - Add or subtract 1 to damage rolls for all enemies.
  - Add or subtract 1 to all damage resistances for all enemies.
  - Add or remove an environmental condition, hazard, or dangerous object.
  - Add a strategic advantage to the enemies or the PCs (e.g., drum barrels containing volatile substances, high defensive walls that must be climbed, or lighting panels that make sneaking difficult).

LEVELING UP NPCS

As a rule, most leveling benefits for NPCs are gained from increasing their level by two or reaching the next odd-number level. Adjust derived statistics such as target numbers for attack-related tests, health points, and initiatives last. Keep in mind the following changes when leveling:

Both Characters and Creatures:

- **Every Odd Level:** Add +1 to one of the NPC's attributes for every odd-number level gained and adjust any derived stats like damage, HP, and carrying capacity accordingly.
- **Every Level:** Add +1 health point for each level gained. This is further adjusted if the NPC has the Big or Little special abilities.

For Creatures:

- **Every Two Levels:** Add +1 to the damage of one attack.
- **Every Two Levels:** Add +1 to one type of damage resistance on all locations.

For characters:

- **Every Level:** Add +1 to one skill.
- **Every Two Levels:** Replace one weapon with one of a higher rarity. Alternatively, increase the weapon damage by 1 or add a damage effect.
- **Every Three Levels:** Add +1 to their Wealth.

Example: *A GM wants to level up a Feral Ghoul from Level 3 to Level 5, granting the mutated human a +1 to Body for added sturdiness. The changes in the Body attribute increase their health points to 13 and initiative to 11. The Feral Ghoul gains an additional for damage with a target number of 9 on its attack, and the GM decides to grant the ghoul a +1 to Physical damage resistance for all locations.*

The steps presented in this section can be found in greater detail in **Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook*** in *Chapter 10: Denizens of the Wasteland.*

MAKING NPCS UNIQUE

Increasing an NPC's Level is one way to fill the gaps in the XP budget, but even changing a normal NPC's type can impose a greater challenge to a fully equipped, well-organized party. Like leveling up, NPCs gain additional benefits by changing into Mighty/Legendary creatures or Notable/Major characters. When leveling up an NPC **and** changing their type, apply the benefits of the type change, then apply the level up benefits last.

	MIGHTY	NOTABLE	LEGENDARY	MAJOR
ATTRIBUTES	+2 to Body or Mind	S.P.E.C.I.A.L = 42 + half level (rounded up)	+2 to Body and Mind	S.P.E.C.I.A.L = 49 + half level (rounded up)
SKILLS	-	Three tag skills rated at 2 plus skill points equal to Intelligence + level	-	Four tag skills rated at 2 plus skill points equal to Intelligence + level
HEALTH POINTS (APPLIED AFTER ALL MODIFIERS, INCLUDING LEVEL)	Double base health points	Add Luck	Triple base health points	Add twice Luck
LUCK POINTS	-	Equal to half Luck (rounded up)	-	Equal to Luck
INITIATIVE	Body + Mind	Perception + Agility + 2	Body + Mind	Perception + Agility + 4
XP REWARD (AT THEIR LEVEL)	Double	Double	Triple	Triple

Example: *A GM upgrades a Mutant Hound to a Mighty Mutant Hound. The Mutant Hound's XP reward is doubled to 62 XP. The GM decides to increase the creature's Body attribute from 9 to 11, and its health points increase to 20.*

SURVIVING DEFEAT

Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook* emphasizes survival roleplay, and sometimes when things go very wrong in combat, the PCs must flee from a dire situation. While in combat, players may perform the following actions:

LUCK OF THE DRAW

When players use **Luck of the Draw**, they can spend additional **Luck points** to introduce a detail that might help them escape the encounter—such as a hidden escape route, a structure they can hide behind, or allies arriving at the right moment to cover their retreat. As the GM, try not to veto their suggestion. Instead, collaborate with them to introduce something that makes sense for the scenario. If you feel an encounter is likely to end with some or all of the PCs dying or becoming overwhelmed, you can encourage the group to spend Luck points this way before it is too late. After a PC uses Luck of the Draw this way, pause the encounter to allow the group an attempt to escape.

The challenge level of the encounter determines the Luck point cost—2 for Simple encounters, 3 for Average encounters, and 4 for Hard encounters. Multiple PCs can contribute Luck points. Once they pay the cost, the PCs must make a group test—using any attributes and skills that make sense for the story—with a difficulty equal to the Luck points spent. If the test succeeds, encourage the group to narrate how they escape the situation. If the test fails, describe to the players how their escape attempt fails

and continue with the encounter, starting with the next character in the initiative after the PC who used Luck of the Draw. PCs cannot use Luck of the Draw to try to escape again until the start of the next round.

EVERY PERSON FOR THEMSELF

If Luck points are scarce, characters can try to escape individually without using Luck of the Draw. If a PC ends the round further than **Extreme** range from the nearest enemy, you can allow them to escape the encounter. Alternatively, PCs can spend a major action to dash into cover **(STR or AGI + Athletics)** or hide **(AGI or PER + Sneak)** until the threat passes. To do so, they must succeed on a test with a difficulty equal to 5 minus the distance from the nearest enemy who can see them—1 for Medium, 2 for Long, and 3 for Extreme.

When it rains, it pours

When PCs flee or successfully hide, you can decide whether or not their foes continue to hunt them or give up the chase. You might even have them escape one encounter only to end up in an even more dangerous situation in the wastelands—out of the frying pan and into the fire. It is important to **read the room** in these situations, especially when it may be necessary to pause or manage players' discomfort (see the ***Fallout*: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook***, *Chapter 9: Gamemastering, Safety and Consent)*.

Make their escape tense, but unless you are running a game where PC death is common, it's often best and most interesting to allow players to run away and survive to fight another day.







★ Chapter Two ★

WELCOME TO THE COMMONWEALTH

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Chapter Two

WELCOME TO THE COMMONWEALTH

Vast stretches of empty land and crumbling pre-war highways lead to ruined skyscrapers and desolate buildings. People make their homes in struggling townships, fortified stadiums, rad-drenched craters, coastal havens, and roaming settlements. Neon signs light up ruined business facades as busy markets fade in the frost. Mutated creatures roam the wastes alongside desperate Super Mutant patrols and raider gangs. A devastating nuclear winter threatens to bring in more than a deadly chill. Welcome to the Commonwealth.

RUNNING THIS CHAPTER

As winter grips the Commonwealth, the player characters (PCs) find themselves displaced and adrift in the wasteland with no place to call home and nowhere to seek shelter. When word of a missing supply train reaches them, they set off to help recover its cargo and return it to Diamond City in exchange for the chance of refuge. Their interference sets in motion a chain of events that throws them deep into a growing conflict between the Minutemen and the Children of Atom that culminates in a bloody battle that promises to ignite the fires of a greater war to come.

Welcome to the Commonwealth contains three connected main quests, detailed information about significant settlements and important peoples, and additional quests for each settlement. Its main quests drive the narrative forward. ***After Main Quest: The Train Job***, this chapter allows free-form sandbox exploration that allows characters to build relationships with settlements and involve themselves in the wasteland's factions.

Before starting ***Winter of Atom***, it is recommended you read this chapter at least once in its entirety. Familiarize yourself with the procedures found *in Traversing the Commonwealth,* p.29. Use them to generate stories and obstacles when the PCs leave behind the relative safety of settlements to explore the wasteland.

When the PCs discover a settlement, refer to that settlement's subchapter. Each settlement contains an overview with details on its key locations, people, and one side quest that influences Welcome to the Commonwealth's main storyline. **Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook***, Chapter 8**:** The Commonwealth, contains other ideas for locations and side quests that you can use when running this chapter. Each quest presented offers a suggested trigger to guide you on when to introduce it to the PCs.

This chapter begins with a broad scope, requiring PCs to define their objectives and explore as they see fit. As the chapter advances, the main quests narrow in focus to channel the PCs into the growing conflict within the Commonwealth that leads them into *Chapter 3: The Winter War*. You can begin ***Winter of Atom*** with exploration, slowly allowing the PCs to make their way towards Diamond City and the first part of the main quest, *The Train Job* (p.56). Alternatively, you can start ***Winter of Atom*** at the gates of Diamond City and kick off your story with the main quest.

LEVELING UP

The PCs begin this chapter at level 1. They should ideally reach level 3 or 4 before starting ***Main Quest: Cleansing Fire***. Encourage PCs to explore, complete side quests, and build relationships with Commonwealth settlements to achieve level 6 or 7 before introducing ***Main Quest: A New Eden***.

PCs may level up using experience points, or you can decide when they advance. Suggestions for good milestones in this chapter for PCs to level up include:

- Whenever the PCs complete one of the chapter's three main quests
- Each time the PCs complete two side quests
- If the PCs kill the Last Son of Atom's acolytes or join them in killing the Minutemen guards during Main Quest: Cleansing Fire, Scene Two
- If the PCs manage to cull the entire hoard of frost feral ghouls found during Side Quest: Forged in the Dark

HOME BASE

As the PCs explore the Commonwealth and build relationships with various settlements, they may naturally find themselves drawn towards a specific settlement that they return to time and again—operating out of it as their home base. Encourage this by introducing side quests and complications that threaten the settlement. Doing so will strengthen their connection to the world and their desire to help the settlement thrive. The more PCs care about settlements, the more real and impactful the Last Son of Atom's growing influence and threat will feel to your players.

You can find advice for creating your own quests to add to this quest line in **Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook***, *Chapter 9: Gamemastering*. Every settlement in this chapter introduces additional NPCs, locations, and local conflicts that can inspire more side quests. To make the Commonwealth feel genuinely alive, make these quest ideas your own by tying them to your PCs' backstories or the settlements they care about most. You can also use the side quest suggestions in **Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook***, *Chapter 8: The Commonwealth*, or take inspiration from the following list.

- A new Vault has been discovered in the wasteland, and the settlement's leaders believe it holds valuable supplies of food and medicine. But they aren't the only ones who have heard about it, and the race is on to get there first. Will the PCs put themselves in harm's way again to help their new friends and bring back supplies that could help them survive the bleak winter?
- A dangerous radscorpion has moved into a small pond near the settlement. Several travelers have been seriously injured or killed by it. More will die unless somebody takes care of the monster—and fast.
- A nearby radio tower has begun broadcasting a signal making everybody feel sick. When the PCs' radios tune into it, they hear endless whispering punctuated by occasional screams. The signal must be silenced and its source investigated before the weird sickness brings the settlement to its knees.
- Protectrons from a nearby military bunker have malfunctioned and keep launching assaults on the settlement. Ammo inside the settlement is running low, and the walls can't hold out for much longer. The PCs need to do something before it's too late.

If you create original side quests, reward the PCs with Settlement Reputation or XP as you see fit. Use these opportunities to give your players the kind of adventure they seem most interested in—developing the world around the events of the main quests to build a truly memorable experience. If additional side quests cause PCs to level up beyond the recommended range, scale up the difficulty of encounters to match.

THE COMMONWEALTH AT A GLANCE

The Commonwealth was once the state of Massachusetts, New England. Post-war, the area is split up into seven regions. The ***Fallout* Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook*** explores these regions more in-depth.

Several small cities, more than a dozen thriving settlements, and small townships call the Commonwealth home. The area has vital trade routes, and most of its factions aid local communities, though a few groups serve themselves at the expense of others.

Except for the usual wasteland dangers—raiders, Super Mutants, unsavory mercenary groups, and the local fauna—the Commonwealth is full of potential for anyone who chooses to make it their home. During winter, high radiation and severe weather make the Commonwealth an icy hell for those who travel through the region or live there.

NUCLEAR WINTER IN THE COMMONWEALTH

The wasteland is no stranger to harsh and unforgiving winters. This year's winter, however, is the worst the Commonwealth has ever seen. The constant below-freezing temperatures bring a frost that does not seem to thaw, killing crops, herd animals, and anyone who fails to find a warm place to sleep at night. Heavy snowfall for days at a time makes travel nearly impossible, cutting off trade routes and snowing people into their homes. Radiation levels in the environment spike as snowfall blankets the landscape and leeches deadly particles into everything it touches. This winter, other problems facing the Commonwealth include a severe supply scarcity, collapsing settlements and infrastructure, homeless refugees seeking food and shelter, and desperate opportunists willing to prey on the vulnerable.

Though this promises to be a long, brutal winter, the outlook is not entirely bleak—the hope of the Commonwealth lies in its communities and their ability to work together for the common good. The Minutemen and the Children of Atom try to aid people where they can. Settlements like **Diamond City** and the fabled **Mirage** offer protection and supplies, while places like **Goodneighbor** and **Big Top** take in the people other settlements deem undesirable.

KEY FACTIONS

The Commonwealth is home to several well-established factions and numerous smaller groups, not including its settlements and communities. ***Winter of Atom*** focuses heavily on the **Church of the Children of Atom** but also features the **Minutemen** at key points in the story.

The Minutemen scramble to provide aid and security for the people of the Commonwealth as the nuclear winter worsens. The success of their efforts varies between settlements, as they struggle to provide for themselves and the people they protect. As heavy snowfall and freezing temperatures make travel difficult, mobilizing the militia's forces is slow and arduous. Across the Commonwealth, tensions rise between the Minutemen and a newly arrived sect of the Children of Atom. This conflict can reach a flashpoint during ***Main Quest: A New Eden*** and in *Chapter 3: The Winter War*.

The Church of the Children of Atom is familiar to many wastelanders. Widely considered a cult, they worship radiation and nuclear annihilation—a gift from their creator god, Atom. While multiple sects of the Church exist in the wastelands, this book focuses mainly on a new group that serves as the quest line's primary antagonists. The sect claims to be on a great pilgrimage across the northern wastes, led by a charismatic leader who calls himself the **Last Son of Atom**. Stuck in the region until the spring thaws, the Children of Atom offer aid to struggling communities while growing their flock and influence. Secretly, the Last Son of Atom is working feverishly to excavate an ancient city far beneath the Glowing Sea that he believes holds the key to ushering in a new age of Atom. As a religious group, members should

be depicted as walking a fine line between outwardly generous to those in need and whimsically overzealous, making them a divisive presence wherever they go. The sect's actions become increasingly sinister and violent as ***Winter of Atom*** progresses.

OTHER COMMONWEALTH FACTIONS

While the following factions do not take center stage in ***Winter of Atom***, they are still active within the Commonwealth. They may take a larger role at your table, and this section describes how they cope with winter and current events during the quests. You can read more about the following factions in the ***Fallout Roleplaying Game*** *Core Rulebook*.

The Institute is an ever-present threat resulting in wild rumors of people being replaced by synthetic lifeforms that cause many locals to be suspicious of other people—even loved ones and friends. Safe below the ground in their self-sufficient habitat, winter is no threat to the Institute, its scientists, or its synth agents. Information regarding the above-ground situation still reaches them, though their synth operatives find the winter season little more than an inconvenience. During ***Winter of Atom***, the Institute is primarily concerned with their secret research and locating a group of escaped synths that are hiding in the Big Top settlement.

The Railroad struggle in their fight to free synths from the Institute's grasp, but the winter hampers their efforts. Supplies are scarce and their safehouses disappear as settlements succumb to the freezing climate. The Railroad take advantage of the aid from the Children of Atom and the Minutemen as much as they can without revealing themselves. During ***Winter of Atom***, they avoid getting directly involved in the conflict between the Church and the Commonwealth, though they may come to the aid of the Big Top synths should the Institute locate the escapees.

The Brotherhood of Steel continues their mission to save humanity from itself, mutated humans, and dangerous technology. However, other than a rare scouting group, they have yet to settle in the region and have no organized presence in the Commonwealth during ***Winter of Atom***.

Raiders seek to survive at any cost, and the deadly winter makes them even more desperate. Unwilling to compromise their way of life to fit into the established settlements of the Commonwealth, they band together in greater numbers than ever to raid settlements and traveling groups. They clash with the Minutemen frequently, but with the militia's forces spread thin, the raiders certainly have the upper hand. They could prove a threat to unprotected travelers and small caravans during the events of Winter of Atom.

The Gunners are better armed and coordinated than typical raiders. They have the firepower to wipe out settlements that will not hand over supplies, and even the Minutemen struggle to fight back against their resources. Desperate individuals pay the mercenaries many caps to protect their goods while they travel across the wintery wasteland. The Children of Atom have recently drawn their attention by arriving in the area with enough resources to share with the local community. Ambitious Gunners whisper about plans to take the Church's stockpile for themselves. The Gunners could make unlikely allies against the Children during Winter of Atom—for a cut of the loot. Of course, they are just as likely to betray their allies and work with the Church, if the price is right.





MAIN QUEST: THE TRAIN JOB

This quest is available at the start of *Winter of Atom*. **Add 2 Action Points per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

As winter tightens its grip on the Commonwealth, crops fail, and supply lines falter. Residents of the settlements that ring the outskirts of Boston flood into the city—refugees seek the relative safety and security of Diamond City. But Diamond City is full to bursting, and Mayor McDonough has decreed that the gates are closed to newcomers until enough supplies arrive to provide for everyone.

When the PCs gather in the growing crowds outside Diamond City, a wounded caravan guard appears in the crowd begging for help. If the PCs aid him in pushing through the scrum of people and making his way to the gates, they are granted an audience with McDonough. They learn that the guard was the only survivor of a brutal attack on a supply caravan bringing vital food and medicine to Diamond City. McDonough enlists the group for help, asking them to travel to the ambush site, recover supplies, and find out who was behind the attack.

In this quest, PCs have the following objectives:

- Rescue the guard from the crowds outside Diamond City and obtain a meeting with Mayor McDonough.
- Travel to the attacked caravan and return whatever supplies they can to Diamond City before the crowds begin to riot.
- Discover who was behind the caravan attack.

At the attack site, the PCs meet a Child of Atom and hear the name the Last Son of Atom for the first time. This first encounter potentially sets the tone for their relationship with the Children of Atom in the coming months.

SCENE ONE: A GROWING HUNGER

Begin this scene when the PCs approach Diamond City for the first time. Read or paraphrase the following:

As the sun sets and the shadows lengthen around Diamond City, a row of heavily armed guards descend the stairs and line up beneath the shutters, batons drawn and ready for action.

"Step back!" a voice cries as the shutters begin to grind downward. A large group of freezing refugees surges forward to meet the shuttering gates. They scream and shout in a desperate attempt to reach the relative safety and warmth of the settlement—but a sharp crack from a guard's baton sends a figure at the front of the crowd reeling. The doors are closed for another night, it seems.

Each of you stands in the middle of the refugee mob. As the mass of bodies presses and writhes against the gates, another pocket of commotion springs up further back in the crowd.

Ask the characters to make a group **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 0, allowing the PCs to store additional successes as AP in the group pool or spending it to **Obtain Information**. The PCs notice that the commotion centers around a lone figure being jostled by the crowd. Read or paraphrase the following:

The woman is beaten and bruised, her thinly-padded armor torn in multiple places and her face covered in deep lacerations. She tries in vain to press forward through the crowd, but people keep pushing her back, sneering and laughing as she stumbles around.

"Help!" she cries, her voice weakening with every moment. "Please… Mayor McDonough! I need to warn him…"

After this short scene, invite the players to introduce their characters and ask each of them the following questions:

- Were you originally from the Commonwealth or another region?
- Where was your original home? Why did you leave?
- Did you know anybody else in the group before you came together in this crowd?
- How is your character responding to what they witness at the gates?

Characters can spend AP to **Obtain Information** about the wounded woman. Some information PCs can learn:

- She's wearing the garb of a Diamond City caravan guard.
- She's on the verge of collapsing from her wounds and exhaustion.
- Her eyes fix on the closing shutters of Diamond City, and she seems desperate to get to them before they close for the night.
- The panicked crowd looks like it might turn hostile soon if she keeps trying to force her way through them.

The woman's name is **Evie**, and she's in danger of being overwhelmed by the crowd. If the PCs decide to help her, they must do so immediately by making a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 3 to convince the crowd to stop bothering her. Alternatively, they can make a **STR + Speech** or **Weapon Skill** test with a difficulty of 2 to intimidate the mob into backing away from her. If the test fails, two men in the group attack Evie, and the PCs must fight them to save her (see *Encounter-1A: The Desperate Wastelanders*). If a PC fails a test to intimidate the crowd using a weapon, a third wastelander attacks the PC who attempted the test. If the test succeeds, the crowd parts and allows the PCs to lead Evie to the gates of Diamond City.

ENCOUNTER-1A: THE DESPERATE WASTELANDERS

Evie does her best to defend herself if a fight breaks out but soon falls to the ground under the beating administered by the wastelanders. If the PCs attack, the wastelanders leave Evie alone, draw their machetes, and instead focus on the PCs. When a PC defeats an enemy, ask if they use lethal force—if they do, the remaining wastelanders try to run away.

If the PCs do not intervene, the wastelanders beat Evie until she is unconscious and leave her for dead. Guards from Diamond City will eventually push their way through the crowd to recover her and take her to Mayor McDonough.

CONTINUING THE QUEST

For ***Winter of Atom*** to begin properly, the PCs must go with Evie to see Mayor McDonough. If they help her fight off her attackers, she asks them to escort her to the city's entrance. The gate guards allow the whole group to enter, at which point you can proceed to *Scene Two: Mayor McDonough*. If the PCs did not intervene, the guards who come to recover Evie's unconscious form identify the group as witnesses to what happened and demand that they go into the city to give an account of events to the Mayor. If they don't come willingly, the guards will take them inside by force. The PCs have a base **Settlement Reputation Rank of 2 (Neutral)** for **Diamond City**. If they didn't help Evie, reduce their Settlement Reputation by 1.

Wastelander

Level 2, Human,
Normal Character (17 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
5	6	6	4	5	6	4

SKILLS			
Barter	1	Sneak	1
Melee Weapons	2	Survival	3
Repair	3	Small Guns	1

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
8	12	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
200 lbs.	-	-

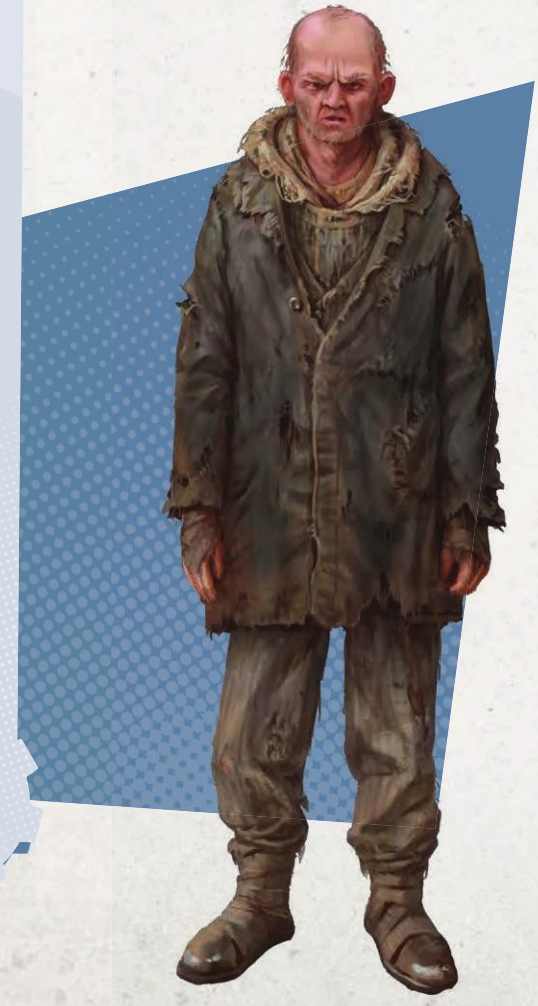
PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1 (Arms, Legs, Torso)	1 (Arms, Legs, Torso)	0	0

ATTACKS

- **MACHETE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 9), 3 Physical damage
- **TIRE IRON: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 7), 3 Piercing Physical damage

INVENTORY

Tough Clothing, Machete, Wealth 1



SCENE TWO: MAYOR MCDONOUGH

PCs find Mayor McDonough in the press box at the top of Diamond City (see *Diamond City, Key Locations and People of Interest,* p.103). The PCs are led there by the guards after being allowed entrance to the city with Evie, corralled into an old window cleaner's lift that ascends to the box. They are then shuffled past the mayor's secretary and into his office without much time to look around.

When the PCs meet the Mayor for the first time, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Mayor McDonough is older than most wastelanders, with streaks of silver in his hair and a smooth bulge over his waistband that speaks to the relative luxury he lives in compared to most people in the city. As the guards shuffle you in, he looks up from a pile of papers on his desk with a frown that quickly deepens when he takes in Evie's torn uniform and battered appearance.*
>
> *"This doesn't bode well," he says, his voice crisp and clipped. "We were expecting you days ago. Where is everyone else? What happened?"*
>
> *"It was awful," Evie says. "The caravan… We were attacked. I fled. They're all dead."*
>
> *A look of defeat sweeps across Mayor McDonough's face. Then his eyes turn to you, and you see a glimmer of hope.*

Mayor McDonough requests that the PCs travel to the site where the supply train was attacked and recover any supplies. He offers them citizenship in Diamond City as a reward, meaning they gain access to the city and a warm place to sleep at night. McDonough provides the PCs with 10 Common Materials they can use to build campsites during their travel since they will be out in the wasteland for a few days. He is also interested in discovering who was responsible for the attack, though that is secondary to recovering the food Diamond City needs to survive winter.

Evie can tell the group the following things:

- The supply train was a literal train traveling along a stretch of railroad kept in good repair by the combined efforts of a group of traders.
- They were attacked at the end of the line while transferring supplies from the train to wagons meant to carry the goods to Diamond City.
- The attack site is a 24-hour journey from Diamond City, located near a large radio tower that leans at a sharp angle—a good landmark for navigation.
- A few days ago, the caravan picked up a traveler—a strange man wearing priest robes who kept to himself. Evie didn't trust him.
- She thinks the attackers were simple raiders, but they were very well armed and knew precisely when and where to strike.

If the PCs stepped in and rescued Evie in the previous scene, her injuries aren't terrible, and she offers to accompany the PCs to the attack site—increase the group's AP pool to 6. Her knowledge of the area reduces the difficulty of navigation tests by 1 (see *Traversing The Commonwealth* on p.29).

The journey to the attack site is a frigid 24-hour trek through the Commonwealth's first snow of the season. Locating the attack site requires a Navigation test as described in *Traversing the Commonwealth* on p.29. Refer to *Building Campsites* on p.35 for the procedures for camping overnight. When they get near the site, proceed to *Scene Three: The Derailed Train*.



SCENE THREE: THE DERAILED TRAIN

A column of thick black smoke on the horizon gives away the attack site's location when the PCs get close. As they approach, PCs can make a **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 1 to scout ahead. If they succeed, they spot scavengers moving about the ruins of the derailed train and can plan their approach. If they fail, the scavengers surprise them when they approach the train.

As the PCs approach the train, read or paraphrase the following:

Ahead of you lies a ruined two-car train. It's been derailed, blown off the track by a large explosion that tipped the cars onto their sides and left a small crater in the ground where rails once ran. A thick column of smoke rises from the wreckage, and small fires still smolder and burn among piles of ruined crates and torn sacks.

The signs of a desperate battle are everywhere—bodies strewn on the icy ground, bullet holes in the sides of the train, and smears of blood that still look fresh despite beginning to dry.

ENCOUNTER-2A: SCAVENGERS

Add 1 AP to the GM's pool for each PC who didn't notice the scavengers before approaching the train.

As the PCs approach, 4 **scavengers** pour out of the train, waving weapons and screaming that this is their find. They are desperate and will defend the train's contents with their lives.

Scavenger

Level 2, Human, Normal Character (17 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
6	6	6	4	4	6	4

SKILLS			
Barter	1	Survival	3
Melee Weapons	1	Small Guns	1
Repair	3		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
8	12	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
210 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1 (Arms, Legs, Torso)	1 (Arms, Legs, Torso)	0	0

ATTACKS

- **PIPE GUN: AGI + Small Guns** (TN 7), 3 Physical damage, Range C, Fire Rate 2, Close Quarters, Unreliable
- **SERRATED COMBAT KNIFE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 7), 4 Persistent, Piercing Physical damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **MASTER SCAVENGER:** The scavenger gains a bonus d20 when making a Survival or Repair test.

INVENTORY

Tough Clothing, Pipe Gun, Serrated Combat Knife, 10+5 .38 Ammo, Wealth 1

The scavengers attempt to surrender if two of them are defeated. After the confrontation, the PCs may speak to the scavengers if any remain alive and present. They can approach the interrogation calmly or threateningly by making a **CHA** or **STR + Speech** test with a difficulty of 1. If a PC passes their test, they may spend AP to **Obtain Information**.

Questioning the scavengers may yield the following answers:

- The scavengers weren't responsible for the initial attack. The massacre was the work of a raider group operating out of a nearby military bunker.
- The raiders tied up a strange man inside the train. He gave the scavengers creepy vibes, so they left him behind.
- The early arrival of winter has everyone in the wasteland scared. People outside the settlements who aren't willing to fight for their food won't survive to see spring.

There are enough clean food supplies amongst the wreckage for PCs to eat and regain any missing health points. If the PCs show mercy and let the scavengers leave with some of the remaining supplies, you may decide they belong to a nearby settlement. Pick a settlement and allow the PCs to increase their settlement reputation rank there by 1, as the scavengers spread word of the group's mercy back with them.

The PCs may decide to try and track the raiders back to their military bunker. If they do, proceed to *Scene Four: The Bunker*. If they do not, proceed to *The Fallout* section of this quest when they return to the Mayor with the train's supplies.

INSIDE THE TRAIN CAR

If the PCs enter the train car, read or paraphrase the following:

The train lies on its side, and the floor is littered with broken crates and long cargo straps that have been torn loose. A thin man in long white robes sits at the back of the carriage through a haze of lingering smoke. He's chained to the inside of the car, but he doesn't seem overly concerned. He hums gently, clutching a pendant hanging from a thin chain around his neck. The pendant is adorned with an unfamiliar symbol—a long triangle with a thick circle inside it, bisected by a vertical bar. The symbol emits a soft yellow glow that seems to be bringing the man some measure of peace.

The man is Brother Landon, an acolyte of the Last Son of Atom. Any character with a Geiger counter (like a Pip-boy) notices that it begins to click as they get close to him. Landon seems quite content to be left alone, though he would prefer to be freed. His chains can be easily broken by cracking them with a blunt instrument. He is close-lipped, but characters can convince him to share some of his stories by succeeding on a **CHA + Speech** test with difficulty 1. PCs who succeed can spend AP to **Obtain Information**.

PCs can glean the following information from Brother Landon:

- As a long-time devotee of the creator god Atom, he believes in the divinity of radiation, and that every atomic mass contains an entire universe. When an atomic mass splits, such as during a nuclear explosion, the act creates a new universe.
- He heard the call of a prophet known as the Last Son of Atom on his radio and decided to join his new Church.
- He planned to travel from his previous home in the far north to the Glowing Sea, searching for the prophet.
- He designed the symbol he wears around his neck. He plans to present it to the Last Son of Atom and hopes it will become adopted as the official symbol of the new Church.
- He joined the train for protection, but it took him further away from his goal than he had planned.

Brother Landon doesn't linger at the crash site. The moment the PCs have left, and he senses that the coast is clear, he begins the long trek to Diamond City.

SCENE FOUR: THE BUNKER

The bunker that houses the raiders who attacked the caravan is a small concrete structure a few hours travel from the train. A sentry turret connected to a control terminal guards the large bunker door. The turret's scanners alert them to the PCs' presence if they enter Close range of the bunker. PCs can notice the turret before they trigger their sensors by making a **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 1. The turret opens fire on anyone in Close range, targeting PCs nearest them.

A PC can avoid the turret's sensors and sneak close by making an **AGI + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 1. If they fail, they trip the turrets' sensors, and the machines open fire. If they succeed, they can enter the bunker or attempt to hack and reprogram the turrets by succeeding on an **INT + Science** test with a difficulty of 2.

Machine Gun Turret MK I

Level 5, Robot,
Normal Creature (38 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
6	5	—	3	—

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
11	11	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1	1	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **MACHINE GUN: Body + Guns** (TN 9) 5 Stun Physical damage, Range M, Burst, Fire Rate 3

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The turret is a robot. They are immune to Poison and Radiation damage and their effects. Also, they are immune to all diseases.

INVENTORY

- **SALVAGE:** Scavengers can salvage from a destroyed turret by making a successful **INT + Science** test with a difficulty of 1. A success yields 3d20 5.56mm rounds and 2 Uncommon Materials.

If the PCs fail to reprogram or destroy the sentry turrets before they open fire, the raiders inside the bunker are alerted to the presence of the PCs and cannot be surprised by them.

ENCOUNTER-4A: RAIDERS

There are 4 **raiders** inside the bunker. If the PCs arrive unnoticed, the raiders are busy dividing their loot and arguing about who gets what—allowing the PCs to surprise them.

The raiders are exiles from various settlements in the Commonwealth who are trying to carve a living for themselves in the bunker. Their leader goes by the name **Silt**; they were exiled from Diamond City by Mayor McDonough, and hold an intense grudge against him.

The bunker's location is a secret, and the raiders intend to keep it that way. A PC can convince the raiders to part peacefully by succeeding on a **CHA + Speech** test with difficulty 2 so long as the PCs agree to periodically bring them supplies to help them get through the winter.

If the PCs scavenge the bunker, you can refer to the *Winter Wasteland Scavenging Table* on p.34.



Raider

Level 2, Human, Normal Character (17 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
6	5	6	4	5	6	4

SKILLS			
Medicine	1	Sneak	1
Melee Weapons	3	Survival	1
Repair	1	Unarmed	1
Small Guns	3		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
8	11	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
210 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1 (Arms, Legs, Torso)	1 (Arms, Legs, Torso)	0	0

ATTACKS

- **PIPE GUN: AGI + Small Guns** (TN 9), 3 Physical damage, Range C, Fire Rate 2, Close Quarters, Unreliable
- **TIRE IRON: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 9), 4 Physical damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **LET RIP:** Once per combat, the Raider may 'let rip' with a volley from their Pipe Gun, adding the weapon's Fire Rate of 2 to the weapon's damage for a single attack (for 5 total).

INVENTORY

Road Leathers, Pipe Gun, Tire Iron, 10+5 .38 Ammo, Wealth 1

THE FALLOUT

The PCs complete ***Main Quest: The Train Job*** when they return to Diamond City with the supplies they recovered from the train (and potentially from the raider bunker). Mayor McDonough is very grateful for their aid and believes that the PCs may help secure the long-term stability of the settlement. The state of Diamond City and how well its people react to the PCs depends on their actions.

The PCs have a base **Reputation Rank of 2 (Neutral)** for **Diamond City**. If their reputation rank becomes 0 (Hostile) at any point, Mayor McDonough banishes them from the settlement. The Diamond City Security guards will not allow them entry until they find a way to raise their settlement reputation—such as by delivering a sizeable donation of supplies to the settlement.

Adjust their base reputation rank based on the following outcomes or make a group **settlement reputation test** considering the following as positive or negative influences:

- Recovered the Supplies. If the PCs chased off or defeated the scavengers and returned with supplies, Mayor McDonough welcomes them back with open arms. The PCs increase their settlement reputation rank by 1.
- Dealt with the Raiders. If the PCs killed Silt's raiders at the bunker and bring back proof to McDonough, he pays them an additional 150 cap bounty. If they did not kill the raiders but inform McDonough of the bunker's location, he instead pays them an additional 50 caps and sends out a crew to deal with the raiders.
- Acted Selfishly. If the PCs keep Diamond City's stolen supplies for themselves, they gain ten of each of the following items: Melon, Corn, Tarberry, Melon Juice, and Brahmin Milk. The PCs reduce their settlement reputation by 1, and Diamond City's food supply becomes limited. If they kept the supplies and also did not help Evie outside the city gates when she was attacked, they lose 1 more settlement reputation—McDonough considers them no better than the raiders.

Possible next steps for the PCs include:

- Meeting locals and purchasing supplies in Diamond City to survive winter
- Exploring the Commonwealth and building alliances with other settlements
- Helping Yefim Bobrov with Side Quest: Digging In to earn the settlers' trust and learn more about the Children of Atom
- Joining Linda's traveling merchant caravan during Side Quest: We Got the Beat to earn some caps and make new allies

Before proceeding, review the section *Diamond City on* p.100 for more information about the settlement and its peoples, locations, conflicts, and side quests. After leaving Diamond City, ***Winter of Atom*** becomes an open-ended, sandbox story. The main quest line and central conflict continue with ***Main Quest: Cleansing Fire*** after the PCs have spent time traversing the Commonwealth and completing side quests. You can introduce the next main quest earlier or later than is recommended if it better suits your needs.

MAIN QUEST: CLEANSING FIRE

This quest becomes available when the PCs have completed at least four Commonwealth settlement side quests. **Add 2 APs per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

Cleansing Fire marks an escalation of the activities of the Last Son of Atom. Until now, the PCs may be unaware of the growing influence of the Last Son of Atom's sect. During this quest, they face the cult and learn more about its eccentricities.

Tasked with helping to clear out the sewers beneath Boston to pave the way for a new supply route, the PCs stumble upon a group of the Children of Atom not allied with the Last Son of Atom. They have been using the irradiated tunnels as a church. The PCs must either send the Children of Atom packing or find a new path for the proposed supply route.

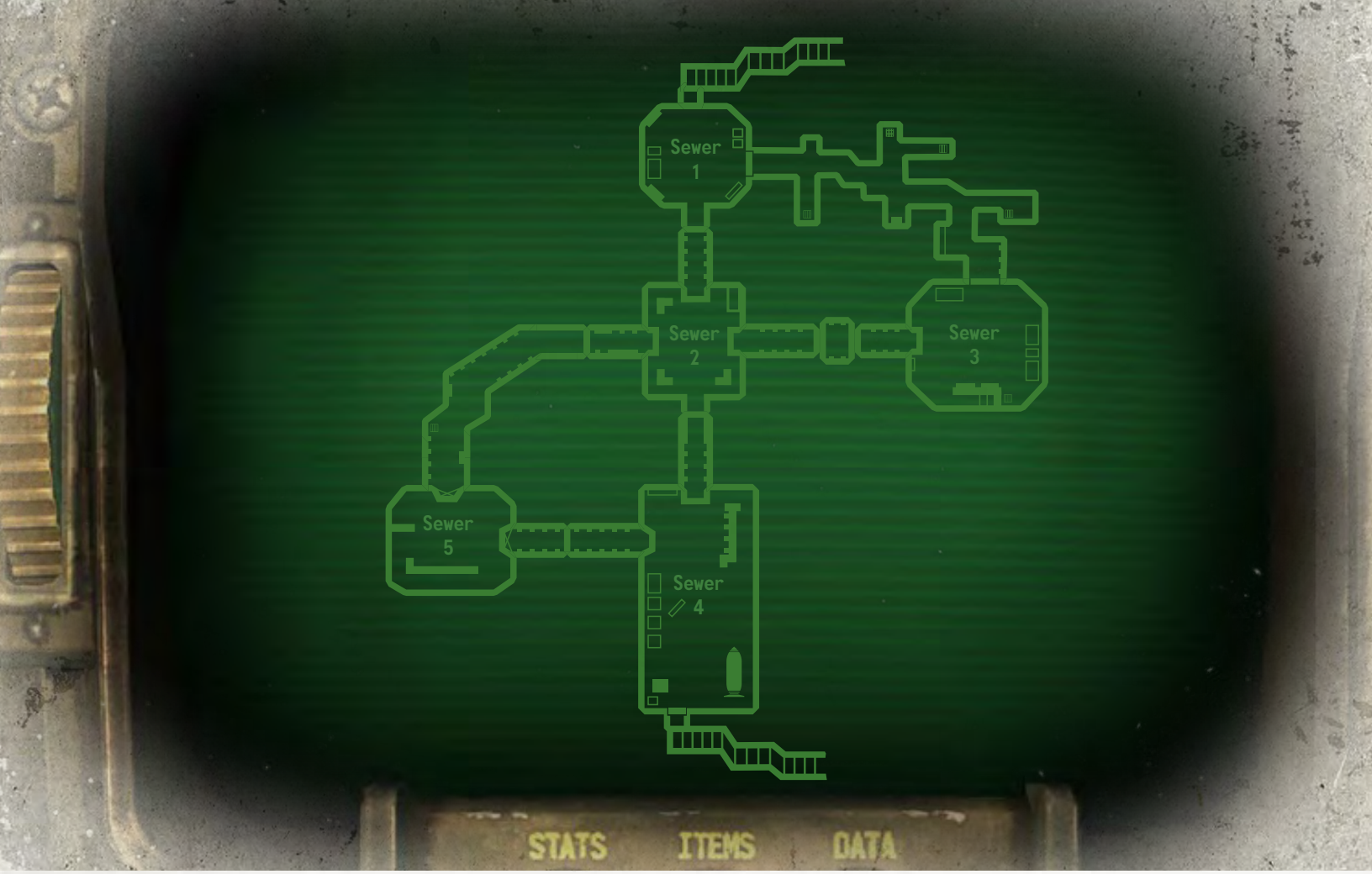
In this quest, PCs have the following objectives:

- Explore the sewers below Boston and make them safe to use as a supply route.
- Drive the Children of Atom out of the tunnels—or make a deal with Brother Schumaker that allows his sect to remain.
- Learn about the Last Son of Atom's cult.

To begin the quest, Mayor McDonough approaches the PCs directly or sends an envoy to invite them to meet with him in his Diamond City office about an important job. If the PCs have a Hostile settlement reputation with Diamond City, substitute Mayor McDonough with the leader of a different settlement with which the group is on better terms. The PCs can find out the following information in any negotiation that takes place:

- To avoid traveling through deadly winter storms, the Minutemen have proposed using the sewers beneath Boston to run supply caravans between settlements.
- The sewers are dangerous, filled with ghouls, radiation, and other hazards. Various groups around the city are working on clearing out their own subterranean sections.
- The PCs may want to prepare by buying or borrowing equipment to protect against radiation, like Hazmat Suits and RadAway.
- The entrance to the section they would like the PCs to clear out is near a Red Rocket just south of Diamond City.

It should be clear to the group that their goal here is to eradicate any dangerous threats from the sewers, remove all sources of deadly radiation, and ensure that a route exists that can be fortified to serve as a trade route. The PCs are offered 250 caps upfront and 250 more caps as payment when the job is complete. Additionally, if no PC has access to a Pip-boy, McDonough gives them a Geiger Counter they can use to pinpoint radiation sources to clear automatically.



SCENE ONE: INTO THE SEWERS

Begin this scene when the PCs travel to the Red Rocket south of Diamond City. As they are within Boston, you do not need to use the rules for *Traversing the Commonwealth*—but you may wish to roll for a random encounter.

The sewer entrance lies amidst a collapsed section of the road near the Red Rocket. Four freezing, grumbling Minutemen guard the entrance. The guards help the PCs attach to climbing ropes to lower themselves into the darkness beneath the streets.

A slow, fat, freezing rain falls as you lower yourselves beneath the broken concrete of Boston's streets and into the relative heat of the sewers. Chunks of masonry litter the ground between puddles of questionable liquid. The air is thick and surprisingly humid, and the steady sound of dripping water echoes around you.

Ahead, a tunnel curves deeper into the darkness, marked with a large arrow daubed on the floor in thick paint that glows green in the fading light. The tunnel is blocked just beyond the arrow by heavy bars surrounding a thick steel door.

A PC can open the door—with skill or force— by making an **AGI or PER + Lockpick** test with a difficulty of 2 or a **STR + Athletics or Repair** test with a difficulty of 3. For each failed test, add 2 AP to the GM's pool as the attempt noisily echoes throughout the sewer. The tunnel stretches beyond the gate for a few yards before turning hard to the right, where it joins with **S1. Sewer Stairs**.

EXPLORING THE SEWERS

Except where noted, the sewers are pitch black and require a light source to explore.

Time. Exploration of the sewer complex takes place in **Exploration Turns**. Each turn lasts roughly 10 minutes in-game time, and you can track them with

simple tallies. You can judge when you believe a turn elapses or use the following guide to determine what encompasses a turn:

- First time entering a room and encountering whatever lies within
- Attempting to make a room safe and remove its radiation source

Radiation. Each room has a **Rad Level** that refers to its ongoing hazard. Each room's Rad Level dictates how many of Radiation damage PCs take while in a location each time an Exploration Turn ends. For example, **S2. Recreation Room** has a Rad Level of 4, so PCs take 4 Radiation damage when they enter the space and first encounter the Children of Atom. They take another 4 Radiation damage when they attempt to destroy the tanning beds and again if they try to scavenge before making the room safe from radiation.

Make it Safe. Each room suggests a way the Rad Level can be reduced to 0 to make the area safe for travel. The entry also recommends a difficulty for the group test required to clear the room's radiation. Solutions are not set in stone; allow groups to puzzle out how to deal with the radiation and reward particularly creative ideas by reducing the difficulty of their test. Group tests require an Exploration Turn, and groups can use any attribute and skill combinations that make sense. If PCs fail their group test, they can attempt a new test with a different approach during a new Exploration Turn.

Scavenging. The Children of Atom haven't paid much attention to the tunnels and are most interested in **Room S4. The Rad Church**. Unless stated otherwise, scavenging tests have a difficulty of 1 for each room, with a complication range of 3 (18-20). Scavenging a room takes 10 minutes or one Exploration Turn. Each room yields a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 6 items (one additional item per AP spent) from the *Boston Sewers Scavenging Table*. If players roll a complication, introduce a pair of wandering **Children of Atom**, an appropriate hazard, or add 2 AP to the GM's pool.

When PCs encounter wandering Children of Atom, you can opt to use the following table to determine the Atomites' initial disposition. If PCs give the Children reason to be wary, roll twice and take the lower result. If the PCs give a persuasive reason for the Children to trust them, roll twice and take the higher result. Choose the reaction that makes the most sense, given the situation.

Boston Sewers Reaction Table

1D20 ROLL	REACTION
1-4	Violent or Terrified
5-9	Threatening or Demanding
10-14	Cautious or Anxious
15-17	Neutral or Uninterested
18-20	Friendly or Curious

BOSTON SEWERS SCAVENGING TABLE

2D20 ROLL	AMMO (QUANTITY)	2D20 ROLL	AMMO (QUANTITY)
2-3	Utility Overalls	28-29	Flamer Fuel (12+6)
4-5	Combat Shotgun and Shotgun Shells (6+3)	30	Church of Atom Propaganda Pamphlet (titled "When the River Glows Green"
6-7	Syringer Ammo (4+2)	31	A radio that only picks up one station (a man reading from The New Testament of The Last Son)
8-9	Sugar Bombs (irradiated)	32	A handmade holy symbol of the Last Son. It matches the one Brother Landon wore from *Main Quest The Train Job*.
10-11	3+5 Uncommon Materials	33	Pristine white robes with a green sun embroidered on the breast
12-13	Dirty Water	34	1+2 Signal Flares
14-15	Key	35	2 Rad-Away
16-17	1 bottles of Nuka-Cola	36	Rad-X
18-19	Lead Pipe	37	Defaced Church of Atom Propaganda Pamphlet (titled "Catch A Shining Star and Put It In Your Pocket")
20-21	5+5 Common Materials	38	1+5 Rare Materials
22-23	Geiger Counter	39	Fusion Cell (14+7)
24-25	Stimpak	40	Psycho
26-27	Berry Mentats		

S1. SEWER STAIRS

The passage turns, and you find yourself at the top of a sharp descent. Wide slabs of stone form deep stairs plunging into the depths. Water flows steadily across them, with ankle-high eddies and whirls gushing into darkness.

Here and there, trails of dust trickle down from the ceiling. Water swirls around masonry chunks that jut up from its murky surface. From beyond the wall to the left, the sound of metal striking metal is audible, rhythmic, and dull. A bright white light cascades through an archway at the bottom of the stairs.

Radiation

Rad Level: 2

Make It Safe (Difficulty 3): The water flowing down the stairs is irradiated. The PCs can render this area safe by diverting the water or building a dam at the top of the stairs that stops the flow. Reduce the difficulty of the group test to 1 if the PCs spend 5 Common Materials and 1 Uncommon Material to build a structure to manipulate the water flow.

Hidden Hazards. The water hides flooring and potholes that can easily turn or break an ankle. Characters passing through this area or scavenging must attempt a **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 3. Failure inflicts 3 Piercing Physical damage to one of their legs. Reduce the test's difficulty by 2 if the PCs stopped the water's flow.

Secret Door. The sound from beyond the left wall comes from **S3. Battle Bots**. A character investigating the wall notices the outline of a doorway in the masonry. It is locked from the other side, but a PC who makes a **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 2 notices a small keyhole in the wall. A PC can force the secret door open by making a **STR + Athletics or Repair** test with a difficulty of 3 or unlock it if they've managed to scavenge a key. Alternatively, they can pick the concealed lock by making an **AGI or PER + Lockpick** test with a difficulty of 2. If they fail a test, the sound alerts the guards in **S2. Recreation Room**—they prepare a surprise attack against any intruders. Opening the door creates a shortcut to **S3. Battle Bots**.

Exits. An archway at the bottom of the stairs opens into **S2. Recreation Room**. The secret door accesses **S3. Battle Bots**.

S2. RECREATION ROOM

This square chamber is a four-way junction for the flowing waters of the sewers. Those sewer channels have been boarded over with thick sheets of drywall to form a makeshift floor. Three deeply tanned guards bearing the clothes of the Children of Atom sit around a small card table, engrossed in a hand of poker. Large lamps—the top halves of tanning beds—have been bolted to the walls, bathing the room in hot white light. Another lamp sits on the floor immediately beyond the archway, pumping light into your faces. A smaller lamp mounted to the ceiling illuminates the card table.

Radiation

Rad Level: 3

Make It Safe (Difficulty 2): The four over-exposed tanning beds are responsible for the high level of radiation here. They must all be destroyed or otherwise disabled to make the room safe. For each successful group test, reduce the Rad Level by 1 to represent the PCs' progress.

Tanning Beds. Each tanning bed provides 2 of cover.

Children of Atom. Three Children of Atom are deeply engrossed in their card game and may not notice the PCs if they are stealthy. The PCs can sneak past them by making a group **AGI + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 4 and a complication range of 3 (17-20) due to the massive bright light beaming down onto the card players. If the test fails, the PCs make a lot of noise, or if they kicked down the secret door in **S1. Sewer Stairs**, the Children see them. You can use the *Boston Sewers Reaction Table* on p.68 to determine the initial response of the Children—or decide how they react based on the PCs' actions. They are devotees of the Church who believe their cause is righteous and that the Rad Church will be a new worship site in the city's heart.



Children of Atom

Level 6, Human, Normal Character (45 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
5	5	6	8	5	5	4

SKILLS			
Barter	1	Sneak	2
Energy Weapons	3	Speech	3
Melee Weapons	1	Survival	4
Repair	1		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
12	10	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
200 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1 (Arms, Legs, Torso)	1 (Arms, Legs, Torso)	2 (All)	0

ATTACKS

- **MACHETE: STR + Melee Weapons**(TN 6), 4 Piercing Physical damage
- **TIRE IRON: PER + Energy Weapons** (TN 8), 3 Piercing, Stun, Radiation damage, Fire Rate 1, Range M, Blast, Inaccurate

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **RAD RESISTANT:** The Child of Atom can survive moderate radioactivity for prolonged periods. They have Radiation DR 2.

INVENTORY

Tough Clothing, Gamma Gun, Machete, 2d20 Gamma Rounds, Wealth 1

Exits. Slick stairs lead up to **S1. Sewer Stairs**. A passage to the left leads to **S3. Battle Bots.** A corridor to the right ends with a locked door leading to **S5. The Vault**. Another path to the south leads to **S4. The Rad Church.**

The locked door to **S5. The Vault** can be picked with an **AGI or PER + Lockpick** test with a difficulty of 3 or opened with the key carried by **Brother Schumacher** in **B4. The Rad Church.** If a PC makes a **PER + Scavenging** test with a difficulty of 2, they notice the door is wired to a trap hidden in the masonry beside it. Disarming the trap requires an **INT + Explosives** test with a difficulty of 3. If the disarm test fails or PCs open the door without disarming it, the trap detonates. The nearest character is hit with exploding caps and nails, taking 5 Piercing Spread Physical damage. Successfully disarming the cap-and-nails trap rewards PCs with 5d20 caps and 3 Common Materials.

S3. BATTLE BOTS

Water gushes out of pipes set high in the walls of this circular chamber, cascading down into a deep pit ringed by a narrow walkway. The bottom of the crater is littered with twisted shards of broken metal, jutting spikes, and rusted chainsaws—the corpses of a hundred destroyed robots.

In the middle of the pit, a large platform holds two hulking metal robots on tracks and wheels, each heavily armored. One brings a vicious spinning saw blade down to cut through the plating on its opponent—but with a lurch, the other bot rams it backward and off into the pit! As the victorious bot spins in circles, letting out gouts of flame from a nozzle set high on its back, a triumphant cry comes up from the walkway on the other side of the pit.

Radiation

Rad Level: 1

Make It Safe (Difficulty 4): A wrecked robot at the bottom of the pit contains a cracked fusion core. Removing and carefully disposing of the core cleans the room. Each failure increases the Rad Level by 1, further exposing the damaged core.

The Platform. A ten-foot diameter circle of stone in the middle of the pit. Now just one robot remains atop the platform—**Eliza's Dragon**. Jumping four feet from the walkway to the platform requires a **STR or AGI + Athletics** test with a difficulty of 1. If a PC fails, they fall into the rubble below and take 3 Piercing Physical damage.

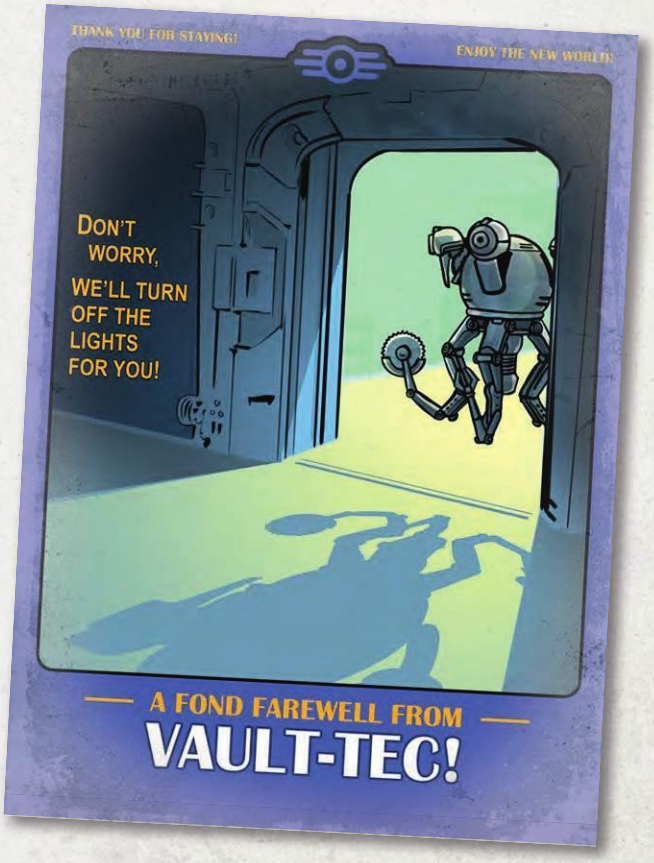
The Children of Atom Tinkerers. Two women, **Esther** and **Eliza**, control the battling robots. The pair are friends and occasional lovers with a deep interest in robotics. They regularly build robots to fight against one another, and the pit surrounding the platform is littered with their cast-offs.

They are generally friendly, though Esther is slightly sour at losing the most recent battle. PCs who succeed on a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 1 can convince the pair that they are not hostile. Increase the difficulty of the test by 2 if the PCs made a lot of noise fighting Children of Atom guards elsewhere in the tunnel. If they succeed, PCs can get Esther and Eliza to open up about what the Children are doing in the sewers by spending AP to **Obtain Information**. If the test fails, Eliza and Esther become hostile.

Some information that might be revealed during the conversation:

- They serve Atom under the guidance of Brother Schumacher, a priest of the Children of Atom. They came to the area from the far northeast and had nothing to do with the Last Son of Atom's sect.
- They are wardens of the Rad Church, a holy site in the sewers. Their sect of the Church won't look kindly on anybody interfering with it.
- The Last Son of Atom and his sect aren't looked on favorably by the other denominations of the Church. Many are wary of the Last Son's zealotry and profane beliefs. However, so far, relations have remained peaceful between sects.
- The Last Son's disciples in the tunnels beyond Brother Schumacher's domain will not respond well to the PCs' attempt to secure a supply route. The acolytes stalk the sewers with terrifying mutants at their side.

If a fight breaks out, Eliza ducks behind some scrap to gain 2 cover. She uses the bot's **remote control** (see *Eliza's Dragon, Remote Controlled*) to attack the PCs. Meanwhile, Esther tries to escape to warn **Brother Schumacher**. If the PCs defeat Eliza, they can obtain her remote control and gain command over Eliza's Dragon. Because the bot is a potent ally in the right hands, you might decide that it cannot be repaired to recover HP—or that it becomes destroyed in a future dramatic moment.



Children of Atom Tinkerer

Level 7, Human,
Normal Character (52 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
4	6	6	5	8	6	4

SKILLS			
Energy Weapons	3	Repair	3
Explosives	4	Science	4
Pilot	4	Speech	4

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
13	12	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
190 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
2(Head) 1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	2 (Head) 1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	4	0

ATTACKS

- **AGITATED RECOIL COMPENSATED PLASMA GUN: PER + Energy Weapons** (TN 9), 7 Vicious Energy/Physical damage, Fire Rate 2, Range C

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **RAD RESISTANT:** The Child of Atom can survive moderately high radioactivity for prolonged periods. They have Radiation DR 4.
- **HACK ROBOT:** The tinkerer can use an action to attempt to use a handheld device to take temporary control of a Robot within Short range by making an opposed **INT + Science** test against it. On a success, the Robot obeys the tinkerer's commands until the device is destroyed or used to hack a different robot. The tinkerer can only control one Robot this way.

INVENTORY

Tough Clothing, Welder's Visor, Plasma Gun, 10+5 Plasma Cartridges, 4 Stimpaks, Junk (Weird Hacking Device), Wealth 2



Eliza's Dragon

Level 10, Robot, Mighty Creature (148 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
9	6	3	3	3

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
38	15	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
4	2	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **DRAGON'S FLAME: Body + Guns** (TN 12) 7 Burst Energy damage, Fire Range C
- **BUZZSAW LAUNCHER: Body + Guns**(TN 12), 6 Piercing,Vicious Physical damage, Range M
- **RAMMING MAW:** Body + Melee (TN 12), 4 Physical damage, and the target is knocked prone. If this attack hits a prone target, add 4 damage and the Vicious effect.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The turret is a robot. They are immune to Poison and Radiation damage and their effects. Also, they are immune to all diseases.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **JUGGERNAUT:** The first time each round that Eliza's Dragon misses with an attack, it immediately makes a different attack as a free action without increasing the test's difficulty. Additionally, it only suffers a Critical Hit if an attack inflicts 7+ damage (after damage resistance) in a single hit, rather than the usual 5+.
- **UNLEASH THE DRAGON:** Once per scene, Eliza's Dragon can use a major action to attack with its Dragon's Flame, Buzzsaw Launcher, and Ramming Maw without spending AP or increasing the difficulty of each attack test.
- **IMMUNITIES:** The turret is a robot. They are immune to Poison and Radiation damage and their effects. Also, they are immune to all diseases.

INVENTORY

SALVAGE: Scavengers can salvage from a destroyed Eliza's Dragon by making an INT + Science test with a difficulty of 2. A success yields 4d20 flamer fuel, 4 units of Uncommon material with +1 per AP spent, and each Effect yields 1 Uncommon Material.

If Eliza and Esther remain friendly or are defeated, PCs can look around, scavenge, and even climb down into the junk pile below where the broken fusion core lies. If they remain, the Children of Atom return to tinkering with their bots. They are happy with their life in the sewers and their Church's relative security.

Exits. The walkway beyond the platform turns into a passage leading back to **S2. Recreation Room**.

S4. THE RAD CHURCH

The long passageway slopes down, and the further it descends, the hotter it gets. Slowly the darkness recedes. Beyond, a dull white glow infuses everything with a bright luminescence that clings to skin, clothes, metal, and stone.

Faint murmurings echo from the end of the passage, a rhythmic muttering that sounds almost like prayer. The corridor expands into a broad chamber. Among the room's fallen masonry and shattered brickwork lies a nuclear bomb the length of a bus—its tip buried in the concrete. A man in robes kneels beside it, hands clasped and head bowed in prayer.

Brother Schumacher. A softly spoken, devout priest of the Children of Atom. He reveres the bomb as a holy offering from the heavens. He desires to build a community here in the sewers, growing his Church around this physical embodiment of their Atomic God.

Brother Schumacher is startled if the PCs make themselves known. A PC can convince him to speak to them by making a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 2. The test automatically fails if the PCs made a lot of noise fighting his followers elsewhere. On a success, Schumacher allows them to stay in his community so long as they do not interfere with Atom's will. If their check fails, Schumacher orders them to leave his community and becomes hostile if they do not.

Schumacher won't allow the PCs to cleanse the Rad Church and will fight to protect its divinity if they try. However, he is willing to tell them about an alternate route through the sewers that circumvents his fledgling community and still allows for a safe trade route to be established. Unfortunately, the alternative tunnels are the domain of the Last Son of Atom's acolytes—they are unlikely to let the Commonwealth use it for a trade route. Schumacher may also reveal the following information:

- Brother Schumaker merely wants to create a refuge for Children of Atom looking to worship in solitude and peace. They are not pacifists, but they mean no ill-will towards the Commonwealth.
- The Last Son of Atom is a secretive man who prefers to work through others. He spends a lot of time in the Glowing Sea, and the radiation he willingly ingests is warping his mind in strange ways. The Glowing Sea is the deadliest area in the Commonwealth.
- Some of the Last Son's acolytes regularly visit Brother Schumacher's church, trying to recruit him to their sect. He refuses them and sends them away with food.
- The Last Son's acolytes patrol the tunnels beyond the church with strange, burrowing monsters at their side. Schumacher wishes they would go home and not return.

If the PCs offer to rid Schumacher of the Last Son's acolytes, he opens a secret door in the back of the Church that leads deeper into the sewers; proceed to *Scene Two: The Acolytes* when the group heads through the secret door.

If the encounter turns to violence, Brother Schumacher summons any living guards from **S2. Recreation Room** and **S5. The Vault** to fight off the intruders. They defend his church and the bomb to the death.

Brother Schumaker

Level 6, Human,
Notable Character (90 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
6	6	7	8	7	6	5

SKILLS			
Barter	3	Science	1
Medicine	2	Speech	5
Melee Weapons	3	Survival	2
Repair	3		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
18	14	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
210 lbs.	-	3

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	4	0

ATTACKS

- **SURGING STAFF OF ATOM: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 6), 8 Piercing Energy/Physical damage, Parry, Two-Handed

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **RAD RESISTANT:** The Child of Atom can survive moderately high radioactivity for prolonged periods. They have Radiation DR 4.
- **NEGOTIATOR:** When Brother Schumaker makes an opposed test with Speech, the first additional d20 he buys costs 0AP.

INVENTORY

Tough Clothing, Staff of Atom, Wealth 1

Children of Atom

Level 6, Human,
Normal Character (45 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
5	5	6	8	5	5	4

SKILLS			
Barter	1	Sneak	2
Energy Weapons	3	Speech	3
Melee Weapons	1	Survival	4
Repair	1		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
12	10	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
200 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	2 (All)	0

ATTACKS

- **MACHETE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 6), 4 Piercing Physical damage
- **GAMMA GUN: PER + Energy Weapons** (TN 8), 3 Piercing, Stun, Radiation damage, Fire Rate 1, Range M, Blast, Inaccurate

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **RAD RESISTANT:** The Child of Atom can survive moderately high radioactivity for prolonged periods. They have Radiation DR 4.

INVENTORY

Tough Clothing, Gamma Gun, Machete, 2d20 Gamma Rounds, Wealth 1

STAFF OF ATOM

WEAPON NAME	WEAPON TYPE	DAMAGE RATING	DAMAGE EFFECTS	DAMAGE TYPE	QUALITIES	WEIGHT	COST	RARITY
Staff of Atom	Melee Weapon	6	Piercing 1	Physical	Parry, Two-Handed	15	200	4

A Staff of Atom is a reinforced metallic staff averaging over 5 feet long with the symbol of Atom embedded on a golden disc at its top. Kinetic storage devices are strapped along the anti-personnel weapon's haft to unleash increased impact force. Its length provides ample flexibility and maneuverability for any wielder, granting them the ability to deflect incoming blows from most melee weapons.

A Staff of Atom can accept the following mod, which is installed with the **Repair** skill:

MOD	NAME PREFIX	EFFECTS	WEIGHT	COST	PERKS
Shocking Coils	Surging	+2 , Inflicts both Physical and Energy damage	-	+100	Blacksmith 2, Science 2

Radiation

Rad Level: 4

Make It Safe (Difficulty 4): Cleansing the Rad Church requires disabling the bomb at its center and finding a way to patch its leaking radiation without triggering a meltdown—a dangerous task that any remaining Children of Atom will fight to the death to obstruct. Each failed group test increases the stakes. Warn the PCs of what might be at risk if they continue to fail in their attempts to disarm the bomb. They can always retreat to a safer room to recover and plan before making another attempt.

- 1st Failure. The bomb begins to emit a rhythmic beeping sound, arming itself. If the PCs do not attempt another test to make the bomb safe, the alarm stops, and the bomb deactivates after ten minutes.
- 2nd Failure. The bomb beeps faster, and a ten-minute countdown clock begins ticking down on the side of the device. The PCs must run for shelter before the bomb detonates or risk their lives to make one more attempt to disarm it.
- 3rd Failure. The bomb detonates.

Nuclear Explosion. After the countdown clock appears on the device, any remaining Children of Atom embrace the coming divinity of the bomb; they join hands and begin to sing a song about embracing Atom's Glow. The PCs can immediately flee as far as they can and do their best to find concrete shelter by making a group **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 3. If they succeed, they take 10 Vicious Physical damage from falling debris when the bomb detonates. If they fail, they take 21 Radioactive Energy damage. ***Main Quest: Cleansing Fire*** ends, and the PCs do not gain a level or other rewards should they survive—see *The Fallout*.

Exits. A long passageway to the north ascends to **S2. Recreation Room**. A narrow tunnel to the right ends in another locked door leading to **S5. The Vault**. A secret door in the south wall descends into the deeper sewers described in *Scene Two: The Acolytes*. A PC who searches or scavenges in the Rad Church notices the door without requiring a test—they can also spot a pair of keys worn on a chain around Brother Schumacher's neck. One key opens the Church's secret door, and the other key unlocks **S5. The Vault's** doors in both this room and **S2. Recreation Room**.

S5. THE VAULT

This small chamber is piled high with crates, sacks of food, bags of caps, and water bottles. Camp beds on the ground betray the vault's dual purpose as sleeping quarters for the Children of Atom.

Radiation

Rad Level: 1

Make It Safe (Difficulty 1): Much of the radiation in the Vault comes from the irradiated food stored here. The ambient radiation fades away if the tainted food can be identified and removed.

There are three **Children of Atom Guards** here at any given time. If the vault door trap explodes or the PCs make a lot of noise fighting elsewhere in the tunnels, the vault guards prepare a **surprise attack** for any PCs standing near the door when it opens.

Vault Spoils. The vault is stocked with supplies and money. If the group spends an Exploration Turn searching the Vault, they find 200 caps, and each PC can roll twice on the *Boston Sewers Scavenging Table*. If the group spends an additional Exploration Turn, each searching PC can roll one more time on the table—at which point they find everything of meaningful value.

Exits. A locked door in the left wall opens to **S2. Recreation Room**. Beyond another locked door waits a winding tunnel that wraps around to **S4. The Rad Church**.

SCENE TWO: THE DEEPER SEWERS

The sewers wind on beneath the surface for several hours. As you move deeper, you reach older tunnels—narrower, more cramped, the air humid and thick with the smell of ancient decay. Water dripping and clanging pipes echo through the tunnels, making it hard to tell whether you are truly alone.

After a seemingly endless trek, new sounds resonate ahead of you: a loud splash, the drag of boots against sewer concrete, the rattling of chains. And then, something else. A clicking, hissing, spitting sound, unlike anything you have ever heard.

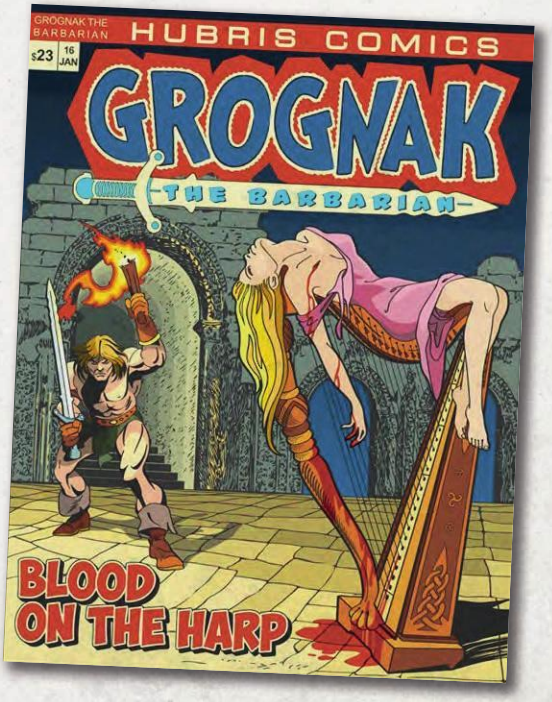
Something is coming.

A group of three **Children of Atom Fanatics** with two **young gigapedes** produce the eerie sounds ahead. The gigapedes are mutated centipedes the size of a horse but three times as long—hatchlings of the fully grown **gigapede** the PCs will encounter during *Chapter 3: The Winter War*. The Atomites pull them along on chains while patrolling the sewers.

The Fanatics' heavy leather robes are reinforced with rags, metal plates, bars, and chains. The armor is decorated with a holy symbol that matches Brother Landon's symbol from ***Main Quest: The Train Job***. If the PCs openly display that sign, the Fanatics consider them allies and try to enlist their aid to stop the expansion of trade routes into the sewers. A PC can also convince the Fanatics they are friendly and to speak to them by making a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 2. If the test fails or the PCs make it clear they mean to sanitize the sewer's radiation, the Fanatics unleash their gigapedes and attack. The Fanatics might reveal the following information:

- Because of the other Church sect's unexploded nuclear bomb, the sewers are heavily irradiated. The Last Son's sect intends to turn this area into a pilgrimage site for his followers and draw more followers to the Boston ruins.
- The young gigapedes are divine creatures blessed by Atom to smite their enemies and protect their holy lands. The Last Son preaches that the gigapedes are angels sent to them from another, more perfect world.
- The Fanatics are looking for a young woman named Minnie Mabee (see Beatsville, p.140), who fled the Last Son of Atom's service and may be hiding in the sewers. They freely offer a 100-cap reward to anyone who gives them her location, regardless of whether or not the information is accurate.

After chatting, the Children ask the PCs to accompany them to the sinkhole where they first entered the sewers, kill the four **Minutemen Riflemen** guards, and block up the hole. In exchange, they generously offer the PCs 500 caps when the deed is done, plus safe passage through the sewers whenever they desire. If the PCs accept and help the Last Children, word of their aid will get back to the Last Son. If the PCs do not intervene, the Children of Atom still defeat the Minutemen, though not all survive.



Children of Atom Fanatic

Level 9, Human,
Minion Character (22 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
7	6	6	5	5	7	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	2	Sneak	4
Melee Weapons	4	Speech	2
Small Guns	4	Survival	2

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
1	13	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
220 lbs.	+1	3

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
3(Head, Arms, Legs, Torso)	4(Head, Arms, Legs, Torso)	Immune	0

ATTACKS

- **COMBAT SHOTGUN: AGI + Small Guns** (TN 11), 5 Physical damage, Spread 1, Range C, Inaccurate, Two-Handed
- **HEATED SUPER SLEDGE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 11), 5 Energy damage, Piercing 1, Two-Handed

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The fanatic is immune to Radiation damage and its effects.
- **MARTYR FOR THE CAUSE:** If an attack targets an ally within Close range, you can spend 1 AP to allow the fanatic to push them out of the way and become the target instead.

INVENTORY

Cage Armor, Heated Super Sledge, Combat Shotgun, 5 shotgun ammo

Young Gigapede

Level 12, Mutated Centipede,
Normal Creature (88 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
9	5	3	-	3

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
21	14	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
3(All)	1(All)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **PINCERS: Body + Melee** (TN 12), 5 Vicious Physical damage
- **CAUSTIC RADIO-SPITTLE: Body + Other** (TN 12), 4 Radioactive, Burst Poison damage, Range M

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The young gigapede is immune to Radiation and Poison damage and their effects.
- **BURROW:** The young gigapede can tunnel under the ground to strike at attackers. Burrowing into the ground takes a major action, and while burrowing, the gigapede is not visible and cannot be targeted by attacks. It burrows two zones as a major action, moving underneath existing zones. Emerging from its burrow requires a minor action; when it does so, the gigapede inflicts +2 on all attacks until the end of its turn.
- **WEAK SPOT:** If an attacker chooses to target the young gigapede's head, it ignores its Physical DR.

INVENTORY

BUTCHERY: Butchering the young gigapede's corpse requires an **END + Survival** test with a difficulty of 1. A success yields 2 portions of gigapede meat (comparable to radscorpion meat). If the test results in at least one Effect, butchery also produces 2 Rare Materials.

Minuteman Rifleman

LLevel 8, Human,
Normal Character (60 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
6	7	6	6	5	5	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	1	Repair	2
Energy Weapons	5	Sneak	1
Medicine	1	Speech	1
Melee Weapons	2	Survival	4

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
14	12	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
210 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	2(Arms, Legs, Torso)	0	0

ATTACKS

- **RECON THREE-CRANK LASER MUSKET: PER + Energy Weapons** (TN 12), 6 Piercing Energy damage, Range M, Two-Handed, Accurate, Recon
- **SERRATED COMBAT KNIFE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 8), 4 Piercing, Persistent Physical damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **CONCENTRATE FIRE:** When the minuteman rifleman makes a ranged attack, they can re-roll up to 2 of their damage roll.

INVENTORY

Leather Chest Piece, Leather Leg x2, Leather Arm x2, Recon Three-Crank Laser Musket, Serrated Combat Knife, 2d20 Fusion Cells, 2 Stimpaks, Wealth 2

THE FALLOUT

The PCs complete ***Main Quest: Cleansing Fire*** when they cleanse Brother Schumaker's tunnels of radiation, clear the alternate route of the Last Son of Atom's acolytes, or work with the acolytes to block the tunnels and kill the Minutemen guards. If they were offered a reward for their services, payment awaits them once they prove their work is complete.

If they made a deal with Brother Schumaker to find another trade way and cleared the deeper tunnels of acolytes, Schumaker's Church becomes a new settlement struggling to survive; the PCs begin with a base **settlement reputation** of 2 (Neutral) for the **Rad Church**.

This quest has the following outcomes:

- Secured a New Supply Route. If the PCs clear out the Rad Church settlement of radioactivity—or the alternate route of acolytes and miniature gigapedes—trade flows through the sewers. The PCs increase their settlement reputation rank by 1 for Diamond City or whichever settlement offered them this quest. Improve the denizen outlook and food supply of all settlements the PCs have discovered by one level.
- Fractured the Church. If the PCs struck a deal with Brother Schumacher to deal with the Last Son's acolytes, word filters back to the Last Son that Brother Schumacher betrayed him and that the PCs were involved. The Last Son's forces may seek revenge against the Rad Church and Schumaker if they are not busy with other schemes.
- United the Children of Atom. If Brother Schumacher and his followers died at the hands of the PCs, other sects flock to the Last Son for protection, and he continues to consolidate power. Double the AP added to the GM's pool when the PCs begin **Main Quest: A New Eden.**
- Accidentally Caused a Nuclear Explosion. If the PCs caused the bomb in the underground Rad Church to explode, they lose 2 settlement

reputation for any impacted settlements that learn of their involvement. You can decide other ramifications for the region after one of its sewer lines becomes ground zero. You might increase radiation hazards during travel, force nearby settlements to move further away from the fallout, or invent your own consequences.

Possible next steps for the PCs include:

- Deciding what, if anything, to do about the bomb in the Rad Church
- Helping Diamond City or other settlements begin to trade food and supplies through a cleansed sewer route
- Searching for Minnie Mabee—to either warn her that the Atomites are hunting her or to turn her over for a reward

After finishing this quest, more settlement side quests become available. Encourage the PCs to continue to travel, build relationships, and survive. Winter's coldest months still lie ahead. When you feel the group is ready to proceed with the main story of ***Winter of Atom***, proceed to *Main Quest: A New Eden*.

MAIN QUEST: A NEW EDEN

This quest becomes available once the PCs complete most of the chapter's side quests, and you feel it is time to progress the main story. **Add 2 APs per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins**.

A New Eden is the final main quest of this chapter, and you should review the quest in its entirety before running it. In the ruined harbor of old Boston, the **USS *Germination*** becomes beached upon the frozen shore. Shortly after, a terrifying sickness turns the once plentiful settlement aboard the vessel into a place of utter horror.

When the PCs encounter a group of Minutemen, they learn of a beached vessel nearby whose residents have grown the largest source of food in the Commonwealth. The mysterious fruit grown aboard the ship could be a lifeline to starving communities trying to survive the winter. Shortly after, the PCs discover that anyone who eats the fruit becomes afflicted by a ghastly sickness. The mutated USS *Germination* mariners refuse to help or allow anyone on board, forcing the PCs to storm the ship by force if they wish to find a cure to the sickness.

Meanwhile, the Last Son of Atom prepares to betray the residents of the vessel and sends a heavily armed unit of soldiers to take the USS *Germination* by force. If they succeed, the Last Son's followers gain control of the most significant food source in the region—and the perfect stronghold from where they can strike at their enemies during *Chapter 3: The Winter War*.

In this quest, PCs have the following objectives:

- Stop the spread of the **flesh fruit** through the Commonwealth.
- Storm the USS *Germination* and find a cure to the flesh fruit sickness.
- Defend the USS *Germination* from invasion by the Last Son of Atom's followers.

The PCs' choices significantly impact the future of the Commonwealth as the worst winter months arrive. They may uncover a valuable source of food the settlements desperately need—or allow a ghoulish sickness to spread across the region and the Last Son of Atom's armed followers to make the USS *Germination* a stronghold. After this quest ends, when you proceed to *Chapter 3: The Winter War*, an all-out war ignites between the Last Son's Church and any settlements standing in his way.



CONTENT WARNINGS AND CHANGING SCENES

This quest involves elements of grotesque body horror and cannibalism. Gamemasters may wish to alter the quest in one or more of the following ways to better suit the needs of their group:

- Avoid giving the PCs the flesh fruit to eat when they first meet the Minutemen, so they do not become changed by its effects.
- Rather than offer vivid descriptions of those affected by the fruit, downplay physical changes but emphasize how the sickness affects their actions, motives, and personalities.
- Avoid vivid descriptions of cannibalization, focusing instead on the sick mariners' other destructive and unsettling behavior.

THE STORY OF THE USS GERMINATION

The **USS *Germination*** is a waste freighter repurposed to be a thriving and self-sustaining farm populated by a few dozen settlers. The farm's rich compost fermented over decades at sea, making the green space possible. Earlier in the winter, the freighter washed inland and almost instantly froze in the ruined Boston harbor. Run aground, the once secure settlement lacked protection against looting Raiders, flesh-hungry Super Mutants, and other starving factions. In their time of need, the **Last Son of Atom** visited the settlement's leader, a brilliant but ethically bankrupt geneticist named **Dr. Yarrow**. The Last Son offered Yarrow a food source capable of replacing the freighter's dying farm—a strange purple fungus that grows delicious fruit even in the coldest climates when planted inside a frozen human corpse. In exchange, Yarrow has helped the Last Son with his

genetic experiments, leading to the creation of highly mutated beings that serve the Church—like **Radoid Freaks** and the **Gigapede** and its hatchlings.

Yarrow and the settlers have recently been hunting stray scavengers near the harbor to provide corpse fertilizer for their new garden. The results have been astounding, and the USS *Germination*'s food stores, known as the Hoard, have become the largest in the Commonwealth during winter. The mariner settlers who have eaten the fruit have become sick, their bodies twisting and mutating in strange and seemingly impossible ways. The more they eat the flesh fruit, the more they become increasingly aggressive and starving. When the PCs encounter them, the mutated mariners are entirely willing to turn to cannibalism to sate their monstrous hunger.

Only a handful of the freighter's residents, including Yarrow and a pair of identical twin children, have yet to eat the fruit. The unafflicted barricaded themselves inside a storage closet to avoid being eaten by their friends-turned-cannibals. Yarrow continues to feed the mutated mariners more fruit to sustain them (and keep them from eating him) but has become increasingly desperate. Yarrow works feverishly to develop a cure for the sickness destroying the settlement, while cursing the day he accepted the Last Son of Atom's help.

Shortly before the start of this quest, a group of **Minutemen** searching for food to give to nearby settlements stumbled upon the USS *Germination* when it came under attack by a band of raiders. Led by Minuteman **Reese**, they came to the mariners' defense. In exchange for their aid and to keep them from coming aboard, Yarrow gave them a large crate of the flesh fruit. Yarrow knows it's just a matter of time before the Minutemen get sick and return with guns to demand answers.

SCENE ONE: STRANGE FRUIT

To trigger the start of the main quest, provide the PCs motivation to explore the ruins of the harbor. Food stores are growing increasingly desperate everywhere. A community leader like the **Reverend Riveter** from Mechminster Abbey may offer them a 300-cap reward to look for the **Minuteman Reese** and his missing unit who were scouting for food supplies—or you can create a compelling hook that fits with the story at your table.

Begin this scene when the PCs finish 24 hours of travel and each the ruined harbor of old Boston. When they do, read or paraphrase the following:

> *The longer you travel, the colder it gets, heralding the arrival of the most merciless months of winter. At last, almost by chance, the views of the frozen harbor and icy ocean beyond give way to a small camp of other travelers shoved into an easily overlooked alleyway. The Minutemen campsite is little more than a collection of large tents secured to ruined walls and makeshift cooking stoves around one central campfire. The mouth of the alley gives an unimpeded view of a large, marooned freighter vessel. Along the ship's outer hull, the freighter proudly displays its name—the USS Germination.*
>
> *At the campsite, a dozen Minutemen huddle around the fires to roast large chunks of hairy purple fruit. Despite the cold, they count their supplies, eat, and share merry jokes and stories. The jolliest looking of the Minutemen, a young person with round, rosy cheeks, notices your group nearby and stands up to wave at you.*

The first time the PCs arrive at the camp, a jolly Minuteman scout named **Reese** spots them. They warn the PCs a blizzard is coming and offers them fresh food, a warm place to spend the night, and good company. The twelve Minutemen at camp are a found family, considering each other siblings. They are friendly and generous with their blankets, fires, and beer. Some things the PCs can learn from the Minutemen include the following:

- The Minutemen guard the harbor shores, keeping an eye out for any ships that get stranded or any strange monsters that come out of the sea. They recently killed a giant squid with thirty-six arms and four human legs. They burnt the body but still smell like ink.

- The Minutemen helped the USS Germination stave off a raider attack earlier today. The people on the ship are a bit odd and never smile, but they are generous enough. The crew rewarded them with a batch of delicious fruit they grew on the ship. The Minutemen think the ship settlement came from overseas and got stranded when winter came.
- They have yet to find a better food source than the USS Germination's fruit stores. They plan to stay here and hope the settlements send traders so they can broker ongoing deals with the crew to help ensure the Commonwealth survives the winter.

In exchange for the PCs' best travel or war stories, the Minutemen offer them the best fruit in the Commonwealth. Of course, the flesh fruit is far from what the Minutemen or the PCs might expect.

FLESH FRUIT

ITEM	HP HEALED	OTHER EFFECTS	IRRADIATED?	WEIGHT	COST	RARITY
Flesh Fruit	10 HP	Gain 2 AP, Special	-	1	25	5

Flesh Fruit is a large, hairy purple fruit of unknown origin that excels in cold weather climates. When cooked, it has a rich, meaty taste, leaving consumers feeling well-fed and craving more. Its ability to be grown in the cold makes it invaluable in harsh winter climates. However, until it is treated with a cure, the fruit carries Famished Fever—a horrifying disease.

Special: The HP and AP gained from Flesh Fruit ignore the effects of Fatigue. Upon consuming Flesh Fruit, the character must succeed on an **END + Survival** test with a difficulty of 2 or contract the **Famished Fever** disease. If they are already suffering from Famished Fever, increase the disease's current Duration by 1.



Famished Fever

Famished Fever causes an afflicted character's thoughts to become increasingly occupied by thoughts of starvation. The disease begins showing symptoms after 12 to 24 hours and causes rampantly increasing addiction and hyper-metabolism. Ultimately, it results in grotesque physical mutations and cravings for raw, living flesh.

Famished Fever begins with a Duration of 2. At the start of each scene, reset the afflicted character's Fatigue to the disease's current Duration—then apply the effects of Fatigue. Increase the difficulty of their **PER**, **CHA**, and **INT** tests by 1.

Once per day, or when an afflicted character rests, they must make an **END + Survival** test with a difficulty equal to the current Duration (maximum 5). If the test fails, increase the Duration by 2 . If the test succeeds, reduce the Duration by 1. If the Duration is reduced to 0, an afflicted character recovers from the disease, and any mutations or other effects fade away after 24 hours.

The disease progresses rapidly in most cases, inflicting additional effects at certain Duration levels:

- **Duration 3+.** The character's food cravings intensify, and they can only regain HP by eating more Flesh Fruit.
- **Duration 5+**. The flesh of living creatures gain the properties of flesh fruit for the afflicted character, allowing them to eat it to gain HP and AP. Afflicted characters become immediately aware of this effect without needing to partake in eating living flesh.
- **Duration 7+.** Double the HP and AP gained from eating living flesh or flesh fruit. The afflicted character begins to mutate physically. Their skin turns purple, revealing strange weeping sores and abnormal bone growths.
- **Duration 10.** The afflicted character's brain becomes entirely consumed by the disease, making them unable to communicate and fixated only on their next meal. A PC that reaches this duration is placed under the GM's control until they can be cured.



After spending time at the camp, the PCs can travel onward to inform settlements of the potential new food source, inform the Minutemen that Reese's unit is well, or accomplish another goal. If they attempt to visit the USS *Germination*, the armed sailors on its top deck politely refuse entry but promise to take any offers the PCs make to their leader, Dr. Yarrow. The mariners look *very* well fed, if a bit skittish. They encourage the PCs to return in a few days. Lacking the climbing gear needed to board the beached vessel without being shot at by dozens of armed mariners, they have no easy means to sneak onto the ship.

CONTINUING THE QUEST

After 12 to 24 hours of travel, before they reach a settlement or another major location, the PCs encounter the horrifying side-effects of the flesh fruit for the first time. PCs who ate the fruit begin to experience the effects of **Famished Fever**.

The PCs stumble upon a terrified Minuteman named **Susan Hailey**, who tracked them down from Reese's campsite. She tells them something terrible is happening at the camp. Her friends are very sick, and she doesn't understand why. Susan begs for their help. If they ask her about the fruit, Susan admits she only ate it for the first time today—she prefers to eat meat.

Encourage the PCs to return to the campsite as soon as they can. If they refuse to return in a reasonable amount of time, this quest ends with foul consequences (see *The Fallout*).

RETURNING TO THE MINUTEMEN ENCAMPMENT

When you return to the camp, everything is different. The smell is truly vile but difficult to discern—more grotesque than the hot tang of rotting flesh. It is almost like the smell of overripe fruit rotting in the sun… but meatier.

Reese and the other Minutemen are changed. Their skin has begun to bloat and stretch, warping into dark purple splotches like enormous bruises. Their eyes weep yellow puss constantly, and their lips are cracked and bleeding. In darkness or shadow, they glow softly with a pale purple aura that is sickening to stare at for too long.

Something is horrifically wrong here.

The Minutemen immediately notice any party members who have consumed the flesh fruit and are feeling the effects. **Reese's** voice has changed too—it is raspier, almost monstrous. The Minutemen are eager for the PCs' help but also *starving* and cannot help but look at the PCs with hungry longing, wondering what they might taste like cooked.

Some things PCs may learn during the conversation include the following:

- Everyone who ate the fruit became ill and began to change in strange, horrifying ways.
- The Minutemen traded some of the fruit to a Commonwealth settlement (choose one that makes sense for you, or the location where PCs have the highest settlement reputation rank). It was too late by the time they realized the flesh fruit was making them sick.
- Not long after the PCs had previously left, a small child stumbled into the Minuteman camp. She was starving and scared and told them stories about being grabbed by a man in a grubby lab coat and dragged aboard the ship. She claimed the USS Germination is covered in thick foliage and that the crew members have transformed into horrible monsters who slather and drool.

- When Dr. Yarrow gave them the fruit initially, he claimed he had not eaten it himself because of a food allergy. Yarrow mentioned he was working on a cure to his allergy so he could enjoy the fruit like everyone else. Reese believes Yarrow holds the treatment to their sickness.

Reese tells the group that the Minutemen have been planning a raid on the USS *Germination* to discover what is happening and find a cure, but their sickness has left them weak and starving. They need help. The PCs have a choice—track down any flesh fruit the Minutemen traded to the settlement before the sickness spreads or join forces with the Minutemen and storm the USS *Germination*.

Whether or not the PCs take time first to track down the traded flesh fruit, when they storm the USS *Germination*, proceed to *Scene Two: Aboard the Starving Ship*.

HUNTING THE FLESH FRUIT

Time is against the PCs, and it proves difficult to track down the flesh fruit the Minutemen traded to a local settlement. **Reese or Susan** can provide the name of the settler the Minutemen bartered with, giving the PCs their first lead—if possible, choose the name of an NPC the characters already know and for whom they have strong opinions. When the PCs arrive, the settler is already changed like the Minutemen before them. Before the PCs' arrival, the NPC traded most of their fruit, and it has since exchanged hands several times.

Unless they found the cure, any PCs who ate the flesh fruit continue to suffer its increasing effects as they spend time traveling and investigating. The longer the hunt continues, the more desperate the situation becomes. Even if they find all the remaining fruit, without a cure, anyone affected will continue to get sicker over time.

Beginning the Hunt. Tracking down all the fruit before it spreads its sickness to more people and settlements requires the PCs to make a series of three group tests with a difficulty of 5. The PCs can make any type of test to progress, so long as they make sense in the story. Reduce the tests' difficulty by 2 if the PCs chose to hunt for the fruit immediately before raiding the USS *Germination*. When the PCs succeed on a test, they locate more of the flesh fruit and gain a new lead about where to look next. When the PCs fail a test, they hit a dead-end in their investigations and must backtrack and try a different approach to find the trail again. Every lead the PCs follow brings them to more NPCs affected by the sickness, as determined by you. Depending on the settlement and their standing there, they may also need to barter, make promises, or earn the trust of locals to get further information.

When the PCs succeed on three group tests, they successfully track down all the flesh fruit in the settlement. If the PCs fail three group tests before they succeed on three group tests, a traveling merchant purchases the flesh fruit and carries it to trade to another settlement of your choice. The PCs must again choose to continue to hunt it down or return to the Minutemen camp.

Continuing the Hunt. If the PCs must continue to hunt the fruit to a second settlement, they only need to succeed on two group tests before they fail three group tests to find the remaining fruit before it spreads again. If they fail to stop the fruit's spread in the second settlement, it reaches a third settlement of your choice. If the PCs track the fruit to the third settlement, they finally find the last of it—but too late to stop more people who ate it from becoming sick.

Proceed to *Scene Two: Aboard the Starving Ship* when the PCs return to the USS *Germination*.

SCENE TWO: ABOARD THE STARVING SHIP

The mutated and armed defenders of the USS *Germination* are entirely uninterested in allowing anyone on board or talking. They are only interested in following Dr. Yarrow's orders, so he continues to provide them flesh fruit. However, in their current state, they would not mind trying regular human flesh and seeing how that tastes and feels. There are no lower entrances to the beached vessel or accessible boarding ramps. To get onto the USS *Germination*, the PCs must storm the freighter and scale its outer hull.

STORMING THE USS GERMINATION

If the PCs leave immediately with **Reese's Minutemen** rather than track down the fruit in the settlements, **Reese** provides them climbing gear and proposes his unit climbs up first to assault the mariners on the upper deck, so the PCs can sneak below decks unnoticed. If the PCs chose not to go with the Minutemen, Reese leads the unit to assault the ship but is viciously overwhelmed by its defenders. Reese, Susan, and four other Minutemen escape into the wilderness (see The *Fallout* p.99) but leave their climbing gear behind at the icy base of the vessel.

Since the Minuteman first left the ship with the gift of flesh fruit, **Dr. Yarrow** has prepared for their inevitable attack. Ten **mutated mariners** constantly crew **Top Side** under orders to immediately open fire on anybody attempting to board without permission. The mariners have been driven to mad hunger by long-term exposure to the fruit—they are just as likely to eat invaders as to shoot them.

The PCs can attempt to use the climbing gear—harnesses, ropes, rigging, and industrial suction cups— to scale the ship's icy outer hull quietly. They must make a group **STR or AGI + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 5. Reduce the test's difficulty by 2 if they allow Reese's Minutemen to climb first and attack to provide a distraction. If they fail, a group of five mutated mariners make a **surprise attack** against them as soon as they reach **Top Side**, all too eager to allow the PCs aboard so the starving mutants can taste their fresh meat.

Mutated Mariner

Level 10, Mutated Human, Minion Character (25 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
8	5	3	3	1

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
1	13	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(All)	1(Arms, Legs, Torso), 0 (Head)	1(All)	Immune

ATTACKS

- **BOLT-ACTION PIPE RIFLE: Body + Guns** (TN 11), 5 Physical damage, Piercing 1, Range M, Two-Handed
- **STARVING BITE: Body + Melee** (TN 11), 5 Physical damage, and the target suffers 1 point of Fatigue.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **FLESH FRUIT METABOLISM:** When a group of mutated mariners enters the scene, generate 2 AP for the GM's pool.
- **BLOW A STEAM PIPE:** While inside the USS Germination, the mariner can spend an action to crack a pipe, filling an area within Close range with hot steam. Increase the difficulty of all PER and AGI tests in the area by 1 until the start of their next turn.

INVENTORY

- Heavy Coat, Hood, Pipe Bolt-Action Rifle, 5, .308 ammo

BATTLE FOR TOP SIDE

Dr. Yarrow's flesh fruit orchard covers most of Top Side. PCs can spend a minor action to pluck another flesh fruit from the grotesquely purple vines. If the PCs snuck aboard without being noticed, they can take the stairs exit leading down to the **Upper Hold** or make a **surprise attack** against the ten **mutated mariners**.

If the PCs fight the ten mutated mariners—after defeating eight of them—five more emerge from below decks. If **Reese's Minutemen** are present to assault the mariners, roll 3 at the end of each round to determine how many mariners they defeat. Should the PCs leave the Minutemen to fend for themselves, the mariners overwhelm the unit**: Reese, Susan,** and five surviving Minutemen desperately flee the vessel into the wilderness.

If the Minutemen fight alongside the PCs and do not flee, several become wounded during the battle. Reese tells the PCs he and his unit will hold the top deck and secure their retreat, then encourages them to look for a cure before it's too late.

THE UPPER HOLD

When PCs head below decks for the first time, read or paraphrase the following**:**

Descending below decks is like walking into a storm of sensation, an all-out assault of smell, sound, and sight. The hold is caked in filth and viscera—its oozing walls coated with blood, organ meat, and chunks of bone. An unidentifiable wet mass slowly drips down ruined surfaces with the pace of a melting glacier. The air down here is heavy enough that one could almost chew its rot and copper tang.

The noises emanating from around the hold are even more overbearing. The walls echo sounds of bones snapping, teeth slowly grinding, flesh tearing like wet paper, and long, slathering slurps.

The mutated, flesh-hungry crew are here. And it's supper time.

The hold contains a group of five **mutated mariners** feasting on bits of corpses of Yarrow's captives and other crew members who refused to eat the flesh fruit. Sneaking past them to reach Yarrow's office requires a successful group **AGI + Stealth** test with a difficulty of 3. If the test fails, all of the ravenous mariners turn on the fresh meal and attack.

EXPLORING BELOW DECKS

Beyond the hold, the ship expands into a twisted maze of tight corridors, stairs descending into lower decks where await ruined crew cabins, engine rooms, gore-spattered waste disposal rooms, ransacked armories, and kitchens overgrown with wild, pulsing flesh fruit vines.

PCs can spend time exploring the ship room-by-room by scavenging. To do so, they must spend 10 minutes per room and make a group **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 2 and a complication range of 3 (18-20). If they succeed, they roll the minimum number of times for each loot table on the *USS Germination Scavenging Table.* For each AP they spend they can roll an additional time on a loot table (up to the maximum.) For each scavenging complication rolled, 3 **mutated mariners** find the PCs and attempt to kill then eat them.

When PCs succeed on a scavenging test, allow them to opt to spend an additional 3 AP to uncover an important location of your choice—either **Dr. Yarrow's Office** or the **Barricaded Storage Closet**. Alternatively, you can add 3 AP to the GM's pool and describe how they find one of the two locations when you want to progress the main quest.

Collaborate with your players to describe the eerie rooms they wander into and what they see there. If the PCs try to fully **rest** while exploring below decks, interrupt their attempts with attacks by groups of five mutated mariners who manage to find them. Only the **Barricaded Storage Closet** and **Yarrow's Office** provide a safe place to rest inside the freighter.

USS Germination Scavenging Table

LOOT TABLES	NUMBER OF ROLLS
Ammunition	1-2
Armor	0-2
Clothing	1-2
Weapons	0-2
Oddities	0-2

THE TWINS

While exploring, if a PC actively keeps watch for threats, they can make a **PER + Sneak or Survival** test with a difficulty of 2. Whenever they succeed, they notice two pairs of eyes watching them from behind a ventilation grill set high up in the wall. **The Twins**, eight-year-olds **Eric** and **Elana**, observe the PCs from safety. They refuse to come out unless the immediate area is safe.

Once an area is safe, a PC can convince the Twins to come out and speak to them by making a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 2. If the test fails, the Twins scurry away into the vents—the PCs can try to earn their trust by making another test when they spot them elsewhere on the ship. If the test succeeds, the stick-thin, pale, stringy blonde-haired twins exit the vents and hold each other's hands tightly. The Twins do not mean to be creepy, but their traumatic experiences cause them to be skittish and act strangely. They speak with high-pitched, hushed voices and often finish each others' sentences.

When PCs talk to the Twins, they can spend AP to **Obtain Information**. When PCs stop spending AP, the Twins grow scared of a nearby sound and escape back into the nearest ventilation shaft. Some of what PCs may learn includes the following:

- Dr. Yarrow. They call him "The Dragon" and don't trust him. He's a bad man who's done very bad things to their friends and family. He made people eat the fruit and it turned them into monsters. It used to be better, and everyone used to be nicer before the ship marooned in the ice.
- The Fruit. They do not know from where the flesh fruit came. Yarrow started to grow it and became increasingly cruel and scary after he began receiving visits from his new friend. That's when they started calling him the Dragon. The Twins only know Yarrow's friend by their nickname for him—the Prophet. He gave them sweets once, but something about his big eyes really scared them.
- The Hoard. The storage area lies beyond a locked door in the Dragon's office on a lower deck of the ship. The Hoard contains more food than the Twins have ever seen. The Twins are small enough to sneak in, but if the PCs want to get inside, they must bypass the locked door.
- Other Survivors. A small group of the crew who refused to eat Yarrow's fruit barricaded themselves inside a storage closet on the other side of the hold. The Twins sneak them safe food when they can. A storage locker conceals the entrance, and a group of monsters wanders the deck outside the closet. The Twins politely plead with the PCs to kill the monsters outside the closet—two of them used to be their parents.

A PC who presses the Twins about how they avoid the monsters to reach the barricaded crew must make a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 4. If they fail, the Twins refuse to share their secrets. If they succeed, the Twins reluctantly lead the PCs on a cramped crawl through ventilation shafts. They emerge on the lower deck directly into the barricaded closet—bypassing the mutated mariners roaming outside.

In either case, the Twins can offer directions to the location of **Dr. Yarrow's Office** or the **Barricaded Storage Closet** on the USS *Germination*'s lower decks before they go back into hiding. PCs no longer need to spend AP while exploring to find the locations.

BARRICADED STORAGE CLOSET

Six starving crew members are locked in the closet—a little smaller than a crew cabin. They barred the door with thick metal scraps rigged with a heavy old-world lock on the inside. The survivors are on the edge of death, kept alive by a combination of adrenaline and the bits of food the Twins sometimes scavenge for them. The closet is the only place survivors have managed to hole up to keep their mutated mates at bay. They are desperate to get off the USS *Germination* and don't want to be eaten by the mutated mariners. The survivors can tell PCs about the history of the USS *Germination*, The Hoard, and Dr. Yarrow (see the introduction to ***Main Quest: A New Eden***, p.85).

If the PCs defeat the ten **mutated mariners** wandering the hold outside the closet, the crew survivors

run for Top Side and either join the Minutemen there or flee the ship. If the PCs snuck past the mariners on Top Side without defeating them, the mariners murder the fleeing survivors and begin to them before they can escape.

If the PCs barricade themselves in the closet, it is one of the only places on the USS *Germination* where they can fully **rest** without being attacked.

Entering Through the Hold. If the PCs approach the closet from the hold outside, they find ten **mutated mariners** roaming the halls. The open hold has been stripped of its belongings, leaving nowhere for the PCs to hide. The starving mariners attack immediately. If the PCs defeat or draw away the mutated mariners, the survivors let them inside the closet when they announce themselves at the door. Otherwise, the PCs can enter the closet through the ventilation ducts if the Twins show them the way.

Entering Through Ventilation. If the PCs enter the closet through the ventilation ducts and open the barricaded door, they can attack or distract the ten mariners while the six starving survivors make a mad dash for the stairs. At the start of each mutated mariner's turn, roll 1 —if they roll an Effect, the mariner spends their turn chasing down and feasting on a fleeing survivor.

Mutated Mariner

Level 10, Mutated Human, Minion Character (25 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
8	5	3	3	1

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
1	13	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(All)	1(Arms, Legs, Torso), 0 (Head)	1(All)	Immune

ATTACKS

- **BOLT-ACTION PIPE RIFLE: Body + Guns** (TN 11), 5 Physical damage, Piercing 1, Range M, Two-Handed

ATTACKS

- **STARVING BITE: Body + Melee** (TN 11), 5 Physical damage, and the target suffers 1 point of Fatigue.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **FLESH FRUIT METABOLISM:** When a group of mutated mariners enters the scene, generate 2 AP for the GM's pool.
- **BLOW A STEAM PIPE:** While inside the USS Germination, the mariner can spend an action to crack a pipe, filling an area within Close range with hot steam. Increase the difficulty of all PER and AGI tests in the area by 1 until the start of their next turn.

INVENTORY

Heavy Coat, Hood, Pipe Bolt-Action Rifle, 5 , .308 ammo

DR. YARROW'S OFFICE

The heavy metal door to the office is eerily unlocked. The lights inside are off. When the PCs enter the room, read or paraphrase the following:

The office lights flicker on with a sickly fluorescent glow. The lab is spotlessly clean, a jarring change from the chaos of the rest of the ship. A large metal door on the opposite side of the room hums gently, a constant electrical current running through it.

A balding, messy-bearded older man in a lab coat stands behind a desk strewn with papers and files. He grins too wide, and his eyes bulge. Doctor Yarrow levels a Syringer in your direction. He giggles a little, then speaks in a squeaky voice. "I'm afraid that's as far as you go. You should not have come, but now that you're here…"

Suddenly, a blaring alarm begins sounding out across the USS Germination. Doctor Yarrow shrugs and laughs before he finishes his threat. "Well, you might as well be put to good use."

Dr. Yarrow uses his desk for 2 cover if he can and attacks with his Syringer, attempting to hinder the PCs while his remaining mutated crewmates swarm them from behind. Yarrow is not well armored but is surprisingly spry and a crack shot with his weapon. While he fights, he taunts the PCs for being short-sighted and not seeing the bigger picture of his phenomenal scientific discovery. He intends to capture the PCs, lock them in the Hoard, and force them to eat the flesh fruit or starve.

The alarm continues to sound during the fight. At the start of each round, you can spend AP to bring in additional **mutated mariners**. For each AP spent, add 3 **mutated mariners** to the encounter. The remaining mutated crew swarm the PCs from the nearby halls outside Yarrow's office, drawn by the alarm. PCs can find the switch for the alarm under Yarrow's desk by spending a major action and succeeding on a **PER + Science or Survival** test with a difficulty of 2. A PC can flip the switch to turn off the alarm by spending a minor action. Once they do, no more mariners can join the encounter.



Dr. Yarrow

Level 8, Human,
Major Character (222 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
5	10	6	7	10	9	6

SKILLS			
Medicine	6	Sneak	3
Repair	2	Speech	1
Science	6	Survival	4
Small Guns	4		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
26	23	2

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
200 lbs.	-	6

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
0	0	0	0

ATTACKS

- **RECON RECOIL COMPENSATED SYRINGER: AGI + Small Guns** (TN 13), 5 Physical damage, Fire Rate 1, Two-Handed, Accurate, Recon, Range M

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **SYRINGER SURGEON:** Dr. Yarrow deals an additional 2 damage with his Syringer (included). Once per combat, he may re-roll any number of after hitting a target with his Syringer.
- **SYRINGE AMMO:** When Dr. Yarrow attacks with their Syringer, he may choose to use Berserk, Endangerol, Lock Joint, or Yellow Belly ammo. Yarrow can only use Berserk ammo once per combat.
- **BERSERK:** When an Effect is rolled, the target frenzies, attacking the nearest living creature (friend or foe) until the end of combat.
- **ENDANGEROL:** When an Effect is rolled, the target's Physical DR is reduced by 2 until the end of combat.
- **LOCK JOINT:** When an Effect is rolled, add the Stun Effect.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **YELLOW BELLOW:** The target must use at least one action each turn to move away from all enemies by the most direct route. This lasts for a number of rounds equal to the Effects rolled.
- **LAB COAT:** Each scene, Dr. Yarrow can re-roll a single d20 on an INT test.

INVENTORY

Lab Coat, Recon Recoil Compensated Syringer, 8+4 Syringer Ammo (a mix of Endangerol, Lock Joint, and Yellow Belly), Wealth 2



Unknown to the PCs, Yarrow's alarm also alerts a nearby unit of the Last Son of Atom's soldiers to the threat to the USS *Germination*. The Atomites mobilize and approach the outside of the freighter, preparing a snowbound siege. Once Yarrow is defeated and none of his mutated crew remain to threaten the PCs, allow the PCs an opportunity to **rest** safely and further explore the freighter.

Yarrow's Desk. The files and objects on the desk are scattered about chaotically. Their contents contain research notes, evidence of Yarrow's experiments, and an unexpected connection to the Last Son of Atom. Any character with ranks in the **Science** skill can recognize the terrifying genius of Yarrow's skill at genetics. The PCs can find the following when they search the desk**:**

- Flesh Fruit Files. Detailed diagrams, drawings, and patient files document what Yarrow called "flesh fruit" and its phenomenal property to grow more abundantly in freezing temperatures. Yarrow's observations indicate an undesirable bacterial effect exacerbated by repeated consumption. The crew he tested the food source on saw a massive increase in metabolism while simultaneously experiencing an enormous reduction in the size and function of their brain's frontal lobe. These effects led to increased hunger, aggression, and impulsive behavior. Yarrow's notes express frustration at not understanding how the fruit mutates the crew's bodies in such monstrous ways.
- Notes on a Cure. A single file details Yarrow's failed attempts to cure Famished Fever without reducing the fruit's ability to be farmed in harsh winter climates. Yarrow's previous efforts failed—but his most recent and unfinished design for a cure has not been tested yet, and the doctor believes this cure will work.
- Holotape. If the PCs play the holotape, they hear Yarrow ramble**:** "This deal with the Last Son of Atom and the mad sheep who follow him has me at my wit's end. I'm the one who helped him unlock the methods to genetically re-engineer his pets—his little monsters. His plan for this backwater region has relied on me entirely! And yet, other than providing me the fungus to grow my beautiful orchard and a little hint about using frozen cadavers as fertilizer, he has given me nothing! No cure to the sickness his fungus inflicted on my crew and no weapons or soldiers to help defend my Hoard. He takes, and he takes. I've had quite enough of his arrogance. He and his sheep will serve me well
the next time they come… by providing a bountiful supper to my crew and fresh fertilizer for the orchard."

THE HOARD

An electrified and double-locked metal door in the office leads to the freighter's massive freezer, where Yarrow grows his supply of flesh fruit. Unlocking the door requires a successful **INT + Lockpick** tests with a difficulty of 4. A PC can deactivate the door's electrocution trap by succeeding on an **INT + Repair** test with a difficulty of 3. Until the trap is deactivated, a failed test involving the door causes a high current of deadly electricity to run through the door—inflicting 6 Piercing Energy damage.

In the massive freezer on the other side of the door lies Yarrow's Hoard, the most significant source of fresh food remaining in the Commonwealth this winter. Investigating the hoard reveals its ghastly nature. Yarrow grows the purple fruit by planting the fungus provided by the Last Son beneath the eyelids and in the mouths of frozen corpses buried under a thin layer of iron-rich topsoil. The USS *Germination*'s Top Deck orchard was cultivated from the Hoard's much larger garden.

The PCs can take as much flesh fruit from the Hoard as you allow them to. If the garden can be treated to remove the adverse effects of the flesh fruit, the food source and its ability to grow in freezing temperatures could save many lives across the Commonwealth.

CURING THE SICKNESS

If the PCs kept Yarrow alive during the battle, he offers to help them find a cure if they promise to let him live just a little longer. The doctor becomes somber once he witnesses so many of his monstrous crew perish during the battle, recognizing their deaths are his fault. He has little fight left in him and only wishes to help do something to correct his terrible mistakes.

If the PCs spend at least four hours, they can attempt to use Yarrow's notes to finish developing a cure to reverse the mutative effects of those who consumed flesh fruit. To do so, they must succeed on a group **INT + Science** test with a difficulty of 4. If Yarrow helps, reduce the test's difficulty by 2. If the test fails, the PCs cannot engineer a successful cure—leaving the fates of those affected by the fruit up to chance.

If the test succeeds, the PCs create an effective cure and can immediately test it on anyone afflicted with Famished Fever. Offer the players the ability to spend 6 AP to adapt the cure into a spray that removes the harmful bacteria from the flesh fruit so that the massive food source becomes safe to eat in the future. They can generate AP for the GM's pool if they want to create this result.

Curing Famished Feverevn

You can abstract the process for the cure, invent your own, or use the following guidelines:

- Remove the intestines of a corpse of someone afflicted by the sickness. Mince them into a paste with RadAway, then dilute them with salt water.
- Soak the fruit's purple seeds in the viscera and saltwater solution for two hours in sub-zero temperatures, such as in a freezer. Wait for the seeds to sprout purple leaves through the ice.
- Remove the sprouting seeds and plant them under the eyes or tongue of the corpse to cultivate a bacterial antibody response during the growing process. Wait two hours.
- Remove and wash the sprouts with anti-bacterial soap. Infuse the sprouts into a sterile saline solution which can be injected into an afflicted patient.

Regardless of how you describe or imagine the cure, injecting it immediately stops the adverse effects of Famished Fever. Cured characters can rest for 6 hours to recover from Fatigue caused by the disease. After 24 hours, all mutations and other effects of Famished Fever end.

Once the PCs have taken control of the freighter, finished exploring, and attempted to find a cure—they will eventually need to leave the USS *Germination* behind. Encourage them to **rest** first.

A nasty surprise awaits them outside the ship. A unit of heavily armed Atomites has arrived to take control of the vessel and Yarrow's garden, under orders from the Last Son to make it a stronghold for the coming. When you are ready, proceed to *Scene Three: Siegebreak*.

SCENE THREE: SIEGEBREAK

When this scene begins, add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool and review the following scene to prepare for the final encounter in this chapter of ***Winter of Atom***. As the PCs return to the USS *Germination*'s Top Side and see its beached hull surrounded by Atomite forces, read or paraphrase the following:

Beyond the eerie purple fruit orchards on the top deck waits clear winter skies, a bright sun, and chilling sight. The sun's glow reflects off the ice shelf floating in the bay, and the heavy blanket of snow settled over the harbor area. Below, a large unit of heavily armed figures approaches the USS Germination, where it lies beached on the frozen shore.

A large group of soldiers wearing the holy symbol of the Last Son of Atom's followers drag a Yao Guai behind them using four thick ropes. The monster looks like a massive, mutated bear. The beast is mostly hairless, its flesh almost polar bear white but pocked with open, oozing sores. Its claws and fangs have become elongated and appear sharp enough to tear a man in two—or rip open a metal door like a tin can. When the soldiers release the monster, it lets loose a blood-curdling roar that echoes across the water and begins thumping around in circles. Where it steps, the monster's claws crack the ice and snow beneath them.

The soldiers gaze up to the freighter's highest deck and draw strange-looking guns that glint in the sunlight. A long dark-haired, muscular soldier steps forward, his lower jaw replaced by scrap metal covered in frost. He presses a button on a wrist device, and a robotic, emotionless voice calls out from below.

"Denizens of the USS Germination. I am Brother Scrapjaw, servant of Atom, God of All Creation. This vessel and its supplies are now the property of the Church. Throw your weapons overboard, lower your ropes, and go in peace. Resistance will be met with oblivion. Have a blessed day."

Brother Scrapjaw is one of the Last Son of Atom's most loyal soldiers. His orders are to secure the vessel's food, get rid of Dr. Yarrow, and establish a stronghold aboard the freighter to be reinforced further by the Church's soldiers. PCs cannot reason with him. He demands the PCs and any of their allies remaining throw their weapons overboard and depart the USS *Germination*. If **Reese's Minutemen** remain on the freighter, they refuse to give up the ship and seem willing to die to defend its food stores.

If the PCs agree to Scrapjaw's demands, the Atomites keep their guns trained on the PCs but allow them to leave the freighter and depart peacefully (see *The Fallout*). If the PCs make a move for their weapons at any point, Brother Scrapjaw commands his forces to open fire and take the vessel by force. After they leave, the Atomites easily overcome anyone remaining aboard the freighter and take control.

If the PCs refuse to cooperate, a desperate battle begins for control over the freighter and its hoard of food stores. Brother Scrapjaw, a **Children of Atom Shock Trooper**, commands the Atomite unit that acts in the following ways:

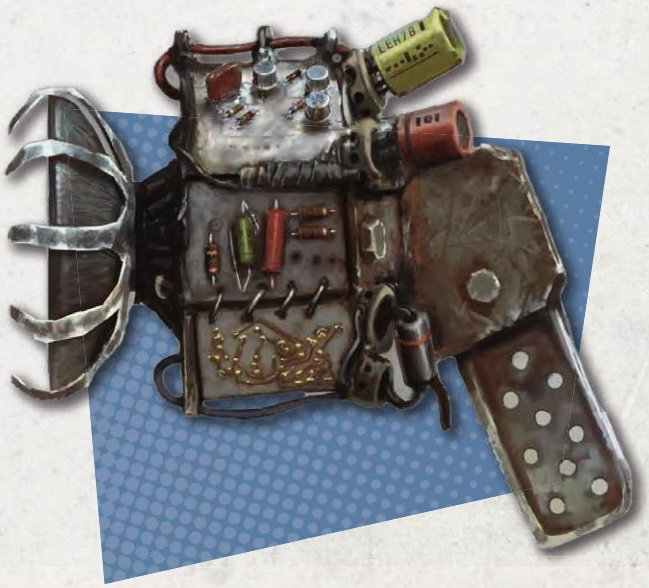
- 10 Children of Atom Fanatics attempt to ascend the outer hull with grappling guns.
- 5 Children of Atom Fanatics stay back to provide cover fire with bolt-action pipe rifles, targeting enemies who expose themselves on the Top Side.
- A trained Yao Guai charges the outer hull and uses its massive claws to rip open an entrance to the lower decks of the USS Germination.

Use the following guidelines when describing and imagining the battle:

- The distance between Top Side and any characters on the icy ground outside the ship is Long range.
- The distance between Top Side or the ground and any characters ascending the outer hull is Medium range.
- Any fighting between characters on Top Side or the ground happens at Close range.

The Atomites' Strategy. Brother Scrapjaw's forces siege the freighter on two fronts—by attempting to board Top Side with grappling guns while his trained Yao Guai rips an opening into the ship's lower decks so that he and his better-trained soldiers can invade from below. The mechanics of the two-pronged assault are presented in the *Repelling the Boarders* and *Holding the Hold* sections that follow.

Reese's Minutemen. If the Minutemen survived and held down Top Side, they eagerly fight beside the PCs against the Children of Atom. Should Dr. Yarrow also still live, he joins the Minutemen in defending Top Side. Roll 2 at the end of each round to determine how many Atomites they defeat, focusing on the closest enemies first. Brother Scrapjaw and the Yao Guai cannot be defeated this way. If the PCs flee Top Side during the battle, the Minutemen and anyone remaining on Top Side are overwhelmed and killed.



Children of Atom Fanatic

Level 9, Human,
Minion Character (22 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
7	6	6	5	5	7	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	2	Sneak	4
Melee Weapons	4	Speech	2
Small Guns	4	Survival	2

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
1	13	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
220 lbs.	+1	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
3(Head, Arms, Legs, Torso)	4(Head, Arms, Legs, Torso)	Immune	0

ATTACKS

- **GRAPPLING GUN: AGI + Small Guns** (TN11), 5 Piercing 1 Physical damage, Range M, Inaccurate, Unreliable

ATTACKS

- **BOLT-ACTION PIPE RIFLE: AGI + Small Guns** (TN11), 5 Physical damage, Piercing 1, Range M, Two-Handed
- **HEATED SUPER SLEDGE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 11), 5 Energy damage, Piercing 1, Two-Handed

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The fanatic is immune to Radiation damage and its effects.
- **GRAPPLING GUN SPECIAL:** When the fanatic hits a creature with their grappling gun, the creature must succeed on a **STR + Athletics** test with a difficulty of 2 or become grappled. The fanatic can use a minor action to pull the target prone and move them one zone closer. A harpooned creature can free themselves of the grapple with a minor action.
- **MARTYR FOR THE CAUSE:** If an attack targets an ally within Close range, you can spend 1 AP to allow the fanatic to push them out of the way and become the target instead.

INVENTORY

Cage Armor, Heated Super Sledge, Grappling Gun, Bolt-Action Pipe Rifle, 5 grappling rounds, 5 .308 ammo

Yao Guai

Level 14, Mutated Mammal,
Normal Creature (102 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
9	6	5	-	4

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
46	15	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
2(All)	1(All)	Immune	2(All)

ATTACKS

- **CLAWS: Body + Melee** (TN 14), 9 Vicious Physical damage
- **BITE: Body + Melee** (TN 14), 10 Piercing Physical damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The yao guai is immune to Radiation damage and its effects.
- **AGGRESSIVE:** When the yao guai enters a scene, immediately generate 1 AP for the GM or group pool, depending on whose side it is on.
- **BIG:** The yao guai towers over most other characters. It receives an additional 1HP per level. Additionally, it only suffers a Critical Hit if an attack inflicts 7+ damage (after damage resistance) in a single hit, rather than the usual 5+.

INVENTORY

- **BUTCHERY:** Butchering the yao guai's corpse requires an END + Survival test with a difficulty of 1. A success yields 2 portions of yao guai meat. If the test results in at least one Effect, butchery also produces 2 Common Materials.

Brother Scrapjaw

Level 8, Human,
Notable Character (120 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
9	8	8	5	5	7	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	4	Survival	2
Energy Weapons	4	Throwing	4
Melee Weapons	5		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
20	17	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
230 lbs.	+2	2

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
5(All)	5(All)	5	0

ATTACKS

- **AGITATED RECOIL COMPENSATED PLASMA GUN: PER + Energy Weapons** (TN 12), 7 Vicious Physical/Energy damage, Fire Rate 2, Range C, Close Quarters, Two-Handed

ATTACKS

- **CURVED RIPPER: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 14), 7 Piercing, Vicious Physical damage, and you can spend 2 AP to disarm the target, knocking one held weapon away.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **RAD RESISTANT:** Brother Scrapjaw can survive moderately high radioactivity for prolonged periods. He has Radiation DR 5.
- **SHOCK TROOPER:** Brother Scrapjaw gains the Close Quarters quality with all ranged weapons and the Piercing effect with all melee weapons.

INVENTORY

Reinforced Heavy Combat Armor (Helmet, Chest Piece, 2x Leg, 2x Arm), Curved Ripper, Agitated Recoil Compensated Plasma Rifles, 10+5 Plasma Cartridges, 2+1 Flashbang Grenades, Wealth 1

GRAPPLING GUN

Ammunition: Grapple Rounds

WEAPON NAME	WEAPON TYPE	DAMAGE RATING	DAMAGE EFFECTS	DAMAGE TYPE	FIRE RATE	RANGE	QUALITIES	WEIGHT	COST	RARITY
Grappling Gun	Small Guns	5	Piercing 1, Special	Physical	0	M	Inaccurate, Unreliable	9	55	2

This homespun grappling gun has metal spikes attached to an industrial cable and a mini-winch contained in the weapon's frame. Upon embedding itself in a solid surface, the winch activates, strong enough to pull a fully grown person to the spike's location. Some raiders and hunters use grappling guns to secure prey.

Special: When the grappling gun hits a target, they must make a **STR + Athletics** (if they are a character) or **Body + Other** test (if they are a creature) with a difficulty of 2. If their test fails, the attacker can use a minor action to pull the target prone and move them one zone closer to them. A harpooned target can free themselves of the grapple with a minor action. Additionally, grappling guns can be used to pull their wielder up heights up to two zones away, at a rate of one zone per turn.

A Grappling Gun can accept one each of the following mods which are unique to Grappler Guns and installed with the repair skill:

MOD	NAME PREFIX	EFFECTS	WEIGHT	COST	PERKS
WINCH MODS					
	Secure	Remove Unreliable			Science 1
	Powered	+2, Inflicts both Physical and Energy damage			Science 2
BARREL MODS					
	Long	Remove Inaccurate			Science 1
	Aerodynamic	+1, Gain Vicious			Science 2

REPELLING THE BOARDERS

At the start of each round, up to five **Children of Atom Fanatics** fire their grappling guns and begin to ascend the outer hull of the USS *Germination*. If a rising Atomite is not stopped, they reach Top Side at the end of their next turn. Ten total fanatics attempt to scale the hull during the encounter.

PCs can expose themselves to fire down at the Atomite ascenders. They can also dislodge the hooks or cut the ropes to prevent boarding. A PC can sever a rope by making an edged melee weapon attack with a difficulty of 1 or an attack with any other weapon with a difficulty of 3. A successful attack with a weapon that hits multiple opponents severs multiple ropes. A PC can also spend a minor action to dislodge a grappling hook by making an **AGI or STR + Athletics** test with a difficulty of 2. When a rope falls, the enemy climbing it also falls—to their death.

PCs expose themselves when they get close to grappling hooks or fire down at climbing Atomites. Once per round, you can interrupt their turn by spending 2 AP from the GM's pool to allow up to five enemies waiting below to attack exposed characters from **Long** range.

HOLDING THE HOLD

While Atomite fanatics attempt to ascend the outer hull, the vicious **Yao Guai** charges. The mutated beast uses its monstrous claws to rend the metal of the outer hull and create an entry. PCs can expose themselves to attack the beast from above, but the Yao Guai does not stop its attempt to breach the hull so long as it lives.

At the end of its fifth turn, the Yao Guai rips an entrance into the outer hull. On its next turn, the beast enters the lower deck, followed by **Brother Scrapjaw** and any surviving **Children of Atom Fanatics** on the ground. They charge their way up towards the upper deck, slaughtering anyone in their path. Unless the PCs go below deck to fight them, the invading group reaches Top Side after three turns below decks.

If PCs go below decks to fight the ascending troops, they can use the close quarters to their benefit by finding good choke points where only two enemies can attack them at a time. If they abandon the upper deck, any ascending enemies that reach Top Side kill the remaining defenders the following turn. The Atomites above then descend and attack the PCs below deck from behind, pincering them with enemies on both sides.

Should the PCs become overwhelmed, allow a PC to use their previous experience navigating the underdecks to escape by spending a major action and succeeding on an **AGI or INT + (Sneak or Survival)** test with a difficulty of 2—or by spending 2 Luck points. If they do, they can either reposition themselves to make another counter-attack or find a safe way to flee the USS *Germination*.

RESOLVING THE BATTLE

If the PCs flee the freighter, the Atomites do not give chase and take over the USS *Germination*. **Brother Scrapjaw's** troops seize the food hoard and execute any other survivors they can find.

If the PCs kill the **Yao Guai** before it creates an opening in the hull and they defeat all the fanatics, **Brother Scrapjaw** orders his soldiers to retreat and falls back towards the ruined streets of Boston. If he survives, he remembers his defeat bitterly and goes out of his way to get revenge on the PCs when he leads the Atomite's final battle during *Chapter 3: The Winter War, Scene Three: Showdown*. Should the PCs defeat the invaders, they control the future of the USS *Germination* and its potential food source.

THE FALLOUT

The PCs complete ***Main Quest: A New Eden*** when they defeat or escape from the Atomite's siege on the USS *Germination*. If **Dr. Yarrow** still lives, they decide his fate, and he does nothing to argue. If the PCs defeated the Atomites, **the Twins** come out of hiding and ask if the PCs or Reese's Minutemen will help them find a new home—they want to leave the horrors of the USS *Germination* behind. Should the Atomites take over the freighter, they kill Yarrow if he lives, but the Twins manage to escape and make their way to a nearby settlement.

If the PCs discovered a cure to the flesh fruit sickness, they might still want to track down the fruit traded by Reese's Minutemen and treat those made sick by it (see *Hunting the Flesh Fruit*, p.86). If they do not, decide which NPCs ate the fruit and what their fates are.

This quest has the following outcomes:

- Secured a Safe Food Source. If the PCs treated the flesh fruit grown in Yarrow's Hoard to remove its harmful effect—and defeated the sieging Atomites—the food source could save hungry communities. Allow PCs to choose how to disperse the food into the settlements. If Reese's Minutemen survived aboard the freighter, they offer to help deliver the food to the people. The food supplies and denizen outlook for settlements that receive food improve by one step, and the PCs increase their settlement reputation ranks by 1 for those settlements.
- Failed to Prevent Famine. Any settlements that do not get access to treated fruit from the Hoard are struck by famine as winter worsens. Reduce their food supplies and denizen outlook by one step. Other than Diamond City and Goodneighbor, communities that reduce those variables below 1 become abandoned ghost settlements at the start of *Chapter 3: The Winter War*. Some of their departing residents perish in the cold when they disperse, while others join other Commonwealth settlements willing to welcome them in.
- The Minutemen Lost. If the freighter's mutated mariners defeated Reese's Minutemen, the six survivors escape into the wilderness only to be captured by the nearby Atomites. In exchange for promising to treat their sickness, they agree to join the Last Son of Atom's Church. He provides them the cure—having known it all along. Reese and Susan Hailey become brainwashed members of the Church and can reappear as enemies in Whately Research Facility during *Chapter 4: The Day of Division*. They blame the PCs for abandoning them.
- Defeated by the Atomites. If the PCs fled the USS Germination at any point during the quest, the Last Son's forces take control of the freighter and kill any remaining residents. The vessel becomes their stronghold in the Commonwealth, and devotees flock to their "New Eden." The Last Son's followers treat the flesh fruit to make it safe for consumption and hoard it for the Church. The Atomites defend their stronghold with a contingent of 15 Children of Atom Soldiers, 15 Children of Atom Protectrons, and a Children of Atom Sentry Bot led by a Brother Scrapjaw. PCs must retake the vessel to gain access to its food source.

Once the PCs take time to deal with the aftermath of the quest, cure the sick, or deliver treated food to the hungry masses, allow time to pass. The worst weeks of winter arrive with a cold fury. The PCs' battle against the Last Son of Atom's followers at the USS *Germination* will soon prove a herald for a larger conflict that engulfs the entire Commonwealth when you proceed to *Chapter 3: The Winter War*.



DIAMOND CITY

Standing in the ruins of Boston, Diamond City is known across the Commonwealth as the Great Green Jewel. Behind the stadium's imposing, bright green walls lie a bustling settlement offering residents and travelers respite from the dangers of the wasteland—providing you aren't a ghoul. Wandering the stands and pitch, survivors can find everything from a noodle-serving Protectron and one of the best-stocked markets in the Commonwealth, to a synth-owned detective agency and the famous Diamond City Radio.

However, even the shiniest beacons of hope and civilization aren't without their problems. The newly elected mayor's anti-ghoul stance has seen them evicting the ghoul population from the city's safe walls, and the harsh nuclear winter has introduced new challenges for its remaining residents. Clashes between the Minutemen and the Church of Atom are only increasing tensions further.

Population: 700-900 settlers

Defenses: Very Strong

Food Supply: Just Enough

Denizen Outlook: Somewhat Grim

Starting Settlement Reputation Rank: Neutral (2)

TENSIONS AT A GLANCE

The conflict within Diamond City is built upon three core issues:

- **A class and wealth divide** between the Upper Stand and Lower Field residents.
- **A scarcity of supplies** due to the nuclear winter, made worse by Upper Stand residents stockpiling and inflating prices.
- **A lack of strong leadership** that allows undue influence on the community from independent factions like the Minutemen and Church of Atom.

All three of these issues are interconnected. The class and wealth divide has always existed in Diamond City, but it grows as the supply crisis worsens. With a lack of strong leadership, independent factions step in to address these issues, aligning them with or against various groups of residents, furthering the division that already exists.

NUCLEAR WINTER IN THE GREAT GREEN JEWEL

Even Diamond City's fortified walls cannot fully protect it against the deadly effects of the atomic winter. Though residents fare better than other settlements thanks to their nuclear-powered generator, the city must survive the most brutal winter in its history.

SUPPLY LINES DWINDLE

The city is famous for its diverse market. However, supply lines suffer from a worse than usual winter season. Because fewer traders are traveling to the settlement and scavenging in the ruins of Boston is deadlier than ever, it takes vendors weeks to resupply. Brahmin, though hardy pack beasts, struggle to survive the arduous treks between scattered settlements—and few places are willing to trade what little they have to outsiders.

At places like Diamond City Surplus, Chem-I-Care, and Fallon's basement, the scenes resemble an auction more than a barter shop. Customers try to outbid each other as they fight for the limited supplies. In contrast, wealthy **Upper Stand** residents have no issue affording the inflated prices and are stockpiling in excess—increasing scarcity and forcing prices to climb higher each passing week. As a result, residents in the **Lower Fields** struggle to afford essential resources. The tension between the upper and lower classes, who already viewed each other with disdain, is a tinderbox ready to explode.

FREEZING WATER AND FAILED FOOD PRODUCTION

Not everything within Diamond City is sourced from supply lines. The city has its own water supply and purifier, a greenhouse, a large plot of crop-growing land, and a small brahmin pen. In earlier winters, careful rationing and planning kept these amenities capable of sustaining resident needs. Now, frigid temperatures freeze the lake solid for weeks rather than days, and water collected from the constant heavy snowfall is more irradiated than the purifier can handle. Each time it breaks down, it becomes harder and more costly to repair.

The colder than usual climate and unyielding frost have caused the crop fields to fail. Tatos and mutfruit can survive mild winters and irradiated water, but even those hardy plants won't grow in frozen soil. **Professor Scara** and **Doctor Duff** of the **Science! Center** work to keep the few remaining crops in the **Greenhouse** alive, hoping to create a strain of plants that might grow in this more extreme climate.

The brahmin also suffer in extreme wintery conditions. Many brahmin who survive freezing to death succumb to dehydration and famine—food and water are prioritized for residents. A lack of fresh meat within the city—something coveted by Upper Stands residents and **Choice Chops** owner **Polly**—has many wondering if the remaining brahmin would be better served as meals than lost by traders on fruitless supply runs.

OVERCROWDING AND RESIDENT TENSIONS

With the Dugout Inn and other lodgings full, Diamond City Security turns away anyone traveling to the city seeking shelter. The city opens its gates during the day to allow trade and closes them at night to anyone who isn't a resident, forcing visitors into the dangerous streets outside. Refugees from failed and collapsing settlements are slowly turning the ruins outside of Diamond City into a shantytown. These survivors are near enough to Diamond City to buy supplies but do not benefit from its shelter or security. Desperate raiders and Super Mutants patrol the Boston ruins, ambushing the folks the city turns away.

After **Mayor McDonough's** recent election, he delivered his promise of removing ghouls from the city—a move welcomed by some, especially with dwindling supplies. **Piper Wright**, owner and only journalist for Publick Occurrences, leads a group of protesters who loudly disagree with exiling ghouls from the city before the arrival of winter. Despite making good on one campaign promise, the hardships of winter, the arrival of conflicting groups and refugees, and Piper's protests have made McDonough's early tenure as mayor unpopular.

Relations between the **Minutemen** and a large sect of the **Children of Atom** have reached broiling tension within the stadium. The two factions have rented every available room in the Dugout Inn, packing three or four people a room to accommodate demand. The Minutemen contribute to the local economy and support Diamond City against the rising external threats. Still, some members of Diamond City Security feel the Minutemen undermine their authority—and resent those of them who join Piper Wright's protests. However, many Upper Stands residents support the Minutemen's presence. They welcome the extra caps, increased security, and bragging rights of the esteemed faction frequenting their businesses.

Diamond City Security often look like the 'bad cops' when breaking up confrontations between conflicting groups. Siding with the Minutemen gains their aid in dealing with internal and external threats but angers the more vulnerable residents who support the Church of the Children of Atom. Meanwhile, siding with the Children of Atom pleases the Lower Field residents but puts Diamond City Security out of favor with Upper Stand residents—who have no issue complaining loudly to the mayor about unwelcome outsiders.

ATOM'S INFLUENCE

Meeting one of Atom's congregations in the wastes is common, and many travelers share tales of their prayers of radiation and nuclear annihilation. Despite the odd reputation of the Children of Atom, few were bothered by their presence in Diamond City at first. Upon their arrival, they were peaceful, and many now think of them as helpful and generous towards the Great Green Jewel residents. The climate is harsh, and hope is hard to come by, so many Lower Fields residents and daytime visitors to the city turn to the Children of Atom's promises of transformation and creation.

WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

The Children of Atom are taking over the **All Faiths Chapel**, citing that they need a place from which they can help the locals. **Pastor Clements** strongly opposes their occupation of the chapel. Most Lower Field residents trust the Children of Atom and support their speaking out about the resource hoarding of the Upper Stand residents. Lower Stands locals frequently agree with the Church's critical view of the Minutemen—who they claim are nothing more than a self-serving militia looking for a foothold in the city.

The Children of Atom make their opinions on Diamond City loudly known. They support reversing the mayor's anti-ghoul policy and speak up in support of the Lower Fields residents. However, the Children are also very vocal about their disapproval of the water purifier run by **Sheng Kawolski**. They often preach about the divine nature of radiation and how purified water is an insult to Atom's will. Despite displaying peaceful behavior, rumors spread each time the purifier breaks down that the Children of Atom are secretly sabotaging the city. The Children's supporters and collaborators brush off such talk as fearmongering and bigotry.

The Children of Atom work hard to build rapport with important individuals in the community. In their attempts to gain favor, they have:

- Struck a deal with **Myra**, owner of Diamond City Surplus, to bulk buy the supplies they offer to residents and visitors to the city.
- Supported Piper Wright's protests against the mayor's anti-ghoul policy, marking at least one issue they can agree on with the Minutemen.
- Offered aid to the **Mega Surgery Center** by providing volunteers to help treat the influx of patients—some of whom cannot afford the cost of treatment.
- Arranged for **Travis Miles** of Diamond City Radio to have an exclusive interview with their leader, **the Last Son of Atom**, and an authentic inside look at their practices and beliefs. The interview with the mysterious Church prophet will take place entirely over radio communications from afar.

WITH OTHER FACTIONS

The Children of Atom go out of their way to ingratiate themselves with the community and other factions. Many in the Lower Fields turn to the Children, rather than the Minutemen, for aid. The Church uses its deep pockets to buy supplies in bulk—creating competition for Upper Stand stockpilers. The Church offers the supplies to residents for nothing more than the cost of listening to a sermon. Still, a handful of Lower Field residents disapprove of the Church out of fear of their religious dogma or support for allowing ghouls back into the city.

Upper Stands residents resent the Children of Atom's progressive attitudes towards redistributing wealth and their support of Piper's protests. The Church's generosity has a marked impact on profit margins for the select few. Additionally, some wealthy citizens even turn their noses up at the Children's pious aesthetic that fails to match the dignified Diamond City they hope to create.

The Church's most significant conflict in Diamond City is with the Minutemen. What began as petty squabbles over rooms and space at the Dugout Inn quickly turned into a mostly one-sided rivalry. The Minutemen's expertise as a security force helps protect the city, but the Children of Atom's aid through supplies is more tangible to needy residents. The Children clash with the Minutemen over their priorities, often claiming they only fight to defend the wealthy.

The Minutemen, used to being viewed as scrappy saviors, see the Children's politicking as a calculated move to undermine their contributions to the city. The Minutemen have seen settlements fall before due to the rapid spread of dangerous ideas. So they seek to turn people against the seemingly benevolent Children of Atom before it is too late. However, many residents of Diamond City believe the Minutemen's past experiences are making them overly cynical towards the great need Diamond City's poor have for supplies to survive the coming winter.

KEY LOCATIONS AND PEOPLE OF INTEREST

The Great Green Jewel is struggling to remain the lively hub of trade and safety that draws people to it from across the Commonwealth. Winter makes the settlement's internal strife worse each passing day. Diamond City needs help and earning favor with its residents is easy enough for those willing to risk a little life and limb to aid its residents.

The **Fallout Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook*** gives a full description of Diamond City and its locations.

ALL FAITHS CHAPEL

The All Faiths Chapel is a non-denominational place of worship run by Pastor Clements. The Children of Atom currently use it as a hub to preach to residents and provide them aid. Residents and visitors to the city flock there to listen to sermons in exchange for supplies, and the Chapel becomes busier each week that passes.

Key NPCs:

- **Pastor Clements** is a kind, older man who strongly believes in treating people equally, regardless of their faith. He views the Children of Atom's takeover of his chapel and their sermons-for-aid methods as manipulative and exploitative. Clements clashes with Brother Bennett about the Chapel's use, but with so many residents supporting the Children of Atom's efforts, he's been unsuccessful in pushing back on their claims to the place. Clements helps give out supplies to the needy alongside the Children of Atom while secretly hoping to find evidence of an ulterior motive that he can use to force them to leave the Chapel.
- **Brother Bennett** is a prominent voice within the Diamond City sect of the Children of Atom. He leads most sermons and is the charismatic face of the flock living inside the city walls. His devotion to The Last Son of Atom and his congregation is unflagging. Bennett is outwardly kind and generous, treating everyone he meets like family. Regardless of his more extreme views, he is careful to keep on others' good side by never discussing anything too polarizing—except for his contempt for the city's sacrilegious purifying of irradiated water.

DIAMOND CITY MARKET

The Market is a large area in the Lower Fields where several shops and businesses reside.

- **Chem-I-Care** is the city's number one shop for chems and first aid supplies. Its owner, Solomon, is having trouble sourcing enough RadAway and Rad-X to keep up with increased demand due to skyrocketing radiation levels.
- **Choice Chops** is usually a place to find fresh meat of every kind. This winter's selection is poorer than usual as Polly, the shop's butcher and owner, fails to secure enough stock. Brahmin is her specialty, and with supply running low, her regular customers are beginning to complain.
- **Commonwealth Weaponry** specializes in weaponry, ammunition, and weapon mods. Arturo Rodriguez, the shop's sole owner, is scrambling to keep his inventory of unique weapons and hard-to-find ammo types stocked.
- **Diamond City Surplus** is run by Myrna. At night her Mister Handy, Percy, manages the stall in her place. The shop functions as a general store that stocks everything from ammo and chems to armor and junk. Myrna refuses discounts to anyone, including those in need, but has struck a deal with the Church of Atom for supplies that lines her pockets well.

CHILDREN OF ATOM PAMPHLET

"Many groups, organizations, and factions claim to protect the people of the Commonwealth, but their true mission is to extort and enforce their will. You know them by their weapons, violence, and inequitable leadership. They have rendered the masses blind, holding hostage your futures and delaying your deliverance.

To those who would protect these wicked people, know that their disastrous practices are not Atom's will. He warns against their self-serving heresy. The Last Son of Atom has foreseen the end of their reign. Their greed will divide them until they devour each other, and the good people of the Commonwealth make this land free from tyranny once more.

The Last Son of Atom calls upon you to join him in protecting the vulnerable and speaking truth to power. Even if you have spilled blood in service to the vile factions infecting the Commonwealth, the Church of Atom welcomes you with open arms. For it is only Atom who can provide for all his children even in the coldest of winters. It is only Atom's chosen who can walk infinite perfect worlds of blue skies and endless food when the Day of Division arrives at last. Those who embrace the warmth of Atom's Glow will know eternity and division. Those who take advantage of the vulnerable will know only Atom's divine judgment."

- **Fallon's Basement** is a clothing store owned by Becky Fallon. Her wares include pre-war and specialist clothing, including items like hazmat suits. Fewer scavengers are daring the Commonwealth's winter wastes, and Becky's inventory is growing thin. The shop's most significant demand is for cold weather clothing.
- **Kathy and Johns' Super Salon** is the barbershop of the city and offers all the services a resident or traveler would expect when looking for a new hairstyle. Kathy and John have not suffered too severely regarding supplies but have slashed prices as patrons prioritize food over fashion. They're both looking for something new to offer this winter season to help them keep the caps coming in.
- **The Mega Surgery Center** is run by Doc Crocker and Doctor Sun. The center offers general medical services to patch wounds and heal radiation poisoning and cosmetic facial reconstruction surgery. The number of patients suffering from radiation-related illness and injuries from the cold is higher than ever this winter, and the doctors are buckling under their workload.
- **Power Noodles** is the market's central food stall, run by a Protectron called Takahashi. Takahashi only speaks one Japanese phrase, *"Nan-ni shimasho-ka"*—meaning *"What will you have?"* Prices have been rising drastically at Power Noodles, making fresh hot food harder to afford. Famously mysterious, no one knows who owns the establishment or the Protectron.
- **Swatters** is a baseball memorabilia and equipment store run by Moe Cronin. Moe's violent and bloody descriptions of pre-war baseball make it clear to anyone actually familiar with the sport that he has no idea what he is talking about. Though the shop's inventory is well-stocked, Moe's only customers lately come from Diamond City Security crew members needing repairs or replacements for their uniforms. Moe struggles to make ends meet because visitors spend more of their caps on essential resources and less on souvenirs and recreation.

DIAMOND CITY RADIO

Diamond City Radio broadcasts from a cramped metal trailer on the lake and is both home and workplace for Travis Miles. Very soon Travis is set to interview the Last Son of Atom and the Children of Atom waste no time in giving Travis a look into their beliefs, and content for his broadcast.

Key NPCs:

- **Travis Miles** is the voice of Diamond City Radio. Travis is a nervous, reclusive young man who rarely leaves his trailer except to eat and drink at the Dugout Inn. He recently arranged an interview with the Last Son of Atom after being encouraged by local Church members. Travis wants to present something new on the airwaves, and Sister Iris has convinced him that spreading the Church of Atom's hopeful ideas and promises of aid is just what the wasteland needs.
- **Sister Iris** is a thin, wispy woman whose skin shows signs of long-term radiation exposure. She is close with Brother Bennett, who assigned her to help Travis organize the interview with the Last Son of Atom. She enjoys educating Travis on the Children of Atom's beliefs to prepare him to speak with the sect's benevolent leader. Iris often hangs around the trailer, chatting about local affairs. She reports anything she learns from the young man back to Brother Bennett so that he may direct his flock to better support the local residents.

DUGOUT INN

The Dugout Inn is a small bar and hotel owned and run by the Bobrov brothers. The situation between the Minutemen and the Children of Atom creates a tense atmosphere. Locals mostly avoid the Dugout Inn and its nightly arguments between the two groups.

Key NPCs:

- **Vadim Bobrov** is one of the co-owners of the Dugout Inn and brother to Yefim. A cheerful man of East Slavic ancestry, Vadim is personable and charismatic. He enjoys joking with his customers and keeping their drinks topped up. He has no real issue with boisterous arguments between the Children of Atom and the Minutemen, waving them off as spirited conversation resulting from too much alcohol.

- **Yefim Bobrov** is the other co-owner of the Dugout Inn and brother of Vadim. Yefim is more reserved than his brother. Concerned that clashes between the two factions under his roof are turning locals and visitors away from the bar, he is contemplating asking one of the groups to leave. Disappointed that his brother does not share his concerns, he hasn't voiced his thoughts on the matter yet.
- **Scarlett** is the server at the Dugout Inn and is very popular with the locals. Usually ambivalent towards her job, she is growing more worried as tensions rise between the Minutemen and Children of Atom. With the Dugout Inn—and tips from its regulars—her sole source of income, she shares Yefim's opinion that something must change. Scarlett is secretly quite fond of Travis Miles and is jealous of the young man's one-on-one time with Sister Iris.

MAYOR'S OFFICE

The mayor's office is located in the stadium's press box. An old window cleaner's lift, guarded by Diamond City Security, gives access to the box via a broken viewing window. The small reception area is managed by Geneva, the mayor's secretary—and has become a crowded room due to Piper Wright's daily protests.

Key NPCs:

- **Mayor McDonough** is the newly elected mayor. McDonough is an older, well-dressed man with an air of political charm. Despite his charisma, he resists introducing new policies to tackle Diamond City's recent issues out of concern he'll become unpopular. When pressed on his positions, he defers by claiming to be in careful consideration, but in truth, McDonough is waiting to see which factions will prove most advantageous for him to support.
- **Danny Sullivan** is in charge of keeping Diamond City's fortified main gate secure. He reports directly to McDonough. Danny views the Minutemen as necessary allies both within and outside the city's walls, though he listens to the growing concerns of his fellow guards. Danny takes his co-workers' complaints about the Minutemen to the mayor, but despite their friendly relationship, the mayor has yet to present a solution that satisfies Diamond City Security.
- **Geneva** is a middle-aged blonde woman who serves as the mayor's secretary. Geneva is polite to visitors and respects Piper's protestors, even when they make a mess of her reception area. Like other residents, she is concerned about the broiling conflict in Diamond City. Unlike others, she knows that McDonough's poor leadership is a shrewd political game he plays for his own benefit. Geneva refuses to get directly involved with conflict but is willing to quietly aid those who might be able to force the mayor into action—so long as it does not put her job or life at risk.

SIDE QUEST: DIGGING IN

This quest becomes available after completing *Main Quest: The Train Job* so long as their Diamond City settlement reputation is at least Cautious (rank 1). **Add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

Yefim Bobrov approaches the PCs, telling them he is growing concerned about clashes between the Minutemen and the Children of Atom in the Dugout Inn. He heard about the PCs helping the Mayor and hopes they can help him too. Some things that might come up in conversation include:

- Both groups have rooms at the Dugout and drink there at night. There was always some mostly benign hostility between the groups. It began as dirty looks and pointed comments spoken a little too loudly.
- Recently tension has escalated due to the groups drinking more the colder it gets outside. There have been a few physical altercations outside of the inn. No one has been seriously hurt yet.
- Regular customers not affiliated with either group have become reluctant to drink at the Dugout due to the palpable tension, and now Yefim is left serving just the two groups.

- He wants to ban one group from the inn but needs a reasonable justification to protect his business's reputation in town.

Yefim asks the PCs to instigate a conflict—or, if possible, convince one of the groups to find a new place to drink and sleep. He doesn't care which group the PCs choose, but it needs to happen soon before he loses his remaining customers entirely. He offers the PCs a free room to stay in and a 50% discount on drinks for the rest of winter if they can make his problem disappear.

MEETING THE MINUTEMEN

Bryce Tucker is the leader of the Minutemen staying at the Dugout Inn. He's gruff and grizzled but relatively friendly. His group makes daily trips beyond the walls of Diamond City to patrol and keep the refugees safe from raiders and monsters. He knows that things are beginning to spiral out of control between the Minutemen and the Children of Atom, but he doesn't believe his group has done anything wrong. Some things that may come up in the conversation:

- The Children of Atom can't be trusted and must have ulterior motives for being in Diamond City. He wishes that Mayor McDonough would exile them. They're unpleasant to be around, and their weird reverence for radiation is an actual hazard.
- He hasn't seen his group start any confrontations. The Atomites drink too much, then rile up the Minutemen with snooty comments about their lack of enlightenment.
- He used to tell his group not to let the Children get under their skin. However, the snide remarks have been happening for long enough that now he thinks the Children ought to get what is coming to them.

A PC can convince Bryce to find the Minutemen somewhere else to sleep and spend their free time—or instigate them to start a brawl with the Children of Atom—by making a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 3. If they fail, he refuses to speak to them further. If a PC tries to intimidate him into leaving the inn, they must make a **STR or CHA** test (with an appropriate skill) with a difficulty of 4. If they fail, five **Minutemen** (including Bryce) start a brawl, fighting the PCs with unarmed attacks. They do not draw weapons unless the PCs draw first.

MEETING THE CHILDREN OF ATOM

The spokeswoman for the Children of Atom is a woman named **Shoeshine Parker**. She has been a reasonably wealthy resident of Diamond City her entire life but is a recent convert to the Church of Atom. She aids the Church's missionaries by organizing volunteers to deliver food to the hungry. She also pays for the Atomite's rooms at the Dugout. She refuses to give up the Dugout Inn to the Minutemen. Some things that may come up in conversation:

- Her father used to drink in the Dugout, and his photo is pinned to the wall behind the bar. The Dugout is like a second home to her; she doesn't want to drink anywhere else.
- The recent fight between the Minutemen and the Children of Atom started when one of Bryce's friends tried to steal caps out of the pocket of one of her volunteers. Those caps were meant to buy supplies for the needy. She caught the thief in the act, and a fist fight followed.
- Yefim is an old family friend, and he's been telling her for weeks that he'll sort out the problem of the Minutemen. So far, he has done nothing.

The PCs can't convince Parker to take her crew and drink elsewhere, and she laughs off any attempts at intimidation—her group helps the needy and has the righteousness of Atom on their side. If pressed, she offers to pay the PCs 25 caps to start a brawl with the Minutemen inside the bar but stresses it must look like the Minutemen started the fight so that Yefim bans the rival group from the Dugout.

If the PCs start a fight with Parker and her friends, they face five **Children of Atom** who fight with unarmed attacks unless any of the PCs draws weapons.

Minuteman Rioweman

Level 8, Human,
Normal Character (60 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
6	7	6	6	5	5	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	1	Sneak	1
Energy Weapons	4	Speech	1
Medicine	1	Survival	4
Melee Weapons	2	Unarmed	1
Repair	2		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
14	12	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
210 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1 (Arms, Legs, Torso)	2 (Arms, Legs, Torso)	0	0

ATTACKS

- **UNARMED STRIKE: STR + Unarmed** (TN 7), 2 Physical damage
- **RECON THREE-CRANK LASER MUSKET: PER + Energy Weapons** (TN 11), 6 Piercing Energy damage, Range M, Two-Handed, Accurate, Recon

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **CONCENTRATE FIRE:** When the minuteman makes a ranged attack, they can re-roll up to 2 of their damage roll.

INVENTORY

Leather Chest Piece, Leather Leg x2, Leather Arm x2, Recon Three-Crank Laser Musket, Serrated Combat Knife, 2d20 Fusion Cells, 2 Stimpaks, Wealth 2

Children of Atom

Level 6, Human,
Normal Character (45 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
5	5	6	8	5	5	4

SKILLS			
Barter	1	Sneak	2
Energy Weapons	3	Speech	3
Melee Weapons	1	Survival	4
Repair	1		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
10	12	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
200 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	2(All)	0

ATTACKS

- **UNARMED STRIKE: STR + Unarmed** (TN 5), 2 Physical damage
- **GAMMA GUN: PER + Energy Weapons** (TN 8), 3 Piercing, Stun, Radiation damage, Fire Rate 1, Range M, Blast, Inaccurate

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **RAD RESISTANT:** The Child of Atom can survive moderate radioactivity for prolonged periods. They have Radiation DR 2.

INVENTORY

Tough Clothing, Gamma Gun, 2d20 Gamma Rounds, Wealth 1

If violence breaks out in the inn, NPCs and PCs can describe using chairs and other bar scenery for their attacks—bar furniture counts as unarmed attacks or 1 cover. If anyone fires a gun or someone dies, twelve Diamond City security guards show up and immediately break up the fight. Otherwise, the guards appear to end the brawl after five rounds of combat. Both groups blame each other, and the guards cannot decide who is guilty. Rather than arrest anyone, they confiscate any drawn weapons and inform the groups that the Mayor will hear about what happened.

Yefim then demands everyone leave—but if he is pleased with the PCs' actions, he whispers to them that they should return later after things have cooled down.

THE FALLOUT

The PC with the highest Charisma makes a settlement reputation test **(CHA + Reputation Rank)** when the quest resolves, rolling a number of d20s equal to their positive influences against a difficulty equal to the number of negative influences. Use the following outcomes as a guide:

- **Peacefully Persuaded the Minutemen.** If the PCs convince the Minutemen to leave the Dugout and find somewhere else to stay, Yefim is incredibly grateful. In addition to a free room and 50% discount on drinks, he gives them three bottles of *Rum* as a reward. His business begins to recover, and he talks up the PCs to his patrons—add one positive influence to the reputation test.
- **The Minutemen Banned.** If the PCs instigated the Minutemen to start a brawl with them or the Children, Yefim bans Bryce's group from the dugout. He rewards the PCs with a free room and a 50% discount unless they fired a gun or killed someone during the encounter. Word about the brawl becomes huge news in Diamond City. If the PCs brawled with the Minutemen themselves, add one negative influence to the reputation test. If the PCs killed a Minuteman, add another negative influence to the test and the PCs become banned from the Dugout Inn.
- **The Children of Atom Banned.** If the PCs started a fight with the Children, Yefim bans both the PCs and Parker's group from the Dugout. If she is able, Parker screams at Yefim as security escorts her from the bar, claiming he is betraying the memory of her father. She and her volunteers leave Diamond City and soon become full Sisters and Brothers of the Last Son of Atom's sect of the Church. She bitterly remembers the PCs in future encounters and may become a recurring foe. If the PCs killed any of the Children during the fight, add a negative influence to the reputation test.

SIDE QUEST: WE GOT THE BEAT

This quest becomes available after the PCs complete *Main Quest: The Train Job* the next time they leave Diamond City and build a campsite. **Add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

Linda, a harmless wandering ghoul trader, approaches the PCs' camp with a proposition. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *A pinch-faced ghoul woman in worn work clothes strolls casually up to your camp, hands raised. She rasps, with a dry chuckle, "Funny, I thought you'd be better armed." Then she holds out a wrinkled hand and kindly says, "Linda. Pleased to meet you all. I have an offer of employment and a few caps for your pockets in exchange for a few travel days. Care to hear me out?"*

Linda is very personable, funny, and world-wise. She can tell PCs about any of the major settlements in the Commonwealth—she has done business with all of them except for Beatsville (see p.140). If the PCs speak to Linda, they can learn the following:

- Linda wants to trade with the legendary hidden settlement of **Beatsville,** said to be the home of brilliant artists. She thinks she knows how to get there—but needs protection, so nobody robs her caravan during the journey. Ghouls aren't welcome in Diamond City anymore, so she followed the players' characters, hoping they might help.

- The trip should only take 48-hours, even though her brahmin struggle with the cold weather. She deduced the location of Beatsville after triangulating the signal from KOOL Radio, but she keeps that presumed location secret. After all, she has no desire to create competition for a trade route.
- Her crew includes **Charlotte** (a human mechanic), **Regina** (a human mercenary), and **Kate** and **Janie** (human merchants). Kate and Janie handle the brahmin, trade inventory, and assist with first aid when necessary. Charlotte keeps their wagons in good repair. Regina's the muscle. She believes her companions are loyal, though Janie's Church of Atom religious beliefs can sometimes be off-putting.
- Linda has a small caravan pulled by four pack-brahmin. The two wagons are stocked with various items, mostly junk, but geared toward what she thinks will sell in Beatsville. Her stores contain paint and thinner, bleached cloth, wire, glue, and glitter.

If the PCs agree, Linda offers them 20 caps per PC upfront and 20 more caps per PC when they arrive safely. If a PC makes a successful **(STR or CHA) + Barter** test with a difficulty of 2, Linda pleasantly offers 20 additional caps per PC should they arrive with her goods intact.

THE JOURNEY TO BEATSVILLE

Searching for Beatsville means traveling overland for 48 to 72 hours (see *Chapter 1, Traversing the Commonwealth*, p.29) and camping at least twice. You may also introduce winter environment conditions during the journey (see *Chapter 1, Winter Wasteland,* p.27). Linda and her crew are open to speaking to the PCs and befriending them. Janie is secretly spying on them for the Church of Atom but does not act against them. She even offers them some of her food and drink.

The caravan may come under attack during the trek through frozen ruins, shattered streets, and endless junkyards. The four brahmin are the easiest attack targets, and Regina does her best to help the PCs protect them.

Brahmin

Level 3, Mutated Mammal, Normal Creature (24 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
6	4	1	—	2

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
9	10	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1	1	Immune	0

ATTACKS

- **HEADBUTT: Body + Melee** (TN 7), 4 Physical damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The brahmin is immune to Radiation damage and its effects.

INVENTORY

- **BUTCHERY:** Butchering the brahmin's corpse requires an **END + Survival** test with a difficulty of 0. A success yields 1 portion of brahmin meat and 2 Uncommon Materials.



Regina

Level 6, Human, Normal Character (45 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
6	6	6	5	5	6	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	1	Sneak	1
Barter	2	Speech	1
Medicine	1	Survival	4
Small Guns	4	Unarmed	1

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
12	12	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
210 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	0	0

ATTACKS

- **UNARMED STRIKE: STR + Unarmed** (TN 5), 3 Physical damage
- **COMBAT RIFLE: AGI + Small Guns** (TN 10), 5 Physical damage, Fire Rate 2, Range M, Two-Handed

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **DEADSHOT:** Once per combat, Regina can increase the difficulty of a ranged attack by 1. If she hits, she doubles the number of rolled to determine damage.
- **LET RIP:** Once per combat, Regina may 'let rip' with a volley from her Combat Rifle. This adds the weapon's Fire Rage of 2 to the weapon's damage for a single attack (for 7 total).

INVENTORY

Road Leathers, Combat Rifle, 9+4 .45 rounds, Wealth 2

During the caravan journey, PCs have opportunities to interact with and build relationships with their new traveling companions.

Arguing Religion. At the end of the first day of travel, an argument breaks out between Janie and Kate about religion during camp. Janie believes in endless possibilities and the unexplainable and doesn't understand how Kate can believe in nothing at all. Kate thinks Janie is a fool to let herself get wrapped up in the so-called Last Son of Atom's prophecy hogwash and can't believe any god would allow the world to fall to its current state. They ask the PCs with the highest **CHA** score to settle the dispute about whether or not faith has any value. A PC who makes a successful **CHA or INT + Speech** test with a difficulty of 3 can make a compelling argument for their own beliefs. On a failure, whichever NPC disagrees most with their argument snubs them for the remainder of the journey with cold dinners, refusal to help with chores, and occasional venomous glares.

The Burden of Fallen Brahmin. Travel becomes much more challenging if any brahmin die from attack or cold weather. Charlotte stays cheery despite the setback but pushes herself too hard to shoulder the burden personally. Unless PCs take the burden on themselves, she becomes critically injured when a wagon wheel breaks after the first day of travel. PCs who help shoulder the burden must make a group **END + Athletics** test with a difficulty of 4 after each day of travel. On a failure, any participating PCs suffer 2 Fatigue.

Old Scars. Regina blames herself if any crew suffers from a critical injury or dies. If no one consoles her, she grows distant while they travel and takes unnecessary risks during combat. Consoling Regina does not require making a test—they merely need to offer support and listen to her. Regina can explain that she used to be a guard for a large settlement that was wiped out by a roaming horde of mutated monsters. While her sister and brother stayed to fight, she fled because she was scared. She hasn't stayed in one place for long ever since.

Trail Song. Linda has a fondness for music, but as a ghoul, her voice is gravelly and not well-suited to singing. Her fingers are still agile, though, and she has

a good sense of pitch and timing. One night around the campfire, she asks if any of the PCs know any good trail songs. If a PC sings a song, allow them to describe the song's meaning and make a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 2. On a failure, Linda cleans out her ears with her fingers and politely thanks them for indulging her. On a success, the song moves Linda, and she asks them how they learned music. She mentions that if someone finds her an instrument, she would love to learn to play. If the PCs search for a musical instrument while scavenging in the future, they can use a roll on the *Winter Wasteland* or *Random Oddities and Valuables* tables to find a guitar or pair of drums instead. If they gift the instrument to Linda, she is very grateful—add 3 AP to the group's pool. Linda begins to practice nightly—proving very naturally talented—and encourages her traveling companions to play music or sing along with her. As winter progresses, she and her crew begin to foster a local reputation for being traveling musicians in addition to traders.

ARRIVING AT BEATSVILLE

Once the caravan finds the hidden junkyard settlement of Beatsville, its residents greet the travelers—they seem both wary and impressed by their efforts. Beatsville rarely gets visitors due to being so carefully hidden. So long as the PCs behave and promise not to share the secret of Beatsville with anyone else, they are welcome to enjoy the settlement's safety, warmth, art, food, and water.

Good Pay for Good Work. Linda gives the PCs their remaining pay and spends two days trading raw materials for finished goods before she leaves for another settlement. Her next destination is only a 24-hour journey away—choose any settlement you think the PCs might enjoy exploring. She offers the group 10 caps per PC if they continue to guard the caravan during the next trip.

Snakes in the Snow. If the PCs accept Linda's offer and travel further with the caravan, **Janie** sneaks off from camp in the middle of the first night of the next journey to inform a Child of Atom spy of Beatsville's location. Suspicious PCs who notice she is missing from camp can track through the snow or ice by making two successful tests **(PER + Survival and AGI + Stealth)** with difficulty 2. If either test fails, Janie recognizes she is being tracked and eludes her pursuers—she informs her contact of Beatsville's location and never returns to the caravan.

If both tests succeed, they follow Janie to a secluded rendezvous where she meets with **Brother Lywin**, a Church of Atom spy, to inform him of Beatsville's secret location. If the PCs confront Janie, the two **Children of Atom** attack. They do not pursue PCs who flee and flee themselves if their partner is defeated.

Should Janie or the spy survive or escape, they travel to the safety of Diamond City to seek shelter with the settlement's Church members. The other caravan members are shocked by the betrayal, though Kate claims not to be surprised.



Children of Atom

Level 6, Human,
Normal Character (45 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
5	5	6	8	5	5	4

SKILLS			
Barter	1	Sneak	2
Energy Weapons	3	Speech	3
Melee Weapons	1	Survival	4
Repair	1		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
12	10	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
200 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	2(All)	0

ATTACKS

- **MACHETE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 6), 4 Piercing Physical damage
- **GAMMA GUN: PER + Energy Weapons** (TN 8), 3 Piercing, Stun, Radiation damage, Fire Rate 1, Range M, Blast, Inaccurate

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **RAD RESISTANT:** The Child of Atom can survive moderate radioactivity for prolonged periods. They have Radiation DR 2.

INVENTORY

Tough Clothing, Gamma Gun, Machete, 2d20 Gamma Rounds, Wealth 1

THE FALLOUT

This quest has the following outcomes:

- **Picked Up a Part-Time Gig.** If PCs continue to work for Linda and maintain a good relationship, she is happy to pay them 10 caps per PC for each trip between settlements and share food or water with them during the journey. They can work as caravan guards while continuing to explore Commonwealth settlements and completing other **side quests**. Linda spends two days in each settlement before traveling onward.
- **Received Rave Reviews.** If they protected her caravan well, Linda spreads word of the PCs' resourcefulness. Make a settlement reputation test for the next settlement she travels to, regardless of whether or not the PCs continue to work for her caravan, adding one positive influence for Linda's good word of mouth.
- **Secret Revealed.** If the PCs do not interfere with Janie and Brother Lymin's meeting, the Last Son of Atom learns the location of Beatsville and may be more likely to attack it during ***Main Quest: A Thousand Feet of Terror***.



GOODNEIGHBOR

No matter one's vice, Goodneighbor promises satisfaction. Founded in the wake of the Diamond City purge, Goodneighbor is home to ghouls, criminals, and other Commonwealth misfits who do not belong elsewhere. A violent rebellion against the settlement's previous leader, Vic, has left Hancock as the self-proclaimed Mayor. Murder, extortion, and chem peddling are commonplace despite Hancock's gang, the Neighborhood Watch, patrolling the streets. Radioactive snow covers every inch of the secure little brick-and-mortar settlement. Most of Goodneighbor's population waits out the frigid weather all warm and cozy inside its many frivolous and indulgent businesses, unaware that starvation and overpopulation could be its downfall. There may be Triggermen in the back alley and memory addicts in the hotel lobby, but some would claim there are far worse places in the Commonwealth to wait out atomic winter.

Population: 50-60 settlers

Defenses: Very Strong

Food Supply: Limited

Denizen Outlook: Satisfied

Starting Settlement Reputation Rank: Neutral

TENSIONS AT A GLANCE

The conflict within Goodneighbor is built upon these core issues:

- **A distracted mayor** that's inattentive to the needs of the settlement or the real struggles its denizens face.
- **A food shortage** pushing settlers to turn to chems for relief from the growing starvation problem.
- **An increase in crime and civil unrest** due to overpopulation and the unsupervised Neighborhood Watch.

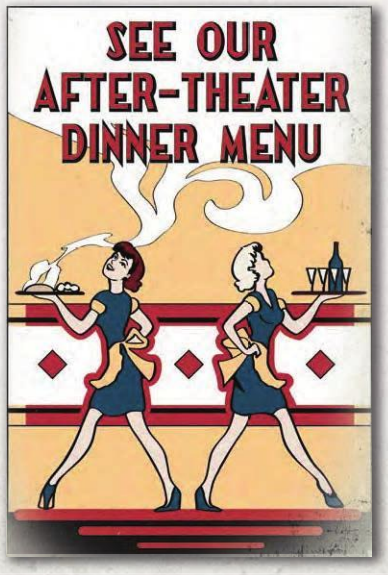
The internal conflicts of Goodneighbor are cause and effect, each one a consequence of the one that came before it. A lack of authentic leadership means no reliable food source, leading to more chem usage and growing internal controversy.

NUCLEAR WINTER IN SCOLLY SQUARE

Once a haven for lost souls and the Commonwealths' undesirables, the settlement is now a place where chem addiction, the cold, and starvation rival one another to be the greatest threat. Its residents look for someone to lead them through the violent nuclear winter.

CHEM-TASTIC LIFE

"A chem a day keeps the hunger away" has become a motto in Goodneighbor since winter began. For many citizens, chems and escapism fill the void left by lack of food and an uncertain future, with the settlement's recreational establishments exacerbating the issue. As legitimate supply lines come to a halt across the Commonwealth, Goodneighbor's well-established community is in a dire situation—and there is nobody more dangerous than the desperate.



SECURITY

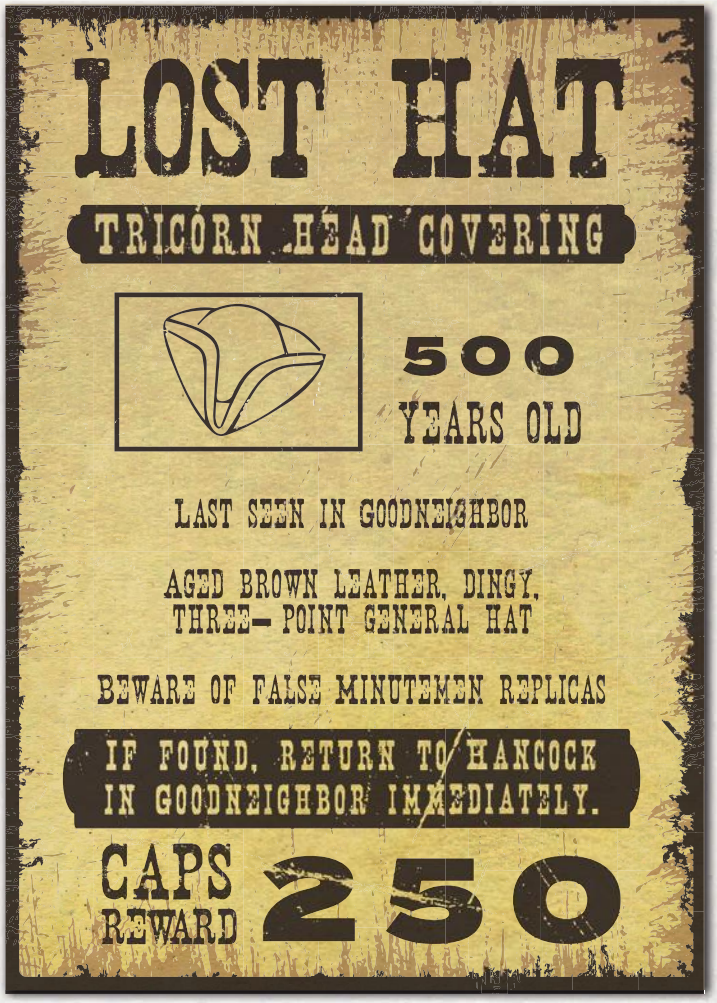
Goodneighbor's location makes it an ideal stronghold against the raging winter weather and dangers of the Boston area. The Neighborhood Watch deals with raiders and other violent attacks quickly, but outside factors are the least of Goodneighbor's problems. The settlement serves drifters, criminals, and vigilantes of all kinds, but crime and civil unrest have spiked with the recent overpopulation. People fight over small slights, steal from those with little to give, and defile the streets with refuse. The people of Goodneighbor have become their own worst enemy. In his isolation, Hancock has declared new measures to limit how many people are allowed into Goodneighbor at any given time. This new "headcount system" addresses the crowding problem but does little to combat the growing internal unrest fueled by illegal chems and supply shortages.

RESIDENTIAL TENSIONS

Hancock's hands-off approach forces residents to fend for themselves, including the Neighborhood Watch. Outnumbered, Hancock's gang resorts to extremes to keep the peace. Violence among neighbors, excessive robberies, and chem-induced rages are commonplace. The Neighborhood Watch answers the growing unrest with even more of an iron fist than usual, escalating tensions between the keepers of peace and the settlers they are supposed to protect. Many residents are fighting back, and rumors spread of new gangs rising to halt the Neighborhood Watch's tyranny and bring peace back to the streets.

ATOM'S INFLUENCE

Hancock has very little interest in allying with outside factions. He did not overthrow Vic and establish Goodneighbor for it to fall under the charge of anyone but himself. And though the Children of Atom do not need Hancock directly, they know he stands between them and Goodneighbor's population. An Atomite spy deviously stole Hancock's hat and framed several members of the Neighborhood Watch, knowing the self-proclaimed mayor would obsess over rats within his organization and pay less attention to outsiders. This distraction provides the Children of Atom the perfect chance to infiltrate and walk among the riffraff without worrying about Hancock noticing. With Goodneighor's overcrowding issue, no one seems to care if people disappear into the care of the Children of Atom. The Church plans to kill several members of the Neighborhood Watch soon and gain Hancock's trust by returning his hat—spinning a grand story of how they uncovered a massive conspiracy against the leader and put an end to it.



WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

New pamphlets at Hotel Rexford confirm that the Children of Atom have made Goodneighbor part of their regular recruitment circle. It's rumored even the Last Son of Atom visited the Memory Den recently. Having seen the disparaged state of the settlers in Goodneighbor with their own eyes, the Children of Atom know residents are vulnerable to suggestion and therefore ideal targets for recruitment. Hancock's new headcount system has slowed their efforts, but it has not stopped them entirely.

WITH OTHER FACTIONS

Due to the declining trade between settlements, caps are not flowing as they used to in Goodneighbor. The local businesses have become concerned, so Hancock has secretly sent chem-runners into the Commonwealth to trade their excess illegal supplies for caps to support the struggling establishments. Like the Children of Atom infiltrating Goodneighbor, Hancock's chem-runners target the most vulnerable people inside other settlements. **Limbo** at **Mechminster Abbey** (p.150) has already proven profitable returns and remains the number one chem sales site during winter.

KEY LOCATIONS AND PEOPLE OF INTEREST

Goodneighbor is home to several one-of-a-kind establishments focused on supplying their visitors with whatever their vice may be. The personalities within them are just as unique, thanks to the settlement's ability to draw in the downtrodden and the eccentric—the types of folks who often have information to trade for the right price.

OLD STATE HOUSE

The Old State House is the oldest building in the Commonwealth and the current headquarters of Hancock's mayoral activities. Once overcrowding became an issue, he put the building on lockdown. The only people allowed in (other than himself) are the Neighborhood Watch.

Key NPCs:

- **Hancock** is the jaded leader of Goodneighbor who has secluded himself in the **Old State House** for the winter. His successes have left him with everything he could ever want—chems, caps, and capital. Even facing the settlement's current adversities, Hancock spends all his time doting over a historical painting of the real John Hancock and babbling about his missing hat. Much of his identity revolves around his historical outfit, and with his hat missing, Hancock remains distraught and intoxicated. His grief has led him to blame the settlers and even his own **Neighborhood Watch** for his missing accessory. The Watch is unhappy with Hancock's accusations and take their frustrations out on local settlers. Hancock's new policies assure he need only do the bare minimum to get Goodneighbor through winter so he can focus on what is most important to him**:** his hat. Hancock may prove a worthy ally to anyone who can help him with his adornment issue or otherwise pull him out of his deep depression.

MEMORY DEN

The Memory Den is a recreational establishment offering a unique virtual experience. Through the use of memory loungers, one can relive a moment from your life or even the lives of others. **Irma**, the proprietor, has a keen business sense, catering only to those with the caps upfront and the mental stability to cope with such an experience. But just like any place of sumptuous indulgence, addiction lingers in the air. Rumor in Goodneighbor has it that the Memory Den recently provided their services to the **Last Son of Atom**. What memory could he possibly want to relive?

Key NPCs:

- **Irma** is one of Goodneighbor's human residents and the co-proprietor of the **Memory Den**. Gifted with great beauty and skilled in persuasion, she rarely fails at turning a shopper into a buyer. But ask about another person's experience, and she reminds you of the strict confidentiality clause**:** only the original owner of the memory can view an archived file unless released as public domain. Recently, the Last Son of Atom partook of the Memory Den's services forcing Irma, under threat to her life, to keep his activities secret. She's the only one who knows he is searching other peoples' memories about a lost military research facility. If paid a large sum of caps, Irma may share this information but doesn't know the facility's location. Everyone knows there is nothing in Goodneighbor that doesn't have a price.

THE THIRD RAIL

The Third Rail is a jazz club built into the subway station below the Old State House. Most people who visit Goodneighbor agree that it's the best place to get a drink—and information. **Whitechapel Charlie's** home-brewed booze and **Magnolia's** jazzy performances are sure to warm up even the frostiest souls.

Key NPCs:

- **Whitechapel Charlie** is a Mister Handy model robot and dedicated bartender of the Third Rail. If you can get past his Cockney accent and pre-war British attire, you might be able to bargain for some information on the local happenings. As a direct employee of Hancock's, he remains loyal and is hostile to anyone who speaks out against him.
- **Magnolia** is the resident jazz singer for the bar hired by Whitechapel Charlie, regarded by many as beauty incarnate. Unknown to most, she is a synth. Listen closely enough to her songs' original lyrics, and the secret story of her escape from the Institute will be revealed. She likes interesting company and gossip, but has little interest in local politics as long as the caps keep flowing.

NEON FLATS

Neon Flats is a vacant apartment building near the center of town. The apartments lack power, but anyone brave enough to exterminate the **mole rats** and **radroaches** nesting there might get squatting rights for the winter. The building consists of three floors, including individual rooms, several restrooms, a kitchen with a **cooking station**, and a larger kitchen containing materials that can be used for a **chemistry station**. Neon Flats could prove a profitable business venture, especially with the settlement's overcrowding issues, but new businesses must gain approval from Hancock first.

HOTEL REXFORD

Hotel Rexford is more of a chem-den than a true hotel. Currently, the sign out front reads "No Vacancy." Under normal conditions, it provides lodging to travelers and scavengers who pass through Goodneighbor. With the recent overcrowding problem, single rooms accommodate six or more at a time. Most inhabitants remain in an inebriated hibernation waiting for winter to pass.

Key NPCs:

- **Norm** is a mysterious homeless man who has taken up permanent residence in front of **Hotel Rexford**. He keeps cover under a tattered wool blanket, hiding his human-like qualities. People joke that winter has frozen him in place, but as a third-generation synth, the cold has little effect on him. He holds the perfect position to see and hear everything that happens in Goodneighbor and is an excellent source of information for those who manage to befriend him.

THE WAREHOUSE

The Warehouse is Hancock's private storage for the settlement's chems and excess food stores. There, his **Neighborhood Watch** meets with chem-runners for pick up and drop off. Though the storehouse stocks plenty of illegal chems, it is the heaping pile of helpful medicines like stimpaks that Hancock hopes to keep secret and safe.

Key NPCs:

- **The Neighborhood Watch** is Hancock's security detail of humans and ghouls, tasked with keeping the peace in Goodneighbor. More bully than security, the Watch dress in three-piece suits, wear fedoras, and sport submachine guns. They take shifts guarding the heavily chained Warehouse door twenty-four hours a day. Since Hancock started secretly running illegal chems to other settlements, the Watch's efforts are concentrated chiefly on protecting the Warehouse's secret stash of medicines and remaining food. Suspicions abound among the settlers about what the warehouse contains, but only Hancock and his goons know what is locked inside.

SIDE QUEST: A VERY GOOD NEIGHBOR

This quest becomes available after the PCs complete *Main Quest: The Train Job* and spend a day in Goodneighbor. **Add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

Hancock approaches the PCs and tells them he heard about their work near Diamond City and has a proposition for them. Some things that may come up during the conversation**:**

- Mayor McDonough is no friend of Hancock or the people of Goodneighbor, and for all he talks about wanting to help the Commonwealth at large, he refuses to offer aid.
- The people of Goodneighbor are starving, and even the recent attempts to limit the population in the settlement by introducing daily headcounts haven't helped.
- He needs help, and he's willing to pay for it.

Hancock's proposition is simple**:** help ensure that some of the supplies meant for Diamond City find their way to Goodneighbor or help the Neighborhood Watch set up an ambush on a caravan. He promises that Mayor McDonough will never learn of the involvement of the PCs in this scheme. In exchange, he offers them 100 caps, medicinal supplies, and an apartment in Neon Flats to do with as they please—though he cautions that there is no power and a bad infestation of radroaches and mole rats that will need dealing with to make the place habitable.

THE DIPLOMATIC ROUTE

The PCs may be able to lean on their relationship with Mayor McDonough to acquire some supplies in an above-board manner. They can return to Diamond City and convince McDonough to share food and water with Goodneighbor. To do so, a PC must make a **CHA or INT + Speech** test with a difficulty equal to 6 minus the PCs' settlement reputation rank for Diamond City. If the test succeeds, McDonough agrees to help Goodneighbor—if only because he believes he might need the PCs' aid in the future. The supplies are enough to help Goodneighbor stave off winter a little longer. If the test fails, McDonough over-dramatically acts heartbroken, but informs the PCs that he simply cannot put his people at risk of starvation to help a town full of criminals.

If the PCs return to Hancock with the good news, he seems genuinely surprised and more than a little suspicious of McDonough's motives—but thanks the PCs for their excellent work.

GREASING THE RIGHT PALMS

The PCs can help Goodneighbor and keep their hands relatively clean at the same time if they tip off Hancock and the Neighborhood Watch about the movements of an upcoming food caravan arriving soon at Diamond City. To learn about the shipment's travel plan, they can strike up a conversation in Diamond City by making a **CHA or INT + Barter** test with a difficulty of 3. If the test succeeds, the person they're speaking to offers them the details in exchange for 4d20 caps. If the test fails, whoever they're talking to becomes suspicious and avoids sharing information—the PCs cannot gain the knowledge unless they resort to more extreme measures, such as capturing and forcing a member of Diamond City Security to spill what they know.

If the PCs learn about the arriving shipment and inform Hancock, five of his Neighborhood Watch set a trap and pull off an easy heist that results in the deaths of several caravan merchants. PCs who have a change of heart, or want to steal the caravan's goods for themselves, might try to set up a trap to take out the five Neighborhood Watch members.

Neighborhood Watch

Level 6, Human,
Normal Character (45 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
5	5	7	6	5	6	4

SKILLS			
Barter	1	Sneak	2
Energy Weapons	3	Speech	3
Melee Weapons	1	Survival	4
Repair	1		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
13	11	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
200 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
0	0	0/Immune	0/Immune

ATTACKS

- **MUZZLED SUBMACHINE GUN: AGI + Small Guns** (TN 10), 3 Burst Physical damage, Fire Rate 4, Range C, Two-Handed
- **HEAVY LEAD PIPE:STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 9), 5 Physical damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

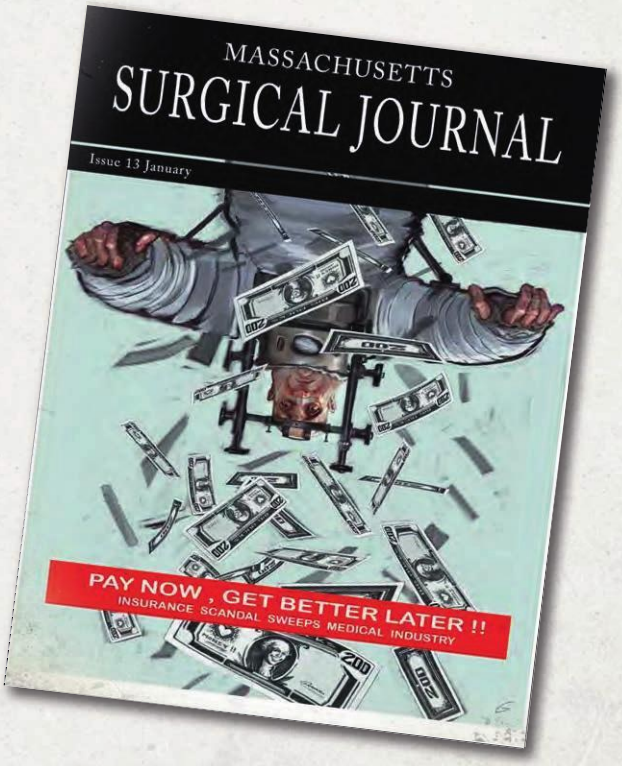
- **GHOUL IMMUNITY:** Neighborhood Watch members are often ghouls, though not always. Ghouls are immune to Poison and Radiation damage and their effects. Also, they are immune to all diseases.
- **LET RIP:** Once per combat, the Neighborhood Watch may 'let rip' with a volley from their Muzzled Submachine Gun, adding the weapon's Fire Rate of 4 to the weapon's damage for a single attack (for 7 total).

INVENTORY

Three-Piece Suits and Fedora (Formal Clothing), Heavy Lead Pipe, Muzzled Submachine Gun, 5+10 .45 Rounds, 2 Bobby Pins, Wealth 2

A LITTLE BREAKING AND ENTERING

If the PCs access the food and medicine stores in Diamond City, they can try to smuggle goods out of the settlement. Sneaking into storage unnoticed requires a group **AGI or PER + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 3. If the test fails, four armed members of **Diamond City Security** notice them and block the storage exit. They demand the PCs lay down their arms and come with them to explain their actions to the mayor. A PC can talk their way out of trouble with the guards or McDonough by making a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 4. On a success, they can convince the locals they had a good reason to be in their food storage room. They may attempt to sneak in and steal supplies again, but if they are spotted, security immediately attacks. The guards immediately attack if the PCs cannot talk their way out of trouble or refuse to surrender to security.



Diamond City Security

Level 6, Human, Normal Character (45 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
6	6	6	5	5	6	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	3	Speech	1
Melee Weapons	4	Survival	2
Small Guns	4	Unarmed	1

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
12	12	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
200 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(All)	1(All)	0	0

ATTACKS

- **CHAIN-WRAPPED ALUMINUM BASEBALL BAT: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 10), 7 Physical damage, Two-Handed
- **LONG BARREL QUICK PIPE GUN: AGI+ Small Guns** (TN 10), 3 Physical damage, Fire Rate 2, Close Quarters, Range M

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **HOME RUN:** Once per combat, the Diamond City Security can swing their baseball bat with all their might, adding their Athletics skill of 3 to their target number (for a total of TN 13). Their first success generates an additional success.

INVENTORY

Baseball Uniform (Tough Clothing), Chain-Wrapped Baseball Bat, Long Barrel Quick Pipe Gun, 5+10 .38 Rounds, 2x Stimpaks, Wealth 1

If the PCs are defeated, the guards strip them of any of their food or beverages, then dump their unconscious bodies and weapons onto the ruined streets of Boston outside the settlement. If the PCs defeat Diamond City Security, the only way to ensure no one learns of their actions is to leave none of the guards alive and quietly leave the settlement.

After the PCs take food supplies and exit, they must make a group **AGI or CHA + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 3 to leave the area without anyone spotting them. If the test fails, two local settlers notice them moving suspiciously and inform Mayor McDonough the following day. In either case, the PCs can leave the settlement with the supplies and make their way back to Goodneighbor—or double-cross Hancock and keep the goods for themselves.

THE FALLOUT

This quest has the following outcomes:

- **Brokered a Peaceful Deal.** If the PCs convinced Mayor McDonough to share some of Diamond City's supplies with Goodneighbor, it marks the beginning of a shaky truce between the settlements that lasts the winter. Make a settlement reputation test for both settlements, adding a positive influence to each for brokering a peaceful deal.
- **Caught in the Act.** If surviving Diamond City Security or local settlers noticed the PCs leaving the storage area—after they stole food supplies or fought guards inside—the mayor becomes aware the next day and the PCs lower their settlement reputation with Diamond City by 2. If the PCs killed any security guards, and McDonough finds out, their settlement reputation automatically decreases to 0 (Hostile). McDonough suspects Hancock to be behind the act and the relationship between Diamond City and Goodneighbor becomes more hostile throughout winter.

- **Delivered the Goods.** If the PCs ensure Goodneighbor receives supplies from Diamond City, regardless of the method, Goodneighbor's **food supply** improves one step, and Diamond City's **food supply** worsens one step. Hancock rewards them with 100 caps, 6 *Stimpaks*, 6 *RadAways*, and the keys to **Neon Flat's** empty apartment. Make a reputation test with Goodneighbor and add one positive influence.

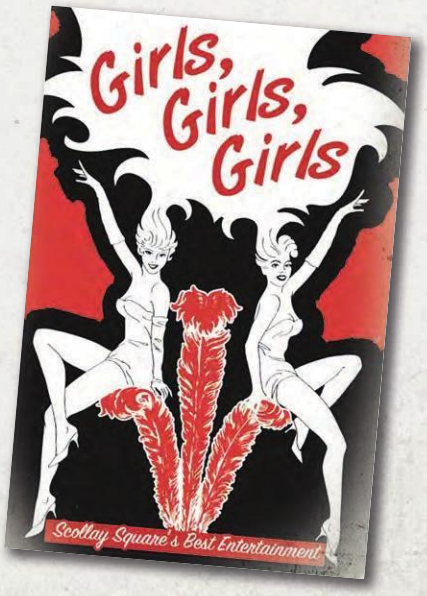
- **Helped Yourselves.** If the PCs keep Diamond City's stolen supplies for themselves, they gain ten of each of the following items: *Melon, Corn, Tarberry, Melon Juice,* and *Brahmin Milk.* Unfortunately, Hancock strongly suspects they double crossed him—the PCs must make a settlement reputation test with a complication range of 4 (17-20) and add one negative influence. Additionally, Diamond City's **food supplies** worsen one step.

Building A Business

Creating a base of operations, like Neon Flats, can provide characters an opportunity for more caps, resources, and narrative possibilities. Establishing Neon Flats as a business venture is a good background task fraught with many challenges, including finding or crafting items for sale, combating competitive business, and protecting assets. You can create additional side quests centered around the PCs' business ventures. When PCs return to their business, consider the state of the settlement, recent events, and how well they have handled any business complications to determine how much profit or debt they have accrued since the last time they checked in.

Below are potential ventures and complications that may arise when converting Neon Flats into a business. You can easily alter these suggestions to work for ventures established in other settlements too.

- **Hotel:** 5 caps per person a night, paid upfront. Requires acquiring or crafting furniture; possible fights among the patrons.
- **Restaurant:** Reference item costs to create a menu. Food resources are scarce; businesses with lots of food on hand become a target for thieves.
- **Chem Front:** Reference item costs to create a list of illicit goods. May antagonize other local chem peddlers willing to fight over turf; could be targeted by local Neighborhood Watch or law enforcement.
- **Shop:** Reference item costs to create a list of goods or services. Highly customized or expensive items may be too expensive for most settlers; competitor shops may do everything they can to chase you out of town.



MIRAGE

To most, Mirage is a rumor at best. Chem-heads babble about the "wandering fortress on the horizon"—a roaming casino offering booze, caps, and gambling for anyone who can find it. The original inhabitants of the fortress were vault dwellers who bravely gave up their home to a gang of vicious raiders, but not before they repurposed the vault's supplies and rigged an explosion to trap the vault's usurpers. Now, these nomadic people live in a metal, beehive-like fortress drawn by brahmin. Though winter storms rattle the steel stronghold, Mirage is never at a loss for supplies, protection, or warmth for those who seek it out and have the caps to pay for it. Paradise may seem too good to be true, especially in a time of such scarcity, but the Children of Atom pamphlets at the bar hint where the leadership's loyalty resides. Look too closely, and just like with any mirage, the truth behind the illusion is revealed.

Population: 32 settlers

Defenses: Somewhat Strong

Food Supply: Just Enough

Denizen Outlook: Very Happy

Starting Settlement Reputation Rank: Neutral

TENSIONS AT A GLANCE

The conflict within the Mirage is built upon these core issues:

- **A decline in caps and customers** due to extreme weather conditions keeping people from traveling.
- **A rising demand for more recruits** to fulfill their deal with the Children of Atom, made more difficult by the recent decline in visitors.
- **The house rules being bent for the Children of Atom** as Maxwell Kantor allows them freedoms reserved for permanent residents.

All three of these issues revolve around Mirage's desperate attempts to survive in a time of scarcity. Drastic times call for extreme measures, and the need to make new allies to survive winter creates growing friction among the residents of Mirage. Now that their revered community rules are being broken, will their paradise be lost?

HOUSE RULES

During Mirage's inception, strict house rules were created for the safety and prosperity of its original residents. These rules have assured the survival of the original vault dwellers. Anyone who doesn't follow the house rules is refused entry or forced to leave by bouncer-types posing as tourists.

MIRAGE HOUSE RULES

- **What happens at Mirage, stays at Mirage.** To maintain its allure and mystery, residents and visitors alike agree to the utmost secrecy for all who visit—what you choose to do in paradise stays in paradise.
- **72-hour limit for all visitors.** Mirage offers delights and luxuries beyond any others found in the Commonwealth, but only permanent residents have the privilege of utopia all the time. All visitors have a 72-hour limit on their stay, and squatters are prohibited.
- **No caps. No entry.** There is no cover charge for admission, but spending caps once inside is required of all parties during their stay. There are many ways to pay, including renting accommodations, gambling, drinking, and tipping entertainment. Anyone who doesn't spend caps becomes evicted (or secretly kidnapped for Church of Atom recruitment).
- **No violence. All weapons checked.** Mirage is a paradise away from the Commonwealth's harsh realities and never-ending violence. Visitors must check all their weapons at the door and handle disagreements with words, not fists. Upon departure,

checked weapons are returned. Armed Mirage guards stand ready to toss people out if violence does arise.

- **Cheaters must pay.** Gambling and caps may rule the scene at Mirage, but the residents believe that fair play is the only way. Anyone attempting to cheat or steal is offered the ability to pay off their debt by working in the kitchens or janitorial details at the casino. Recently, Maxwell Kantor has been secretly kidnapping some of these individuals to produce power for Mirage, before he hands them over to the Children of Atom as part of their vile deal.

NUCLEAR WINTER IN PARADISE

Residential status belongs only to the original vault's dwellers and their immediate families. All have agreed to discretion regarding the inner workings of Mirage so long as it remains their personal paradise. But as hard as they have tried to shape the perfect life behind steel, they cannot control the external effects of nuclear winter's onslaught.

ASSURING SAFETY AND SUPPLIES

Extreme weather conditions make it almost impossible for people of the Commonwealth to travel, which means fewer and fewer visitors seek out Mirage. Fewer customers lead to fewer caps, which means less budget for supplies.

Mirage requires brahmin to power their reactor, and recent frost feral ghoul attacks have killed many of the settlement's herd. This forced Mirage's leader, **Maxwell Kantor**, to strike a secret deal with the Children of Atom—deliver recruits for the Church in exchange for brahmin and supplies to survive the cold months. Unfortunately, the very existence of the bargain disregards several of the community's valued house rules.

RESIDENTIAL TENSIONS

Tensions rise among residents as fewer people visit Mirage. There is a philosophical divide on whether the "No Caps, No Entry" rule should be paused to draw in more patrons. Some believe the people of the Commonwealth would take advantage of this kindness and bleed them of supplies. Maxwell Kantor has yet to make an official ruling, and differing opinions on the matter lead to heated arguments. Those who suspect something sinister is going on in the engine room are increasingly uncomfortable in their own home.

Since making a deal with the Children of Atom, a divide has opened up among Mirage's permanent residents. Kantor, supported by the few people who know the truth of the deal, allows the Children of Atom to disregard the house rules occasionally. He lets the Atomites carry concealed weapons, enter without caps, and even overstay the 72-hour limit. Kantor tries to excuse this blatant rule-breaking by claiming that the Children of Atom are being persecuted and fear for their safety—and that their supplies are more valuable than caps. Other residents, unaware of Kantor's deal, are grateful for the Church's supplies but grow uneasy at their leader's relationship with the Church.

ATOM'S INFLUENCE

While in other settlements the Children of Atom appear mostly benevolent and generous, Mirage's leader knows the true price of the Last Son of Atom's aid. The hand that feeds is the same hand with an iron grip on the settlement.

WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

The isolation and exclusivity of Mirage make it the perfect place for a secret recruitment effort. There are propaganda pamphlets at the bar, cameras hidden in the slot machines, and Children of Atom at the card tables looking for potential recruits.

Only a handful of residents know the truth of Kantor's deal with the Last Son—his most loyal guards and Ole' Man Murray. Others, like Fusion Susan, simply believe the Church is generously gifting supplies in exchange for permission to preach within Mirage and take a short respite from the bitter winter. The more Kantor allows the Atomites at Mirage to openly break the house rules, however, the more suspicion rises that their leader and his new allies are hiding something.

The Last Son of Atom has identified ideal recruits as those down on their luck, with no personal connections or a place to call home. Once a target is selected, the unlucky patron is charged with cheating by Mirage security. Kantor then takes them into a secret hold deep in Mirage's bowels, where hundreds of exercise bikes are used to power the generators. Maxwell Kantor and a handful of his most loyal guards are the only ones allowed into the engineering room. Kantor keeps Mirage's secondary power source a tight secret. Under threat of death, seized visitors are chained to a Vault-Tec bike until they are desperate—left with no choice but to convert to the Church of Atom and resign themselves to the Children's reprogramming to escape. Once amenable to this option, a secret Children of Atom convoy picks them up and takes them to the Last Son's secret headquarters near the Glowing Sea.

WITH OTHER FACTIONS

Mirage is open to all for a short period of time. This rule ensures now more than ever that outside factions, such as the Minutemen, do not get the opportunity to gain a foothold and power in Mirage, keeping them safe from those who seek to exploit the paradise they have created. With Atomites being allowed to ignore the 72-hour time limit, many wonder if Mirage is falling victim to the very danger this rule was designed to protect against.

KEY LOCATIONS AND PEOPLE OF INTEREST

The casino games at Mirage may be fair, but the fate that befalls cheaters and unlucky visitors is not. The casino's patrons have no idea they are making a blind bet against their freedom when they play at Mirage. Aside from the key locations listed, Mirage has many other facilities designed to cater to the needs of its patrons. Kitchens that offer freshly cooked appetizers to those sipping cocktails at the Watering Hole, hotel rooms decorated to look like Vault-Tec dorms for 5 caps per night, and a small shop offers essential equipment to stock up for your stay—or departure.

THE WATERING HOLE

The circular bar is in the middle of the casino floor, maintaining a 360-degree view of all Mirage activities. Visitors can find a liquid lunch accompanied by a Children of Atom pamphlet. The bar hides a single steel trap door leading to the engineering chamber that houses the repurposed vault reactor powered by soon-to-be Church recruits riding exercise bikes. Maxwell Kantor is the bartender and only person with the code to access this room, serving as Mirage's sole reactor engineer.

Key NPCs:

- **Maxwell Kantor** is the appointed leader and resident engineer of Mirage. He is a quiet fellow, a little introverted, but puts on a friendly face to visitors. Behind this façade, Kantor's care for Mirage and its residents borders on the obsessive. He places the settlement's survival above all else—including the lives of the people he recruits for the Children of Atom. He lacks remorse for his decisions, believing that preserving paradise is a worthy cause. His only issue with the Last Son's deal is the struggle to make the agreed recruitment quota and ensuring that Mirage remains under his control. He spends most of his time at the Watering Hole, where he has the perfect perspective to watch for potential recruits.



BLACKJACK'S BLACKJACKS

One of the only Blackjack tables in the Commonwealth, **Blackjack's Blackjacks** is the perfect place to win some caps. If you play your cards right, the dealer might double down and provide valuable information.

Key NPCs:

- **Blackjack** isn't just the best dealer in the wasteland but also the most honest. Unfortunately, **Maxwell Kantor** has asked him to source more "cheaters" at his table, claiming Mirage desperately needs more temporary "volunteers" to keep the casino running. Kantor also promised that these individuals would be fed and cared for while they worked off their falsified debt and released within a few days of being detained. Blackjack is uncomfortable with this breach of the house rules. After his inquiries about the welfare of a few recent faux cheaters lead to a dead end, he is beginning to suspect he's unknowingly setting up innocent people for a much more sinister purpose. He feels compelled to do something about his suspicions but is too afraid to act alone.

THE OASIS

The Oasis stage, fashioned to look like a picturesque sandy paradise, is where Fusion Susan performs new takes on old songs. A Protectron reprogrammed as a one-person band accompanies her each night. If you're lucky, you might catch one of her hits, like "My Atomic Baby" or "Glowing for You."

Key NPCs:

- **Fusion Susan** was a psychologist back in the Vault. Now she charms visitors on and off the stage. She tends to be chatty when not performing, especially if she receives a good tip. Once off the stage, she drops her fake ditzy demeanor. Those who get to know her immediately realize Susan is very caring and intelligent. The permanent residents of Mirage consider her the glue that keeps their community together in tough times. Recently Fusion Susan met the Last Son of Atom during his first visit to the casino and immediately became smitten. She converted to his Church shortly after that, and it's no secret she has a swelling crush on the charismatic prophet. She does whatever she can to gain his attention during his rare visits to Mirage. She tries to impress him with the results of the psychoanalysis she offers to patrons who buy her drinks after her shows. Unknown to her, the Last Son has instructed his spies to listen in on these sessions and use the information to pick out potential recruits.

GLOWING FOR YOU

If the PCs take the time to attend one of Fusion Susan's shows at the Oasis, you can describe one of her performances and the song she sings with the following narration:

The lights dim over the Oasis stage, fading into warm sunset tones as Fusion Susan slinks onto the stage and into the spotlight. As light jazz music starts to play from the one-person Protectron band, Fusion Susan croons, singing with powerful longing, wearing her desperate love on her sleeve. Her performance moves all those with a warm heart to tears.

"Glowing for you is easy living
It's easy to glow when you know
There's nothing in this wasteland but you

I never regret the years I'm giving
It's easy to give when you're in love
I'm happy to do whatever I do for you

Maybe I'm a fool
It's almost cruel
For I believe
You're the Atom to my Eve

Glowing for you is easy living
It's easy to glow when you're in love
I'm atomically glowing for you"

THE SLOTS

The Slots are an aisle of refurbished slot machines initially placed in the Mirage for fun. Now, they each have a small camera installed for surveillance to identify those most ideal for recruitment.

Key NPCs:

- **Ole' Man Murray** is one of the strangest of all Mirage's residents. He drinks heavily and is often heard spouting conspiracy theories. He knows about Kantor's deal with the Last Son of Atom and that his daughter, **Minnie "Muse" Mabee** (see *Beatsville, Artist Alley,* p.143) was forced into recruitment because the Church needed someone who knows American Sign Language. The Last Son gave Kantor a choice—if Mirage gave him Minnie, the Church would never take another original resident for indoctrination. Murray has hated both the Children of Atom and Maxwell Kantor ever since. He keeps quiet about the deal only because Kantor promised that the Church would return Minnie in time if Murray didn't stir up any trouble. If PCs ply him with enough alcohol, show a disdain for the Last Son and his sect, or give him the news that Minnie is free, he is willing to help them stop Kantor and his Atomite allies.

PLAYING THE SLOTS

The Slots boast a wide variety of three reel-handled slot machines for gambling caps. Characters insert caps into the machine, which become converted to "credits" displayed on the machine's screen. When characters pull the handle, they lose 5 credits and roll 3d20 to replicate the spinning wheels. They gain credits based on the results of their roll, as follows:

- **No Matching Numbers or 20s:** No gain.
- **Matching Numbers:** Add the matching numbers together and gain that many credits.
- **One 20:** Gain 5 credits.
- **Two 20s:** Gain 50 credits.
- **Three 20s:** Jackpot! Gain 100 credits.

A character can press the "cash out" button at any point before spinning the wheel again. When they cash out, caps drop into a tray at the bottom of the machine equal to the remaining total credits. Afterward, the machine's screen resets to 0 credits.

SIDE QUEST: MIDNIGHT AT THE OASIS

This quest becomes available after the PCs meet Minnie Mabee in Beatsville or complete *Main Quest: Cleansing Fire.* **Add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

Resident Mirage drunkard and conspiracy theorist—**Ole' Man Murray**—approaches the PCs and asks them to join him outside the casino for a quiet word. He appears cagey and skittish, afraid of being caught talking to the PCs by Kantor's security team. He can reveal the following information:

- **Maxwell Kantor** made a deal for Mirage's safety with the Last Son of Atom's sect. In exchange, he sent Murray's daughter Minnie to the Church. The Last Son was most interested in her ability to speak American Sign Language. Murray's sick with grief and desperately wants to reunite with his daughter but cannot until Mirage is safe again.
- Kantor betrays his promise of safety in Mirage. He targets vulnerable people visiting the casino, captures them, then forces them into manual labor to power the casino. When Kantor is through with his prisoners, he ships them off to the Last Son for "recruitment." Murray and **Blackjack** have decided that Kantor cannot be allowed to kidnap anyone else, even if it leaves Mirage vulnerable.
- Murray knows how to get to where the kidnapped people are held and has a plan to free them. He wants the PCs to play cards at Blackjack's table and do well enough—or be loud and cheat to win—to draw the attention of the casino security team. If they can get themselves kidnapped, Murray believes they are resourceful enough to escape and free the others trapped too. Word will spread, and he hopes everyone living at Mirage will turn against Kantor and his sycophants.

If the PCs agree to help Murray, he tells them to signal him at the slot machines when they are ready to get caught. He offers to play at the blackjack table opposite them to help make a loud scene. Because weapons are not allowed in Mirage, clever deception is the only way to avoid civilian casualties.

CONTENT WARNINGS AND CHANGING SCENES

This quest involves simulated gambling. Gamemasters may wish to alter the quest in one or more of the following ways to better suit the needs of their group:

- Instead of playing out betting and blackjack hands, narrate what happens as though the PCs successfully cheat and get caught.
- Instead of playing cards, Murray can tell the PCs about the keycode-protected trap door behind the bar at the Watering Hole. He offers to create a distraction by smashing bottles and shouting about subliminal messages in the slot machines. The PCs can use the distraction to slip behind the bar and break into the chamber below. Hacking the keycode requires succeeding on an **INT + Science** test with a difficulty of 5. If the PCs fail, six guards show up to arrest them, and Kantor takes them below for eventual "recruitment."

GUNS BLAZING

Mirage visitors must check their weapons at the door. If PCs decide against Murray's plan and go into Mirage guns blazing to rescue its captured people, they must fight their way through a busy casino, facing all eight **Mirage Security Guards**. The guards use slot machines, card tables, the bar, and casino visitors to maintain a superior position. The scenery gives the guards 1 cover, and attacks have a complication range of 2 (19-20). Every complication rolled during the shootout hits an innocent bystander.

Mirage Security Guard

Level 6, Human, Normal Character (45 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
6	6	6	5	5	6	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	1	Small Guns	5
Barter	1	Survival	2
Melee Weapons	5	Unarmed	1

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
12	12	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
210 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
3(Arms, Legs, Torso)	3(Arms, Legs, Torso)	0	0

ATTACKS

- **MACHETE: STR + Melee** (TN 11), 4 Piercing Physical damage
- **COMBAT RIFLE: AGI + Small Guns** (TN 11), 5 Physical damage, Fire Rate 2, Range M, Two-Handed

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **DEADSHOT:** Once per combat, the guard can increase the difficulty of their next ranged attack by 1. If they hit, they double the number of rolled to determine damage.

INVENTORY

Heavy Raider Chest Piece, Heavy Raider Leg x2, Heavy Raider Arm x2, Combat Rifle, Machete, 9+4 .45 rounds, Wealth 1

If the PCs are defeated, Kantor takes all their belongings, then throws them down in the engineering chamber below with the rest of his prisoners—proceed to *The Holding Cell*. If the PCs defeat the guards, Kantor surrenders. He agrees to let the prisoners go and begs the PCs for mercy.

PLAYING CARDS

When the PCs first sit down at Blackjack's table, he doesn't pay them much notice. They must win a few hands or cause a commotion to get him talking. If they mention they are working with Murray to free captives, he hushes them with a finger to his lips, then nods in understanding.

PCs can win caps by playing their cards right. They can bet up to 100 caps each hand; if they win, the house pays out 2:1. Any PC playing makes an **INT + Barter** test—or a **PER + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 3 to cheat to win the hand automatically. After all the PCs bet and make their tests, roll 2d20, counting each result of 11 or lower as a success for the dealer.

PCs who generate more successes on their **INT + Barter** test than you win the hand and receive twice what they bet in payment. Otherwise, they lose the hand and their bet. Anyone who rolls a **20** and a **1** scores a blackjack and automatically wins—but ties always favor the dealer. The first time any PC in the group fails a test to cheat, Blackjack takes their caps and warns them if he catches them cheating again, he will call security.

If any PC wins at least 100 caps, Blackjack mutters, quietly warning them security takes notice of people who win too much, and the PC might want to quit while they are ahead. If any PC wins at least 200 caps, security shows up. Alternatively, a PC can create a scene that draws security by succeeding on a **STR or CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 3.

When security appears, Maxwell Kantor joins them and loudly decries to the visitors at Mirage that they must suffer the fate of all cheaters. He then orders four **Mirage Security Guards** to take their belongings and follow Kantor to the holding cell. If the PCs resist, four more guards appear (see the previous section *Guns Blazing*). If the PCs allow themselves to be taken, the guards strip their belongings and lead them down the trapdoor behind the bar to the engineering chamber—proceed to *The Holding Cell*.

THE HOLDING CELL

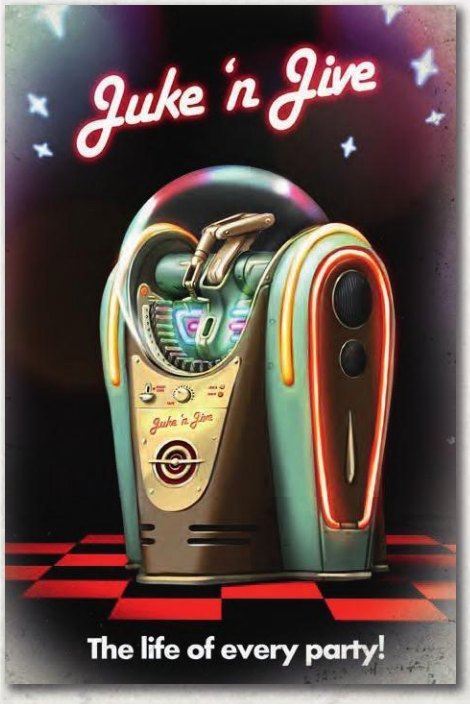
When the PCs allow themselves to be captured or are taken forcefully, they are brought into the bowels of Mirage and witness a horrific scene. Dozens of captives wait below, forced to pedal exercise bikes to power the Mirage's generator until they agree to join the Last Son of Atom's Church. Review the following sidebar before continuing.

CONTENT WARNING AND CHANGING SCENES

The line between indentured servitude and slave labor is semantic. Forcing people to work for zero pay is abhorrent, and should never be tolerated. It is entirely understandable that some players will not want to engage with this content or include it in their games.

You can alter this scene by replacing prisoners riding bikes with brahmin on giant rotating wheels. Captive PCs find themselves locked in the cell with other prisoners and occasionally visited by priests from the Church of Atom. The priests offer them their freedom in exchange for pledging loyalty to the Church.

However you run this scene, do your best to make it clear to the players that the management and guards of Mirage are objectively evil people who need to be held accountable for their actions.



When you are ready to continue, read or paraphrase the following:

The small cell smells bad. Really bad. Like the days-old sweat of hundreds of people forced to cram into too-small conditions for weeks at a time.

But the cell isn't the worst of it. When a prisoner's turn comes—and you never know when you will be next—Kantor's loyal guards lead captives into the so-called "engine room." There, prisoners are chained to an exercise bike and told to start peddling until they cannot anymore. All around, dozens and dozens of other prisoners accused of cheating wait for their next shift at the bikes. The air is filled with the sounds of a hundred old bikes whirring in exhausted unison.

Occasionally robed figures enter the engine room, walking among the pedaling prisoners. When they stop, they kneel to wash the sweat from prisoners' heads with cool rags and gently whisper to them. According to the rumblings of other captives, often, the robed figures unchain prisoners and lead them away, never to be seen again. The rumor is that the Church of Atom offers freedom to those who agree to join the Atomites and attend sermons given by the Last Son of Atom and his most devout followers.

This is the beating heart of Mirage. This is where you live now unless you do something about it. But remember—the house always wins.

The cell is a small cage in the engine room, large enough for a handful of ratty camp beds and a poorly working toilet. The rest of the room contains hundreds of exercise bikes that power Mirage. Three **Mirage Security Guards** are present—two flanking the doors and one sitting reading a magazine in the middle of the room. There are currently five other people caught "cheating" being held in the cell along with the PCs.

The guards removed the PCs' equipment, weapons, and armor. Their gear is stashed away in a large storage trunk located at **long range** on the opposite side of the engine room, beyond the exercise bikes. They can take up their weapons to fight if they can reach the trunk. The PCs must devise a plan to defeat the guards and free Kantor's many prisoners. A few approaches the PCs might take follow.

Tricking the Guards. A PC can trick the guards into opening the cell door for any reason by making a **STR or CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 2. If they lure the guards into the cell to spring a trap, the PCs can make a **surprise attack**. If the PCs ask the other five prisoners in the cell to help, they are all too happy to make the guards pay for their cruelty by swarming them and holding them down during the fight—increase the difficulty of the guards' attacks by 1.

Sneaking Past the Guards. A PC can attempt to pick the cage's lock if they can fashion a pick out of something nearby, such as a spring from the small camp bed in the corner of the cell. To use a jury-rigged tool to unlock the cell without being noticed, they must make an **AGI or INT + Lockpick** test with a difficulty of 2. If they succeed, they can attempt to sneak past the guards without being spotted by succeeding on an **AGI or PER + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 3. If either test fails, or the PCs otherwise make it clear they intend to escape, the three guards approach to deliver a beatdown.

Overpowering the Guards. A PC who waits until one of the guards takes them out of their cell to chain them to an exercise bike can attempt to force their way free and either fight or run for the equipment trunk. To do so, they must succeed on an **AGI or STR + Athletics** test with a difficulty of 2. If they fail, the other two guards immediately approach, and all three attack, attempting to knock the PC unconscious and throw them back into their cell. If they succeed, the PC can take their turn before the guards attack. It takes a major action to grab items like weapons from the equipment trunk.

Mirage Security Guard

Level 6, Human, Normal Character (45 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
6	6	6	5	5	6	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	1	Small Guns	5
Barter	1	Survival	2
Melee Weapons	5	Unarmed	1

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
12	12	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
210 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
3(Arms, Legs, Torso)	3(Arms, Legs, Torso)	0	0

ATTACKS

- **MACHETE: STR + Melee** (TN 11), 4 Piercing Physical damage
- **COMBAT RIFLE: AGI+ Small Guns** (TN 11), 5 Physical damage, Fire Rate 2, Range M, Two-Handed

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **DEADSHOT:** Once per combat, the guard can increase the difficulty of their next ranged attack by 1. If they hit, they double the number of rolled to determine damage.

INVENTORY

Heavy Raider Chest Piece, Heavy Raider Leg x2, Heavy Raider Arm x2, Combat Rifle, Machete, 9+4 .45 rounds, Wealth 1

Freeing the Prisoners. When the PCs defeat the guards or find another way to deal with them, they can take the keys from the meanest-looking guard and free the dozens of prisoners chained to exercise bikes. Once free, the prisoners storm through the trap door to Mirage above to expose Kantor with righteous anger. The remaining Mirage Guards are immediately overwhelmed by the prisoner revolt.

The PCs can stay behind to loot the guards and find an additional 200 caps on their persons—but **Maxwell Kantor** manages to escape the prisoner uprising while the characters linger below. If they instead immediately follow the escaped prisoners up to the casino, they must make a group **PER + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 3. If the group test succeeds, they notice Kantor attempting to sneak out the front entrance and can capture him before he escapes.

Resolving the Uprising. When the PCs return to the casino above, they find the escaped captives overwhelming the remaining Mirage Guards loyal to Kantor. **Blackjack** and **Murray** stand atop card tables and publicly expose Kantor and his allies to the other residents. Blackjack asks the PCs to help them decide what will become of Kantor, his loyal guards, and the future of Mirage. The PCs can offer solutions that impact the future of Mirage. If the PCs refuse to get involved or side with Kantor, **Fusion Susan** takes over leading Mirage. She orders Kantor and his allies executed and abandons her faith in the Church of Atom. Appalled and horrified at Kantor and the Last Son's sect's actions—and any unwitting part she played in them—she pays reparations to the captives and offers them permanent residence if they wish. Few accept the offer, and most prisoners return to their previous homes and lives.

THE FALLOUT

This quest has the following outcomes:

- **Freed the Prisoners.** If the PCs released the prisoners, Mirage no longer has a working power source. After a day, the settlement loses electricity, and its **denizen outlook** becomes **somewhat grim**. The settlers close the casino and focus all their efforts scavenging for temporary power and other supplies to help them survive the winter. Meanwhile, **Murray** and **Blackjack** depart Mirage and move to Beatsville so that Murray can reunite with his daughter **Minnie Mabee**. They tell the Beats all about the PCs' great deeds at Mirage; when they make their next a reputation test with Beatsville, add one positive influence.
- **Did No Harm (Except to the People Who Deserved It).** If the PCs freed the prisoners without harming any innocent bystanders in the casino, the long-time residents treat them as heroes when they visit in the future—increase their settlement reputation rank by 2 for Mirage.
- **Kantor Escaped.** If Kantor escaped, he joins the Children of Atom. Ashamed and angry, he gives himself over entirely to the Last Son's mad teachings. During *Chapter 4: The Day of Division*, the PCs can reencounter him as a zealous, vengeful enemy in the Glowing Sea at any time.
- **The Last Son Revealed.** If the PCs spread the word of the Atomites' abhorrent deal with Maxwell Kantor to other settlements, those settlements turn against the Last Son of Atom's Church unless they have already become entirely indoctrinated. Children of Atom living at those settlements become exiled and retreat to hideouts in the Glowing Sea.





BIG TOP

Stationed under a sizable and decrepit circus tent, **Big Top** is home to a community of ghouls that call themselves the **Freeques**. They are a small group of itinerant circus performers who wandered into the Commonwealth during their cross-country tour. Now trapped by the onset of atomic winter, they wait out the long, dark months beneath their big top tent, which offers little relief from current conditions. The original Freeques took up the identities of the circus freaks that came before them and now provide refuge for ghouls and disenfranchised synths under their performance space. With the roads frozen, trade halted, resources running dry, and more people seeking shelter within Big Top, recent supply offers from the Children of Atom seem more welcoming every day.

Population: 7 original Freeques, 14 ghouls, 7 synths

Defenses: Moderate

Food Supply: Scarce

Denizen Outlook: Somewhat Grim

Starting Settlement Reputation Rank: Neutral

TENSIONS AT A GLANCE

The conflict at Big Top is built upon these core issues:

- **Lack of infrastructure for a fixed settlement** since Big Top is established as a nomadic traveling community.
- **Growing distrust for ghouls and synths** in the Commonwealth limits their potential allies and trade partnerships.
- **A pending community vote** on whether to take the deal with the Children of Atom in exchange for supplies.

Much has changed for the Freeques since being forced to settle for the winter, stirring several internal conflicts. Unlike other settlements, they are ill-equipped to support a proper community. The disenfranchised are looking to the original members of the Freeques for guidance and security in a time when they cannot even provide it for themselves.

NUCLEAR WINTER UNDER BIG TOP

The settlement's big-hearted founding circus performers are beginning to feel the burden of being forced to put down roots without being prepared to survive. More than anywhere else in the region, the refugees living in Big Top face dire starvation and desperately need help from the outside.

ITINERANT LIFESTYLE

Big Top was never meant for long-term settlement. The raging winter has forced the circus to stay in one place for too long. As a traveling troupe, the Freeques rely on ticket sales for supplies and mobility for protection. They are taking in more mouths than they can feed, and without audiences attending shows, Big Top is now more refugee camp than circus. The Freeques have improvised by building Carnival Row to provide some security for residents but cannot fully shelter the community from the relentless cold.

NO ALLIES

Because Big Top has little to trade and harbors both ghoul and synth refugees, potential allies are scarce. Residents take shifts scavenging for food and supplies in the frozen wastes but find little reward for risking their lives. Without a constant source of food and caps, the Freeques are growing desperate to seek help from anyone that will offer it.

RESIDENTIAL TENSIONS

Much has changed since the Freeques opened Big Top up to new settlers. A handful of third-generation synths seeking freedom from the Institute joined the settlement several months ago. They are outnumbered by the original Freeques and more recent ghoul residents. The ghoul refugees are the most populous group and hold the majority of votes in the Big Top Assembly. The Assembly rules are simple—each settler gets one vote in all matters, and the majority wins.

The settlers have not yet voted on the **Last Son of Atom's** recent offer to provide supplies in exchange for allowing the Church to preach to the Big Top community. Overall, few settlers want to ally with the Children of Atom, but desperate times call for desperate measures. The ghoul settlers must eat, and most feel they have no choice but to work with the Church to survive, while most of the synths—who do not require food or water to live—stand firm in rejecting the Children of Atom on their offer. Differing opinions cause rising tensions between the ghouls and the synths in the community. Even though the synth residents are a minority, their united stance against the Church could sway the vote and leave the other residents without the supplies they need to last the winter.

ATOM'S INFLUENCE

The Children of Atom are scouting everywhere they can in hopes of swelling their congregation, and they have their eyes set on Big Top. The Freeques have never dealt with settling in any place for too long before, much less having to ally with local factions. Performing is their specialty, not negotiations, and the Children of Atom have taken advantage of this fact by

offering the settlement what it needs most—food and clean water. All Big Top must do is accept their offer and open their tent flaps to the Church's teachings.

WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

A few weeks back, the Last Son of Atom walked straight into the Big Top tent, utterly unaffected by the radiation traps of Carnival Row. He came offering gifts of much-needed supplies in exchange for a chance to talk about the Children of Atom's cause. Many ghoul settlers saw the offer as a means to survive the winter, while the synths saw a charlatan making empty promises. The Last Son's only additional request was Big Top swearing loyalty to the Church should the sect ever come under attack. The ghoul residents called for a Big Top Assembly vote that very day, but Ringleader Johnnie Lonnie stalled, claiming all the settlers deserved a chance to contemplate such an important choice before deciding.

WITH OTHER FACTIONS

The Minutemen have only visited Big Top a handful of times since winter began. Those who stop by the settlement usually attempt to recruit new soldiers to their cause. Most of Big Top's settlers are refugees from the chem-filled streets of Goodneighbor or the secret facilities of the Institute; they have no interest in returning to a life of violence, regardless of the cause. The Freeques have welcomed synths with open arms, but unbeknownst to them, the Institute is hunting the escaped synths—putting Big Top in more danger than they realize.

KEY LOCATIONS AND PEOPLE OF INTEREST

The bright tents and light of the circus welcome those who stumble upon Big Top while searching the frigid wastes for shelter. Though its residents live up to the expectations of a wondrously bizarre carnival troupe, Big Top's future hangs by a thread so delicate that even the most skilled tightrope walker would have trouble keeping their balance.

CIRCUS POSTER

This poster can be found on buildings and boarded-up windows in the immediate area around Big Top and on boards throughout carnival row. Read or paraphrase the following when PCs travel to Big Top and see the poster for the first time:

> ***A newly painted advertisement hangs in the middle of the vintage Freeque posters of the past. The new poster promotes the Big Top's first show since settling down in the Commonwealth for the winter. The painting's bright colors show the Freeques performing wondrous feats—the Swinging Sals sway from the trapeze, Brawny Bill lifts a ruined car over his head, the Inked Lady displays her mind-bending tattoos, and Madam Atom glares intensely into a crystal ball. They all frame the central image of Ringleader Johnnie Lonnie, who cracks a whip to fend off a Protectron painted to look like a ferocious lion.***

THE BIG TOP TENT

The Big Top Tent is the home and performance space of the Freeques and many recent refugees. The massive circular red and white tent holds two tiers of seats, a performance ring, and a trapeze rig. Public seating gets used as a shared sleeping space for residents, and a single community fire burns in the center of the ring. On rare occasions, when disputes arise or critical decisions must be made, the Big Top Tent serves as the site for the Freeques' democratic voting assembly.

Key NPCs:

- **Ringleader Johnnie Lonnie** is considered the leader of the Freeques. He wears classic red and white coattails, designating him as the public speaker for the settlement. Though he does not make decisions for the Freeques, he serves as the announcer for all voting results and a diplomat when negotiations arise. He knows his fellow performers miss life on the road, but his hope does not waver that winter will pass, and their show will go on.

- **The Inked Lady** is the spectacle of the Freeques, adorned with intricate tattoos from her beautiful bald head to her polished wrinkled toes. She is both the canvas and the artist. Each one of her pieces tells a story. She eagerly offers those who share their stories (and a few caps) a tattoo to immortalize the tale. Recently, the Last Son of Atom visited her, requesting her talents in private. Only they know of the image she inked into his flesh—a pale purple tentacle wrapped around a dark obelisk covered in mysterious hieroglyphs. The Inked Lady might share the description of her work for the Last Son with someone who befriends her. However, Madame Atom now mistrusts the Inked Lady for tattooing the Last Son.
- **Brawny Bill** is the strong man of the group. When not showing off his muscles under Big Top, he can be found at the High Striker carnival game in Carnival Row with his prized hammer, Wilma. Brawny Bill and Wilma are always ready to crack skulls at the front lines when things get rough. Beneath his gruff demeanor, Bill is the most compassionate and caring member of the Freeques, unafraid to show his vulnerability and emotions to those he trusts.
- **The Swinging Sals** are a triad of acrobats who all answer to the name Sal. They consider themselves brothers bound even though they are not siblings by blood. Their trapeze act is the highlight of any Big Top performance. They are skilled spies and assassins off the ropes—though they would much rather be swinging than slaying.

CARNIVAL ROW

Carnival Row has become a much-needed security measure—a series of fun houses, sideshows, and carnival games meant to welcome visitors. Carnival Row's repurposed booths camouflage deadly radiation traps keeping unwanted visitors at bay. The traps ensure only the radiation-immune can easily find their way into the settlement unless they know the safe route. The tent city constructed between the stalls and games of Carnival row helps relieve the Big Top Tent of its growing overcrowding problem.

Key NPCs:

- **Madame Atom** spends most of her time at her private tent in Carnival Row. She is an eccentric woman who reads palms, crystal balls, and futures in exchange for all-mighty caps. Occasionally, she wanders into the Big Top Tent with a premonition, declaring her psychic vision with an extravagant emotional display. Her most recent vision was of an irradiated, thousand-legged beast monster rising from the earth to devour the Commonwealth. Not many newer residents took the prophecy seriously, but Madame Atom is quite worried. Some locals blame chems for her theatrics, but the original Freeques know Madame Atom's visions always have some truth.

SIDE QUEST: THE ILLUSTRATED MAN

This quest becomes available after the PCs complete *Main Quest: The Train Job* and spend a day in Big Top. **Add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

While in Big Top, the PCs overhear a tense conversation between **Protectron Deputy D3N-Z3L** and a group of synth refugees. If the characters listen in or join the conversation, they can learn the following things (much of which are lies)**:**

- Deputy D3N-Z3L recently arrived at Big Top. He used to guard a military bunker about a day's travel to the northeast. He claims he fled the bunker after a group of raiders invaded.
- The Protectron came to Big Top because they heard, from another traveler, about Madame Atom's recent premonition regarding a giant underground beast. He believes the monster in her vision is real and that the answers lie inside the computers of the old bunker he used to guard.
- Deputy D3N-Z3L has been asking the locals if anyone will help him travel to the bunker and chase off the raiders, but the Freeques have refused.

Even the bravest troupe members are preoccupied with preparing for the upcoming Big Top vote on whether the settlement will accept the Church of Atom's offer for aid.

Deputy D3N-Z3L asks the PCs to help him retake the bunker from the raiders who invaded. He offers them the stockpile of supplies inside to help the needy people of Big Top.

The Deputy's Lies. The PCs do not yet know that the Protectron is lying about everything. There are no raiders in the bunker. However, Deputy D3N-Z3L knows that the bunker houses a dangerous monster and contains secret files on the Last Son of Atom's genetic experiments. He plans to sell the information—and the location of the synth refugees hiding in Big Top—to an Institute informant for a large sum of caps. Of course, achieving his goals means betraying the PCs at the most inopportune moment.

TRAVELING TO THE BUNKER

Traveling to the bunker is a 24-hour journey at a normal pace. Deputy D3N-Z3L insists on accompanying the PCs to redeem himself for previously being bested by the raiders. If they allow him to help, reduce the difficulty of their navigation test by 1. If they refuse, he tracks them through the wilderness and waits for the right moment to spring his trap once they enter the bunker.

THE BUNKER AND THE STORM

The bunker is a small, unremarkable concrete dome sealed on its south side by two heavy blast doors on the structure's south side. The charging station previously used by Deputy D3N-Z3L is visible on the north side of the bunker.

When the PCs approach the bunker, surrounded by half a mile of featureless wasteland in every direction, a **Rad-izzard**—a furious radioactive blizzard—rapidly forms in the area. At the start of a creature's turn, if they are without shelter, they must make an **END + Survival** test with a difficulty of 2. If they fail, they gain 1 Fatigue and are inflicted with 2 Vicious Radiation damage.

After the start of the Rad-izzard, it takes the PCs one round to reach the concrete blast doors. If Deputy D3N-Z3L accompanies the party, he fails to open the blast doors via their terminal, then exclaims that the raiders must have changed the access code. A PC can hack the console by making a successful **INT + Science** test with a difficulty of 3. Without any nearby shelter, PCs remain exposed to the deadly storm each round they fail to break into the bunker.

When the doors open, read or paraphrase the following:

The doors grind open to the sound of hissing air as the atmosphere sealed inside rushes to meet the radioactive storm outside. The bunker air carries the stink of hot metal, ozone, sulfur, and something… else. Something so rotten it would make most people's skin writhe and crawl. Something so rancid it would cause most people's lizard brains to scream at them to run away as fast as possible.

Then you see it—emerging from the bunker's gloom. A creature unfurls like a giant cat rising from slumber—a furry beast with nine legs and a mass of bulging eyes covering its head and shoulders, each with vertical slits that pulse out of time. It trails two long, distended tongues over its jutting mandible. And then it roars. Its fierce cry sounds like the static that sometimes fills radio airwaves but is lower in frequency and far hungrier.

The freak pounces, and hell breaks loose.

The starving **Radoid Freak** tries to make a frosty snack of the PCs. The beast was sealed in this bunker in hopes that it would starve to death. It didn't. If the PCs fight it outside, they must contend with the Rad-izzard's effects each round. If they rush into the bunker to fight, the **darkness** within increases the difficulty of their attacks by 1 unless they provide a light source. Deputy D3N-Z3L does not risk his gears against the beast, avoiding combat unless the PCs prove they cannot handle the beast on their own.

Radiod Freak

Level 7, Mutated Feline, Mighty Creature (104 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
8	6	3	—	3

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
30	14	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
4 (Arms, Legs, Torso), 2 (Head	2(All)	Immune	2(All)

ATTACKS

- **FORKED TONGUE: Body + Melee** (TN 7), 6 Stun Physical damage, range C, and the target must make an END + Athletics test with a difficulty of 2 or be knocked prone
- **CLAWS: Body + Melee** (TN 11), 4 Piercing Physical damage, or 8 Piercing Physical damage against prone targets
- **BITE: Body + Melee** (TN 11), 7 Vicious Physical damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The brahmin is immune to Radiation damage and its effects.
- **MUTANT RAGE:** The first time each round the radoid freak takes damage, it can immediately make an attack as a free action.
- **JUGGERNAUT:** The first time each round that the radoid freak misses with an attack, it immediately makes a different attack as a free action without increasing the test's difficulty. Additionally, it only suffers a Critical Hit if an attack inflicts 7+ damage (after damage resistance) in a single hit, rather than the usual 5+.
- **LOW LIGHT HUNTER:** The radoid freak's vision is vulnerable to light but particularly keen in the dark. In dark areas, reduce the difficulty of its tests by 1 (to a minimum of 1). In a brightly lit area—or if a character uses a minor action to shine light at its eyes—increase the difficulty of its tests by 1 instead.

INVENTORY

- **BUTCHERY:** Butchering the radoid freak's corpse requires an **END + Survival** test with a difficulty of 1. A success yields 2 portions of radoid freak meat (comparable to mirelurk meat). If the test results in at least one Effect, butchery also produces 2 Rare Materials.

INSIDE THE BUNKER

After the encounter, Deputy D3N-Z3L turns the lights on inside the bunker. The bunker is one small room. The monster made the chamber's center its nest for a long time, trashing most of the terminals and contents. Amongst the rubble lies a dozen Church of Atom holy symbols. The walls on the outside of the bunker contain the following supplies that could be lifesaving to the residents of Big Top: 3x **Buffout**, 20x **Purified Water**, 5x **Rad-X**, 5x **RadAway**, 10x **Nuka-Cola**, 20x **Common Materials**, 10x **Uncommon Materials**, and 5x **Rare Materials**.

Before continuing, encourage PCs to consume food, warm up, and heal. The screen of a single terminal mounted to one of the internal walls flickers with life, requiring a passcode (AT0M) to access. A PC can hack the terminal by making an **INT + Science** test with a difficulty of 1. If they fail their hacking test, the terminal auto-wipes its data after displaying an ominous phrase on the screen: *"The Day of Division is nigh."* If they succeed, they can access notes written by the Last Son of Atom to learn the following:

- The Last Son experiments with gene-splicing to create intelligent beasts capable of both empathy and great destruction. His scientific notes suggest the Last Son is a true genius beyond his religious fervor. He desires the creatures to see him as their father.
- He wrote of the Radoid Freak locked within the bunker: *"Perhaps too great a success, at this stage. I may return to my most unruly child later when we can better control and communicate with her."*
- He seems obsessed with excavating a buried city and locating what he refers to as "Atom's Glow." He does not mention the city's supposed location but

believes he is very close to his goal if only he can unearth "the last piece of the puzzle."

- He is confident the Day of Division is nearly come, where the faithful of Atom will walk between infinite universes and know true paradise. His greatest frustrations are the interference of the Minutemen and the other sects of the Church that call his prophecy heretical and profane.

Deputy D3N-Z3L plugs into the terminals and makes a copy of the logs if he is able.

THE INSTITUTE'S BETRAYAL

When the PCs attempt to leave the bunker, **Deputy D3N-Z3L** turns on them, powers up his weapons, and attempts to block their way out. He states, *"Thank you very much. The Institute will pay me quite well for the good work you've done here."*

A successful **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 1 can delay the attack long enough for the PCs to spend AP and Obtain Information. If they do, they can learn the following:

- Deputy D3N-Z3L is a cold killing machine and mercenary. He is programmed to make as much money as possible and dreams of owning a Bed & Breakfast that caters to robots. He plans to sell the location of the synth refugees in Big Top to the Institute.
- He does not know the Last Son of Atom but believes the Institute will be very interested in his genetic experiments and scientific knowledge.
- The PCs have simply proven too resourceful to be allowed to live.

If the PCs fail their test to speak with Deputy D3N-Z3L, he immediately makes a **surprise attack**, targeting the party's most vulnerable member. If the PCs instead attack, begin the encounter normally.

Deputy D3N-Z3L is a dangerous foe, and escape may be the best option for lower-level groups already hurt from the previous encounter. Outside, the Radizzard storm has passed. If PCs leave the bunker, the Protectron does not immediately pursue on its next turn and instead fires through the door with his tear gas launcher from **Medium range**.

A PC can spend a major action to shut the bunker doors from outside, potentially trapping Deputy D3N-Z3L inside. The door cannot be opened from within the bunker.

Protectron Deputy D3N-Z3L

Level 8, Robot, Mighty Creature (120 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
6	8	3	4	3

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
28	14	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
4(All)	3(All)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **CLAWS: Body + Melee** (TN 9), 3 Physical damage
- **ARM LASERS: Body + Guns** (TN 10), 3 Burst, Piercing Energy damage, Range C, Fire Rate 4
- **TEAR GAS LAUNCHER: Body + Guns** (TN 10), 4 Persistent, Stun, Spread Poison damage, Range M, Blast, Inaccurate

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** Protectron Deputy D3N-Z3L is a robot. It is immune to Poison and Radiation damage and their effects, plus the effects from disease, starvation, suffocation, and thirst.
- **ARM LASERS:** If one of the Protectron's arms suffers an injury, the Fire Rate of its Arm Lasers decreases by 2.
- **CEASE AND DESIST:** Once per combat, the Protectron can activate its anti-riot subroutine. He attacks with his Tear Gas Launcher, and then with his Improved Arm Lasers, without spending AP or increasing the test's difficulty. Add equal to the Arm Laser's current Fire Rate to the damage.

INVENTORY

SALVAGE: Scavengers can salvage from Protectron D3N-Z3L with a successful **INT + Survival** test with a difficulty of 1. A success yields 2 units of uncommon materials with + 1 per AP spent, and each Effect yields 1 Rare Material. Tear Gas Launcher, 1+5 tear gas canisters.

TEAR GAS LAUNCHER

Ammunition: Tear Gas Canister

WEAPON NAME	WEAPON TYPE	DAMAGE RATING	DAMAGE EFFECTS	DAMAGE TYPE	FIRE RATE	RANGE	QUALITIES	WEIGHT	COST	RARITY
Tear Gas Launcher	Big Guns	4	Persistent, Stun, Spread	Poison	0	M	Blast, Two-Handed, Inaccurate	18	254	3

This pre-War weapon designed to house tear gas canisters has been lovingly repaired. Tear gas is a mixture of various aerosolized irritants and compounds ideal for deterring or disabling crowds or large animals. Tear gas is also effective at drawing out unsuspecting hostiles from fortified positions.

A tear gas launcher can accept one each of the following mods, which are unique to the tear gas canister and installed with the Repair skill:

MOD	NAME PREFIX	EFFECTS	WEIGHT	COST	PERKS
BARREL MODS					
Extended Barrel	Extended	Increase Range by 1 step	+1	+20	Gun Nut 1
GRIP MODS					
Tactical Grip	Tactical	Remove Inaccurate	-	+28	-
BARREL MODS					
Snap Barrel	Double Action	+1 Fire Rate	-	+143	Gun Nut 2
3-Shot Chamber	3-Shot	+2 Fire Rate	+8	+218	Gun Nut 3
6-Shot Chamber	6-Shot	+2 Fire Rate, Gain Unreliable	+10	+250	Gun Nut 4
STOCK MODS					
Balanced Stock	Balanced	Gain Accurate and Reliable	+10	+250	Gun Nut 2

THE FALLOUT

This quest has the following outcomes:

- **The Church Exposed.** If the PCs tell any of the leaders of Big Top about the Last Son's terminal logs—or about his dealing with Mirage exposed during ***Side Quest: Midnight at the Oasis***—the settlement votes to publicly rebuke the Church of Atom regardless of the other outcomes of this quest. The Last Son's sect marks Big Top as an enemy and might plan to target it during *Chapter 3: The Winter War*.
- **Joined the Church.** If Big Top votes to allow the Church of Atom into their settlement, its missionaries take residence and sway its people to become true believers in the Last Son's prophecy. The settlement's **denizen outlook** and **food supplies** improve two steps, but they fully aid the Atomites against their enemies in future conflicts. If the PCs are vocally opposed to the Church, add a negative influence to the next settlement reputation test they make for Big Top.
- **Donated the Supplies.** If the PCs give at least 50% of the bunker's supplies to the needy people of Big Top, they make a settlement reputation test and add one positive influence, but the settlement still votes to accept the Last Son's offer out of sheer necessity. If the PCs give all their supplies, they add another positive influence to the test, the settlement's **denizen outlook** and **food supplies** improve one step, and Big Top votes to politely refuse the Last Son's aid.

- **Deputy D3N-Z3L Survived.** If the PCs do not destroy the Protectron, he activates an internal device to signal his informant at the Institute, who can free and repair him if necessary. After 2d20 days, the Protectron leads a group of Institute synth coursers to Big Top. There, they viciously attack. Unless the PCs are present to defend the settlement, several residents die, and the Institute recaptures its escaped synth refugees.

BEATSVILLE

The people of Beatsville are simply known as the Beats. This commune of new-age Beatniks exists in an old junkyard brought to life with vibrant art. They aim to bring the people of the Commonwealth out of a dark age and into an age of enlightenment by spreading new art, music, and literature as far as possible. Most would consider Beatsville's location a trash heap, while the Beats see it as an architectural marvel and an ever-changing art piece. Vast mounds of junk, tires, and rusted metal around the settlement's exterior cover conceal the settlement's artistic nature. Over the years, residents have learned to craft incredible objects from repurposed junk—plastics intricately woven into clothing and fabrics, cans reshaped into unique jewelry and helpful gear, dirt and clay fired to make beautiful ceramics, and old objects illustrated over with new paintings are just a few of the incredible things created by the Beats.

Population: 21 settlers

Defenses: Very Weak

Food Supply: Stocked

Denizen Outlook: Somewhat Happy

Starting Settlement Reputation Rank: Cautious

TENSIONS AT A GLANCE

The conflicts at Beatsville are built upon these core issues:

- **A desperate need to remain hidden** as they are a pacifist community with no means of protecting themselves.
- **An absent governing structure or authority** to mitigate the rising community issues and decisions that must be made.
- **An interruption in their regular trade routine** causing settlers to lack the supplies needed to survive the harsh winter.

In the wake of an isolating winter, the Beats face several tough decisions. The ideologies that keep safe may no longer be enough. How far will they go before they must reveal their location to survive?

NUCLEAR WINTER AMONG ARTISTS

Beatsville residents have survived times of hardship by staying true to their vision and coming together through creative expression. Now, nuclear winter paints a bleak picture for the settlement's future, and the rifts opening within the community are more than mere artistic differences.

HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

Beatsville's only means of protection is their anonymity. As pacifists, they do not allow weapons within their walls, so remaining safe means remaining hidden. Years in isolation have allowed the people of Beatsville to flourish creatively and peacefully, away from prying eyes. The atomic winter brings new dangers and conflict—anonymity may not be enough to provide the protection and supplies needed to survive the atomic winter.

STARVING ARTISTS

"Creativity at all costs" is the Beats' way of life and how they envision a better future for the Commonwealth. Their secondhand creations once provided a source of caps and supplies, but the harsh



winter has halted the efforts of the settlement's sole traveling trader, Dead Drop Dave. The wilderness is too dangerous for scavenging efforts, and limited road access makes it hard to bring back enough supplies in large quantities when trade is possible. Soon they will run out of manuscripts to burn and be left as nothing more than a community of starving artists.

RESIDENTIAL TENSIONS

In the current situation, some settlers believe it is time to break isolation and make new contacts to support the community's longevity. However, many stand beside the Lama and his teaching that they must remain hidden. Most Beats hold fast to their belief in living a concealed life, which thus far has kept them safe. The Jambakers' recent announcement to leave the settlement and bring their music to the wider Commonwealth has sparked a panic regarding safety and security. Fear that Beatsville may be revealed to the world spreads through the community like wildfire, and the artists call for action to be taken. The settlement has never faced an internal conflict of this kind, but tensions only worsen with no official governing system and the Lama's unwavering stance on the matter. With the atmosphere growing more uneasy by the day, many seek to peacefully take matters into their own hands—with some residents suggesting the Beats should find a new Lama.

ATOM'S INFLUENCE

The Beats remain unaligned with any major Commonwealth faction due to their isolationist way of life. Both the Children of Atom and the Minutemen are actively searching for the settlement. Each group hopes to recruit these new forward-thinking people to their respective causes. The Children of Atom have set a large bounty for information on Beatsville's location—almost no price is too high for adding such creative and ingenious minds to Atom's divine cause.

WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Unbeknownst to the Beats, their newest settler, Minnie "Muse" Mabee, was essential in the Last Son of Atom's long-term plan for the Commonwealth. She mostly keeps to herself, speaking only to a specific few in American Sign Language or scribbling short responses in her journal. Though the Children of Atom have no hold on the community, Minnie is a loose end, and her presence endangers everyone.

WITH OTHER FACTIONS

The Minutemen are far more interested in recruiting the Beats as performers than fighters, but the Beats' distrust of armed forces makes it difficult for them to trust the militia. The Minutemen believe the Beats' artistic endeavors are frivolous if they don't use their talents for the good of the entire Commonwealth. They believe the best contribution the artists can make is to join them and help raise the spirits of its weary and exhausted soldiers. So far, the Minutemen have not been able to locate Beatsville, but they have started trading with **Dead Drop Dave** to gain an opportunity to follow him back to the compound's hidden locale.

KEY LOCATIONS AND PEOPLE OF INTEREST

Beatsville is a testament to how a community can thrive when its people live with security. It is also a cautionary tale of how quickly security can crumble when artists can no longer create in peace. Art is rarely crafted without a message, and the people of Beatsville must decide what their creative endeavors truly stand for.

KOOL RADIO

KOOL Radio is one of the farthest-reaching stations in the Commonwealth. The massive satellite dish it's positioned under serves as an excellent conduit for expanding its reach. According to DJ Daddy-O, it's the only station in the region playing the wasteland's hottest talent, newest hits, and uncensored news.

Key NPCS:

- **DJ Daddy-O** is the hippest cat in Beatsville and—according to him—probably in the whole wasteland. He dedicates his life to spreading swinging new tunes and the truth about the "way-out world of the Wasteland." He hides behind a sleek pair of sunglasses and his anonymity, believing his mic is the best weapon against the Children of Atom's propaganda. Lucky locals sometimes attend one of DJ Daddy-O's happening parties or catch one of his live broadcasts.
- **The Jambakers** are the most jivin' band in the Commonwealth. They recently announced their decision to leave Beatsville and take their act on the road as part of their new creed— bring music to the masses no matter the cost. Their proclamation created one of the first open discourses amongst the Beats about the settlement's isolation and whether the Jambakers' tour might endanger the community. They would make for an ideal performance group for the Minutemen.

DJ DADDY-O'S BROADCAST

"It's that time! Get ready for the hippest DJ this side of the atomic crater! It's me, DJ Daddy-O, ya dig? You're tuned in to K.O.O.L Radio, your number one station for the truth about what's happenin' in the way-out Wasteland.

Today's weather is less than groovy. You guessed it —more snow. I can hear your crumb crushers chattering from here, so grab your duchess and squeeze her tight because it's gonna be another cold one.

But you know what's colder than this weather? The Children of Atom. I should know. I'm the coolest cat around. Trust me when I say the Atomites will tell you it's a jumpin' time, but that's just a whole lotta lies and false promises. If you wanna warm your bones, you gotta dance to the beat of your own drum, ya dig?

But enough of my spoutin'. Let's arm up with some new hot licks from the best band in Beatsville: The Jambakers! Enjoy and remember—ain't nothing atomic about Atom."

ARTIST ALLEY

Artist Alley is one of the Commonwealth's most vibrant, beautiful, and curious places. Stall after stall stands laden with finely crafted goods, clothes, and art. The shops serve as both the work and residential spaces for each Beat, who can prepare many other fine goods that cannot be found on the stalls' shelves.

Key NPCs:

- **The Lama** guides all the settlers of Beatsville to write, create, and archive everything they can about their experience in the Commonwealth. He claims to be a playwright and is earnest in his commitment to telling the stories of the people of today. The Lama keeps the settlement's location secret, believing it is the key to Beatsville's safety and artistic freedom. In the wake of the Jambakers tour announcement, he thinks the Beats may need to use physical force for the first time—and imprison the band if they try to leave the settlement.
- **Minnie "Muse" Mabee** is a quiet, kind, and brilliantly creative deaf young woman—and the newest settler to Beatsville. The Beats don't know much about her, except that she is a poet running from her past who keeps to herself. The walls of Beatsville have provided her safety from the people she fled—the Children of Atom. Muse is wary of most people, but if befriended, she shares what she remembers about the Children of Atom. After being recruited from Mirage, she was blindfolded and taken to a secret bunker. There, the Last Son of Atom made her communicate in American Sign Language to train a radioactive monster through a small panel in the wall. Because she is deaf, she never learned the Church's plans for the creature and only ever saw its terrifying mandibles through the panel. Muse eventually escaped and only knows the bunker is located somewhere near the Glowing Sea. Muse's diary holds verses written for the Children of Atom's propaganda pamphlets currently in distribution across the Commonwealth—and speaks to her regret about not being able to visit her father, Murray, for fear of what the Last Son of Atom might do to him.
- **Dead Drop Dave** is the only Beat who travels out into the Commonwealth. He secretly trades the settlement's art, literature, and clothing in exchange for needed supplies. All "drops" happen without either party knowing each other's names or seeing each other's faces—he delivers the goods to one location and picks up caps and supplies from another. His time traversing the Commonwealth has left him rougher around the edges than the other Beats. He knows it is only a matter of time before the jig is up for Beatsville.

DIARY OF A MUSE

Prayer of the Atomites:

Hear, O Atom, our prayer.
We proclaim your name.

We give so that you may give.

You sacrifice so we no longer have to.

It is only in your radiant rays that we live free of depravity.

Keep His commands and do what pleases Him.

We seek His grace. For the faithful are cleansed of all unrighteousness.

SIDE QUEST: BEAT IT

This quest becomes available if the PCs complete *Side Quest: Midnight at The Oasis* in Mirage and Murray survives to reunite with his daughter in Beatsville. Before that point, Minnie instead encourages PCs to investigate what truly goes on at Mirage if they want to help her. **Add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

Minnie "Muse" Mabee and Dead Drop Dave approach the PCs covertly and insist that the Lama can't know what they're about to tell the group. If he moved to Beatsville, Minnie's father Murray joins them. Though Minnie is deaf, she reads lips proficiently and speaks clearly while mirroring her words in American Sign Language. Dave supports Minnie, reinforcing that she understands the Children of Atom better than anybody. During the conversation, they can reveal the following information:

- As the Last Son Of Atom's influence in the Commonwealth grew, some less zealous members of his sect with doubts about his leadership fled the Glowing Sea. They call themselves 'Pilgrims.' They have been turned away from every settlement due to being highly irradiated.
- Drawn by the massive radio dish, a small group of Pilgrims is starting to sniff around the junkyard. People fear they will try to make the yard their home and may discover Beatsville's location.
- Opinion on what to do is divided. Some—including Minnie—argue that pacifism is only a viable option when you don't have wolves at your door. She believes Beatsville should set up turrets and traps around the perimeter to guard the settlement. Others—namely the Lama—are steadfast in their belief that violence begets violence and would rather wait for the problem to go away on its own.

Dave and Minnie do not want to hurt the Pilgrims and will not risk going directly against the Lama's wishes. Minnie trusts the PCs' judgment and asks them to find a way to keep Beatsville hidden. Minnie cannot offer them any material reward but does promise to tell them everything she remembers about the Last Son of Atom (see *Beatsville, Artist Alley*, p.143). She is also willing to teach interested PCs some American Sign Language, which may prove very useful during *Chapter 3: The Winter War*.

Finding the Pilgrims scavenging amongst the junk piles outside of Beatsville proves simple. There are multiple possible solutions to this quest, and you should allow the players to approach it as they see fit. Some suggestions for a few approaches follow.

THE TALKING CURE

A PC can persuade the Pilgrims to go elsewhere by making a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 4. If they fail, the Pilgrims refuse to leave and begin to scavenge faster—convinced there is something of value nearby. If they succeed, the Pilgrims agree to leave if the PCs advise them on a safe place to go and explain why they cannot stay in the junkyard. PCs can, of course, lie.

If the PCs attempt to help relocate the Pilgrims honestly, they can travel with them to the place of their choice. When they arrive, the PCs need to lean on their connections to convince settlers to take in the radioactive group. To convince a settlement leader to let the Pilgrims move into their community, a PC must succeed on a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty equal to 6 minus their settlement reputation rank. If they fail, the settlement leader may request the PCs complete a side quest or do them a favor in exchange for taking in the Pilgrims. Additionally, they ask the new settlers to complete an aggressive course of RadAway to keep other residents safe.

THE FIGHTING CURE

The PCs might decide the best course of action is to dispose of the Pilgrims entirely, resorting to violence. The eight **Pilgrims** have nowhere else to go and fight to the death. Describe the interesting junk in the yard—big snow-covered scrap piles, burnt-out cars, construction machines, and the sad remains of the old world. Allow both sides to creatively use their surroundings for between 1-3  cover or hazards they can pit against their enemies.

At any time during the encounter, the GM can spend AP to target a PC with a unique hazard. To avoid the hazard's effects, the PC must succeed on a test of their choice—so long as it makes narrative sense—with a difficulty equal to the AP spent.

HAZARD	EFFECT
A falling avalanche of icy junk	3 Stun Physical Damage per AP spent
An ancient machine explodes	2 Piercing Vicious Energy Damage per AP spent
Pilgrims throw heavily irradiated snowballs	2 Persistent Radiation Damage per AP spent

Pilgrim

Level 6, Human,
Normal Character (45 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
5	6	6	7	5	5	4

SKILLS			
Barter	1	Sneak	2
Energy Weapons	4	Speech	2
Melee Weapons	1	Survival	4
Repair	1		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
12	11	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
200 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	2(All)	0

ATTACKS

- **MACHETE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 6), 4 Piercing Physical damage
- **PLASMA GUN: PER + Energy Weapons** (TN 10), 6 Physical/Energy damage, Fire Rate 1, Range C, Close Quarters

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **RAD RESISTANT:** The Pilgrim can survive moderate radioactivity for prolonged periods. They have a Radiation DR of 2.

INVENTORY

Tough Clothing, Plasma Gun, Machete, 6+3 fusion cells, Wealth 1



THE TRAP CURE

PCs can convince the Lama to let them build a trap to deal with the Pilgrims by succeeding on a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 5. If they fail, the Lama forbids the plan and decries them for their failure to think of non-violent solutions. If the PCs build the trap anyway, or without asking permission, nobody in Beatsville will use force to stop them.

Unless the PCs already possess a suitably deadly trap, they must build one from scratch. Allow them to scavenge for materials, scrap, and robo-parts to invent the most sinister trap they can imagine. Building the trap takes two hours, requires spending 2 Common Materials, 2 Uncommon Materials, and 1 Rare Material—and then making an **INT + Repair** test with a difficulty of 4. If they succeed, their trap kills half of the Pilgrims and sends the remainder fleeing from the junkyard. If the test fails, the trap proves a partial dud, only killing 2  Pilgrims before the remainder discover Beatsville.

Should the Pilgrims reach Beatsville, they try to invade the settlement forcefully and succeed in taking over if the PCs do not intervene. If the PCs protect Beatsville against the **Pilgrims** (see *The Fighting Cure*), the Lama dies in the crossfire while standing between the two groups and trying to cry out for peace.

THE FALLOUT

The PC with the highest Charisma makes a settlement reputation test **(CHA + Reputation Rank)** when the quest resolves, rolling a number of d20s equal to their positive influences against a difficulty equal to the number of negative influences. Use the following outcomes as a guide**:**

- **Safely Resettled.** If the PCs helped the Pilgrims move to a safe settlement, add one positive influence to their settlement reputation test with Beatsville. The recovering Atomites become happy and helpful community members. In the future, they go out of their way to aid the PCs however they can. The PCs also make another settlement reputation test with the Pilgrims' new home and add one positive influence.
- **Soiled With Blood.** If the PCs kill the Pilgrims by attacking or using a trap—and did not first convince the Lama to let them—the leader becomes livid. He exiles them from Beatsville, and their settlement reputation rank becomes 0 (Hostile). The Lama preaches that the PCs cannot be trusted and sends scouts into the wasteland to look for a new place to call home. Even if the PCs gained approval before killing the Pilgrims, add one negative influence to their settlement reputation test. If any Pilgrims survived, they are caught by the Church of Atom and reveal Beatsville's location to the Last Son's followers.
- **The Lama Perished.** If the Pilgrims invaded Beatsville and the Lama died in the crossfire, the surviving settlers are heartbroken. Every settler, including Minnie, repledges to living only a pacifist life and not being led astray again. The PCs add one negative influence to their reputation test with Beatsville and the settlement's **denizen outlook** becomes **very grim**.
- **Beatsville Fell.** If the PCs did not stop the Pilgrims, they forcefully invade Beatsville and take over. The Lama perishes while trying to stand in their way. The remaining community scatters to the winds, relocating to other settlements. Only **DJ Daddy-O** remains behind, broadcasting for as long as possible.



MECHMINSTER ABBEY

Though the tattered church is no longer a house of God, it is still a house of worship—worship of steel, fire, and all things machine. The Sisters of the Forge, a small female group of blacksmiths and mechanics who wear necklaces of c-wrenches instead of rosaries run Mechminster Abbey. The Sisters are known to pray by whispering, "Where there is light, there is hope." They live by those words, working tirelessly to keep the forge burning so they can provide charitable support to people in the Commonwealth fighting the good fight. They strongly disapprove of the Last Son of Atom and dedicate themselves to leading others away from his dangerous doctrine. Unfortunately, their priorities have shifted due to the extreme winter conditions. Food is scarce, and a recent frost feral ghoul attack has left Mechminster Abbey's defenses in disarray. With their pews full and their coffers empty, it might be the Sisters' turn to reach out and seek a helping hand.

Population: 43 settlers

Defenses: Somewhat Weak

Food Supply: Limited

Denizen Outlook: Somewhat Grim

Starting Settlement Reputation Rank: Neutral

TENSIONS AT A GLANCE

The conflicts at Mechminster Abbey are built upon these core issues:

- **An overabundance of starving people** and a lack of supplies to feed them.
- **A surprise attack by a pack of frost feral ghouls** has left their defenses in disarray and the settlement exposed.
- **An increase in illegal chem use** among the settlers in Limbo conflicts with the settlement's values.

The changes in the wake of atomic winter have significantly strained Mechminster Abbey. Their dedication to serving the people of the Commonwealth has not gone unnoticed. Many seek help in their time of need, but the Sisters' resources are exhausted. The settlement requires outside help to get more supplies and shore up its security.

NUCLEAR WINTER AT THE FORGE

Few settlements try to support and uplift those in need for truly honest and just reasons, but the Sisters of the Forge have ever been a light in the darkness. However, even the Forge of Mechminster Abbey struggles to keep the dark of winter at bay. Unless someone stokes the fire of hope during the settlement's most desperate hour, the wasteland might find itself a little colder in the coming nights ahead.

DWINDLING TITHES

Since its inception, Mechminster Abbey has relied on the kindness of others in exchange for their own. The Minutemen and people of the Commonwealth have always paid tithes to the Abbey in food, stimpacks, and clean water. The Sisters provide weapons and armor to those keeping the Commonwealth safe in exchange. But supplies are scarce for everyone now, so no one has extra to pass along to the Sisters' cause. With more people seeking haven in Limbo, they lack a solution to their current resource problems.

DOWNED DEFENSES

The recent frost feral attack left many dead or injured and depleted the settlement's ammo supply. The heat from the ever-burning forge is a beacon for the ferals, and several settlers have suggested that the Sisters shut it down. The Pulpit's flame has burned every moment since the Reverend Riveter lit it years ago. It symbolizes what the Abbey stands for; she would never see that light doused. Recently, the Sisters have put most of the settlers from Limbo to work repairing and patching their defenses. They fear the recent frost feral attack may be the herald of a larger hoard on the horizon. But even with the newly constructed junk fences, Mechminster Abbey is unlikely to survive another attack.

RESIDENTIAL TENSIONS

A strict set of rules and values help shape the settlement of Mechminster Abbey. One of these rules is that residents may not use illegal chems, but Limbo's recent overcrowding fosters the perfect environment for illicit activities. The Sisters have been so busy finding resources and helping the injured that they struggle to manage the growing population of the settlement. Illegal chems go against their values, but they refuse to put vulnerable people into the cold. The Sisters offer a substantial reward for anyone who can provide information on who is responsible for the influx of chems into Limbo.

ATOM'S INFLUENCE

The Sisters of the Forge stand firmly against the Last Son of Atom's sect of the Church and are generally wary of other Children of Atom too. They have no interest in the Last Son's manipulations or supply offerings. The Sisters have worked hard to spread their own propaganda against the Church, shedding light on their ulterior motives. The Last Son of Atom has taken notice of their resistance and considers Mechminster Abbey his sect's greatest enemy.

WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Anyone caught spreading the Children of Atom's teachings is not welcome inside the walls of the Abbey. The Sisters consider the religious group blasphemous and will not abide them in their community. Many of Limbo's residents are survivors of the Church and spread the word that the Last Son of Atom is a false prophet. The Sisters often use their testimonies in their Anti-Atom campaigns.

WITH OTHER FACTIONS

The Minutemen have always been an ally to Mechminster Abbey, and the Reverend Riveter holds a deep personal history with their faction. In the past, their partnership benefited both groups through trade and security. The harsh winter has created new friction between the Abbey and Minutemen, however. The Minutemen continue to request the Sisters craft weapons and armor for them but lack the supplies to trade in exchange. Dedicated to their work, the Sisters continue to fulfill weapon requests, but the Reverend Riveter is running out of charity and patience. She has demanded the Minutemen investigate the recently grounded USS *Germination* and return with food to trade for the Abbey's continued crafting.

KEY LOCATIONS AND PEOPLE OF INTEREST

Mechminster Abbey is as much of a sanctuary now as it was hundreds of years ago. The Sisters provide comfort to those lost in the wasteland, and their fierce rebuke of the Last Son of Atom makes them a potential ally for those who feel similarly.

THE PULPIT

The Sisters dug down into the foundation of the ancient church's Pulpit to construct their massive stone forge. As the centerpiece of their church, it provides both warmth and resources. They melt down junk in the ever-burning fire and craft it into usable weapons and armor. The Pulpit is the perfect place to seek fellowship or thaw out during a freezing storm.

Key NPCs:

- **The Reverend Riveter** is the appointed Mother Superior of the Sisters of the Forge. She is damn good at her job and wields motherly love with as much precision as she does her hammer. She founded Mechminster Abbey and is the saving grace for the many Sisters that now call the settlement home. After losing her husband, who served the Minutemen, the Reverend swore to take up a life of service without violence in his honor. Mechminster Abbey started as a beacon to provide light in the face of the wasteland's darkness.

THE STEEPLE

The Steeple of the church is now a workshop space for Sister Guyger, the headquarters for her ongoing experiments. Aside from the tools, junk, and many empty Nuka Cola bottles tossed about, a large turret gun stands erected in the center, which is the focus of her every waking hour. Her workbench lies just below the mounted turret, covered in blueprint drawings and Gamma Gun parts.

Key NPCs:

- **Sister Guyger** is a steadfast acolyte of the sisterhood. Long ago, she was a scientist. Convinced the Children of Atom are weaponizing radiation, she dedicates herself to discovering countermeasures. This work has consumed her mind, leaving her a bit tattered as she obsesses over how to complete the anti-rad turret gun mounted to the Steeple. Once complete, she hopes to use it to fire particles toward any radioactive threats that might seek to attack the abbey and neutralize them. Despite her best efforts, she lacks critical information and parts to get the turret functioning. She doesn't interact much with the rest of the settlement in her isolation, but is sure to be friendly to anyone who can help her unlock the weapon's potential.

THE CONFESSIONAL

The Confessional is a weapon and armor shop run by the pithy **Sister Amos Nition**. The Sisters are some of the most talented blacksmiths in all the Commonwealth, and their shop proves the quality of their craft. Their Confessional is the economic heart of Mechminster Abbey, providing the Sisters with caps for trade and information they can use to keep their settlement safe.

Key NPCs:

- **Sister Amos Nition** is a poignant woman who knows a lot about weapons and loves to talk about them. Information is more valuable to her than caps. Before a buyer can purchase an item, they must confess either a sin or a valuable secret. The juicier the information they confess, the more caps Sister Amos knocks off the price. A brilliant gunsmith, she may even be willing to treat her best customers to rare and custom weapon mods.

LIMBO

Limbo is a makeshift hostel where weary wanderers can freely claim a pew, warm their frozen limbs, and share rumors of their travels with others. Once a barely known haven, this winter's fierce storms force many newcomers to seek shelter, and food and medical supplies run low to support the hostel. Rampant chem usage and starvation have led to increasingly tense nights and several dangerous brawls within Limbo's walls. Residents fear braving the wastes until the ground thaws but grow concerned that the Sisters lack the security necessary to deal with armed and desperate guests.

Key NPCs:

- **Tripper** is a settler of Goodneighbor tasked by Hancock to run chems out into the Commonwealth. He made Limbo his go-to location and found great success in moving his product there. Tripper has managed not to get caught so far, but the Sisters are increasingly committed to rooting out the source of Limbo's chem problem. Tripper may have to take new precautions and work with outsiders to keep the caps flowing back to Goodneighbor.

PEW STEW

The stew is aptly named for being brewed over coals in small pots between the abbey's pews. The settlers of Mechminster Abbey must make do with what little they have, and though Pew Stew isn't very hearty or tasty, it keeps bellies warm when there is nothing else available. Consuming Pew Stew heals 3 health points.

Ingredients

- 1 of literally any vegetable, root, or flower you can find
- 1 of any other edible living green thing
- 1 cup of beans, any kind, preferably not radioactive
- 1 bottle of clean water
- Meat (if you have it)

Instructions

- Chop vegetables
- Roast what meat you have over hot coals
- Bring water to a boil
- Then combine vegetables and browned meat
- Simmer 5-10 minutes before serving

SIDE QUEST: FORGED IN THE DARK

This quest becomes available after the PCs complete *Main Quest: The Train Job*. **Add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

The Sisters of the Forge have a problem. Mechminster Abbey's defenses are in shambles after a frost feral ghoul horde attack. Meanwhile, the Last Son of Atom's influence is growing. In any settlement where Tripper can sell chems, he approaches the PCs. Tripper is happy to sell them basic chems at regular prices. Additionally, he knows about their work in the Commonwealth and thinks that the Sisters of the Forge in Mechminster Abbey could desperately use their help. If they converse with him, PCs may learn the following:

- Sister Gugyer has been working day and night in the Abbey to build an anti-radiation gun but is growing frustrated. Last week, Tripper heard her arguing with the Reverend Riveter about trying to steal a part from a local faction of Super Mutants. The Reverend Riveter denied her request, claiming that sending any of their people was too dangerous.
- Tripper sometimes sells chems to the Super Mutants, and he knows that the Last Son of Atom has been trying to convince them to ally. Tripper is concerned that would be bad news for Mechminster Abbey.
- He likes his job. People need chems, and he needs to eat. Unfortunately, the Sisters have a no-chem policy at Mechminster Abbey and are growing suspicious of him. Selfishly, he admits he thinks if he can help them, it might throw the Sisters off his scent.

If the PCs agree to travel to Mechminster Abbey, they can speak to Sister Gugyer and find out about the piece she needs—a huge, perfectly-preserved copper spring. If they can retrieve it from the Super Mutants, she offers to treat PCs' radiation sickness for free whenever they need her help. Guyger seems eager and excited at the prospect of someone helping her finish the weapon and is all-too-happy to show off the device if asked. The anti-radiation cannon is a comically oversized circular gun hanging on a massive steel frame with a many-wheeled base. She claims when it's finished, it will be able to destroy or weaken creatures that rely on heavy radiation to survive.

THE SUPER MUTANT HIDEOUT

The Super Mutants are holed up in a nearby parking garage. It's not particularly well defended—the mutants find that their brutish reputation keeps most intruders at bay—and the PCs can walk right into their lair.

Thrash, a surprisingly calm and well-spoken Super Mutant, leads the gang. Even by Super Mutant standards, she is old and massive. She wears a dirty jacket made from leather straps and motorcycle pants patched together to fit her large form, studded with human bones and spattered with bits of a scavenger's brains. Thrash is willing to barter with the PCs for what they want so long as they do not act aggressively. She offers them a few options to trade for the part:

- A nearby horde of roaming frost feral ghouls killed several members of her gang two days ago. Thrash plans to battle the horde head-on before they locate their hideout. However, she is happy to let the PCs deal with the horde instead in exchange for 150 caps and the part Sister Guyger seeks.
- Alternatively, Thrash openly desires to take over Mechminster Abbey and rally other Super Mutants there to survive the winter. If the PCs agree to lure the frost feral horde to the Abbey and force the Sisters of the Forge to flee or die, Thrash offers them 500 caps, permanent membership in her gang, the part they seek, and Sister Guyger's anti-radiation gun.

If the PCs refuse both of Thrash's offers or act aggressively, she orders the group of three Super Mutants in the parking garage to kill them and loot their bodies. One Super Mutant stays back to fire with their gun, while the other two pick up nearby objects to use as improvised melee weapons. Thrash only joins the fight if she is attacked or one of her gang members dies. If the PCs flee the garage, the Super Mutants do not pursue—their howling laughter follows the party on the wind.

If they agree to Thrash's offer but return later to ambush the gang or steal the large copper spring, each PC sneaking into the garage must succeed on an **AGI + Stealth** test with a difficulty of 1 to avoid being spotted. Finding the large copper spring and escaping unseen requires a successful **PER + Stealth** test with a difficulty of 2. The gang catches them in the act if either test fails and attacks.

Thrash

Level 10, Mutated Human, Notable Character (148 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
10	8	8	5	6	5	2

SKILLS			
Athletics	2	Small Guns	2
Barter	4	Speech	4
Melee Weapons	4	Survival	3
Repair	2	Unarmed	1

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
23	15	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
250 lbs.	+2	5

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
3(Arms, Legs, Torso) 2(Head)	3(Arms, Legs, Torso) 2(Head)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **SHISKEBAB: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 14), 7 Piercing Energy damage, Two-Handed, Parry

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES AND RESISTANCES:** Thrash is immune to Radiation and Poison damage and their effects. Additionally, Thrash gains a +2 to Physical and Energy damage resistances (included).
- **FIRE TORNADO STRIKE:** Once per combat, Thrash can use a major action to go on a fiery rampage. She makes an attack with her Shishkebab against any number of targets within Close range, but increases the difficulty of the tests by 1.

INVENTORY

Road Leathers, Shiskebab, Junk (Assorted Human Bones), Wealth 2

Super Mutant

Level 5, Mutated Human, Normal Character (38 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
9	5	7	4	4	5	4

SKILLS			
Melee Weapons	4	Survival	3
Small Guns	4	Unarmed	2

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
12	10	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
240 lbs.	+2	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
2(All)	2(All)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **IMPROVISED MELEE WEAPON: STR + Melee** (TN 13), 6 Physical damage, Two-Handed
- **PIPE BOLT-ACTION RIFLE: AGI + Small Guns** (TN 9), 5 Piercing Physical damage, Range M, Two-Handed

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES AND RESISTANCES:** Thrash is immune to Radiation and Poison damage and their effects. Additionally, Thrash gains a +2 to Physical and Energy damage resistances (included).

INVENTORY

Pipe Bolt-Action Rifle, assorted human bones, 6+3 .308 ammo, Wealth 1

FROST FERAL GHOUL HORDE

The ghoul horde is located two hours away from Mechminster Abbey in and around a burnt-out old-world skyscraper that once served as luxury housing. The frozen streets around the ruined tower hold twelve-foot-tall snowdrifts—many of the sleeping ghouls linger in the building or beneath the snowbanks.

Getting close enough to the building or horde to enact a plan requires a successful group **AGI + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 3. If the test fails, 4 **frost feral ghouls** pop out of the snow and surprise attack the PCs before they can get close. Once attacking ghouls have been dealt with, the PCs can finish their trek to reach the skyscraper outskirts again.

If PCs fire loud weaponry or use explosives at any point while approaching the skyscraper, they might draw the attention of more ghouls hidden nearby. Attacks with loud weapons or similar noisy tests have a complication range of 3 (18-20)—and for each complication, another frost feral ghoul appears from beneath snow or nearby ruins to attack them.

Once the PCs reach the perimeter of the skyscraper, they can plan their attack. They might choose to eradicate the horde, lure it elsewhere, or come up with an entirely different idea of what to do. The following sections provide guidance for the most likely scenarios. Because frozen corpses look similar to ghouls, and the ferals may be hidden in buildings or beneath the snow, PCs cannot learn how many there are—dozens or more.

Frost Feral Ghoul

Level 6, Mutated Human, Minion Creature (15 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
6	5	3	0	2

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
1	11	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
2	2	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **FROZEN CLAWS: Body + Melee** (TN 9), 3 Physical damage, Piercing 1, and the target's Defense is reduced by 1 (to a minimum of 0) until the start of their next turn. If you spend 1 AP after this attack hits, add the Stun effect.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The ghoul is immune to Poison and Radiation damage and their effects. Also, they are immune to all diseases.
- **FROZEN FERAL:** Due to its severely frozen joints, the ghoul only moves one zone when it takes the Sprint action. Because of its unintelligent nature, it cannot communicate or be influenced by Speech tests. Driven by feral instinct, the ghoul moves towards and attacks the nearest enemy, bright light, or loud noise.
- **PLAY DEAD:** The ghoul often lies inert, waiting to ambush unsuspecting passers-by. A character must succeed on a PER + Survival test with a difficulty of 2 to spot a ghoul playing dead.

Culling the Horde. Clearing the entire horde promises to be a daunting task, especially for low-level parties. Allow the PCs to devise a plan and make a group test with a difficulty of 0 using attributes and skills that directly contribute. Collaborate with them on using their environment and encourage them to describe enacting their strategy.

For every 2 AP the group spends after the group test, they gain one of the following benefits during the prolonged battle. They can choose to spend AP

for **defensible structure** or **elaborate trap** twice, prolonging their defenses or allowing them to trigger another trap at a different time.

- A **choke-point** that only allows five frost feral ghouls to enter **Close** range at a time
- A **defensible structure** that keeps all ghouls from entering **Close** range for the first three rounds of combat—until the defenses are overrun or destroyed
- An **elaborate trap**, with a trigger determined by the PCs, set up at **Medium** or **Long** range that deals 4 Vicious (Physical or Energy) damage to all creatures in that range when it triggers. The attack damages ghoul minions normally.

PCs might choose to set up a defensive perimeter, use a choke-point to pick off the ghouls slowly, charge into the icy stairwells of the skyscraper with guns-blazing, or any other idea that makes sense for the story. Keep this encounter fast-paced and intense by focusing less on minute details and more on the push-and-pull of the PCs facing overwhelming odds in the freezing weather.

During the encounter, keep track of the number of ghouls at each range. Ghouls spend their turn moving as close to the PCs as they can (two zones per turn) before attacking indiscriminately. To keep combat moving quickly, allow groups of up to five ghouls to attack at once (see *Chapter 1, Grouping NPCs*, p.46).

Once the PCs begin their attack on the horde or draw the attention of the ghouls to attack them en masse, the encounter begins with a number of frost feral ghouls at the following distances:

- **Close Range:** 0 ghouls
- **Medium Range:** 2 ghouls
- **Long Range:** 5 ghouls
- **Extreme Range:** 8 ghouls

Ghouls give chase if the PCs attempt to flee. A PC can escape and hide from the horde by using a major action to make an **AGI or PER + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 3—or by spending 3 Luck points.

The noise of the battle continues to draw more ghouls at the end of every combat round. You can spend 2 AP from the GM's pool at the end of the round and roll 1d20; add half (rounded up) as many frost feral ghouls to the encounter at **Extreme range**. When you have no more AP to spend or decide the fight has gone on long enough, the last of the horde has reached the battlefield, and it is up to the PCs to win the day or run away.

THIS IS A JOB FOR A GHOUL

Ghoul PCs have a real opportunity to shine during this portion of the side quest. A feral ghoul will not attack a non-feral ghoul unless the non-feral attacks it first. This trait makes ghoul PCs uniquely capable of helping their allies during a battle against—or escape from—the horde. Additionally, any success a ghoul PC generates during a group test to lure the horde away counts as two successes if they describe how they use their ghoul nature to contribute to the plan.

Luring the Ghouls Away. PCs might try to draw the ghouls to another location as part of their plan or because they fled after trying to fight them head-on. They can attempt to lead the ghouls anywhere nearby, though luring the horde to either **Thrash's Hideout** or **Mechminster Abbey** holds significant consequences (see *The Fallout*).

Luring the horde away is a long, dangerous venture that should be treated as a single long encounter with no time to camp or rest. Encourage the PCs to describe how they try to draw the ghouls without being overrun. Describe the nearby environment and how far away they are from their destination. Use the moments of calm before group tests to increase tension by reinforcing just how easily their plan could go terribly wrong.

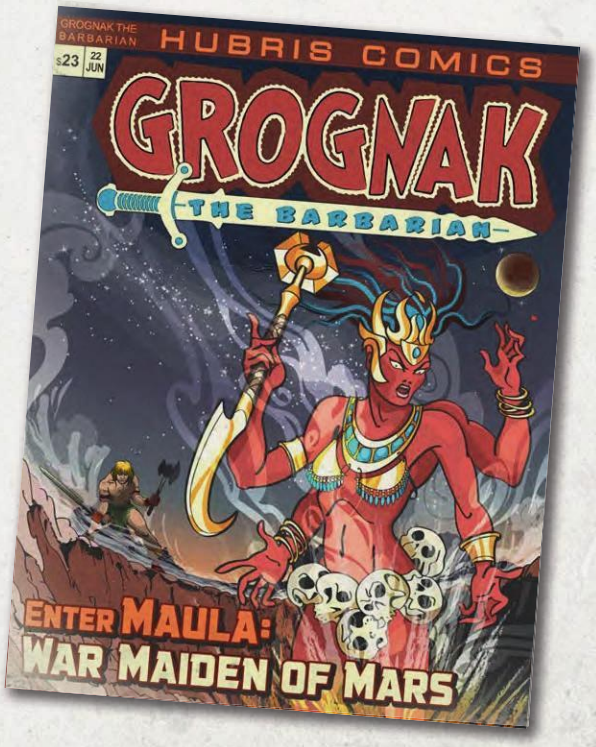
To make progress, PCs must make group tests of their choice—so long as their attributes and skills make sense for the scenario—with a difficulty of 3 and a complication range of 2 (19-20). For each complication, a group of 3 frost feral ghouls catch up to them and attack. During the skirmish, attacks also have a complication range of 2 (19-20), and each complication results in 2 more ghouls from the horde joining the encounter. Once all attacking ghouls have been defeated, the PCs can return to their plan to lure the ghouls away.

When a group test fails, an unexpected obstacle forces them to change direction or find another way forward. The PCs must succeed on three total group tests to lead the horde to a new location and get away unnoticed. If the PCs lead the ghouls to a small settlement like Mechminster Abbey or a camp like Thrash's Hideout, the horde invades and slaughters most living people. During the carnage, allow the PCs a chance to loot something of value—such as the copper spring Sister Guyger requested—before they escape.

THE FALLOUT

The quest has the following outcomes:

- **Betrayed Mechminster Abbey.** If the PCs lured the horde to Mechminster Abbey, the settlement falls, taking most of the ghouls with it. Only Sister Guyger escapes, having witnessed what they did. She moves to whichever settlement is least aligned with the Church of Atom and the PCs. Guyger considers the characters her nemesis and spreads word of the PCs' murderous treachery. Reduce the settlement reputation rank of the community she moves to 0 (Hostile).
- **Cut a Deal with Thrash.** If the PCs helped Thrash get rid of the horde, she pays them 150 caps and hands over the rare copper spring. Additionally, if the PCs guided the ghouls to slaughter the settlers at Mechminster Abbey, Thrash takes over the settlement in the name of the Church of Atom, revealing she is a faithful acolyte of the Last Son. She offers the PCs permanent residence there and begins to draw worshippers and Super Mutants to secure her new community. The new settlement gains the following traits: 30 Population, Somewhat Weak defenses, Just Enough food supplies, and a Very Happy denizen outlook. The PCs gain a settlement reputation rank of 4 (Trusting) with the new settlement.
- **Recovered the Rare Part.** If the PCs recover the part Sister Guyger requested, she is extremely grateful if they return it to her. Make a settlement reputation test, add one positive influence, and the **denizen outlook** improves one step. Add another positive influence to the test if the PCs also killed Thrash and her gang, ridding Mechminster Abbey of their threat. Sister Guyger promises to treat their radiation sickness or damage whenever they come to her for help. After one more week of work, she finishes building her anti-radiation cannon and can use it to significant effect against the Gigapede during *Chapter 3: The Winter War*.
- **Made a Call About Tripper's Secret.** If the PCs did not reveal Tripper's chem dealing operation in Mechminster Abbey, he sells chems to them at half price whenever they cross paths in the future. If they instead rat out his operation to the Sisters, the Reverend Riveter exiles him from the community. He uses his chem whisper network to get revenge on the PCs—most merchants dealing chems refuse to do business with them, and those that do sell double their prices.







★ Chapter Three ★

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Chapter Three

THE WINTER WAR

As the icy grip of winter sets in, the Children of Atom increase the pressure on the Commonwealth settlements to force them to join the Church or be destroyed. The Last Son of Atom's fanatical soldiers launch attacks on various settlements in conjunction with a massive, radiation-spawned monstrosity—the gigapede—a towering, mutated centipede they command using American Sign Language. The gigapede launches terrible strikes against the settlements while Atom's troops assault on foot, threatening that those who do not submit will perish. With the help of the player characters, the settlements must work together to learn the secrets of the gigapede, mount defenses against it, and then band together to drive it off or destroy it.

As war rages in the Commonwealth, the Last Son of Atom freely pursues his secret goal in the Glowing Sea—unearthing an ancient, buried city he believes houses an artifact that will usher in the prophesized Day of Division.

RUNNING THIS CHAPTER

Before running your first session using this chapter, review this section along with *Staging the Gigapede Attacks* and the first scene of *Main Quest: A Thousand Feet of Terror*. Notify the players that once they attempt to assemble the communities of the Commonwealth for a final battle against the gigapede (or decide to go it alone), they reach a point of no return. If they avoid confronting the gigapede, the Sisters of the Forge slay the monster during its assault against Mechminster Abbey—but a large portion of the Abbey is ruined in the battle, rendering it uninhabitable and scattering the few survivors to the wastes.

When the PCs travel from settlement to settlement, you can introduce the side quests presented at the end of this chapter or refer to *Chapter 2, Traversing the Commonwealth,* p.29 to create additional encounters between the significant moments of *Main Quest: A Thousand Feet of Terror*.

If PCs try to rally the Commonwealth's communities together to fight the Church of Atom, they must continue to build trust. Only communities for which PCs have a settlement reputation of 4 or higher will fight by their side in this chapter's key battles, while others decline to join them. Between major battles, allow PCs to complete side quests from *Chapter 2: Welcome to the Commonwealth* and *Chapter 4: The Winter War* to gain levels and make stronger alliances with the settlements.

This chapter of *Winter of Atom* is somewhat nonlinear. The Children of Atom command the gigapede to attack various settlements in no fixed order. The section *Staging the Gigapede Attacks* provides advice on deciding which settlements the gigapede attacks—and additional guidance for preparing the main quest's major battle scenes for the settlements you choose. Adjust the recommendations to best suit your group. The high stakes of this chapter's desperate battles against an overwhelming foe will resonate best with players if their characters are emotionally invested in defending the settlements and people targeted by the Children of Atom and the gigapede.

LEVELING UP

The PCs should ideally reach level 7 or 8 before they first encounter the gigapede during the main quest—and level 11 or 12 before the final conflict during *Scene Three: Showdown*.

PCs may level up using experience points, or you can decide when they advance. Suggestions for good benchmarks in this chapter for PCs to level up include:

- After the PCs complete each scene in this chapter's main quest
- Each time the PCs complete two side quests
- If the PCs rally at least three communities with settlement reputation 4 or higher to join them for the final confrontation

CONTENT WARNINGS AND CHANGING SCENES

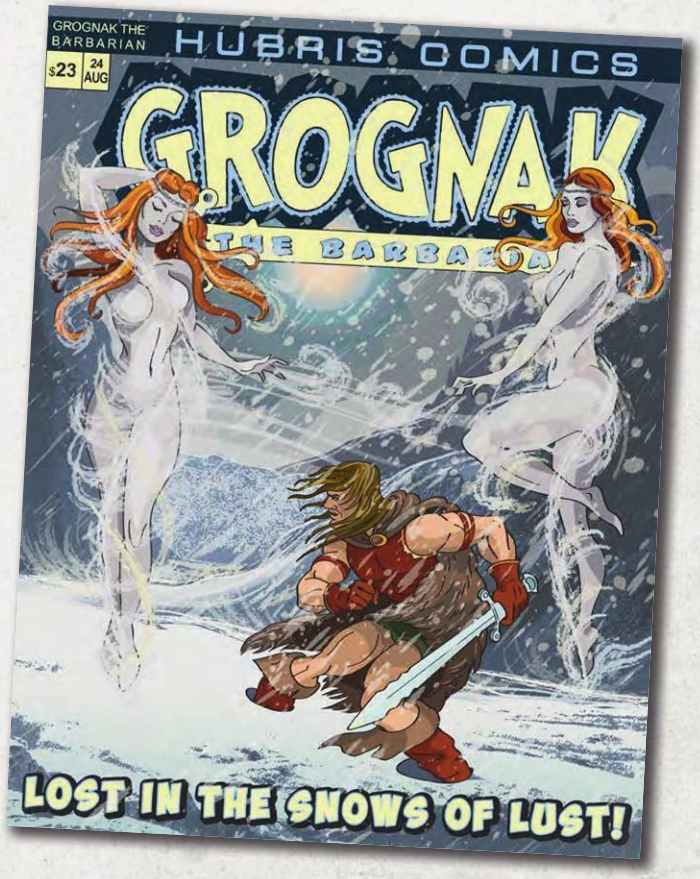
This quest includes a brutal ongoing war and a massive insectoid creature, which may be challenging for players with adverse reactions to insects. Gamemasters may wish to alter the quest in one or more of the following ways to better suit the needs of their group:

- Re-flavor the gigapede as a mutated mammalian or another animal type your players are more comfortable with—but use the same stat block.
- Describe the gigapede's *caustic radio-spittle* as a globe of energy rather than viscous spittle.
- Describe the carnage of war with light detail and allow NPCs the players care about to survive the battles.

SIGNS OF CONTROL

The Children of Atom control the gigapede with American Sign Language (ASL). The Church of Atom's gigapede handlers use ASL to direct the monster during the attacks in *Scene Two: Signs Coalescing* and *Scene Three: Showdown* during this chapter's main quest. PCs who learn some ASL can use the knowledge to great benefit during later battles against the gigapede.

Should the PCs ask around the Commonwealth about sign language, a friendly NPC tells them about the Horace Mann School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (see *Side Quest: Higher Learning,* p.179) in the ruined Cambridge District. The NPC might also recommend they talk to Ole' Man Murray in Mirage (see *Side Quest: Midnight at the Oasis* p.126), whose deaf daughter, Minnie, taught herself a form of sign language. If the PCs complete the quest, they can learn the relevant ASL from Minnie "Muse" Mabee in Beatsville (see *Side Quest: Beat It,* p.143). Since Muse helped to train the gigapede, she is intimately familiar with the signs used to command it.



STAGING THE GIGAPEDE ATTACKS

During *Main Quest: A Thousand Feet of Terror*, each scene presents a battle at a different settlement. This section offers guidance on choosing which settlements to use for the gigapede's attacks, continuing the story between the main quest's scenes, and how to set up a battle at any Commonwealth settlement featured in *Winter of Atom*. Use the following structure and guidance:

- **Scene One: The Gigapede Rises.** Choose any settlement to attack when the PCs happen to be visiting it. The gigapede, with a contingent of Children of Atom Soldiers, surprise attacks the settlement. If the PCs drive the monster off, they can learn more about it and which community the Children plan to unleash the gigapede upon next.
- **Scene Two: Signs Coalescing.** Choose a smaller settlement to attack—Mirage, Big Top, or Beatsville. You should *either* choose a community the PCs haven't visited yet *or* one with which they have a settlement reputation of 3 or lower. The settlement's size puts it at significant risk of being destroyed by the gigapede. If the PCs attempt to defend the community, they can learn how the Children use ASL to communicate with and control the gigapede. After the battle, as PCs rally allies or prepare for the final showdown, they learn of the next settlement the Church intends to attack.
- **Scene Three: Showdown.** Choose a beloved settlement to attack—other than Diamond City or Goodneighbor. You should *either* choose a community the PCs have made their home *or* the settlement with which they have the highest settlement reputation. The showdown is an opportunity for the PCs to rally their allies and resources to end the gigapede's carnage. If the PCs decide to let the Commonwealth fend for itself against the gigapede, it attacks Mechminster Abbey—and neither the gigapede nor the settlement survives the bloody battle.

Between main quest scenes, encourage PCs to travel to settlements, complete side quests, and gather resources. Allow them to find notes or overhear transmissions from the Children of Atom to give them a definitive timetable for the attacks presented in *Main Quest: A Thousand Feet of Terror*. You can use the following timetable as a guideline, adjusting it to your preferred pacing:

- Traveling from one settlement or significant location to another usually takes 24 hours.
- One week after the attack in *Scene One*, the gigapede attacks another settlement per *Scene Two*.
- One week after the attack in *Scene Two*, the final showdown with the gigapede occurs per *Scene Three*.

Even after presenting the timetable to the PCs, you can give them a little more time to finish a side quest or other business and reach an attack site before it is too late. Vicious winter storms and other logistical problems might delay the Children's attacks, allowing PCs enough time to reach a settlement to protect it.

The following sections provide a toolkit detailing guidance on using each Commonwealth settlement as a backdrop for the gigapede attacks presented in this chapter's main quest. Adjust the ideas presented to best fit your group's story. When possible, include NPCs the PCs know and care about in the battle scenes—put them in harm's way of the gigapede and Children of Atom's attacks. This chapter presents an opportunity to twist the narrative knife and show the devastating cost of war.

DIAMOND CITY

Diamond City is well-positioned to avoid the wrath of the gigapede, thanks to its concrete and rebar construction, extensively reinforced underground tunnels, and large perimeter walls. The gigapede cannot burrow into the tunnels or easily climb over the outer fortifications. Diamond City's local security officers keep up a barrage of fire against the creature, though their small arms are ineffective at repelling it. More importantly, security officers and traps allow the city to keep Children of Atom devotees from breaching the city's walls.

Some ways the Children and gigapede may attack the settlement's defenders include the following:

- The gigapede's poisonous, radioactive spittle arcs over the wall, possibly killing people in the city's Upper Stands.
- Church of Atom troops lay down covering fire. When the gigapede rears to strike, they launch a barrage against any Diamond City local who dares pop up from the Upper Stand walls to fire at the monster.

FIGHTING OUTSIDE DIAMOND CITY

If the PCs are caught outside the city walls during the attack, Diamond City security won't open the gates to let them in unless they have a settlement reputation of 5. If they remain in the open to fight the Children's troops or protect refugees, they draw the notice of the gigapede itself. PCs can safely hide in piles of cinder blocks or behind building ruins to avoid the fighting by succeeding on an **AGI or PER + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 3.

The vulnerable refugees caught outside the city walls find themselves in a perilous situation. The gigapede chews through canvas tents and ramshackle shelters while the Children's troops shoot or capture anyone unable to flee fast enough. Diamond City security has its hands full protecting the walls and refuses to come to their aid.

If the PCs do not protect the refugees during the battle, word spreads that Diamond City turned its back on those in need and is no longer safe. The fearful ripple effect causes other settlements and groups to stop trading with the city until the Last Son of Atom's reign of terror has ended.

FIGHTING INSIDE DIAMOND CITY

If the PCs remain inside the city walls during the attack, they have more protection. They can attack from the Upper Stand walls at **Long range** while benefiting from 5 of cover. Complications rolled on attacks against the Children or the gigapede hit fleeing refugees below. Unless the PCs leave the safety of the walls to help the refugees, many of them die, resulting in other settlements cutting off trade with Diamond City.

GOODNEIGHBOR

Goodneighbor's old buildings sit over reinforced concrete tunnels, difficult to penetrate without specialized equipment. The settlement's surrounding walls make the town a tough nut for the gigapede and the Children of Atom to crack. Hancock hides inside the Old State House, ordering anyone armed to position themselves in windows and on rooftops. Triggermen gang members rally with the Neighborhood Watch to protect their home—and source of income—by repelling invaders with sniper fire and the occasional grenade or incendiary cocktail.

Some ways the Children and gigapede may attack the settlement's defenders include the following:

- The gigapede launches poisonous spittle at guards on the barricades and snatches defenders off lower wall areas with its maw.
- The Children scale the walls or push through the gates, shooting at people fleeing the town's streets before retreating from the defenders' counter-fire.

INSIDE THE OLD STATE HOUSE

If the PCs have a settlement reputation of 3 or higher, Hancock asks them to join him in the Old State House. Inside, he directs those with ranged weapons to windows or up to the roof. From there, PCs can attack from Long range while benefiting from 3 of cover.

Hancock requests anyone with medical training to aid the wounded brought to the Old State House during

the battle. Three NPCs the characters are familiar with become mortally wounded during the fight. Treating a dying NPC requires an **INT or PER + Medicine** test with a difficulty of 3. On a failure, the NPC dies from their wounds.

FIGHTING IN THE TOWN

During the battle, Children of Atom troops sometimes manage to force their way through the front gates or scale the walls before being repelled by defenders. The gigapede can attack with its spittle over the walls, targeting a PC out in the open—increase the attack's difficulty by 1.

PCs can try to ride out the battle inside an NPC's home or shop, but residents of Goodneighbor will not open their doors unless they have a settlement reputation of 5. PCs can climb to a roof or high wall by using an action to make an **AGI or STR + Athletics** test with a difficulty of 3. On a success, they gain 3 cover and make attacks from Long range.

If PCs do not tend to the wounded in the Old State House during the battle, three NPCs they are familiar with perish from mortal injuries.

MIRAGE

While Mirage's towering fortress seems impervious to the gigapede, the large herd of brahmin that pulls it is not. In the initial strike against the traveling casino, the gigapede focuses on sating its hunger with a few of the pack animals. The ensuing panic among the herd grinds the fortress to a halt, and the Atomites attempt to board the fort while the Mirage's handful of defenders pull up the ladders and return fire from above.

If Maxwell Kantor still leads the settlement, he "accidentally" leaves the back entrance to Mirage unguarded and open for the Children's soldiers to enter. In this case, the Atomites goals differ from the battle situations presented later in this chapter. They desire to terrify any settlers who resist them, capture all of Kantor's prisoners from the vault in one fell swoop, and retreat into the wilderness. PCs who question Kantor's allegiance can determine that he is secretly helping the Church's soldiers by making a successful **PER + Speech** test with a difficulty of 2. If they reveal his treachery, the settlement turns against him, asking the PCs to help them decide how to deliver justice for his wicked deeds.

Some ways the Children and gigapede may attack the settlement's defenders include the following:

- The gigapede spends several rounds hunting fleeing brahmin and any PCs attempting to gather the herd. Then the monster's handler turns its attacks to damage the outer structure of Mirage itself.
- The Children lay down cover fire at the fort's entrances while others raise siege ladders so they can board.

PROTECT THE BRAHMIN

Mirage is immobile and out-gunned without its pack brahmin. PCs who leave the relative safety of the fortress to risk running into the open wastes can round up the scattered, panicked herd. To round up the flock, a PC must spend an action to make an **AGI or CHA + Pilot or Survival** test, adding one die to their pool for each rank of the Animal Friend perk. A PC manages to round up 10% of the herd for each success they generate.

The gigapede attacks any PCs who attempt to regather fleeing brahmin. If PCs retreat into the fort before the battle ends, the gigapede returns to eating brahmin—all wrangled brahmin panic and run away again. If the PCs fail to wrangle at least 70% of the brahmin herd before the end of the battle, Mirage becomes immobile until the spring, when its settlers can purchase new pack brahmin from traveling traders. In the meantime, the settlement becomes a sitting duck for desperate raiders and other threats.

CLASH AT THE OASIS

PCs can fight off invading Atomite forces by guarding the entrances to Mirage. At the start of each round of combat, Church soldiers raise two magnetized siege ladders from the ground up to the entry. Half the Children present spend their entire turn climbing the ladder, and on their following turn, they leave the ladder and fight their way into Mirage. The other half of

the invaders provide cover fire from Long range below, aiming at PCs who try to throw down siege ladders or guard the entrance.

PCs using Mirage's fortified walls have 5 cover against attacks from below. A PC who leaves cover can attempt to throw back a siege ladder by making a **STR + Athletics or Throwing** test with a difficulty of 5. If they succeed, any creatures on the ladder fall to the ground below and take 4 damage that ignores all DR. The Atomites attempt to raise the ladders again the next round for as long as the battle lasts, replenishing fallen invaders with the soldiers providing cover fire.

If Atomites successfully invade the casino via siege ladders or with Kantor's help, the battle becomes much messier. The Church's soldiers use the slot machines, bar tops, gaming tables, and innocent captive bystanders to shield themselves from the PCs and other defenders—they gain 2 cover.

BIG TOP

Big Top's structures are built to pack up and travel, making them difficult to defend from sustained attacks. Out-gunned, the Freeques and other defenders fight with makeshift ropes, circus equipment, meat cleavers, and a few small arms.

Some ways the Children and gigapede may attack the settlement's defenders include the following:

- The gigapede tears through tents and wagons. It rips apart the settlement's fragile structures, unhindered by the Freeques' makeshift traps and defenses.
- One group of Atomites invade the Big Top tent at a time, while the rest of their forces siege outside and fire at any settlers who flee.

ALL ALONG CARNIVAL ROW

PCs can distract the gigapede from destroying the settlement on its turn if they attack it or by drawing its attention with loud noises and explosions. When they get its attention, the gigapede attempts to destroy them and only returns to attacking the settlement after they flee or are defeated. PCs who confront the gigapede also draw fire from groups of Atomites sieging the tents from the outside.

Each turn that the gigapede is unopposed, it destroys one tent or structure. After it destroys three structures, Brawny Bill bravely rushes out to distract the monster by swinging his mighty hammer at it. Unless the PCs intervene, the gigapede devours Brawny Bill on its next turn and then finishes destroying the main Big Top tent the turn after.

If the gigapede manages to smash up Big Top, surviving settlers disperse into the winds after the battle. Many succumb to the awful winter, while others move to refugee camps near Goodneighbor and Mechminster Abbey.

THRILLS AND CHILLS AT THE BIG TOP!

The Atomites send small groups from their larger forces into the Big Top tent, one at a time, to terrify the settlers and cause them to flee out into the open, where they are more vulnerable. A PC defending the inside of the Big Top tent can use a major action to convince the settlers to stand and fight a little longer by making a **CHA** test with a difficulty of 2. Reduce the difficulty of the test by 1 if the PCs help arm the defenders with better weaponry. If no PCs succeed on the test during a round, another group of settlers flees outside at the end of the round.

The first two groups to flee are ghoul and human settlers. The third group to flee is the synth refugees, if they still remain at Big Top. The fourth group to flee is the Freeques. Unless the PCs intercede by attacking the Atomites outside to cover groups' retreats, most fleeing settlers are gunned down. If the Freeques run away from Big Top, roll 3 to determine how many of the following Freeques are killed by Atomites as they flee: Johnnie Lonnie, the Inked Lady, or one of the Swinging Sals triplets.

If a PC takes the Rally action and then spends 6 AP, they do not need to convince the defenders to stand their ground for the remainder of the battle. Moreover, the Freeques fight with renewed purpose, using their circus training to great benefit.

The Swinging Sals disappear behind curtains or boxes in a flash, only to re-emerge up on the ropes or while climbing a tentpole and mount surprise attacks with juggling knives. Brawny Bill roars and rampages, using his hammer to bash in Church fanatics' heads. Ringleader Johnnie Lonnie draws enemies into a trap, unleashing his prize pet Protectron painted like a lion. At the start of each remaining round of combat, roll 2  to determine how many enemies the Freeques defeat.

BEATSVILLE

By midwinter, the Children of Atom learn Beatsville's location from their spy network or by tracing back food traders who visit the settlement. Lacking fortifications, Beatsville's secret location was its only meaningful defense—a direct attack by the gigapede quickly spells the end for the settlement. The locals are pacifists with no fighting skills; without the PCs' help to stop an attack, they flee, surrender, or become giga-chow. If the settlement cannot prevent the attack, it is doomed to fall immediately.

Some ways the Children and gigapede may attack the settlement's defenders include the following:

- The gigapede emerges from beneath the settlement or the fake settlement (see *All Art is Revolution*). It immediately destroys Artist Alley before attempting to devour anyone present.
- The Children wait for the gigapede to emerge and then invade the garbage yard, shooting any settlers who flee indiscriminately.

ALL ART IS REVOLUTION

Though Beatsville is unfortified and unarmed, its art supplies can be repurposed as weapons. Paint thinner turns into firebombs. Decorative beadwork becomes shrapnel. Clever clockwork toys turn into triggers for traps. The locals lack the knowledge to create the weapons but are willing to allow the PCs to try. Allow a PC to make an **INT or PER + Explosives** test with a difficulty of 1, creating either a Molotov cocktail or a frag mine on a success, and for every AP spent they create two more Molotov cocktails or one frag mine.

PAINT THE TOWN RED

The Lama, or whomever currently leads Beatsville, suggests a radical method to defend Beatsville before the attackers arrive. They ask the PCs to help the settlement's artisans construct an entire false façade on the far side of the garbage yard—a fake version of Beatsville, designed to collapse under the attack of the Children and give them the impression that the place has been destroyed.

The PCs can guide the Beats in constructing the mock town so that it will stand up to some level of scrutiny. Fake blood and debris splashed around the area help to complete the illusion, along with rickety wooden structures decorated via colorful cloth and canvas curtains. Small bowls of art supplies stacked atop empty crates give the impression that the town's materials are all stored here. The PCs can use the campsite building rules (see *Building Campsites*, p.35) to finish their façade. If they build at least a tier 5 campsite, the fake Beatsville proves convincing enough to the Atomites.

If the PCs build a façade, Beatsville's leader asks the PCs to defend the fake settlement and drive back the Atomite forces before they realize they have been misled. The PCs can prepare for what promises to be a brutal fight by laying traps and using campsite features such as **defensible walls** for cover.

If the PCs lose the battle against the Atomites and gigapede—or if they do not create a convincing fake settlement to mislead the enemy's initial attack—the remaining Church forces locate the real Beatsville and quickly destroy it. The Lama dies in the battle. If the PCs do not defeat the Atomites, Minnie Mabee is recaptured by the Children of Atom and taken to Whately Research Facility in the Glowing Sea. Any survivors are forced to move to Diamond City and miserably reintegrate into the unforgiving realities of a more capitalist society. DJ Daddy-O refuses to rejoin a settlement and travels the wastelands, continuing to broadcast until a wandering monster makes a snack of him.

MECHMINSTER ABBEY

The hallowed walls of Mechminster Abbey, combined with the stalwart resolve of its defenders, make it one of the most challenging targets for the Children of Atom. With their well-maintained weapons and artillery, the Sisters organize a strong defense against both the gigapede and the Atomites. Heavy weapons fire causes the gigapede to recoil, while small arms fire forces the Children to stay low and move forward by inches.

Some ways the Children and gigapede may attack the settlement's defenders include the following:

- The gigapede remains out of range of most of the settlements' defenses, using its spittle attack to strike at defenders along the perimeter.
- The Children provide cover fire for the gigapede from a distance, not risking a full assault until their spies detonate their mini nukes in the Abbey or are caught in the attempt.

ENEMIES WITHIN

While the settlement seems to repel the invaders initially, the Atomite's true goal is to distract the defenders. The Children of Atom have secretly planted spies in the refugee encampment of Limbo. After the first round of combat, require PCs not actively fighting at the settlement's perimeter to make a **PER + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 4. PCs who succeed notice the two Children of Atom Soldiers wearing refugee clothing but fully armed and carrying armed mini nukes, sneaking towards the Pulpit. If they stop the spies, the PCs can take their two mini nukes.

If the PCs do not stop the spies, they sacrifice themselves for Atom's glory by detonating their mini nukes at the end of the third round of combat. The terrible blast destroys the Abbey from within and profanes its holy ground with radiation. The Reverend Riveter and Sister Guyger miraculously survive, but many sisters, including Sister Nition, perish. Any PC in Close range to the detonation takes 21 Breaking, Radioactive, Vicious physical damage.

Regardless of the outcome, the Atomites advance on the settlement at the start of the fourth round of combat.

TRAPPED IN LIMBO

The initial brunt of the Atomite's advance strikes the refugee camp. The gigapede hunts any refugees who flee the settlement, hurling people through the air with its maw. The Sisters remaining make their final stand at Limbo to protect the most vulnerable.

If the PCs previously helped Sister Guyger finish building her anti-radiation cannon, she wheels its massive frame out into the open when the battle appears most hopeless. Guyger asks the PCs to help her aim the unwieldy energy weapon. A PC can use their major action to make a **PER + Energy Weapons** test with a difficulty of 4. Once they succeed, Guyger unleashes the anti-radiation gun's powerful beam and significantly weakens the monster. The gigapede's Physical and Energy DR is reduced to 0 for the remainder of the battle, it suffers 21 Energy damage, and it cannot take actions on its next turn. Once Guyger's weapon hits the gigapede, it overheats and explodes in a brilliant shower of sparks.

Should the PCs fail to repel the attack, Reverend Riveter finishes the job. She sacrifices herself by allowing the gigapede to devour her, then detonating a mini nuke to blow it up from the inside (see *Scene Three: Showdown, Losing the Battle*, p.186).

THE HORDE RETURNS

If the PCs didn't previously deal with the nearby feral frost ghoul horde, the horde arrives after the Atomites advance into the settlement. The ghouls swarm the gigapede and attack it, drawn to its immense heat. Though the ghouls cannot deal damage through the monster's tough hide, they make it challenging to target the monster—increase the difficulty of attacks against the gigapede by 1.

The gigapede thrashes its way through the horde, eradicating the ghouls after three rounds of combat before rejoining the battle for Mechminster Abbey.



MAIN QUEST: A THOUSAND FEET OF TERROR

This quest becomes available after the PCs conclude the first act of *Winter of Atom*, Chapter 2**:** Welcome to the Commonwealth. **Add 2 Action Points per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

As winter firms its grip on the Commonwealth, the Children of Atom launch attacks on the settlements to push desperate people over the edge. The Last Son of Atom hopes to keep the Minutemen and communities occupied while he excavates a buried city beneath the Glowing Sea. With his campaign of terror, he aims to shatter the Commonwealth's resolve and draw more settlers to his flock before the Day of Division arrives.

The gigapede, a massive, mutated monster, is the primary weapon of the Children. Deadly, impervious to most weapons, and easily controlled by the Children's handlers—the beast seems undefeatable. Able to burrow surreptitiously and then strike by surprise nearly anywhere, its existence makes the entirety of the Commonwealth unsafe.

In this quest, PCs have the following objectives**:**

- Defend the settlements attacked by the gigapede and learn where it will strike next.
- Discover how the Children control the gigapede.
- Rally their allies for a final battle to defeat the gigapede.

Once the gigapede is defeated or pacified, the PCs win the acclaim of the surviving settlements. With the hope of spring on the horizon, they gain the opportunity to lick their wounds and work to repair the damage done to the Commonwealth.

SCENE ONE: THE GIGAPEDE RISES

Begin this scene the next time the PCs are in a settlement when you are ready to continue the main storyline of Winter of Atom. *They hear shouts of alarm, then witness settlers panicking. Read or paraphrase the following:*

> *Panicked shouts break the crisp, cold air as they rise from the edge of the settlement. Moments later, a wounded survivor rushes past you, yelling, "We're under attack! We're under attack!" The pop of handguns rings out, only to be overshadowed by an enormous roar and the loud crashing sound of a wall collapsing!*
>
> *Rising over the rubble is an enormous monstrosity—an insectoid head atop a thick, flexible, rectangular body with dozens of squirming legs down either side. Sizzling acidic spit dribbles from mandibles the size of swords, the beast lunges forward with unnatural speed. It plunges several of its spear-like talons into a piece of rubble, flinging them aside as casually as a soldier in power armor. The entire length of its body undulates side to side as it races to another position and then rises with a hiss. The monster is at least thirty feet long. Its compound eyes glitter as its head twists from side to side, responding to the noise of every movement around it.*

A PC who makes a successful **INT + Science or Survival** test with a difficulty of 2 recognizes the **gigapede** as a highly mutated centipede, unique from other mutated creatures like mirelurk queens and super mutant behemoths. If they succeed, they may spend AP to **Obtain Information**. Some information PCs can learn**:**

- The gigapede has an armored carapace, much like giant ants or radroaches, though on a massive scale. Common guns and melee weapons are unlikely to hurt it.
- The mutagens the Children of Atom have exposed the gigapede to make its bodily excretions radioactive and poisonous.
- The gigapede seems to leave Atomites alone while attacking other people nearby. It is clearly in league with them or controlled by them, somehow.

Give PCs just enough time to observe the gigapede and react before the settlement comes under attack.

ENCOUNTER-1A: THE GIGAPEDE

The Gigapede attacks the settlement *(see Staging the Gigapede Attacks,* p.160) with a small unit of the Last Son's troops. In this first attack, the Children's goal is not to conquer a settlement but to inflict terror by revealing the Last Son's favorite pet to the Commonwealth. The soldiers open fire on anyone exposed until they come under attack.

Any PCs who join the battle must contend with a group of five Children of Atom Soldiers from the enemy unit. The gigapede (see p.181) only attacks the PCs if they attack it first, instead focusing on devouring local settlers.

Resolving the Battle. The Children of Atom attempt to escape after four rounds—scattering back into nearby rubble or wasteland. After five rounds—or when the gigapede is reduced to half or fewer HP—it escapes by burrowing far beneath the earth, collapsing the tunnel behind it. The sounds of combat emanate from other areas around the settlement as local defenders fight off the other attacking soldiers.

If the PCs do not flee from the fight and manage to hold their ground until all enemies escape or are killed, their settlement reputation rank for the community they defended increases by 1.

After the battle, the PCs can attempt to track fleeing Children of Atom by making a **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 3. Tracking the gigapede proves impossible due to how far below the earth it burrows. If they succeed, they corner a group of five Children of Atom soldiers who stand their ground and fight, using nearby cover to their advantage. If the PCs do not capture any soldiers, the settlement's defenders manage to take one alive. The settlement's leader or defenders ask the PCs to interrogate—the prisoner refuses to speak to anyone but the characters.

INTERROGATING A PRISONER

A captured Atomite sneers, spits, and generally shows contempt for their captors. They fully believe their cause is righteous and destined for success. The Last Son ordered any captured soldiers to taunt the PCs and openly share knowledge of the Church's plans. A prisoner can share the following information:

- The settlements of the Commonwealth face a Great Trial to prove themselves worthy for the Day of Division. On that date, Atom shall reveal His Glow to the world and show his faithful doorways to infinite universes of paradise.
- The gigapede is the holy weapon of Atom, infused with His Glow. Soon, it will strike again. It will not stop until all unbelievers in the Commonwealth are judged. The settlers who join the Church and seek to bask in Atom's Glow will be spared and know eternal salvation.
- This first attack was merely a celebration of the holy gigapede's rise and taste of what is to come. The next attack will show Atom's true power.
- The Last Son of Atom left the Commonwealth on a holy pilgrimage and will return on the prophesized Day of Division.

For *Main Quest: A Thousand Feet of Terror* to continue, the prisoner must inform the PCs about their upcoming plans. They defiantly tell interrogators which settlement the gigapede will attack next and when the attack will occur. The prisoner taunts them, claiming the settlement's residents are marked for judgment, and there is nothing they can do to stop it—the gigapede is Atom's immortal servant. The PCs are but ants to the creature, their lives meaningless unless they give their hearts to Atom. Once the prisoner shares this information, they refuse to speak any further—their mission to bait the PCs is complete.

VICTORY CELEBRATIONS

Once the Atomites are driven off, the settlers breathe a sigh of relief, take stock, and congratulate the PCs on their aid—or rebuke them for their cowardice, as appropriate. Survivors remain on edge, though. News of the Atomites' mutated war-beast spreads rapidly, and any settlement with a radio starts broadcasting about the attack. The heightened tensions expose any social rifts in the community, providing an impetus for the PCs to engage in side quests as local problems come to a head.

The Second Target

Refer to *Staging the Gigapede Attacks* (p.160) to choose gigapede's next target. Decide how long the PCs have before the attack occurs—one week is recommended to allow them to travel and pursue other goals between battles. You can shorten the time to put PCs under more pressure or extend it to give them more time to prepare and finish side quests.

PREPARING FOR THE UPCOMING BATTLE

Armed with new knowledge, the PCs must plan what they will do next. If they try to take the fight to the Last Son's soldiers, they can find splinter cells hiding in settlements or small fortified structures throughout the Commonwealth. Each cell acts independently, answering to a single brother or sister—they wait to join the next attack and have no communication with other groups.

Allow the group to think outside the box when preparing additional defenses or traps to help defend against the gigapede. To convince settlements to go along with their plan, they may need to complete the location's side quests or otherwise persuade its leaders that the gigapede's threat is real or not to abandon the settlement. Reward their successful efforts during *Scene Two: Signs Coalescing* by slowing enemy advances at crucial moments or saving beloved NPCs from certain death. Challenge failed efforts to prepare by putting PCs and the NPCs they care about most in harm's way during the next attack.

Ideally, despite their best efforts, their resistance comes at a high cost to their allies—and they fall short of total victory until *Scene Three: Showdown*. When the gigapede and Church's forces attack the next settlement, proceed to *Scene Two: Signs Coalescing*.



SIDE QUEST: WE NEED BIGGER GUNS

This quest becomes available after PCs complete *Scene One: The Gigapede Rises*. **Add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

When the PCs first tangle with the gigapede, they may feel woefully under-armed. If they ask around about better weapons, they gain the interest of a scavenger in a tattered trench coat with short, dark hair and a young face. Rookie Richard Durkin offers to trade helpful information in exchange for a meal. If the PCs feed him, read or paraphrase the following:

Rookie Richard Durkin babbles between gulps as he tears into his food, saying, "I came through a ruined little town west of Boston—the old town of Stow. Mostly abandoned, just a few scavengers like me. But! There's a ruined military museum there, the American Heritage Museum. The locals stripped all the old vehicles around the grounds for parts, but nobody's gone into the museum building and returned. I bet there are some old weapons on display there. Maybe something you can use!"

Rookie Richard has little else to say about the matter. Stow is, at this point, little more than a survivor community of a dozen freezing people with snow-covered farms and dead orchards. Traveling to Stow is a 24-hour journey. The local scavengers are suspicious of

armed strangers but happy to trade and swap stories. The people of Stow confirm Rookie Richard's account and have no objections to visitors investigating the old museum. When the PCs approach the museum, read or paraphrase the following:

> *The grounds of the American Heritage Museum are a large, barren landscape, once a lawn but now covered in bleak snow and dotted with ruined vehicles and twisted, stubby shrubs. The main building is a low, single-story warehouse-like structure with several locked garage doors and a central front door in a tower-like façade—decorated in peeling and spotted red, white, and blue paint.*

The garage doors are long since rusted shut and too heavy to lift without superhuman effort. A PC can pick the doors' ancient maglock by making a successful **AGI or PER + Lockpick** test with a difficulty of 3—or force them by making a successful **STR + Athletics** test with a difficulty of 5. On a failed test, the patrolling robots inside are alerted to their intrusion and position themselves to make a surprise attack as soon as the PCs enter.

SEARCHING THE MUSEUM

Inside, the darkened rooms are historical re-creations of various battlefields from World War I, World War II, and Anchorage. Amidst the museum displays and statues are mangled, scorched human skeletons.

The world that the PCs live in now is the product of old America's glorification of war. This is a perfect chance to inject some of ***Fallout's*** signature dark satire. Some propaganda pieces the PCs might experience in the museum include the following:

- Pre-recorded tinny patriotic music playing over damaged speakers
- Faded signs describing the heroic actions of soldiers in the conflicts
- Crumbling pamphlets extolling the virtues of spreading Freedom and the American Way—while making snide remarks about traitorous pacifists and communists

Four Mister Gutsy Patriot robots decked out in poorly-fitting human military garb patrol the area, routinely intoning various "patriotic" and propagandistic statements about Red Invaders, government handouts, and freedom-not-being-free. At the same time, they attempt to burn any museum visitors to a crisp. Any PC trying to avoid their notice or prepare a sneak attack must succeed on an **AGI + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 3. Once the robots spot a character, they attack.

During the fight, PCs must climb over replicas of trenches from World War I and minefields from World War II while fighting the robots. They can duck behind soldier mannequins to gain 1 of cover. The robots do not pursue the PCs if they flee the museum and instead begin to clean up the mess they created, complaining all the while.



Mister Gutsy Patriot

Level 8, Robot,
Notable Character (120 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
8	8	5	6	7	8	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	2	Melee Weapons	4
Big Guns	4	Repair	3
Energy Weapons	4	Speech	3
Explosives	2		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
17	18	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
230 lbs.	+1	2

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
5(All)	5(All)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **COMPRESSED LONG BARREL NAPALMER: PER + Big Guns** (TN 12), 5 Burst, Persistent, Spread Energy damage, Fire Rate 5, Range C
- **LASER PISTOL: AGI + Energy Weapons** (TN 12), 5 Piercing Energy damage, Fire Rate 3, Range C, Close Quarters
- **PINCER: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 12), 4 Physical damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The Mister Gutsy Patriot is a robot that moves through jet propulsion and hovers above the ground, unaffected by difficult terrain or obstacles. It is also immune to Poison and Radiation damage and their effects, plus the effects from disease, starvation, suffocation, and thirst.
- **MAJOR GENERAL:** The Mister Gutsy Patriot attacks characters not wearing Memorial Battle Armor Plating and treats those who do wear the plating as revered war generals from the old world.
- **WORLD ON FIRE:** Once per combat, the Mister Gutsy Patriot burns extra fuel to unleash a wave of ripping flames from its napalmer. The attack loses the Spread effect but adds its Fire Rate to the damage (for 10 total). Plumes of smoke cause the difficulty of attacks made against targets in the Mister Gutsy's zone to increase by 1 until the start of its next turn.

INVENTORY

SALVAGE: Scavengers can salvage from a destroyed Mister Gutsy Patriot by making a successful INT + Science test with a difficulty of 3. A success yields a Compressed Long Barrel Napalmer, Memorial Battle Armor Plating, 12+6 flamer fuel, 2d20 fusion cells, 3 units of Uncommon Materials with +1 per AP spent, and each Effect yields 1 Rare Material.

MEMORIAL BATTLE ARMOR PLATING

ARMOR TYPE	PHYSICAL RESISTANCE	ENERGY RESISTANCE	LOCATION	CARRY WEIGHT	COST	PERKS
Memorial Battle Armor Plating	5	5	All	+30	300	Armorer 2

These specialized heavy-duty steel plates denote pre-War American military ranks and regalia. They can be installed on any robot character by spending one hour and then succeeding on an **INT + Repair** test with a difficulty of 3. On a failed test, the plating is ruined.

Special: A robot fitted with the Memorial Battle Armor plate is granted the same security clearance of a military major or sergeant. They reduce the difficulty of a **Science** or **Speech** test by 1 (minimum of 0) when interacting with people or machines that recognize the authority of pre-War America. In addition, the robot can overcharge Small Guns and Energy weapons—increasing their Fire Rate by 1.

Once the PCs dispatch the robots or avoid notice, they can loot the museum before leaving. To do so, they must spend 2 hours and make a group **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 3 and a complication range of 2 (19-20). If they succeed, they roll the minimum number of times for each loot table on the *American Heritage Museum Scavenging Table*, and for each AP they spend they can roll an additional time on a loot table (up to the maximum). For each scavenging complication rolled, another Mister Gutsy Patriot ambushes them or 2 AP is added to the GM's pool.

If PCs succeed on a scavenging test, for each AP they spend to roll additional times on a loot table, allow them to also find one of the following: *military fatigues* and an *army helmet*, a *laser gun* with the *automatic barrel* and *full stock* mods, a *Ballistic Weave Mk IV* mod, a *gas mask*, or 4 *Stimpaks*. Regardless of the results of their scavenging test, PCs can find one full suit of *reinforced combat armor* on a soldier model in the Anchorage area of the museum.

AMERICAN HERITAGE MUSEUM Scavenging Table

LOOT TABLE	NUMBER OF ROLLS
Ammunition	0-1
Armor	1-4
Clothing	0-3
Weapons (Ranged)	1-4
Chems	0-3
Oddities	0-3

THE FALLOUT

This quest has the following outcomes:

- **Big Guns, Strong Armor.** Though the few functional weapons remaining are only replicas, the museum proves to be a highly valuable scavenging site untouched by outsiders. Additionally, PCs can salvage powerful weapons and armor plating from the defeated Mister Gutsy remains to aid in future battles.
- **New Friends.** Unless the PCs treated them poorly or picked a fight, the dozen scavengers living in Stow happily trade with them. Supplies are limited, but the farmers can sell PCs limited amounts of plant and fruit-based food supplies for 50% of the standard cost. If the PCs tell curious locals about what they found inside the museum, the settlers move in and fortify the building as a town hall and defensible position. If the PCs want to move in, they are welcome and can pick any of the museum areas to make home.

SIDE QUEST: THE BLOW-OFF

This quest becomes available after PCs complete *Scene One: The Gigapede Rises* when they visit a settlement where they have a settlement reputation of at least 2. **Add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

A fast-talking gambler and small-time hustler named Mackenzie Frey, or Mac as they prefer to be called, approaches the PCs with a proposition: they want someone to join a card game as a ringer. Mac carries a simple knife for self-defense. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *A slender individual with slicked-back blonde hair approaches. They wear a classy navy-blue suit that appears well-tailed and recently repaired. The person offers a swaggering half-bow, then holds out an unopened can of Nuka-Cola. The stranger's lips part in a roguish smile before they speak. "Why, hello there, friend. What a day! This weather, right? Say, might I have a moment of your time? My name's Mac, and I have a proposition I think you might like to hear."*

Mac offers a Nuka-Cola if the PCs are willing to listen to them. They are concerned the high-stakes card game they were invited to might be a "blow-off"— a con in which someone interrupts and attacks the card game to get the players to flee and leave behind their caps. Mac wants a ringer to play in the game with them while the rest of the PCs take up positions outside to watch for interference. The game will take place that night in a temporary location, a pop-up tent hidden away from the purvey of local travelers or guards. Mac promises 200 caps as a reward for helping them.

THE BIG GAME

If the PCs agree to help Mac, they encourage the PC intending to play cards with them to bring some precious loot or a lot of caps to bet. They vouch for the PC upon arriving at the gambling tent. So long as the PC flashes a valuable item or a few hundred caps to show their bona fides, they are allowed to join the game. The other PCs can set themselves up outside in the meantime to keep a lookout.

The other four people at the table include the following, though you can add more players and more card tables to suit your needs:

- The dealer, Jackson Quint, a battle-scarred brute with a big, toothy smile and friendly disposition
- "Full House" Ivey, an extraordinarily paranoid but self-aware Protectron who believes everyone else at the table is cheating
- Hanh "Nervous" Nguyen, a small, quiet ghoul woman with black pig-tails who seems easily shaken
- Doyle Negreanu, a slow-talking gunslinger wearing a cowboy hat who tries to keep everyone at ease

Mac's instincts are correct: the card game is a front. Jackson Quint and Hanh Nguyen are insiders on the con. Everyone else at the card table is a mark. The goal for the con artists is to play a few hands, get the players to put up big stakes, then signal their confederates to raid the tent under the guise of a robbery. Jackson and Hanh will "bravely" attempt to slow down the robbers while the other players escape out the back of the tent, happy to make it out with their lives. Jackson and Hanh both secretly plan to kill everyone else in on the con, so they don't have to split their earnings. Then they intend to steal all the winnings at the table and escape the settlement before anyone realizes what happened.

Playing Cards. Once the game begins, Mac and PCs play through three rounds of a card game—poker or another game of your choosing. The starting bet for each hand is 20 caps per player. After putting in their caps, a PC rolls  equal to their Luck to represent the quality of their hand.

Each round, a PC chooses to call the bet, raise the bet, or fold their hand. They can make one **LCK + Speech** test with a difficulty of 2 to bluff or intimidate another player. On a success, they convince another card player to fold their hand. No matter the result, Nguyen cannot be forced to fold her hand.

The other players act accordingly:

- **First Round.** Ivey raises the bet 20 caps, and all the other players call the bet.
- **Second Round.** Ivey raises the bet 30 caps, and all the other players call the bet. Mac folds their hand, but the other remaining players call the bet.
- **Third Round.** Nguyen nervously raises the bet 50 caps. The remaining players call the bet, but Ivey is very angry about it.

Intercepting the Robbers Outside. At any point between rounds of the game, a PC outside can make a **PER + Stealth** test with a difficulty of 3 to spot the robbers hiding nearby. On a success, a PC can spend AP to Obtain Information. Some things the PCs can learn include:

- Five robbers hide behind a snow drift near the gambling tent, ready to take the players by surprise.
- The robbers wear winter camouflage overtop well-made combat armor. Black bandanas cover their faces so they cannot be recognized. Each robber holds a loaded double-barrel shotgun in their hands.
- One of the robbers hides a little closer to the tent, their head cocked as though they are listening for a signal.

If a PC attempts to ambush the robbers before the end of the third round of the game, they must get closer without being seen. If they succeed on an **AGI + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 3, the robbers do not notice them, and the PC can make a **surprise attack**.

If the PCs' approach is spotted, the robbers immediately run into the gambling tent and attempt to pull off their con before they can be intercepted. If the PCs fail to spot the robbers entirely, they wait for Nguyen's signal (see *The Blow-Off*).

Robber

Level 6, Human,
Normal Character (45 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
6	6	6	5	5	6	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	1	Small Guns	5
Barter	1	Sneak	2
Melee Weapons	4	Survival	2

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
12	12	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
210 lbs.	-	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
3(Arms, Legs, Torso)	3(Arms, Legs, Torso)	0	0

ATTACKS

- **MACHETE: STR + Melee** (TN 10), 4 Piercing Physical damage
- **DOUBLE-BARRELED SHOTGUN: AGI+ Small Guns** (TN 11), 6 Spread, Vicious Physical damage, Range C, Inaccurate Two-Handed

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **DOUBLE-TAP:** Once per combat, the robber can spend a major action to make two attacks with their shotgun against the same target without spending AP or increasing the difficulty of the second attack.

INVENTORY

Heavy Raider Chest Piece, Heavy Raider Leg x2, Heavy Raider Arm x2, Double-Barreled Shotgun, Machete, 6+3 Shotgun Shells, Wealth 1

Resolving the Game. If the masked robbers become intercepted before reaching the tent, Jackson and Nguyen look around nervously at the sound of fighting outside. Still, the card game warily continues unless it becomes interrupted by the PCs or robbers. After all, gunfire isn't uncommon in the Wasteland; as long as the bullets aren't *too* close by, nobody wants to interrupt the game.

The con is foiled, and the game resolves after the third hand. Any PCs or NPCs who did not fold reveal their hands. Roll for each NPC who did not fold to compare the quality of their hands with PCs' previous results. Ivey rolls 5, Nguyen rolls 7, and Doyle rolls 8. The winner is the character with the highest result, and they take the full sum of what was bet. On a tie, winnings are split evenly between the winners.

After the hand, Ivey angrily storms out of the tent (even if he won), ranting about dirty-rotten cheaters. Nguyen, her con foiled, discreetly exits. Jackson then smiles and shrugs before stating that it looks like the games will be ending early. He packs up his things, Doyle says farewell, and the gamblers all begin to depart. Mac appears relieved. Proceed to *The Fallout*.

THE BLOW-OFF

After the third round of betting, but before hands are revealed, Jackson Quint "accidentally" bumps into Nguyen, seated to their right. Nguyen plans to let out an angry yelp and briefly argues with Jackson until they apologize. The yelp is meant to alert the robbers approaching outside that the table stakes are high and it's time to make the blow-off.

If the PCs outside did not keep the five masked robbers from entering, they charge into the tent and flash their double-barrel shotguns. Jackson leaps up and attacks a robber, fighting for their gun. Nguyen points to the back flap of the tent and shouts for the other card players to make a run for it. If everything goes to plan and the card players flee, Jackson and Nguyen grab shotguns and betray their robber allies by murdering them. Nguyen then, cold-blooded, shoots Jackson in the back of the head, takes her ill-gotten gains, and flees from the settlement.

If the PCs intervene or make a move for the bets on the table, Jackson and Nguyen join the robbers in trying to kill them before they betray each other—use the Robber stat block for Jackson and Nguyen. After one round of combat, Nguyen attempts to steal whatever she can and flee during the commotion. When all the robbers are defeated, proceed to *The Fallout*.

THE FALLOUT

When the local settlement guards arrive on the scene having heard the sounds of fighting, they demand the PCs explain the violence. To convince the locals of their side of the story, a PC must make a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty equal to 6 minus their settlement reputation. If they succeed on their test, add a positive influence to the PCs' next reputation test for the settlement. If they fail their test, reduce their settlement reputation by 1. If their reputation is reduced to 0, the local guards either become hostile or exile them from the settlement.

This quest has the following outcomes:

- **The Robbery Stopped.** If PCs stopped the robbers from stealing the game's earnings, Mac returns any caps lost betting to the PC who played the game. Regardless of the game's results, Mac then pays the PCs an additional 200 caps and gives one of them an antique silver watch (that still runs!) worth 100 caps. Mac may not have been a winner, but they are grateful to be alive—and there's always a next game. PCs may run into Mac in the future and be invited to less violent high-stakes card games.
- **Ace In the Bullet Hole.** If the PCs kept their composure, minimized the spread of violence, and exposed the con job, Doyle Negreanu is impressed with their skills. The formidable gunslinger shakes hands and states that he hopes to see them around again—and indeed, he proves friendly if their paths cross again, as long as the PCs stay on the up-and-up. Doyle Negreanu can show up at a dramatically-appropriate moment, six-shooters blazing— or act as a mentor for a PC who wants to develop better gunfighting skills.
- **Nguyen Got Away.** If Nguyen manages to escape the settlement, she does not get far. A unit of Children of Atom soldiers captures her, then tortures her for information about the settlement's defenses. Add 6 AP to the GM's pool. PCs find Nguyen's corpse in the snow the next time they travel, her skin scarred with severe radiation burns. Nguyen still has any stolen caps on her body—money means nothing in the future world being built by the Last Son of Atom.

SCENE TWO: SIGNS COALESCING

Begin this scene when the gigapede attacks its next target, and the PCs are nearby. Describe the environment around the group, noting other characters, defenses, weather, and other preparations. Then read or paraphrase the following:

> *A deafening explosion of gunfire signals the arrival of the Children of Atom. A moment later, the ground shakes, and the gigapede bursts forth once more with a mighty crash. This time, the Children of Atom approach behind the monster, using the gigapede for cover while they take aimed shots at the settlement's defenders. One soldier stays close to the enormous mutant creature, unharmed despite his proximity.*
>
> *As the gigapede and soldiers charge to attack the settlement, the monster rises from the shattered earth around its burrow, stretching forty feet into the air. It sprays a wide arc of radioactive bile across the snow with another quaking roar, melting the flesh from a fleeing settler.*

Give PCs just enough time to move or react to the approaching enemies before the settlement comes under attack. Consider the battle zones and determine the PCs' starting range from their enemies.

ENCOUNTER-2A: THE GIGAPEDE RETURNS

Add 2 AP to the GM's pool at the start of this encounter. Allow PCs a turn or two between facing different groups of enemies to heal, reposition themselves, and prepare for the next fight.

The gigapede attacks the settlement (see *Staging the Gigapede Attacks*, p.160) with a sizeable force of Children of Atom soldiers and reprogrammed Protectrons. In this second attack, unless noted

otherwise in *Staging the Gigapede Attacks*, the Children's goal is to eradicate the targeted settlement and take any captives who surrender to be indoctrinated into the Last Son of Atom's cult.

The community's defenders face a variety of the Church's forces in the battle's background. If the PCs join the fight, in addition to the gigapede, they must contend directly with three groups of enemies attacking different areas of the settlement:

- Five Children of Atom Soldiers (see Profile across) kill settlers indiscriminately.
- Two groups of 5 Children of Atom Protectrons each hunt the PCs, programmed to kill them.
- A group of 5 Children of Atom Fanatics (see p.177) and a Children of Atom Handler guard the gigapede while it trashes the settlement's infrastructure.

If the PCs prepared the settlement's defenses well or rallied enough strong allies, reward them by narrating how their preparations remove one of the three enemy groups from the battle.

The Gigapede. During the battle, the gigapede attacks defenses and vulnerable structures, destroying them and leaving them uninhabitable. If the gigapede takes damage, it rampages on its next turn, attacking nearby PCs or settlers.

The Gigapede's Handler. The gigapede's handler directs the monster during the battle. A PC who observes or attacks the handler can make a **PER + Speech or Survival** test with a difficulty of 2 without spending an action. If they succeed, they notice the handler uses hand signals to communicate with the monster.

If the handler is defeated, the gigapede rampages—turning all its attacks against the responsible character until the battle ends. While it rampages, the difficulty of attacks against it is reduced by 1 (to a minimum of 0).

Children of Atom Soldier

Level 8, Human,
Normal Character (60 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
8	5	6	5	5	5	5

SKILLS			
Athletics	2	Small Guns	3
Barter	1	Sneak	2
Energy Weapons	3	Speech	1
Melee Weapons	3	Survival	2

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
14	10	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
230 lbs.	+1	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	2(Arms, Legs, Torso)	3(All)	0

ATTACKS

- **MACHETE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 11), 4 Piercing Physical damage
- **PIPE BOLT-ACTION: AGI+ Small Guns** (TN 8), 5 Piercing Physical damage, Unreliable, Range Close

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **RAD RESISTANT:** The soldier can survive moderate radioactivity for prolonged periods. They have Radiation DR 3.

INVENTORY

Leather Chest Piece, Leather Arm, Leather Leg, Tough Clothing, Machete, Pipe Bolt-Action, 2d20 .308 rounds, Wealth 1

Children of Atom Protectron

Level 9, Robot,
Minion Creature (22 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
7	6	4	4	2

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
1	13	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
4(All)	3(All)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **ARM LASERS: Body + Guns** (TN 11), 5 Energy damage, Piercing 1, Range C
- **CRUSH, KILL, DESTROY: Body + Melee** (TN 11) 5 Physical damage, Burst

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The Protectron is immune to Poison and Radiation damage and their effects. Also, they are immune to all diseases.
- **FINAL GLORIOUS DIVISION:** When the Protectron is defeated, it explodes, showering the nearby area with its fusion core's radiation. All creatures within Reach range take 5 Radiation damage.



Children of Atom Fanatic

Level 9, Human,
Minion Character (22 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
7	6	6	5	5	7	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	2	Sneak	4
Melee Weapons	4	Speech	2
Small Guns	4	Survival	2

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
1	13	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
220 lbs.	+1	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
3(Head, Arms, Legs, Torso)	4(Head, Arms, Legs, Torso)	Immune	0

ATTACKS

- **COMBAT SHOTGUN: AGI+ Small Guns** (TN 11), 5 Physical damage, Spread 1, Range C, Inaccurate, Two-Handed
- **HEATED SUPER SLEDGE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 11), 5 Energy damage, Piercing 1, Two-Handed

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The fanatic is immune to Radiation damage and its effects.
- **MARTYR FOR THE CAUSE:** If an attack targets an ally within Close range, you can spend 1 AP to allow the fanatic to push them out of the way and become the target instead.

INVENTORY

Cage Armor, Heated Super Sledge, Combat Shotgun, 5 shotgun ammo

Resolving the Battle. This time, the Church's forces do not flee and fight to the death. The gigapede escapes when all the Church's other forces are defeated or when it is reduced to half or fewer HP. It flees by burrowing far beneath the earth and collapsing the tunnel behind it.

Should the PCs be defeated, they may escape, but the settlement will be left a ruin—its survivors captured or scattered to the wind.

If the PCs defeat the Church's forces, their settlement reputation rank for the community they defended increases by 1. If they managed to wound the gigapede enough to force it to flee—or if they managed to save essential structures or settlers during the battle—increase their settlement reputation by an additional 1.

Oops We Killed It!

With excellent preparation and a bit of luck, the PCs might manage to kill the gigapede before it can escape. While killing the gigapede in this encounter is a cause to celebrate, the Children of Atom continue with their next attack against a settlement. Replace the gigapede with a group of five radscorpions (see ***Fallout: The Roleplaying Game*** *Core Rulebook, Chapter 10: Denizens of the Wasteland)* to spearhead their terror campaign.

Any Children of Atom survivors act like caged animals if captured. They say little other than that the Day of Division is nigh, and the Commonwealth will soon see the Last Son of Atom's great army fully unleashed in one final battle. In the aftermath of the latest battle, the PCs must rally defenders and do whatever it takes to slay the gigapede and defeat the Atomites' army.

The Final Target

Refer to Staging the Gigapede Attacks (p.160) to choose the gigapede's third target. Decide how long the PCs have before the attack occurs—one week is recommended to allow them to travel and rally allies for a final battle. You can shorten the time to put PCs under more pressure or extend it to give them more time to prepare and finish side quests.

Two days after the recent battle, the PCs overhear a message that reveals the location and time of the next attack. The PCs may proactively learn the information sooner by spying on a Church stronghold, interrogating a prisoner, or completing a side quest of your invention. Otherwise, you can reveal the information to PCs—they stumble across a dead Atomite gripping a radio that transmits the Church's plans.

PREPARING FOR THE UPCOMING BATTLE

With the clock ticking down before the final battle, the PCs must carefully plan what to do with the little time they have left. They may travel, gather resources, pursue side quests, spend time with loved ones, or attempt to learn more sign language to aid them against the gigapede. Attempts to hunt down enemy cells only reveal that they are spread throughout the Commonwealth and plan to siege the target settlement from all sides.

Encourage PCs to rally their allies to help them in the upcoming battle. Any settlement for which they have a settlement reputation rank of 4 or higher will send aid. Allow PCs to send messengers on their behalf to rally allies if they wish to spend their time pursuing other goals.

Once the PCs arrive at the battle site, they may again prepare defenses if they have time before the gigapede attacks. If they requested specific resources from settlements willing to aid, they get what they asked for within reason. Allow them to think outside the box and reward successful efforts during Scene Three: Showdown by distracting enemies or saving a PC's life in a critical moment.

When the gigapede and Church's forces attack the next settlement, proceed to *Scene Three: Showdown.*

Pick On Something Your Own Size!

PCs with a penchant for robotics might decide that if the Children of Atom are going to field a monster, they should counter it with a technological terror of their own! Building a large-scale synth or robot to fight the gigapede is a major undertaking—the PCs need to find enough parts, assemble or repair the robot, and load in an operating system that gives it battlefield control. Treat this as three separate tasks that must be completed in order, one at a time:

- Characters must spend twelve hours building a war robot frame. The PCs can repurpose defeated enemy robots, such as the Mister Gutsys from *Side Quest: We Need Bigger Guns* on p.169. Additionally, they must spend 9 Common Materials, 6 Uncommon Materials, and 3 Rare Materials.
- To make the frame's joints and motors function, a PC must work for four hours and then succeed on an **INT + Repair** test with a difficulty of 5.
- To program the robot's operating system controls, a PC must work for four hours and then succeed on an **INT + Science** test with a difficulty of 5.

If the PCs succeed at building their mega war bot, allow them to describe what it looks like and how it functions. The robot responds to the commands given to it by its operator during *Scene Three: Showdown*.



SIDE QUEST: HIGHER LEARNING

This quest becomes available after the PCs complete *Scene Two: Signs Coalescing*. **Add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

Once the PCs know that the Children use hand signals to control the gigapede, they might seek help decoding ASL. The gigapede's teacher, Minnie "Muse" Mabee, resides in Mirage, but the PCs might not have access to her or even know of her existence. If they ask Commonwealth NPCs about the language, at first, no one seems to have ever seen it before. After they inquire about it to at least three settlers who cannot help them, read or paraphrase the following:

> *A wandering merchant passes by, dressed in ragged clothes and struggling to pull along a rusty cart with a broken wheel. Sitting at the top of the cart's pile of useless junk lies a small collection of old-world books. The spine of one of the books faces outward, titled "A History of the Horace Mann School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing."*

The book does not decode ASL and is a complete bore to read, though it does provide information about the school. Located in the southwest of the Cambridge district, the school is an hour's walk from the Bunker Hill area. Even before the Great War, the institution was old; supposedly, many luminaries and accomplished peoples received a world-class education there centuries ago.

Traveling to the school's neighborhood is a 24-hour journey through wintery conditions. Locating the exact location of the building requires making tests with a difficulty of 3. PCs can make **INT + Survival** tests to use the details and faded pictures of the book to correlate location—or **CHA + Speech** tests to flag down passing scavengers and convince them to help them look. They find the building if they succeed on three tests before failing three times. Otherwise, they spend an entire day traveling, but their search proves fruitless, and they cannot try again until the next day.

From the outside, the three-story school ruins appear to be an unremarkable moldy building with no signage to indicate its original purpose.

Black Mold. The most dangerous thing in the school is an invisible enemy: mold. Tiny motes of the poisonous black mold cover everything inside. PCs wearing gas masks, power armor, or other filter systems are immune to this hazard, but other PCs not immune to poison risk health problems. For every ten minutes the PCs spend breathing the poisonous air they feel sick and take 1 Poison damage. Cleaning out the mold requires thoroughly sterilizing the building, a task requiring large amounts of chemicals and a total tear-down of the already unsound walls.

Searching the School. The interior is picked over by scavengers who found little but moldy books to hold their interest. Inside, the school is claustrophobic and quiet—filled with decayed books, cracked blackboards, and overturned desks. The PCs can make scavenging tests as per usual in the school. To do so, they must spend 30 minutes and make a group **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 2 with a complication range of 3 (18-20). If they succeed, they roll the minimum number of times for each loot table on the *Horace Mann School Scavenging Table*, and for each AP they spend they can roll an additional time on a loot table (up to the maximum.) For each complication rolled, unprotected PCs take 3 Poison damage from the black mold spores.

HORACE MANN SCHOOL SCAVENGING TABLE

LOOT TABLE	NUMBER OF ROLLS
Clothing	1-4
Oddities	2-5
Food	1-4
Beverages	1-4
Junk	2d20

Anyone searching the top floor finds a busted stairwell leading to the attic. In the moldy attic lies an old signing robot once used as a teaching tool. The robot functions like a very primitive synth, clearly artificial, with a layer of decayed rubber skin and a pair of hands and arms but no legs. It requires an E-cell or similar power source to become operational again. The PCs can easily transport the robot with them away from the school.

The rudimentary teaching robot has no personality. It uses a small screen on its chest to project a picture indicating the American Sign Language word it teaches; for instance, it displays a picture of someone eating when it teaches the sign for "to eat." Each time a PC spends a total of eight hours studying the robot, they can make an **INT + Speech** test with a difficulty of 3. On a success, they gain partial competence in American Sign Language—enough to recognize and repeat a few simple words, including some commands they recognize the Children of Atom handlers used previously. They can spend AP to Obtain Information to learn specific words at their request, if they feel they are important to know for their quest. The robot can't teach well enough to provide full fluency; that requires help from a better teacher, like Minnie.

Catching Sludge Lung. Upon leaving the school, PCs exposed to its black mold must make an **END + Survival** test with a difficulty of 4. On a failure, they become inflicted with the Sludge Lung disease (see ***Fallout*: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook*, *Chapter 5: Survival***)—they gain 1 Fatigue and, until they recover, can only store AP in the group's pool if the pool contains 3 or fewer AP.

THE FALLOUT

This quest has the following outcomes:

- **Learned to Sign a Little.** By studying with the robot, the PCs can gain rudimentary competence in sign language, understanding a few simple signs like "go," "stop," "eat," and "rest." They can attempt to give the gigapede orders, but their limited knowledge increases the difficulty of their tests by 1. If they manage to tame the gigapede during *Scene Three: Showdown* and continue to study ASL, they can eventually communicate with it enough to befriend it long-term.
- **Made a New Robot Friend.** If the PCs take the teaching robot with them, it mysteriously begins to form a unique personality after three days. The first sign that it is becoming self-aware comes when it uses ASL to ask a PC who understands it whether or not it has a soul. Depending on how PCs answer—or ignore—its many questions, the robot develops a personality that could be friendly, curious, murderous, or greedy. It can communicate but

cannot take actions unless the PCs find a means to transfer its robotic brain into a new body.

- **Noticed by Desperate Travelers.** When the PCs leave the school, a small group of freezing travelers from a settlement of your choice spots them. Unless the PCs warn the travelers about the mold inside, the group decides to seek shelter from the elements inside the dilapidated building. Unfortunately, the survivors have no defense against the black mold and begin to suffer from fever and coughing the next day. The healthiest survivor hunts down the PCs to ask for their help. A PC can diagnose Sludge Lung with an **INT or PER + Medicine** test with a difficulty of 2. The sick settlers won't survive the journey home without the PCs' help. If the characters spend a day helping travelers return to their settlement, the survivors relate the location of an old recycling dump site 12-hours travel away. The PCs can scavenge the site by spending two hours and making a group **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 2 to scavenge.

OLD RECYCLING DUMP SCAVENGING TABLE

LOOT TABLE	NUMBER OF ROLLS
Armor	2-4
Beverages	1-2
Chems	2-5
Clothing	3-5
Junk	5d20

Gigapede

Level 18, Mutated Centipede, Legendary Character (390 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
12	9	3	–	2

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
90	21	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
7 (Arms, Legs, Torso), 5 (Head)	5 (Arms, Legs, Torso), 3 (Head)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **MANDIBLES: Body + Melee** (TN 15), 10 Piercing, Debilitating Physical damage
- **CAUSTIC RADIO-SPITTLE: Body + Melee** (TN 14), 6 Radioactive, Burst Poison damage, Range M

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The gigapede is immune to Radiation and Poison damage and their effects.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **MONSTROUS:** When the gigapede misses with an attack, it immediately makes the same attack as a free action without increasing the test's difficulty. The new attack must target a creature in the same Range that it has not attacked yet this turn. Additionally, it only suffers a Critical Hit if an attack inflicts 14+ damage (after damage resistance) in a single hit, rather than the normal 5+.
- **TOSS:** When the gigapede hits a creature with its mandibles, you can spend 2 AP to throw them up to Medium range away from the gigapede, inflicting 3 Stun Physical damage.
- **BURROW:** The gigapede can tunnel under the ground to strike at attackers. Burrowing into the ground takes a major action, and while burrowing, the gigapede is not visible and cannot be targeted by attacks. It burrows two zones as a major action, moving underneath existing zones. When the gigapede emerges from the ground with a minor action, it inflicts +2 on all attacks until the end of its turn.

INVENTORY

BUTCHERY: Butchering the gigapede's corpse requires an END + Survival test with a difficulty of 1. A success yields 4 portions of gigapede meat (comparable to Queen Mirelurk meat). If the test results in at least one Effect, butchery also produces 4+4 Uncommon Materials and 2+2 Rare Materials.



SCENE THREE: SHOWDOWN

Begin this scene when the Last Son of Atom's army attacks with the gigapede (or radscorpions if the gigapede is dead), and the PCs are nearby. Describe the environment around the group, noting other characters, defenses, weather, and other preparations. Then read or paraphrase the following:

The winter stillness breaks with the sudden shout of "Contact! They're here!" A moment later, the roar of gunfire rips through the air, followed by the ground tearing open as the gigapede rises. The large Children of Atom army charges from all directions. The Atomites' booted feet crunch heavily over blankets of green-glowing snow—the Last Son of Atom's soldiers do not fear the snow's radioactivity.

The settlements' defenders crouch behind cover and cry out the enemy's advancing positions. In the moments before the battle begins, hot breath in the cold air forms steam clouds that give away peoples' positions. The chaos makes it difficult to tell friend from foe.

The oncoming hordes of Atomites seem endless. Defenders grow grim, realizing how outnumbered they are. The Children of Atom charge with their fully committed forces, wave after wave, meaning to crash over the settlement like a frozen hurricane. Stories of old battles come to mind—the Battle of Anchorage, perhaps, with armored troopers advancing through the snow.

Truly, it seems, war never changes.

Give PCs just enough time to move or react to the approaching enemies before the settlement comes under attack. Consider the battle zones, any allied settlements that sent help, and determine the PCs' starting range from their enemies.

ENCOUNTER-3A: THE FINAL BATTLE

Add 4 AP to the GM's pool at the start of this encounter. Allow PCs a turn or two between facing different groups of enemies to heal, reposition themselves, and prepare for the next fight.

The gigapede attacks the settlement (see *Staging the Gigapede Attacks*, p.160) with most of the Last Son's remaining forces. The soldiers believe their sacrifice will help usher in the Day of Division. Their goal is to destroy the settlement and any who still choose to look away from Atom's Glow.

The community's defenders face a variety of the Church's forces in the battle's background. If the PCs join the fight, in addition to the gigapede, they must contend directly with five groups of enemies attacking different areas of the settlement:

- A group of 5 Children of Atom Protectrons (see p.177), led by a Church of Atom Sentry Bot (see p.184), flank the settlement to provide deadly cover fire against defenders.
- 3 Children of Atom Shock Troopers (see p.185) stalk the battlefield, looking for the most opportune moment to ambush the PCs. They make strategic use of Flashbang Grenades.
- A group of 5 Children of Atom Fanatics (see p.177), led by a Church of Atom Shock Trooper (see p.185), charge the settlement head-on.
- Two groups of 5 Children of Atom Fanatics (see p.177) each attempt to sneak into the settlement to set fires and attack the defenseless.
- A group of 5 Children of Atom Fanatics (see p.177) and 2 Children of Atom Handlers (see p.186) guard the gigapede while it trashes the settlement's infrastructure.

Heavily irradiated snow blankets all outdoor areas surrounding the battlefield. If a character ends their turn amidst the hazard, they take 2 Vicious Radiation damage.

The Gigapede. During the battle, the gigapede attacks defenses and vulnerable structures, destroying them and leaving them uninhabitable. If the gigapede takes damage, it rampages on its next turn, attacking nearby PCs or settlers.

After the gigapede's handlers are defeated, if any of the PCs learned American Sign Language, they can use a major action to attempt to influence the monster. To do so, they must make a **CHA or INT + Speech or Survival** test with a difficulty of 3. On a failure, it attacks them on its next turn. On a success, they can give it a simple command to follow on its next turn. After three successful tests, they tame the gigapede and no longer need to make tests to issue orders.

The Gigapede's Handers. The gigapede's two handlers direct the monster during the battle. If the handlers are defeated, the gigapede rampages—attacking any enemy or structure nearest to it until the battle ends. While it rampages, the difficulty of attacks against it are reduced by 1 (to a minimum of 0).

Unleashing a War Bot. If PCs built a giant war bot after the previous battle, its operator can use a major action to command it—allowing it to make a significant one-time impact. If it attacks an enemy group opposing the PCs, it automatically defeats 8 enemies within Medium range but cannot harm the gigapede. If it instead engages the gigapede in an epic fight, reduce the gigapede's current HP by half (rounding up). Let the PC operating the robot narrate its epic intervention, then describe its last stand as it is overwhelmed and destroyed by Atomite soldiers or the gigapede.

Rallying the Commonwealth. Inform PCs they can summon aid from allies—settlements with reputation rank 4 or higher—who responded to their request for help during the final battle. To do so, they must use a major action to Rally and then spend 3 AP. If they do, allow the player to narrate a flashback scene showing how their PC and an allied settlement's group prepared a trap or plan that helps them at this moment. Alternatively, narrate how one of the PCs' allied settlements swoops in just in time to save the day.

Each allied settlement can only aid this way once during the encounter. They automatically defeat 6 enemies within Medium range to the rallying PC but cannot harm the sentry bot or gigapede. If the rallying allies instead target the sentry bot or gigapede, they inflict 12 Piercing Physical or Energy damage. Afterward, describe the allies disappearing into the battle background or becoming injured or killed by the Atomite's forces.

Some ways different settlements might aid the PCs include the following:

- **Beatsville.** The artists turn most of their remaining art supplies into colorful explosives of paint, confetti, and shrapnel—hanging up their pacifist beliefs to put on one bloody brilliant show.
- **Big Top.** The Freeques set up trapeze swings and tightropes between structures or natural geography, waiting for the right moment to swing overhead and rain fire from above.
- **Diamond City.** Three Diamond City resident baseball nuts pop out of cover to hurl baseball grenades, getting incredible range and striking out the opposition.
- **Goodneighbor.** A squad of Neighborhood Watch gunmen heavily dosed with psycho bust through a nearby wall or out of the ice itself, surprising the enemy with barbed machetes, submachine guns, and chem-induced ferocity.
- **Mechminster Abbey.** The Sisters deploy one of their secret weapons: Sister Amos Nition wearing T-51b power armor, swinging her super sledge like a madwoman.
- **Mirage.** Hidden beneath a large snowy blanket until the right moment, the roaming fortress's brahmin stampede forward, pulling the entire fortress across an enemy formation and crushing it under the full weight of the gambling den.

Children of Atom Sentry Bot

Level 15, Robot, Mighty Creature (219 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
12	6	3	3	3

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
52	18	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
6(All)	5(All)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **ATOMIC CHAIN GUN: Body + Guns** (TN 15), 8 Piercing, Radioactive Physical damage, Burst, Range Medium
- **UNARMED: Body + Melee** (TN 15), 8 Vicious Physical damage
- **SELF-DESTRUCT: Body + Melee** (TN 15), 12 Physical damage, Blast, Range Reach

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The Sentry Bot is immune to Poison and Radiation damage and their effects. Also, they are immune to all diseases.
- **KEEN SENSE:** The Sentry Bot can attempt to detect creatures or objects by reducing the difficulty of PER tests by 1 (to a minimum of 0).
- **AGGRESSIVE:** When the Sentry Bot enters a scene, it generates 1 AP for the group pool or GM—depending on the bot's current loyalty.
- **NO PLACE LIKE ROBOT HEAVEN:** The Sentry Bot's reprogramming by the Children of Atom makes it resilient to hacking. Attempts to hack or reprogram it require an INT + Science test with a difficulty of 4.
- **SELF-DESTRUCT:** If both the Sentry Bot's arms are injured—or if it is reduced to 26 HP or fewer—it moves to the nearest enemy and uses its major action to self-destruct on its next turn. The attack is centered on itself and destroys the Sentry Bot.

INVENTORY

- **SALVAGE:** Scavengers can salvage from a destroyed Sentry Bot by making an INT + Science test with a difficulty of 1. A success yields a fusion core and 3 units of Rare Materials.

Children of Atom Shock Trooper

Level 8, Human,
Notable Character (120 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
9	8	8	5	5	7	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	4	Survival	2
Energy Weapons	4	Throwing	4
Melee Weapons	4		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
20	17	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
230 lbs.	+2	2

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
3(Head, Arms, Legs, Torso)	4(Head, Arms, Legs, Torso)	Immune	0

ATTACKS

- **AGITATED RECOIL COMPENSATED PLASMA GUN: PER+ Energy Weapons** (TN 12), 7 Vicious Physical/Energy damage, Fire Rate 2, Range C, Close Quarters, Two-Handed
- **CURVED RIPPER: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 14), 7 Piercing, Vicious Physical damage, and you can spend 2 AP to disarm the target, knocking one held weapon away
- **FLASHBANG GRENADE: AGI + Throwing** (TN 11), 3 Persistent, Stun Poison damage, Blast, Thrown (M)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **RAD RESISTANT:** The Child of Atom can survive moderately high radioactivity for prolonged periods. It has Radiation DR 5.
- **SHOCK TROOPER:** The shock trooper gains the Close Quarters quality with all ranged weapons and the Piercing effect with all melee weapons.

INVENTORY

Reinforced Heavy Combat Armor (Helmet, Chest Piece, 2x Leg, 2x Arm), Curved Ripper, Agitated Recoil Compensated Plasma Rifles, 10+5 Plasma Cartridges, 2+1 Flashbang Grenades, Wealth 1

Flashbang Grenade

WEAPON NAME	WEAPON TYPE	DAMAGE RATING	DAMAGE EFFECTS	DAMAGE TYPE	QUALITIES	WEIGHT	COST	RARITY
Flashbang Grenade	Explosive	3	Persistent, Stun	Poison	Blast, Thrown (M)	1	50	2

A flashbang grenade consists of several reagents housed within a narrow casing. The chemical reaction creates bright light and a loud sound that can cause temporary blindness, hearing loss, and a loss of balance. Flashbangs are less lethal than other grenades, designed to disable combatants.

Special: Creatures that wear full protective covering over their head (such as a combat helmet) or are immune to Poison damage are unaffected by flashbang grenades' damage and effects. When a creature suffers from a flashbang grenade's Persistent effect, their senses become disoriented. Increase the difficulty of tests that rely on sight or sound by 1 until Persistent ends.

Children of Atom Handler

Level 6, Human,
Notable Character (90 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
5	6	6	9	6	7	6

SKILLS			
Barter	1	Sneak	1
Energy Weapons	3	Speech	5
Medicine	3	Survival	4
Repair	1		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
18	15	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
200 lbs.	-	3

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	5	0

ATTACKS

- **GAMMA GUN: PER + Energy Weapons** (TN 9), 3 Piercing, Stun Radiation damage, Range M, Blast, Inaccurate

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **RAD RESISTANT:** The Child of Atom can survive moderately high radioactivity for prolonged periods. It has Radiation DR 5.
- **GIGAPEDE WHISPERER:** When the handler takes the Rally action using CHA + Speech to generate AP for the GM's pool, they can also communicate with the gigapede using American Sign Language. The handler can give the gigapede a direct order, which it obeys on its next turn.

INVENTORY

Tough Clothing, Gamma Gun, 2d20 Gamma Rounds, Wealth 1

Losing the Battle. Should the PCs be defeated, they may escape. Add 6 AP to the GM's pool. As they flee, the Sisters of the Forge arrive to save the day with a great sacrifice if they were not already present. If Sister Guyger finished building her anti-radiation gun, the sisters roll it into range to unleash it on the gigapede, stunning it. The Reverend Riveter runs forth with a primed mini nuke strapped to her chest, determined to sacrifice herself to save others. When the gigapede recovers, it turns and dives, devouring the leader of Mechminster Abbey. A moment later, the nuke detonates, blowing the monster to bits from the inside.

The explosion causes the gigapede's radioactive goo to spray for hundreds of yards, covering the nearby region and remaining survivors. The extreme radiation leaves the settlement inhospitable and likely spells death for many of the exposed NPCs. If any Children remain on the battlefield, they do not linger. They immediately retreat to the Glowing Sea and reunite with their prophet (see *Chapter 4: The Day of Division*).

Winning the Battle. The Last Son of Atom's army makes a desperate last stand, intending to destroy their enemies or become battle martyrs. PCs cannot win the battle until every Atomite is defeated and the gigapede is either slain or tamed.



Regardless of the outcome, narrate the devastation left behind by the Children of Atom's vicious assault, emphasizing what was lost and what was saved during the battle. Then read or paraphrase the following:

> *The Children of Atom's murderous assault against the Commonwealth has ended at last. Their unstoppable gigapede no longer poses a threat to the survival of the people of the Boston ruins. In a surprising turn, the settlements are safe—for now.*
>
> *But the frozen faces of the dead remain fallen in radioactive ice, and the moans of the wounded carry on the freezing wind. War never changes. And though the promise of spring grows ever nearer, few folks in the Commonwealth believe that this winter war is over.*
>
> *Somewhere, out there in the wastes, a prophet toils to bring about the Day of Division. The Last Son of Atom has yet to finish his divine work.*

Allow the PCs the opportunity to regroup, check on survivors, mourn the dead, and loot the bodies. Then proceed to *The Fallout*.

THE FALLOUT

The PCs complete ***Main Quest: A Thousand Feet of Terror*** when they survive the final Atomite attack. Recovering from the carnage may take a while, depending on the extent of the damage. However, for now, the Commonwealth is safe.

This quest has the following outcomes:

- **Restored Hope in the Commonwealth.** If the PCs won the final battle, many in the region feel hope again for the first time. Improve all **settlement outlooks** by one step. Additionally, they increase their settlement reputation rank by 2 for any settlement that aided during the final battle.
- **Dealt a Terrible Defeat.** If the PCs lost the final battle, causing the **Reverend Riveter** to sacrifice herself, they reduce their settlement reputation by 2 for any settlement that aided during the final battle. The surviving Sisters of the Forge abandon **Mechminster Abbey** and leave the Commonwealth. The settlement becomes overrun with frost feral ghouls and raiders looking for any loot the Sisters left behind. Additionally, the settlement attacked by the gigapede becomes uninhabitable, and its people scatter to the winds.
- **Taming the Gigapede.** If the PCs managed to tame the creature using American Sign Language, they can direct it away from vulnerable people to a natural abode. The creature is intelligent, philosophical, and even affectionate to those it trusts. However, it still loves the Last Son of Atom and is unwilling to betray him. Keeping the gigapede fed and healthy becomes an immediate issue. Without a massive source of radioactive meat to eat, the monster's scales grey, and it becomes sickly. It will not survive until spring without significant investment. Going out of their way to help the gigapede may cause the PCs to lose trust with settlements.

Possible next steps for the PCs include:

- Helping the Commonwealth recover from war
- Improving trust with settlements by completing side quests
- Recovering lost resources through scavenging, trading, crafting, and repair
- Searching for information on the Day of Division and the Last Son of Atom's whereabouts

Allow time to pass. The worst of winter ends. The Commonwealth rebuilds. The Children of Atom do not resurface. When you are ready to begin the final chapter, proceed to *Chapter 4: The Day of Division*.





★ *Chapter Four* ★

THE DAY OF DIVISION

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Chapter Four

THE DAY OF DIVISION

After the rampaging gigapede's demise, the Children of Atom retreat to their base in the Glowing Sea to pursue their secret agenda. As the long winter draws closer to spring, the player characters travel across the Commonwealth's deadliest stretch of wasteland and work with a peaceful sect of the Church of Atom to unearth a buried city that pre-dates recorded history. There, they must confront the Last Son of Atom before he can use the city's ancient technology to bring about the Day of Division.

RUNNING THIS CHAPTER

Before running your first session using this chapter, review this section and *Main Quest: Into the Glowing Sea*. Communicate to the players that they will reach a point of no return once they travel to the Glowing Sea. Should they return to the Commonwealth without confronting the Last Son of Atom, he succeeds in his mad goals (see *Main Quest: The Buried City, The Fallout,* p.235).

Refer to *Traversing the Glowing Sea,* p.192 when the PCs explore the Glowing Sea to search for the Crater of Atom or Whately Research Facility. **Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook***, *Chapter 8: The Commonwealth* contains other ideas for locations and side quests in the Glowing Sea you can use when running this chapter.

As the climactic finale of *Winter of Atom*, this chapter's main quests and epilogues present several opportunities to revisit previous NPCs and plotlines. Make those moments feel satisfying and significant. A great *Fallout* quest allows PCs to witness the impact their actions make on the world.

As this chapter advances, events become increasingly supernatural and unexplainable. Avoid defining hard truths about the nature of the PCs' visions and the ruins beneath Whately Research Facility. Haunt the PCs with terrifying possibilities and allow them to decide what they believe to be true. Cosmic horror is best when its mysteries entice players to dig deeper—but its biggest existential questions should never be answered entirely.

LEVELING UP

The PCs should ideally reach level 12 or 13 before they travel to the Glowing Sea during the first main quest of the chapter. Encourage PCs to prepare for their journey, complete side quests, and aid the Commonwealth settlements before continuing. They should ideally achieve level 14 or 15 before beginning *Main Quest: The Buried City*.

PCs may level up using experience points, or you can decide when they advance. Suggestions for good benchmarks in this chapter for PCs to level up include:

- Whenever the PCs complete one of the chapter's two main quests
- If the PCs complete all the side quests in the Crater of Atom settlement
- If the PCs slay Sister Dawn

THE CRATER OF ATOM

The Crater of Atom was ground zero for a nuclear explosion that demolished Massachusetts and created the region known as the Glowing Sea—a perpetual radiation cloud resulting in deadly toxic storms that wreak havoc on the rest of the Commonwealth. Reaching the crater is treacherous due to extreme radioactivity and prowling mutated beasts. The green aura within the crater glows brightly, visible across the Commonwealth, particularly at night.

MOTHER ISOLDE'S SECT

The Crater of Atom is home to a small group of members of the Church of Atom immune to its radiation. Led by Mother Isolde, the community has lost many of its members to the Last Son of Atom's influence. He attempted to convince her to join his sect of the Church, but she rejected him and exiled him from the settlement. Isolde considers him a heretic and false prophet, leading the Children astray with promises of awakening Atom and opening gateways to other universes.

Isolde fears the Last Son will use Whately Research Facility's blasphemous stockpile of chemical weapons against her sect and his other enemies. Her sect is non-violent, and they worry that there will never be peace in the Commonwealth so long as the Last Son lives.

WHATELY RESEARCH FACILITY

A blast door beneath a ruined Catholic church in the Glowing Sea hides an ancient secret—Whately Research Facility, an underground pre-war military bunker officially built to support the government's top-secret chemical weapon experiments. The facility was overseen by General John Whately, whose famously wealthy military family first came to America aboard the Mayflower in 1620. For generations, the Whately family believed an ancient city pre-dating recorded history was located far below the earth near Boston. They preached that a Dreaming God slept within the holy city, waiting for a chosen messiah to wake him so he might reveal his divinity to the world.

Unknown to the United States government, General Whately carefully selected his staff and brainwashed them to believe in his family's prophesized city. The facility became a place of dark deeds and strange religious rituals. In secret, Whately's cult managed to excavate tunnels far beneath the base. However, before they could finish digging their way to the ancient city in 2077, the nuclear bomb dropped outside Boston. The fallout buried the facility, and the staff trapped there did not survive the harrowing months that followed.

THE LAST SON OF ATOM'S SECT

The Last Son of Atom, a descendant of the Whately family, found the entrance to Whately Research Facility just before winter began. His congregation followed him there, making it their base of operations. Throughout winter, the Last Son finished the excavation work his ancestor began. He unearthed a small section of the prophesized city and began feverishly studying a strange crystalline device he professed to be Atom's Glow. When the prehistoric ruins proved to be highly radioactive, it only confirmed the Last Son's fevered belief—he is Atom's promised messiah, destined to awaken the Atomic God.

Activating the device's energy field has had a terrible effect on the minds of the Children of Atom residing at the facility. Unable to distinguish reality from hallucination, many of them have gone mad. The Last Son learned to control the device, resisting its effects by heavily dosing himself with an addictive chem mixture of *Berry Mentats*, *Ultra Jet*, and *X-Cell*. By integrating the device's technology into his custom suit of power armor, he prepares to return to the surface and bring enlightenment to the Wasteland. The Last Son believes the device allows people to travel to other universes created by Atom's Division. He plans to lead true believers to worlds of paradise—and banish heretics to nightmarish hells.



TRAVERSING THE GLOWING SEA

The Glowing Sea is a very different and far more dangerous region than the Commonwealth. When traveling through the highly irradiated wastes, use the guidelines and tables in this section in place of (or in addition to) the tools presented in *Chapter 1, Traversing the Commonwealth*. If you want to speed up travel, you can handwave as many guidelines as suits your table.

SURVIVING EXTREME RADIATION

Rather than calculating constant Radiation damage during the PCs' time in the Glowing Sea, communicate to them that surviving there for more than a few minutes requires strong protection against radiation. Give PCs time to prepare before *Main Quest: Into the Glowing Sea, Scene Two: Beloved Sister*.

Radiation damage resistance 5 or higher in all body locations is enough to protect a PC from extreme ambient radiation during travel. PCs might prepare by wearing **hazmat suits** that offer Radiation immunity but provide little protection against physical threats, bringing along a massive stash of Rad-X or RadAway chems, or by coming up with another plan suitable for your story.

Compromised Protection. PCs wearing armor or clothes that protect them from extreme ambient radiation might become vulnerable should they become compromised. When a PC takes Physical damage, the GM can spend 3 AP to compromise the piece of armor that was hit. While a piece of armor is compromised, a PC takes 3 Vicious Radiation damage at the end of each of their turns. At your discretion, damage that rolls a *Breaking* effect can also compromise a piece of armor.

A PC can spend a major action to attempt to patch compromised armor by succeeding on an **END or INT + Survival or Repair** test with a difficulty of 2. If they succeed, they must consume two Common Materials, one Uncommon or Rare Material, or a similar item that makes sense to patch the tear or break in their armor so that it is no longer compromised against Radiation damage.

NAVIGATION

You can use the rules *Traversing the Commonwealth* rules (see p.29) for treks across the deadly Glowing Sea. Modify the previous guidelines in the following ways, as detailed further in the next section:

- Navigation is more difficult in the region.
- The Strange Visions table replaces Journey Complications.
- The Glowing Sea uses its own Random Encounter and Scavenging tables.
- PCs can spend AP to generate opportunities or locations unique to the region.
- PCs are unlikely to receive campsite visitors except for Sister Dawn at the end of *Main Quest: Into the Glowing Sea, Scene Two: Beloved Sister.*

Navigation Quick Reference

Review the steps to **navigate the wasteland** and determine **travel pace** effects as follows:

- Choose a destination and set the navigation test difficulty.
  - The PCs decide who will lead the expedition (the navigator).
  - The navigator decides if the journey will be Cautious, Normal, or Hurried.
  - The navigator and their allies assemble the test's dice pool.
  - The navigator rolls the dice, and you determine the result.

Cautious Pace: Double the journey duration. Decrease the navigation test difficulty by 2. PCs cannot roll complications.

Normal Pace: Do not change the journey duration. Decrease the navigation test difficulty by 1 and set the complication Range to 2 (19-20).

Hurried Pace: Half the journey duration. Set the complication range to 4 (17-20).

Navigation tests **(END + Survival)** have a base difficulty of 6 in the Glowing Sea. AP cannot be spent to add dice to the test, though companions can still assist the navigator per usual. If the PCs have a knowledgeable guide, such as Brother Lucius, they make the test normally to determine what they encounter along the way—but reach their destination at the end of the journey even if the test fails.

You can reduce the navigation test's difficulty in the following ways:

- Decrease the difficulty as determined by travel pace.
- If the PCs received good directions, reduce the difficulty by 1.
- If the PCs have visited the location before, reduce the difficulty by 1.
- If the PCs spend 4 AP to find a hidden route, reduce the difficulty by 1.
- If the PCs already failed a navigation test to reach the location, reduce the difficulty by 2.

Navigation Success. For each complication rolled, add 2 AP to the GM's pool. Additionally, each PC who rolls a complication receives a **Strange Vision** during the journey from the Strange Vision table—you can reroll or make up your own to avoid repeats. The Last Son of Atom's use of the crystalline device beneath Whately Research Facility causes intense hallucinations in creatures roaming the region. Some strange visions involve the PCs witnessing creatures' bizarre behavior, while others are literal visions or hallucinations a character experiences themselves.

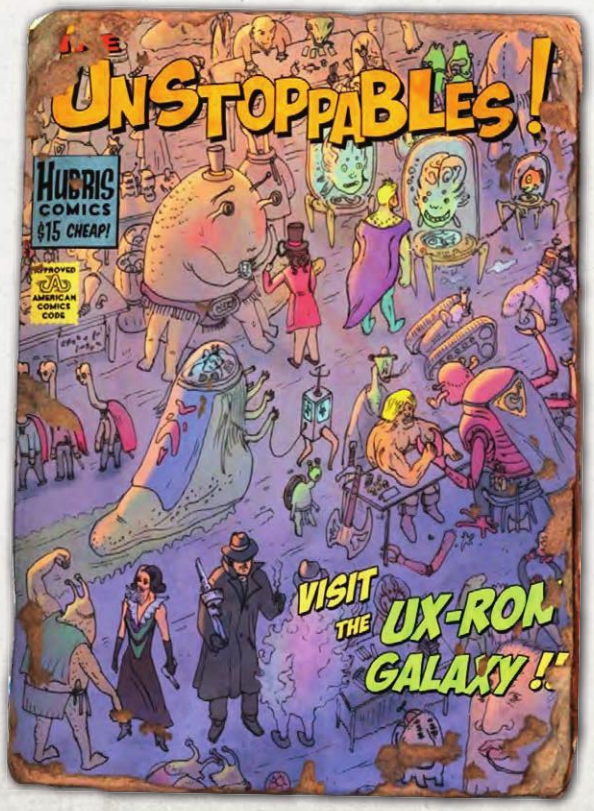
The PCs arrive at their destination once they resolve all strange visions. Adjust their Hunger, Thirst, and Fatigue levels from cold exposure based on the length of the trip and their preparations.

STRANGER VISIONS

1D20 ROLL	STRANGE VISIONS
1-2	A familiar acolyte of the Last Son of Atom lies face-up in a snowbank, shivering and convulsing. They whisper again and again, desperate to escape their eternal nightmare. *"I can't... get back... can't get back!"* No treatment seems to save them from their terror.
3-5	The PC sees someone important to them who died, following them through the ruins. If they seek out the ghost, they only find an icy skeleton. The corpse's skull turns towards them and speaks softly, *"I'm still here. Waiting for you in Atom's Glow."*
6-8	A deathclaw lies squirming in reptilian ecstasy, its mind trapped in a euphoric vision of an endless human banquet. It does not notice anyone else or attempt to defend itself.
9-10	The PC sees their companions as having transformed into feral ghouls, attempting to devour them. The effect lasts for one hour or until they become sedated with chems.
11-12	A large swarm of 40 bloodbugs buzz around a pool of highly irradiated water, stinging each other to death. If approached, the swarm flees in terror.
13-15	Until the PC rests, they see the world before the bombs dropped—full of people driving to work, close-knit families, and suburban homes with white picket fences.
16-18	Thirteen Glowing One ghouls gather around a ruin decorated with the holy symbol of the Last Son of Atom. They growl hungrily, stomping and dancing wildly around the symbol for ten minutes, unable to remove their eyes from it. Then, one at a time, the ghouls fall asleep.
19-20	The landscape seems to come alive, moving and speaking to the PC until they rest. Landmarks mostly complain about the weather, lack of company, and being used by monsters as egg nests. One grumpy old ruin blames humans for the sorry state of the world, reminiscing about the good old days and blue skies.

Navigation Failure. If the navigation test fails, the group becomes lost in the wasteland. Adjust their Hunger, Thirst, and Fatigue levels from cold exposure based on the length of the trip and their preparations.

For each navigation complication, roll a random encounter using the *Glowing Sea Random Encounter Table*, create your own, or add 2 AP to the GM's pool. After resolving any encounters, the PCs can once again attempt to travel onward to their destination or choose a new destination.



GLOWING SEA RANDOM ENCOUNTERS TABLE

1D20 ROLL	ENCOUNTER
1	**THE PARTY ACCIDENTALLY STUMBLES UPON THE RUINED CHURCH ABOVE THE LAST SON OF ATOM'S STRONGHOLD (SEE *MAIN QUEST: The Buried City*, *Scene One: Whately Research Facility* on p.216).** Warn them—they may not be prepared for the dangers lurking within.
2-4	Twenty Children of Atom Protectrons, in groups of five each, patrol the wastes looking for the Last Son of Atom's enemies.
5-8	A swarm of 40 bloodbugs buzzes about in the glowing sky, a little too close for comfort.
9-10	Four radscorpions surprise a single PC by burrowing up from beneath the ground to attack with their stingers.
11-12	An acolyte of the Last Son of Atom approaches the group, claiming to be fleeing from a deathclaw. If the group agrees to kill the monster, the acolyte leads them into an ambush by 20 Children of Atom Fanatics attacking from the cover of nearby ruins.
13-16	A radscorpion burrows up from the ground to liquefy and feast on a lone nearby brahmin. It only becomes hostile should the group draw too close.
17-18	A massive horde of frost feral ghouls begins to wake beneath the snow and ice, drawn to the group's noise and warmth.
20	A pack of six hungry deathclaws prowls nearby, having picked up the group's scent.

SPENDING ACTION POINTS AND SCAVENGING

Players may spend their Action Points at any time while traveling to find a point of interest, something they need, an opportunity to better their situation, or a scavenging location. The icy, radioactive wastes of the Glowing Sea require higher amounts of AP to be spent this way than in other areas—but offer unique benefits.

Allow the players to describe what they locate this way, though as GM, you have the final say and can modify or add to their descriptions.

AP COST	EFFECT	BENEFIT
3	Safe Site	PCs find an underground or otherwise protected site unaffected by the region's ambient extreme radiation, allowing them to safely remove protective gear, rest, and camp.
4	Miraculous Find	At your discretion, the PCs stumble across a single item they desperately desire, left behind in a curious or surprising location.
4+	Hidden Route	Reduce the difficulty of the next navigation test by 1 for every 4 AP spent.
5	Scavenging Site	**PCS COME ACROSS A LOCATION THEY CAN SCAVENGE *(SEE FALLOUT: The Roleplaying Game*, *Chapter 5: Survival, Scavenging* and *Fallout: Gamemaster's Toolkit, Chapter 1: Gamemaster's Options, Creating Scavenging Locations*).** For a simpler alternative, you can describe the location PCs find and allow them to make a group **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty you choose. If they succeed, they find an item of your choice or roll once on the *Glowing Sea Scavenging Table*. For each additional success, they find another item.

GLOWING SEA SCAVENGING TABLE

2D20 ROLL	ITEM SCAVENGED
2	Fat Man
3-4	Mini Nuke (1+1)
5-6	Gamma Gun
7	Gauss Rifle
8-9	2mm EC ammo (6+3)
10-11	**JUNK:** Shattered Deathclaw Gauntlet
12	Rad-X
13-14	Fusion Cell (14+7)
15	Military Fatigues
16	Formal Clothing
17	Casual Clothing
18	Heavy Coat
19	Geiger Counter
20	**JUNK:** Hazmat Suit (ripped and compromised)
21	Dirty Water
22	5+5 Common Materials
23	Potted Meat
24	**TESLA SCIENCE MAGAZINE:** *U.S. Army Goes to Space!* (when you use this Perk, inflict a Critical Hit on a single Energy weapon attack if you deal 3 or more damage after DR)
25	**ASTOUNDINGLY AWESOME TALES MAGAZINE:** *Attack of the Metal Men!* (when you use this Perk, add +2 to Physical and Energy damage resistances vs Robots for the scene)
26	Pre-War money worth 5d20 caps
27	**LIVE & LOVE MAGAZINE:** *Nuke-the-Man!* (when you use this Perk, add +1 damage to attacks from all party members for this scene)
28	10+5 bobby pins
29	**WASTELAND SURVIVAL GUIDE MAGAZINE:** *The Bright Side of Radiation Poisoning* (when you use this Perk and consume irradiated food or drink, heal additional HP equal to the roll on the)
30	**JUNK:** A holy symbol of the Last Son's cult (trampled and frozen in hoarfrost)
31	3+5 Uncommon Materials
32-34	10mm ammo (8+4)
35-36	Shotgun Shells (6+3)
37-38	**U.S. COVERT OPERATIONS MANUAL:** *FH 5-10 Tiptoe Through the Tulips* (when you use this Perk and spend a Luck point to re-roll a d20 on one **AGI** test, instead count that die as if it had rolled a 1)
39	1+5 Rare Materials
40	Stealth Boy



MAIN QUEST: INTO THE GLOWING SEA

This quest becomes available after the PCs conclude Chapter 3: The Winter War. Add 2 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.

While the Commonwealth settlements lick their wounds from recent hardships, spring approaches. Mother Isolde, the leader of a sect of Children of Atom that opposes the Last Son of Atom's heresy, grows worried that he will use the chemical weapons stockpiled in his base to murder his enemies. Isolde sends an emissary named Brother Lucius to find the PCs and invite them to the Crater of Atom. If they travel to Isolde's settlement, she promises to help them end the Last Son's reign of terror and return peace to the Commonwealth.

Meanwhile, unknown to anyone but his most trusted followers, the Last Son activated an ancient device beneath Whately Research Facility. The device's energy field inflicts vivid hallucinations on the predators and occupants of the Glowing Sea, causing them to act strangely and more aggressively than usual.

The Last Son captured Sister Dawn, Mother Isolde's daughter. He experimented extensively on her using the device. Over time, Sister Dawn mutated into a thirty-foot tall, super-irradiated glowing one. Now, Dawn stalks the Glowing Sea, devouring other glowing ones and growing larger with every macabre meal.

In this quest, PCs have the following objectives:

- Intercept Brother Lucius and retrieve Mother Isolde's message.
- Say farewell to the settlements and prepare for the Glowing Sea's extreme radiation.
- Travel across the Glowing Sea and locate the Crater of Atom.

If the PCs ensure Brother Lucius survives his trip to the Commonwealth—or manage to slay Sister Dawn—Mother Isolde's followers become more friendly and helpful towards them.

CONTENT WARNINGS AND CHANGING SCENES

This quest contains elements of body horror. Gamemasters may wish to alter the quest in one or more of the following ways to better suit the needs of their group:

- Describe Sister Dawn's **radioactive bile spray** as a toxic breath attack.
- Describe the glowing ones created by Sister Dawn's Spawn Glowing Ones ability to climb out of nearby ruins rather than claw through the creature's open wounds.

SCENE ONE: AN UNLIKELY ALLY

Begin this scene any time the PCs leave or return to a settlement to trigger the start of the quest. They hear gunshots nearby and see Brother Lucius, hunted by six Minutemen, rushing full speed towards them. Read or paraphrase the following:

The sound of nearby gunshots shatters the whistling of the cold wind. An older man with cracked, orange skin and scraggly white hair sprints towards you as fast as possible. He wears tattered clothes and holds a gamma gun in his hand. Hanging on a rusty chain around his neck is a metal kitchen strainer— a holy symbol denoting a Child of Atom. Three ratty leather straps keep a mini nuke tied tight around the man's chest.

Five Minutemen give chase from a few hundred yards away. They open fire wildly at the Child of Atom. A gruff old Minuteman calls out over the roar of gunshots. "Don't let him reach the settlement!"

A PC who makes a **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 2 recognizes Brother Lucius is exhausted and scared. If they succeed, they may spend AP to Obtain Information. Some information PCs can learn:

- The mini nuke strapped to Lucius's chest is decommissioned. It appears purely aesthetic for religious purposes.
- Lucius is sprinting directly towards the PCs, as though he recognizes them.
- Lucius does not look aggressive, despite holding a gamma gun.
- The Minutemen are shooting to kill Lucius.

Lucius attempts to escape the Minutemen and deliver Mother Isolde's message to the PCs. He does not attack them unless they attack him first. If they do not attack, Lucius reaches the characters moments before the Minutemen bear down on him, begging them to protect him.

After recent events, the Minutemen have no intention of allowing the Child of Atom to live. If a PC attempts to intervene, they must do so immediately by making a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 5 to convince the Minutemen to stand down peacefully—or a **STR + Speech** test with a difficulty of 3 to intimidate them into backing off. If their test fails or they do not immediately intervene, the Minutemen attack Lucius. If their test succeeds, the gruff Minuteman tells the PCs they are making a mistake before he grudgingly orders his squad back to their camp.

If the PCs intimidate the Minutemen, and the Minutemen are a welcome presence in the nearby settlement, add a negative influence to the PCs' next reputation test in that settlement. If the PCs enter combat to defend Lucius and any Minutemen survive to tell the tale, add another negative influence to the test and add 6 AP to the GM's pool.

ENCOUNTER-1A: BROTHER LUCIUS

If a fight breaks out, Brother Lucius does his best to defend himself against the overwhelming odds but is unlikely to survive or escape unless the PCs join the fray on his side. The 5 Minutemen Riflemen focus on attacking Lucius, only targeting the PCs after they kill one of the Minutemen. When only two Minutemen remain, they attempt to flee to the nearest friendly settlement to warn others of what happened, twisting events to make it seem like the PCs are in league with the Last Son of Atom.

Brother Lucius

Level 8, Human,
Notable Character (120 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
5	8	7	6	6	8	6

SKILLS			
Energy Weapons	3	Repair	2
Explosives	2	Sneak	4
Lockpick	1	Speech	2
Medicine	1	Survival	4
Melee Weapons	1		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
21	18	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
200 lbs.	-	3

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	Immune	0

ATTACKS

- **GAMMA GUN: PER + Energy Weapons** (TN 11), 3 Piercing, Stun, Radiation damage, Range Medium, Blast, Inaccurate
- **MACHETE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 6), 3 Piercing Physical damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** Brother Lucius is immune to Radiation damage and its effects.
- **MOVING TARGET:** Brother Lucius is adept at navigating through the Wasteland. When he takes the Sprint action, his defense increases by +1 until the start of his next turn.

INVENTORY

Tough Clothing, Gamma Gun, 2d20 Gamma Rounds, Pip-Boy, Holotape, Stimpaks x3, BlamCo Brand Mac and Cheese, Wealth 1

Minuteman Rifleman

Level 8, Human,
Normal Character (60 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
6	7	6	6	5	5	4

SKILLS			
Athletics	1	Repair	2
Energy Weapons	5	Sneak	1
Medicine	1	Speech	1
Melee Weapons	2	Survival	4

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
14	12	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
210 lbs.	-	3

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	2(Arms, Legs, Torso)	0	0

ATTACKS

- **RECON THREE-CRANK LASER MUSKET: PER + Energy Weapons** (TN 12), 6 Piercing Energy damage, Range M, Two-Handed, Accurate, Recon
- **SERRATED COMBAT KNIFE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 8), 4 Piercing, Persistent Physical damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **CONCENTRATE FIRE:** When the minuteman makes a ranged attack, they can re-roll up to 2 of their damage roll.

INVENTORY

Leather Chest Piece, Leather Leg x2, Leather Arm x2, Recon Three-Crank Laser Musket, Serrated Combat Knife, 2d20 Fusion Cells, 2 Stimpaks, Wealth 2

If the PCs do not intervene and the Minutemen kill Lucius, add 6 AP to the GM's pool. The gruff Minuteman thanks them for their service to the Commonwealth. He takes Lucius's **gamma gun**, then orders his squad back to camp. Next to Lucius's corpse lies a **Pip-Boy** loaded with a **holotape** inside.

If the PCs deal with the Minutemen and Lucius survives, he attempts to hug the most friendly-looking PC, graciously thanking them for saving his life. He informs the PCs he has been searching the Wasteland for them for weeks, sent by Mother Isolde to deliver a message and an invitation to visit their home in the Glowing Sea. He gives the PCs the Pip-Boy loaded with Isolde's tape. If the PCs question Lucius, he is honest and open to answering their questions. Some things the PCs might learn from Lucius:

- He is a Children of Atom acolyte from a small settlement in the Crater of Atom at the center of the Glowing Sea. Mother Isolde is the leader of their sect of the Church.
- He has not listened to Isolde's message but trusts her wisdom implicitly. She only told him their community was in danger, and that they required the PCs' help.
- He met the Last Son of Atom once and found him a creepy, self-obsessed narcissist. Several of the Children in his community joined the Last Son's sect and left.
- He is scared for his friends and family. They are a peaceful sect, but few in the Commonwealth trust the Church due to the Last Son's heinous actions.
- The Glowing Sea is located southwest of the Boston ruins. The radiation there is enough to kill most outsiders in minutes. Packs of deathclaws, radscorpions, and worse roam the ruins. The PCs should take their time to prepare before traveling to the Crater of Atom.

GM NOTE: CONTINUING THE QUEST

The PCs must listen to Mother Isolde's message on the Pip-Boy to proceed. Make sure it ends up in their possession during or after the scene. You may also narrate the holotape to start playing eerily of its own accord.

When the PCs listen to the holotape loaded into the Pip-Boy, read or paraphrase the following:

> *When you close the Pip-Boy and press play, it emits loud, shrieking feedback that lasts for several seconds. Then you hear the gentle voice of an older woman through its speakers.*
>
> *"Hello, children. I am Mother Isolde, a humble servant of Atom and a shepherd to my flock. Not all of the Church's children follow the false prophecies of the murderer who calls himself the Last Son of Atom. My congregation has suffered—I have suffered—deeply from this madman's actions. Just as you have. Just as all the Commonwealth has.*
>
> *"I hear you are brave and have fought to protect others from the Last Son before. I know where his hidden base lies—and I know what he is planning. If you wish to end his cult's reign of terror, seek out my community in the Glowing Sea. We can help each other and restore peace to the Commonwealth. Until then, may you always walk in Atom's Glow."*

Once the PCs listen to the message or finish talking to Lucius, he informs them he plans to return to his people immediately. He encourages them to settle their affairs before traveling to the Glowing Sea. Finding the crater should be easy—it glows with Atom's divinity, bright enough that you can see it in the night sky from anywhere in the Commonwealth.

Should the PCs insist on traveling to the Glowing Sea immediately, they may accompany Lucius and gain him as a temporary traveling companion until they reach the Crater of Atom. If they remain in the Commonwealth to prepare and complete side quests, Lucius returns alone to the Crater of Atom to inform Mother Isolde his mission was a success.

The biggest challenges for most people traveling across the Glowing Sea are extreme radiation levels and mighty monsters. The PCs may seek out some of the following to help them survive the journey:

- Powerful weapons and weapon mods
- Hazmat Suits for PCs without high radiation defense
- Strong armor or plating for PCs with high radiation defense
- Stockpiles of useful chems, especially Rad-X *and* RadAway

The PCs reach a **point of no return** once they enter the Glowing Sea, triggering the beginning of the endgame for *Winter of Atom*. Once they arrive at the region's border, proceed to *Scene Two: The Glowing Sea*.

SCENE TWO: THE GLOWING SEA

The Glowing Sea is what remains of the communities and towns southwest of Boston proper, beyond the southern freeway connected to Mass Pike Interchange. Its ruins are isolated from the rest of the Commonwealth.

Winter makes the Glowing Sea even deadlier and slower to traverse than usual. Snow drifts hide burrowing beasts and other dangers. Unwary travelers may step through thin layers of ice, falling into frozen radioactive ponds. The radstorms that batter the rest of the Commonwealth originate from this region, which causes regular storm systems to become radioactive when they pass through.

When the PCs travel to the border of the Glowing Sea, read or paraphrase the following:

> *At the edge of a massive, ruined freeway, the Wasteland beyond reveals a beautiful and terrible sight. Winter's wrath grips the endless Glowing Sea, wrapping it in a blanket of white.*
>
> *Radioactive snow hides most of the scorched ground, with drifts reaching up to twenty feet. The horizon is dotted by hills of frozen debris, burnt trees covered in crystalline hoarfrost, and the skeletons of car wrecks. What buildings remain standing are half-buried in treacherous sinkholes. A toxic fog drifts across the landscape, obscuring views—and the sky glows with brilliant green light originating from the far-off Crater of Atom.*

If Brother Lucius accompanies the PCs through the Glowing Sea, increase the group's AP pool to 6. He knows the region well and provides essential background information on any locations or enemies. Lucius is not a fighter and is a bit of a coward—during combat, he hides, knowing he is no match against the region's deadly threats.

Refer to *Traversing the Glowing Sea* on p.192 to determine what the PCs encounter during their journey to the Crater of Atom. You can also expand on the region by introducing locations from **Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook***, *Chapter 8: The Commonwealth*. Traveling at normal pace to the Crater of Atom from the border takes 24 hours due to the wintery conditions. Crossing the Glowing Sea end-to-end is a 48-hour trek.

Their first time the PCs camp during the journey, instead of rolling for an encounter, proceed to *Scene Three: Beloved Sister*. If the PCs decide not to set up camp, they instead encounter Sister Dawn when they explore a ruin or travel close to the Crater of Atom.



SCENE THREE: BELOVED SISTER

After being experimented on by the Last Son of Atom beneath Whately Research Facility, **Sister Dawn** transformed into a feral glowing one. Unlike normal glowing ones, she continues to grow larger with every meal. Her preferred foods are smaller glowing ones and highly radioactive materials, but she is content to make a snack of the PCs too. There is nothing left of the gentle-hearted woman's mind—she exists only to roam the Glowing Sea aimlessly, constantly eating.

Just before the PCs encounter Sister Dawn, allow a PC keeping watch to make a **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 2 to notice something big is coming—you might describe the ground starting to shake or a bright green glow emanating from nearby. Give an alarmed PC a few moments to prepare before Sister Dawn attacks. If PCs encounter Sister Dawn outside of a campsite, they have less control over the situation. If they are inside a building, she rips the structure open like a tin can and enters. If they are outdoors, she appears from behind a tall hill or ruin and charges.

When the PCs encounter Sister Dawn, read or paraphrase the following:

Above you looms an enormous female ghoul whose body glows with a sickly green light. She stands at least thirty feet tall, slack-jawed and drooling. Her jiggling abdomen is distended beyond belief—a massive bulge of bloated flesh that does not seem to slow her movements. The ghoul's glowing skin is translucent, revealing her misshapen skeleton beneath. There are other shapes visible through her flesh—strange shadows that seem to move with a life of their own.

She stares down at you with glowing eyes. Then she beats her massive fists against her chest, lets loose a booming roar, and charges!

ENCOUNTER-3A: SISTER DAWN

Add 2 AP to the GM's pool for each PC unaware of Sister Dawn's approach before she appears.

If she attacks the PCs outside of a campsite, their situation is especially dire. Introduce up to 3 winter environment conditions, hazards, or objects (see *Chapter 1, Winter Wasteland*, p.27). Consider their surroundings and whether there is any limited cover nearby.

If PCs set up camp, consider their campsite features when preparing the encounter:

- Introduce a winter environment condition and up to 2 hazards or dangerous objects. If the camp is a cleaned site, PCs can easily avoid hazards and dangerous objects while Sister Dawn charges through them, automatically failing her tests.
- If the camp is an alarmed site, the PCs spot her at Long range. She spends her first turn using the Sprint action to move into Close range.
- PCs can use their environment to gain cover if their camp is a defensible site. Sister Dawn uses attacks with the *Breaking* effect to destroy cover before using other attacks.

Mutated beyond the limits of known human science, Sister Dawn is perhaps the mightiest foe in Winter of Atom—but not the most intelligent. She ferociously targets characters near her, prioritizing those who manage to inflict damage on her.

Sister Dawn

Level 36, Mutated Human, Legendary Creature (768 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
12	12	4	—	4

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
144	24	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
10(All)	10(All)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **UNARMED: Body + Melee** (TN 16), 12 Breaking, Radioactive Physical damage
- **RADIOACTIVE BILE SPRAY: Body + Other** (TN 16), 8 Burst, Vicious, Radioactive Poison damage, Range Close
- **DEBRIS THROW: Body + Guns** (TN 12), 9 Stun, Vicious Physical damage, Thrown, Range Medium

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** Sister Dawn is immune to Poison and Radiation damage and their effects.
- **POWERFUL GLOWING ONE:** Sister Dawn regains 1HP for every point of Radiation damage inflicted upon her. Creatures that begin their turn within Reach of her suffer 4 Radiation damage.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **MONSTROUS:** When Sister Dawn misses with an attack, she immediately makes the same attack as a free action without increasing the test's difficulty. The new attack must target a creature in the same Range that she has not attacked yet this turn. Additionally, she only suffers a critical hit if an attack inflicts 14+ damage (after damage resistance) in a single hit, rather than the usual 5+.
- **RADIATION PULSE:** Once per combat, Sister Dawn may spend a major action to unleash a radiation pulse, inflicting 10 Radiation damage to anyone within Close range. Any defeated ghoul within range is restored to 1 HP and immediately returns to the fight.
- **SPAWN GLOWING ONES:** Whenever Sister Dawn's torso is hit with an attack that adds the Piercing effect, the GM can spend 2 AP to add a glowing one that claws its way out from the wound. It joins combat during the next round.
- **WEAK UNDERBELLY:** Sister Dawn's belly is soft and vulnerable. Attacks that hit her torso ignore her Physical and Energy DR.

INVENTORY

2 Junk items

At the end of the second round of combat, four **Children of Atom Soldiers** from Mother Isolde's settlement arrive to aid the PCs. Their leader—a brave, stone-faced young woman named **Sister Gertrude**—tells the PCs they will cover their retreat. If **Brother Lucius** is present, he joins Gertrude and her companions. So long as any Children of Atom allies live, PCs may take the Sprint action on their turn to flee combat without spending Luck points (see *Chapter 1, Surviving Defeat*, p.48).

Glowing One

Level 9, Mutated Human, Normal Creature (67 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
8	5	5	—	3

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
17	13	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(All)	1(All)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **UNARMED: Body + Melee** (TN 13), 7 Radioactive Physical damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** A glowing one is immune to Poison and Radiation damage and their effects.
- **GLOWING GHOUL:** A glowing one literally glows with radiation. It regains 1 HP for every 3 points of Radiation damage inflicted upon it. Creatures that begin their turn within Reach of it are inflicted with 2 Radiation damage.
- **RADIATION PULSE:** Once per combat, a glowing one may spend a major action to unleash a radiation pulse, inflicting 5 Radiation damage to all creatures within Close range. Any defeated ghoul within range is restored to 1 HP and returns to the fight during the next round.

INVENTORY

2 Junk items

Children of Atom Soldier

Level 8, Human, Normal Character (60 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
8	5	6	5	5	5	5

SKILLS			
Athletics	2	Small Guns	3
Barter	1	Sneak	2
Energy Weapons	3	Speech	1
Melee Weapons	3	Survival	2

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
14	10	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
230 lbs.	+1	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
1(Arms, Legs, Torso)	2(Arms, Legs, Torso)	Immune	0

ATTACKS

- **MACHETE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 11), 4 Piercing Physical damage
- **PIPE BOLT-ACTION: AGI + Small Guns** (TN 8), 5 Piercing Physical damage, Unreliable, Range Close

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The Children of Atom Soldier is immune to Radiation damage and its effects.

INVENTORY

Leather Chest Piece, Leather Arm, Leather Leg, Tough Clothing, Machete, Pipe Bolt-Action, 2d20 .308 rounds, Wealth 1

If the PCs escape without slaying Sister Dawn, the Children of Atom sacrifice themselves—none survive. Sister Dawn does not pursue those who flee. You may decide to have the PCs reencounter her the next time they explore the Glowing Sea, spotting her from a distance with an opportunity to plan their attack or avoid her entirely.

If the PCs manage to kill Sister Dawn and the Children of Atom survive, Sister Gertrude introduces herself. She has been scouting for the PCs' arrival to ensure they reach the Crater of Atom. She is impressed by their skill and thankful for their help putting their sister to rest. She does not know what happened to transform Dawn into such a blasphemous horror, but she is confident it was the Last Son of Atom's doing. She avoids answering questions in detail, encouraging the PCs to ask Mother Isolde instead.

If Gertrude or Lucius are present after Dawn dies, they ask the PCs to give them a few minutes to pray for their fallen sister before finishing the journey to the Crater of Atom. If the PCs try to join them, they gratefully allow it. The Children kneel before Sister Dawn's giant body and place their hands on her flesh. The group's leader speaks a gentle prayer, *"Radiant Atom, we offer up to you our beloved sister's feeble bones. Relieve her of this rotten flesh, this fragile body. Call her back to your brilliance so she may live eternally in the forge of your Glow—so she may live forever in our hearts. Amen."*

The remainder of the short trek to the Crater of Atom is without incident. When the PCs arrive at the settlement, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Against all odds, a tiny, peaceful-looking settlement stands at the center of the Glowing Sea. The Crater of Atom features a large metal shack built over an irradiated pool of glowing water. Several wooden ramps lead to the shack's entrances. Four smaller wood-and-metal structures stand west of the pool. A few Children of Atom go about their daily work, packing supplies into rusty carts, unworried by the deadly monsters that stalk the wasteland.*
>
> *Above the Crater of Atom, a yellow-green aura glows brightly in the sky—the same light visible across the entire Commonwealth. This place is its origin.*

THE FALLOUT

The PCs complete ***Main Quest: Into the Glowing Sea*** when they reach the Crater of Atom. Mother Isolde's community is desperate for help. She wants to believe the PCs may be the answer to their prayers. The state of the settlement and how well its people react to the PCs depends on their recent actions.

The PCs have a base **reputation rank of 1 (Cautious)** for the **Crater of Atom**. If their reputation rank becomes 0 (Hostile), Isolde and her people attempt to deny them entry until they prove they are allies by slaying Sister Dawn and putting her tortured soul to rest.

Adjust their base reputation rank based on the following outcomes:

- If Brother Lucius makes it back to the settlement alive, he sings the PCs' praises and does what he can to help them. They increase their settlement reputation rank by 1.
- If the PCs killed Brother Lucius, the Minutemen proudly tell the tale. Mother Isolde's scouts learn of it while trading in the Commonwealth, and she considers it an ill omen. They reduce their settlement reputation by 1, and the settlement's **denizen outlook** becomes **somewhat grim**.

- If the PCs slay Sister Dawn, Mother Isolde is willing to talk to them about what happened to her daughter. They improve their settlement reputation by 1. If Sister Gertrude also survived, they instead increase their reputation by 1, and the settlement's **denizen outlook** becomes **somewhat happy**.

Possible next steps for the PCs include:

- Exploring the Glowing Sea further
- Hunting down **Sister Dawn** if she still lives
- Helping the local settlers with their **side quests** to earn their trust and make friends
- Seeking out **Mother Isolde** to learn more about the Children of Atom and the Last Son of Atom. When they do, ***Main Quest: The Buried City*** becomes available.

Before proceeding, review the section Crater of Atom. Refer to the following section as the PCs explore the settlement, meet its people, and undertake any side quests there.



THE CRATER OF ATOM

The Crater of Atom is a skeleton of a settlement, a place of devastation turned holy. A large storage shack contains the settlement's limited supplies, built on stilts over an irradiated pool in the center of the community. Four minor metal and wood shacks serve as homes for residents on the western edge of the territory, including the home the Last Son of Atom stayed in briefly with Sister Dawn when he lived at the crater. Mother Isolde resides in a two-story shack and often leads others in prayer from her home's wooden overlook.

A sickly green glow is ever-present, and at night it is visible for miles across the Commonwealth, giving the Glowing Sea its name. As ground zero for the bombs dropped on Boston in the Great War, the Crater of Atom is a rare pocket of life in an otherwise irradiated, barren landscape littered with ruins, death, and monstrous creatures.

The Crater of Atom's population, denizen outlook, and PC reputation may vary from those listed depending on the outcome of *Main Quest: Into the Glowing Sea*.

Population: 11 - 17 settlers

Defenses: Somewhat Weak

Food Supply: Limited

Denizen Outlook: Somewhat Grim

Starting Settlement Reputation Rank: Cautious



TENSIONS AT A GLANCE

The conflict within the Crater of Atom is built upon these core issues:

- **The Last Son of Atom's looming shadow** hangs over the settlement due to his sect's proximity and violence.
- **Hostility from the other Commonwealth settlements** caused by the Last Son's actions makes it extremely difficult to source supplies during the relentless winter.
- **Disagreements of faith** break out between residents regarding whether the nuclear winter is a blessing, a test of faith, or a display of Atom's wrath against the Last Son.

The Crater of Atom is suffering greatly from the Last Son's actions. Many of the settlers left to join the Last Son's sect. His followers' brutal attacks on the Commonwealth have made the region an unsafe place for Mother Isolde's sect to live and trade.

NUCLEAR WINTER IN ATOM'S GLOW

Before the radiation storms over the Glowing Sea became even more dangerous radizzards, keeping the Crater of Atom well-stocked was difficult. There are no crop fields, and pack brahmin cannot survive in the extreme radiation long enough to rear them into adulthood. Brother Lucius is responsible for gathering supplies, while Brother Ogden acts as a vendor to any visitors. Before winter struck, Lucius often made trips to scavenge supplies from other areas of the Glowing Sea or trade with settlements outside the rad-basin. Due to the precarious state of the Commonwealth, however, Lucius's trips have become less frequent—and less fruitful.

Unlike residents of other settlements, the Children of Atom rarely complain about the treacherous weather. They believe "Atom will provide." Though Mother Isolde and Brother Lucius have concerns, the residents are used to extreme conditions and treat them

as a test of faith. Residents still spend time outside in Atom's Glow to meditate and pray. They huddle together around fires or in their shacks at night to keep warm. Since their makeshift homes are often open to the elements, some settlers sleep in the central storage building, which offers more protection. The irradiated pool at the crater's center has frozen over and navigating the ruins and debris around the settlement becomes difficult when snowdrifts cover the ground.

A few consider the radioactive snowfall and storms a blessing from Atom that causes their home to glow brighter than ever. Others believe the fierce winter to be Atom's punishment on the region for allowing the Last Son to pervert his divine will.

PEOPLE OF INTEREST

The Crater of Atom is smaller than most settlements, as few can survive in the irradiated locale. The residents spend much of their time praying to Atom and basking in his Glow.

MOTHER ISOLDE

Mother Isolde leads the sect of the Church of Atom that resides within the crater. She speaks softly with a constant slight smile and carries an air of eerily calm optimism. She is entirely devoted to Atom's will and takes her role as a leader seriously. Isolde cares deeply for the Children in her care and is swift in exiling those who would harm her community. Outspoken, Isolde denounces the Last Son of Atom as a heretic and has no tolerance for his cult or its teachings. See *Talking to Mother Isolde,* p.214.

SISTER GERTRUDE

If Sister Gertrude survived her encounter with the PCs, she resides in the settlement. She takes it upon herself to help defend the Crater of Atom from the threats of the Glowing Sea. During times of peace, Gertrude meditates and prays to Atom. She is the first to volunteer when the need arises to head deep into a treacherous territory to scavenge supplies. Brave and darkly funny—Gertrude is fiercely dedicated to fighting for her found family.

BROTHER LUCIUS

Lucius is present at the Crater of Atom if he survives his encounters with the PCs. He is an alert and perceptive person who walks and talks with purpose. Often acting as a messenger and scout on behalf of Mother Isolde, he has some proficiency with Pip-Boys and Holotapes. When not praying or tinkering, he can be found organizing the settlement's supplies in the central storage shack—and occasionally playing the Pipboy game *Pipfall.*

BROTHER OGDEN

Balding and gaunt-faced, Brother Ogden acts as the settlement's sole shopkeep. He is keen for people to find "something of value" in his limited inventory of "what Atom provides"—for a price. When the PCs arrive, the usually friendly vendor is locked away in one of the shacks on the settlement's west side. He struggles with Sister Dawn's disappearance, and only once PCs put her to rest does he emerge from hiding to ask them for details. Brother Ogden features in *Side Quest: One Last Memento,* p.211.

OLD BOOMY

Old Boomy is a battered Mr. Handy who speaks with a low resonant voice. He desires to "split" in a grand explosion before decommissioning from age and wear. As a devout follower of Atom, he believes achieving Division will allow him to atone for his past sins. Before finding the crater, he aided in Vault 95's vile experiments. Programmed to administer medicine to recovering addicts, he did nothing to stop Vault-Tec's secret plan to later reintroduce addictive substances to Vault 95's populace. The social experiment ended in carnage, and Old Boomy deeply regrets his part in the Vault's destruction.

After the Gunners opened the Vault, he escaped and found Lil Boomy powered down in a stasis pod. He awoke the robot and named him—the pair have been together ever since. Old Boomy's plans to end his life on his terms have caused a rift in his relationship with his best friend. The younger robot cannot reconcile with Old Boomy's desire for Division. Old Boomy features in *Side Quest: A Dividing Detonation,* p.212.

LIL BOOMY

Lil Boomy joined the Children of Atom when he and Old Boomy found the crater and decided to stay. He has an energetic personality, a higher-pitched voice, and fidgets if he waits in one spot too long. While Lil Boomy has come to have faith in Atom, he is torn between his beliefs and what they mean for Old Boomy. Lil Boomy never experienced life before the Great War and struggles to process grief, leaving him distraught at the idea of losing his best friend. The usually happy-go-lucky robot has taken on an angry, upset demeanor since Old Boomy announced his plans and is desperate to change his mind. Lil Boomy features in *Side Quest: A Dividing Detonation,* p.212.

SISTER SUNSET

As a leading voice in the community, Sister Sunset preaches about Atom's forgiveness and guiding Glow with an almost sickly-sweet attitude. In truth, her sermons about forgiveness are as much for her as they are for others. Unknown to anyone, Sunset was once a devotee of the Last Son before his cult reached the Commonwealth. After committing atrocities in his name, she realized he did not represent the Atom she had come to worship and fled. She kept a token of her time in the Last Son's inner circle—a pendant embossed with a strange design—as a reminder to stay on Atom's true path. When nervous, frustrated, or praying, she absent-mindedly plays with the necklace.

Sister Sunset came to the crater shortly after Mother Isolde exiled the Last Son. Upon settling, she grew frightened her new family would discover her past. The recent arrival of the High Chronicler has increased her fears—she met the Super Mutant before and knows his memoirs contain stories of her previous deeds. She loudly advocates for Mother Isolde to exile the High Chronicler. Sunset features in *Side Quest: In the Light of Day,* p.209.

THE HIGH CHRONICLER

The High Chronicler, an extremely old and perpetually stoned Super Mutant, wanders the wastes searching for exciting people so he can record their stories in his memoirs. His long-term chem-addiction leaves him unable to accurately recall most tales without referring to his book. He often pauses between words when he speaks, enjoying the dramatic effect it gives when he recounts his many adventures. He is not a devotee of Atom, but is interested in hearing the settlers' stories and beliefs to carry with him when he eventually moves on. Since first arriving and telling a few stories, the Children of the settlement have shunned him for reasons he doesn't understand. The High Chronicler features in *Side Quest: In the Light of Day,* p.209.

OTHER SETTLERS

The settlement is home to a few other residents; Brother Foster, Brother Griffith, Brother Ward, Sister Layla, and Sister Verena, to name a few.

SIDE QUEST: IN THE LIGHT OF DAY

This quest becomes available when the PCs mention their encounter with Sister Dawn to others at the Crater of Atom. **Add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

The High Chronicler approaches the PCs, asking about their encounter with Sister Dawn to record in his memoirs. He offers to tell them one of his stories in exchange. If they comply, he tells a story about the Last Son of Atom. Very stoned, he struggles to recall details but remembers the following:

- Years ago, he met the Last Son not far from the Capital Wasteland. He thought the Last Son was a charismatic but desperate conman who struggled to retain followers except for a few devotees.
- It was easy to tell the devout from the half-hearted—the Last Son's inner circle wore pendants embossed with strange patterns, supposedly relics of Atom's greatness.
- The Last Son's cult aggressively tried to convert the nearby settlers. It ended in violence, leaving the Last Son with only three devotees. The rest of his flock fled or were killed. The Last Son took revenge by targeting the settlement with a volley of mini nukes to show them the "beauty of Division."

- He describes a woman matching Sister Sunset's description (See *Sister Sunset*, p.209) firing mini nukes into the settlement before fleeing.

The High Chronicler does not realize that Sister Sunset is the woman from his story. After sharing his tale, he thanks the PCs and sadly tells them that he may be moving on from the settlement soon—he no longer feels welcome and refuses to speak further on the matter.

CONTENT WARNINGS AND CHANGING SCENES

This quest contains themes of discrimination and addiction. Gamemasters may wish to alter the quest in one or more of the following ways to better suit the needs of their group:

- Remove mentions of Sister Sunset claiming Super Mutants are an affront to Atom.
- Instead of narrating the High Chronicler as a chem addict, describe him as forgetful due to his age. He uses chems medicinally to help him remember his stories.

SISTER SUNSET'S VISIT

Sometime after the PCs leave the High Chronicler, Sister Sunset approaches and curiously asks about their conversation. If they tell her the truth, she grows annoyed. She claims Super Mutants are an affront to Atom and that the High Chronicler is a chem-addict who cannot tell fact from fiction. A PC who makes an **INT or PER + Speech** test with a difficulty of 2 notices her voice quiver when she responds—and that she plays nervously with a necklace embossed with a strange pattern.

A PC can convince Sunset to admit she is the woman from High Chronicler's story by making a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 4. If they fail, she refuses to speak to them further. If they succeed, she begs them to keep her secret and convince Mother Isolde to exile the Super Mutant so she can finally begin a new life, free of her past sins. She claims she only wears the Last Son's necklace as a reminder to never turn from Atom's true Glow again.

THE FALLOUT

This quest has the following outcomes:

- **Revealed Sister Sunset's Secret.** If the PCs reveal Sister Sunset's secret, Mother Isolde exiles her from the settlement and she rejoins the Last Son's sect. Isolde proclaims the High Chronicler a prophet and faithful friend, allowing him to stay. She encourages others to share their stories with him. The High Chronicler later visits the PCs to tell them he is "going clean" and offers them his chem stash containing 5 of each of the following chems: *Berry Mentats, Grape Mentats, Buffout, Ultra Jet, X-Cell,* and *Super Stimpaks*.
- **High Chronicler Exiled.** If the PCs do not reveal Sister Sunset's secret, she convinces Mother Isolde to exile the High Chronicler. He tells less than savory stories about the Children of Atom to settlements as he travels westward—claiming the PCs have joined the Church. PCs reduce their settlement reputation rank 1 by for every settlement negatively impacted by the Last Son's prior actions. Additionally, if the PCs learned Sunset's secret but did not reveal it, she praises them as heroes to the tiny community; PCs increase their settlement reputation by 1 for the Crater of Atom.
- **All Were Exiled.** If the PCs reveal Sunset's secrets but encourage Isolde to still exile the High Chronicler, Sunset rejoins the Last Son of Atom. The High Chronicler, a super mutant master, vows revenge. He recruits a gang of ten super mutants to prepare an ambush for the PCs the next time they travel across the Glowing Sea (see ***Fallout: The Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook,*** *Chapter 10: Denizens of the Wasteland*).

SIDE QUEST: ONE LAST MEMENTO

This quest becomes available when the PCs kill Sister Dawn. **Add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

Brother Ogden approaches the PCs after hearing Sister Dawn is dead. He asks for details of their encounter and expresses deep sadness about her passing. Some things that may come up during the conversation:

- He and Dawn were childhood friends. He is upset and confused about why she left the settlement without telling him.
- Dawn moved into the same shack as the Last Son of Atom when he lived at the crater. They grew close before Mother Isolde exiled him. Ogden worries she may have left to join the Last Son's cult.
- He is too afraid to search through Dawn's things to find the truth about why she left.

Ogden asks the PCs to investigate Sister Dawn's shack to learn why she left and recover something to remember her by—a photograph of the two of them as children.

INVESTIGATING THE SHACK

The shack is sparse, containing only two bedrolls and a few metal boxes filled with junk and worn clothing. A PC can make a **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 2 to find the photograph. If the test succeeds, they uncover it at the bottom of a metal box full of personal trinkets.

A PC who wants to search for anything relating to the Last Son of Atom or why Dawn left can make a **PER + Survival** test with a difficulty of 4. If the test succeeds, they discover a hole cut into the underside of a bedroll. Stuffed inside is Sister Dawn's Journal.

Sister Dawn's Journal

The journal contains the following key entry:

Mother Isolde assures me Atom will guide me and keep me safe on my mission, but I am still afraid. I remember the Last Son when he stayed here. So kind to us and helping with our struggles, so eager to please. He would smile and speak gently to offer me help, and I would have to play along and listen to his blasphemous ideas. It was worse after he started taking the chems. I watched him once. Berry Mentats, Ultra Jet, and X-Cell, all in one go. I was sure the mix would kill him, but it just made him more confident of his heresy. He was ranting and raving about how the chems would protect his mind from Atom's Glow so he could lead his flock to paradise. He'd whisper at night of dreams about a child and an obelisk buried beneath the earth.

I will do as she asks and follow the false prophet. I will discover the truth behind his lies so that all will know he is no Son of Atom and no Child of this Church. And when my mission is complete, I know Atom will reward me with his Glow as he rewards all his faithful.

THE FALLOUT

This quest has the following outcomes:

- **Returned the Photograph.** Giving Ogden the photograph eases the pain of losing his friend. He reopens his shop and gives the PCs a 50% discount. While his stores are limited, he may have a few rare items of great interest to the PCs, including one dose each of *Berry Mentats, Ultra Jet, and X-Cell*—the exact mix the Last Son uses.
- **Failed to Recover a Memento**. If the PCs do not locate the photograph, Ogden is saddened to have nothing to remember Dawn by. If they know Dawn left to spy on the Last Son and share the information with Ogden, he thanks the PCs and decides to reopen his shop for them.
- **Investigated the Last Son's Chem Mixture.** If the PCs read *Sister Dawn's Journal*, they learn about the Last Son's intense chem mixture to remain sane while excavating the buried city. If they have not completed *Side Quest: In the Light of Day* and tell Ogden about the Last Son's chem use, he suggests they speak to the High Chronicler about his *chem stash*. If the PCs fail to discover the journal, they don't learn about the Last Son's chem mixture and its purpose.

SIDE QUEST: A DIVIDING DETONATION

This quest becomes available when PCs reach a settlement reputation score of 3 or higher with the Crater of Atom. **Add 1 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

Lil Boomy approaches the PCs. He pleads with them to help him change the mind of his best friend, Old Boomy, who plans to destroy himself to achieve Division. Some things that may come up during the conversation:

- Old Boomy is his best friend. A few years ago, the older robot found Lil Boomy and freed him from a powered-down state. Old Boomy gave the newly-awoken robot his name after realizing he did not have one.
- Old Boomy wants to achieve Division via nuclear explosion before his systems fail, but Lil Boomy believes the old robot has plenty of life left in him yet.
- He stole the nuclear fuel mix Old Boomy planned to use to achieve his incredible explosion to buy time. He hopes to convince the old robot of another course of action that doesn't end in his destruction. Lil Boomy keeps the nuclear fuel mix hidden in his Mr. Handy compartment.
- Old Boomy is determined and will eventually find another way to achieve his goals, so the PCs must act quickly.

CONTENT WARNINGS AND CHANGING SCENES

This quest contains themes surrounding self-harm and grief. Gamemasters may wish to alter the quest in one or more of the following ways to better suit the needs of their group:

- Instead of planning to self-detonate, Old Boomy is breaking down. He requires repairs but refuses help, stating that modifying himself would go against Atom's Will. Lil Boomy needs help to convince his best friend to get the help he needs.
- If the PCs fail to convince Old Boomy to accept repairs, he and Lil Boomy never reconcile. Lil Boomy loses faith in Atom and leaves the settlement, and Old Boomy's systems continue to degrade over time.
- If the PCs convince Old Boomy to accept repairs, he gifts them the chem suppressant syringe.

MEETING OLD BOOMY

When the PCs talk to Old Boomy, he is desperate to achieve his goals. Some things that may come up during the conversation:

- He cares deeply for Lil Boomy but is near to decommission. If his systems fail, he won't achieve Division and truly atone for his sins—he does not wish to end up as a heap of scrap.
- He falsely believes he misplaced his nuclear fuel mix. He asks the PCs to find it or another suitable atomic power source to help him achieve Division.

- He asks the PCs to help Lil Boomy understand his decision and learn to deal with his grief.
- If asked about his sins or past, he replies that he is no longer the robot he once was. A PC can convince him to reveal his past with a **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 2. If the test succeeds, he shares his backstory—see *Old Boomy,* p.208.

A PC can persuade Old Boomy to abandon blowing himself up by making a successful **CHA + Speech** test with a difficulty of 4. If the test fails, the robot refuses to speak to the PCs again and continues searching for a nuclear fuel source on his own.

The PCs can help Old Boomy achieve Division by stealing back the nuclear fuel mix from Lil Boomy or providing another similar explosive, such as a mini nuke. To steal the fuel container inside Lil Boomy's compartment, PCs must find a way to distract him, then succeed on an **AGI + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 5. If they fail, Lil Boomy flees full-speed from the settlement, unwilling to let the PCs help his best friend detonate.

PCs can try to convince Lil Boomy to support his friend and give back the nuclear fuel mix by making a **CHA or INT + Speech** test with a difficulty of 5. Reduce the difficulty of the test by 2 if the PCs learned about Old Boomy's sins and explain his need to atone to Lil Boomy. If the test fails, Lil Boomy refuses to follow Old Boomy's wishes. If the test succeeds, Lil Boomy begins to process his grief—knowing he has to say goodbye to his best friend before it is too late.

THE FALLOUT

This quest has the following outcomes:

- **Changed Old Boomy's Mind.** If the PCs convince Old Boomy to give up achieving Division, he questions his faith in Atom and leaves the settlement with Lil Boomy. When the PCs encounter the traveling pair the next time they travel, Lil Boomy stands a guilty guard over a collapsed Old Boomy. The old robot's propulsion systems have failed, and his memory banks are slowly dying.
- **Left Lil Boomy to His Grief.** If the PCs do not help Lil Boomy come to terms with Old Boomy's decision, the two robots never reconcile. Old Boomy achieves Division through other means, and Lil Boomy is left grief-stricken. The next time PCs return to the settlement, Lil Boomy is missing—they may encounter him in the future as a crazed Mr. Handy, obsessed with fixing anything he deems faulty.
- **Helped Lil Boomy Process Grief.** If the PCs successfully console Lil Boomy, the two robots reconcile. That night, the settlement celebrates as Old Boomy achieves Division in a grand explosion. Lil Boomy gives the PCs Old Boomy's last possession, a chem suppressant syringe. He tells them Old Boomy kept it as a reminder of his past. He thinks his friend would approve of the PCs using it for one last good deed in Old Boomy's name. The syringe can be used to great effect against the Last Son of Atom when the PCs confront him during *Main Quest: The Buried City.*

Chem Suppressant Syringe

A pre-filled, autoinjector syringe containing a cloudy liquid. The ingredients and methods used to make this medicine are unknown. The syringe can also serve as a single round of syringer ammo.

Duration: Lasting
Effect: Gain 2 Fatigue and remove one addiction. All other active chems lose their effects, and chems taken during the duration have no effect.

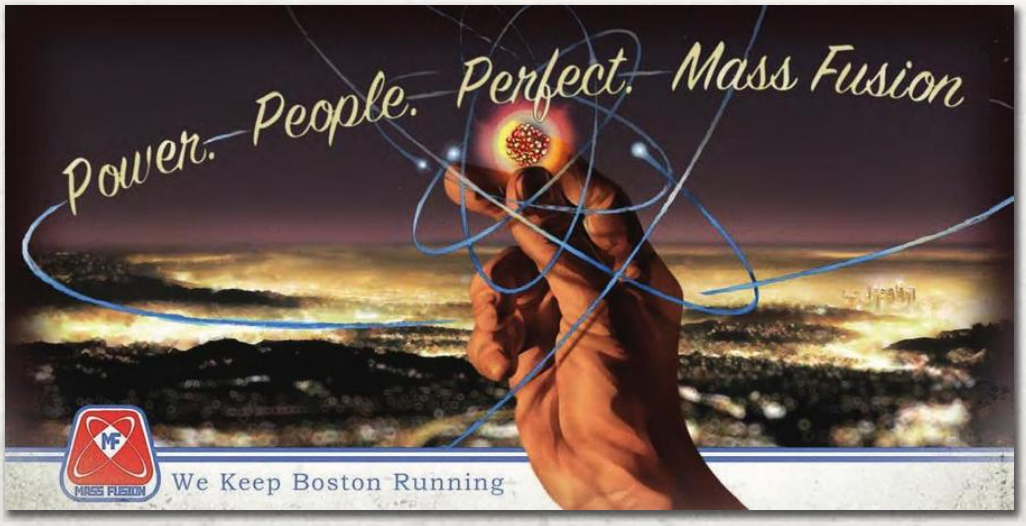
TALKING TO MOTHER ISOLDE

Mother Isolde is keen to talk to the PCs about the Last Son of Atom and his plans. She tells the PCs all she knows, hoping they will end his blasphemy. Some things that may come up during the conversation:

- **"That heretic has no place within our Church. He is a false prophet, his teachings an affront to our beliefs. That is why I exiled him."** Isolde explains the Last Son briefly stayed at the settlement. His teachings, aggressive conversion attempts, and previous evil deeds led to her exiling him. She feels guilty that she let him into her fold, as some of her followers left to join his cult. She fears for them and resents the Last Son for perverting Atom's teachings.
- **"The Children of Atom are neither monsters nor mad, but the Last Son has made us appear so. We promise all we want is peace with the settlements. But first, the heretic's reign of terror must be put to an end."** She is deeply troubled by the death and destruction caused in Atom's name. She wishes the settlements no ill will and does not want her flock to be blamed for the Last Son's actions.
- **"He left in search of ruins of an old-world military base— Whately Research Facility. What resides within is no gift of Atom's."** Isolde reveals that she knows the Last Son's location but does not elaborate on how she received the information. The facility is hidden underground beneath a buried church 12-hours trek west of the crater. The Last Son claimed that he would awaken Atom and open gateways to other universes once he found the facility. He promised those who followed him they would find paradise there—and their enemies would know hell.
- **"The Last Son is a vengeful egomaniac, and now he has weapons he can use to become judge, jury, and executioner."** Whately Research Facility is the site of a large stockpile of chemical weapons. Isolde calls the weapons blasphemous. She emphasizes the devastation the Last Son could cause if he were to turn them on his enemies. The Crater of Atom and other settlements would never be safe from him.

If the PCs mention Sister Dawn, Mother Isolde's demeanor shifts to one of grief.

- **"Sister Dawn was a daughter to me. One of Atom's brightest and most faithful. Her passing is a sadness we must all bear."** Isolde is upset to hear of Dawn's fate and passing. A PC can make a **PER + Speech** test with a difficulty of 3 to notice Isolde's attitude is one of guilt when she struggles to talk about Dawn. If questioned, she reveals that she asked Dawn to befriend and keep tabs on the Last Son when he lived at their settlement. After exiling him, Isolde asked Dawn to join his followers and spy on his activities in Whately Research Facility. She knows in her heart that the Last Son transformed her daughter into a monster as an act of petty revenge. She is grateful that her daughter is at rest, at last.





MAIN QUEST: THE BURIED CITY

This quest becomes available when the PCs learn of Whately Research Facility's location or find it independently. **Add 2 AP per PC to the GM's pool when the quest begins.**

The Buried City is the final main quest of Winter of Atom, and you should review the quest in its entirety before running it. To make the endgame more specific to your unique version of the quest line, consider the following preparations:

- Add additional lore to Whately Research Facility to suit your tastes.
- Populate the facility with Children of Atom or other NPCs your players already know.
- Prepare ideas for every vision PCs will experience during *Scene Two: Descent Into Madness*.
- Consider the creepy and epic way you will present the final encounter with the Last Son of Atom in *Scene Three: Atom's Glow*.

Directed to a military facility buried beneath the Glowing Sea, the PCs arrive just in time to confront the Last Son of Atom before he can enact his plan to bring about the Day of Division. Inside Whately Research Facility lie the remains of an insidious pre-war military chemical weapons test program run by a mad cult leader—General John Whately, the Last Son's ancestor. A secret elevator in Whately's office leads deep beneath the earth to the excavated ruins of a city that pre-dates known history, filled with strange technology that defies human understanding.

The Last Son spent several weeks experimenting on his followers using the crystalline device he found in the buried city. The device's energy field inflicts the followers with vivid hallucinations, shattering their psyches and leaving them in a violent state. The Last Son barely clings to his sanity while he finishes integrating the device into his custom power armor so he can control it. When he returns to the surface, he plans to expand its energy field to impact the minds of everyone in the region.

In this quest, PCs have the following objectives:

- Explore the pre-war research facility and locate the Last Son of Atom.
- Embrace or resist the ancient device's visions of alternate realities.
- Prevent the Day of Division or join the Last Son of Atom.

Whether the device truly allows peoples' minds to travel to peaceful worlds—or merely causes vivid hallucinations controlled by the Last Son—much of the Commonwealth will be plunged into chaos unless the PCs stop the Day of Division from coming to pass.

CONTENT WARNINGS AND CHANGING SCENES

This quest contains elements of cosmic, body, and supernatural horror. Gamemasters may wish to alter the quest in one or more of the following ways to better suit the needs of their group:

- Avoid describing unexplainable supernatural events and focus more on the facility ruins and the remains of Whately's cult.
- During *Scene Two: Descent Into Madness*, allow players the opportunity to describe their characters' visions of other universes rather than inflict them with the nightmares provided.

SCENE ONE: WHATELY RESEARCH FACILITY

Begin this scene when the PCs travel to Whately Research Facility—a 12-hour journey at normal pace from the Crater of Atom. The hatch to the facility lies in the wreckage of a half-buried Catholic church located in the western Glowing Sea. PCs enter the church by crawling through a hole in its shattered roof. When they do, read or paraphrase the following:

Atomic ash mixes with snow, coming through the hole in the church's roof and leaving a thick coat over everything inside. The church pews are smashed and scattered across the ground. Some of those jagged stone ruins have been dragged into a large circle to form a garish firepit. The pit does not look as though it has seen use in a long time.

A large, cracked brass church bell lies overturned near the buried altar. Near the altar, a ten-foot hole has been excavated in the earth. At the bottom of that hole lies a heavy metal hatch with a rusty handle. The hatch features no writing or viewing port.

The church interior has been picked clean of any valuable loot. However, it is an ideal place to set up camp—hostile creatures do not enter the church.

Opening the hatch reveals a rubble-strewn access ramp descending to a battered elevator. The Children of Atom recently repaired the elevator. The elevator's only two buttons are in the form of yellow faces—one smiling and one frowning. When someone presses the smiling button, the elevator begins its shaky 100-foot descent to **R1. Reception Ruins** in the Whately Research Facility.

EXPLORING THE FACILITY

The facility is a particularly deadly area far from nearby settlements where PCs are likely to meet friendly faces. If any PCs die in the facility, players may create a new character who is already down in the facility for an unknown reason with their own motives for putting an end to the Last Son's reign of terror.

Much of Whately Research Facility is dark, requiring a light source to explore. Its rooms are far enough underground to be unaffected by the Glowing Sea's deadly radioactivity.

Atmosphere. The facility is the last major area PCs explore in **Winter of Atom**. There, they experience unsettling senses and unexplainable phenomena. Use each room's **Increasing Tension** as a guide to encourage players to engage with the creepy environment between encounters. **Winter of Atom** provides few concrete answers for supernatural events or the history behind Whately's cult and experiments. You can imagine more detailed explanations to share with players or leave much of the facility an eerie mystery.

Resting. PCs face a deadly gauntlet while fighting their way through the facility. Allow them one opportunity to rest safely during their exploration prior to reaching General Whately's Office. If they rest multiple times, interrupt their attempts with attacks by enemies presented later in this quest—several Children of Atom Berserkers or a group of five Protectron minions.

Scavenging. The Children of Atom have heavily searched most of the facility for loot. Scavenging tests have a difficulty of 2 for each room, with a complication range of 4 (17-20). Scavenging a room takes 10 minutes. Each room yields a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 4 items (one additional item per AP spent) from the Whately Research Facility Scavenging Table. When there is a scavenging complication, describe something unsettling or supernatural the PCs encounter or add 2 AP to the GM's pool.

WHATELY RESEARCH FACILITY SCAVENGING TABLE

2D20 ROLL	ITEM	2D20 ROLL	ITEM
2	Mini Nuke (1+1 ☢)	22	Perfectly Preserved Pie
3-4	Heavy Combat Armor (either arm, leg, helmet, or chest piece) with Polymer Material mod	23	Whiskey
5-6	Gamma Gun with Electric Signal Carrier Antennae mod	24	**CHEMICAL WEAPON TEST PATIENT CORONER REPORT (SCRIBBLED ON THE BACK:** "Ha ha HA what a GAS")
7	Syringer with Recoil Compensating Stock mod	25	**CHURCH OF ATOM PROPAGANDA PAMPHLET (TITLED:** "Divide Us, O Great One!")
8-9	Syringer Ammo (4+2 ☢) of any one type	26	Holotape (a man whispers, "I made a mistake. I should never have gone down there. That *thing* isn't God.")
10-11	Shotgun Shells (6+3 ☢)	27	Holotape (a woman praying feverishly to the Black Star Who Dreams Beneath, begging to be devoured)
12	.44 Magnum Rounds (4+2 ☢)	28	Holotape (The Last Son of Atom exclaims, "I found Him! Atom is here. If you are listening, rejoice! The Great Division begins today.")
13-14	Gamma Rounds (4+2 ☢)	29	Obsidian Statuette of a Tentacled Star (smeared with blood and brains)
15	Pre-War Formal Clothing	30	A Preserved Human Hand (still moving with a life of its own)
16	Pre-War Military Uniform	31	Behavioral Analysis Mod
17	Lab Coat	32-34	Addictol
18	Hazmat Suit	35-36	Super Stimpak
19	Welder's Visor	37-38	Berry Mentats
20	Hard Hat	39	Ultra Jet
21	Utility Overalls	40	X-Cell

R1. RECEPTION RUINS

The elevator creaks open, revealing the ruins of a dark reception room. Above the central reception desk hangs a clock— its hands stuck at the time 9:47. An overhead sign reads: Whately Research Facility.

Most of the room's walls have collapsed, creating a perilous maze of rubble. Cubicles and side offices lie impossibly buried. Navigating the labyrinth requires squeezing between wreckage where anything could be waiting around a corner.

On the far side of the room, an eerie red light shines through cracks in the ruins.

Increasing Tension. As PCs explore, they might sense the following:

- **Sights.** Skeletons wearing pre-war military garb, creeping shadows that disappear around corners, and the fresh corpse of a Child of Atom grinning ear-to-ear
- **Sounds.** Echoing footsteps, a rubble wall collapsing, and incoherent babbling of voices in the distance
- **Smells.** Rotten eggs, copper, and chlorine

Reception Desk. The corpse's nametag belongs to Lieutenant Jake Ripley. A tattered map of the facility is tucked away in Ripley's uniform pocket. Inside the desk drawer lies an old, yellowed photo depicting a handsome young soldier and a sad-looking blonde bride—getting married before an eerie black altar engraved with sun and constellation symbols.

Lurking Predator. A Deathskull Radscorpion waits, burrowed beneath the rubble. It emerges to make a surprise attack against the most vulnerable PC when the party scavenges or tries to open the biometric lock to **R5. General Whately's Office**. The radscorpion does not pursue PCs who flee into the smaller office or narrow nearby tunnels.

Exits. On the room's far side, shattered stairs lead down to **R2. Collapsing Corridors**. PCs can climb the twisted metal wreckage of a fallen overlook and reach the second-floor blast door to **R5. General Whately's Office**. The door features an advanced biometric lock that requires an unassisted **INT + Science** test with a difficulty of 8 to unlock. If their test fails, PCs can only open the door with **General Whately's Hand** (p.223).

R2. COLLAPSING CORRIDORS

This long, 15-foot-wide main hall leads over mounds of human waste and crumbling architecture. Smaller hallways split off from the main corridor, their paths blocked by fallen ceilings. Office rooms for research directors and security forces lie almost entirely buried in the rubble. Fevered voices whisper prayers to Atom from somewhere deeper into the pitch-black corridors.

Increasing Tension. As PCs explore, they might sense the following:

- **Sights.** Skeletal arms stretching through ruins, the ghost of a stern-faced older woman in a lab coat passing through walls, and more smiling Children of Atom corpses
- **Sounds.** A dripping water leak, shuffling footsteps, and a person's happy groan
- **Smells.** Rotten eggs, cheap lipstick, and sweat

Children of Atom. 4 Children of Atom Berserkers blindly roam the halls, wearing robes pierced through with metal bars and plates. They whisper soft prayers while they hallucinate about alternate universes. PCs can sneak past them by making a **group AGI + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 5. If the test fails or PCs make a lot of noise by scavenging or other activities, the Children see them as mutant monsters invading their peaceful worlds—and attack.

Deathskull Radscorpion

Level 26, Mutated Arachnid, Legendary Creature (558 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
12	12	4	—	3

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
144	24	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
8(All)	6(All)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **CLAW: Body + Melee** (TN 16) 12 Piercing, Vicious Physical damage
- **STING: Body + Melee** (TN 16) 9 Persistent, Debilitating Poison damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

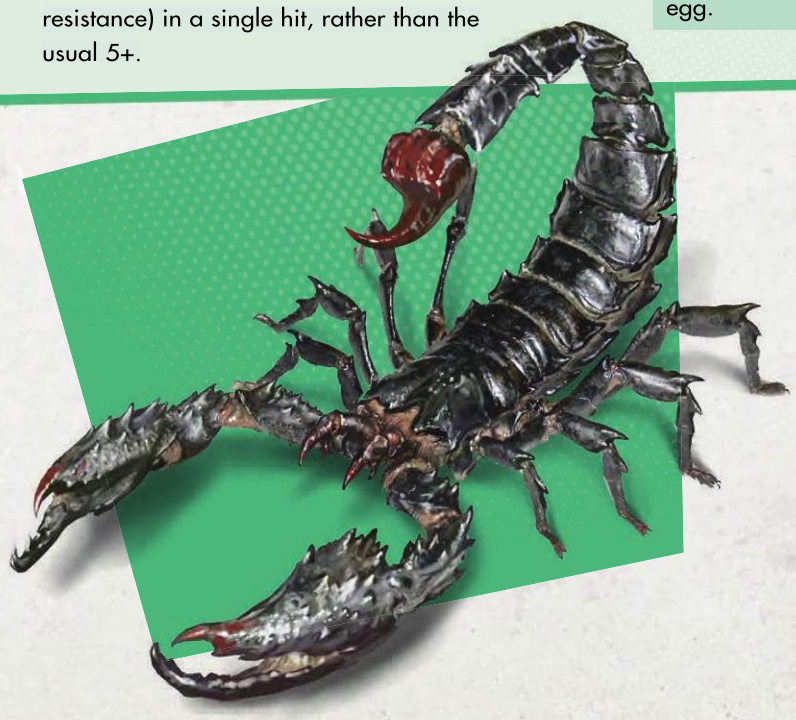
- **IMMUNITIES:** The radscorpion is immune to Radiation and Poison damage and their effects.
- **MONSTROUS:** When the radscorpion misses with an attack, it immediately makes the same attack as a free action without increasing the test's difficulty. The new attack must target a creature in the same Range that it has not attacked yet this turn. Additionally, it only suffers a critical hit if an attack inflicts 14+ damage (after damage resistance) in a single hit, rather than the usual 5+.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **BURROW:** The deathskull radscorpion can tunnel under the ground to strike at attackers. Burrowing into the ground requires a major action. While burrowing, the radscorpion is not visible and cannot be targeted by attacks. It burrows two zones as a major action, moving underneath existing zones. Emerging from its burrow requires a minor action; when it does so, the radscorpion inflicts +2 on all attacks until the end of its turn.
- **VICE GRIP:** Whenever the radscorpion inflicts a critical hit with its claw attack, its target becomes grappled and cannot move until they escape. The radscorpion can move or burrow while grappling, taking the target with them. A creature can break the grapple by making a STR + Athletics test with a difficulty of 3 while within Reach—or by inflicting a critical hit on the radscorpion.
- **WEAK SPOT:** Attacks that choose to target the radscorpion's head ignore its Physical and Energy DR.

INVENTORY

BUTCHERY: Butchering the radscorpion's corpse requires an END + Survival test with a difficulty of 1. A success yields 1 portions of radscorpion meat. If the test results in at least one Effect, butchery also produces 2 Rare Materials and a radscorpion egg.



Children Of Atom Berserker

Level 14, Human, Normal Character (102 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
8	5	7	5	5	7	5

SKILLS			
Athletics	3	Sneak	2
Melee Weapons	5	Speech	2
Repair	1	Survival	4
Small Guns	6		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
21	12	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
230 lbs.	+1	-

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
3(Head, Arms, Legs, Torso)	4(Head, Arms, Legs, Torso)	5(All)	0

ATTACKS

- **IMPROVED COMBAT SHOTGUN: AGI + Small Guns** (TN 13), 7 Spread, Vicious Physical damage, Fire Rate 2, Range Close, Inaccurate, Two-Handed
- **HEATED SUPER SLEDGE: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 13), 8 Piercing Energy damage, Two-Handed

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **RAD RESISTANT:** The berserker can survive moderately high radioactivity for prolonged periods. They have Radiation DR 5.
- **LET RIP:** Once per combat, the berserker may 'let rip' with a volley from their Improved Combat Shotgun. This adds the weapon's Fire Rate of 2 to the weapon's damage for a single attack (for 9 total).
- **ATOMIC RAGE:** While the berserker has less than 5 HP remaining, they gain +3 to all DR, and their attacks deal +3 damage.

INVENTORY

Cage Armor, Improved Combat Shotgun (7 damage), 2d20 Shotgun Shells, Wealth 3

Exits. Shattered stairs lead up to **R1. Reception Ruins**. A cargo elevator door waits at the far end of the corridor. The elevator lies broken at the bottom of the shaft. Access ladders lead down 200 feet to **R3. Testing Floor**.

If a PC makes a **PER + Scavenging** test with a difficulty of 3, they notice the elevator door is wired to a trap placed inside the shaft. Disarming the trap requires an **AGI or INT + Explosives** test with a difficulty of 4. If the disarm test fails or PCs open the door, the trap detonates—anyone nearby is doused in jet fuel and rocked by the heavy explosion, taking 8 Persistent, Piercing, Energy damage.

R3. TESTING FLOOR

Beyond the elevator waits a concrete chamber that stinks of sulfur, held up by thick steel columns. Ancient, shattered skeletons lie strewn about the room's debris. Dozens of three-foot-tall metal cylinders are placed strategically around the floor. Each canister features the painted logo of a choking Vault Boy.

On the far side of the room stand two open doors. One door leads into darkness while a sickly green glow spills through the other. A small army of heavily-armed robots patrol the chamber, blocking the path from the elevator.

Two groups of 5 Protectrons each patrol while 1 mighty Sentry Bot guards the door to R4. The room's steel columns provide 3 of cover. The robots begin at Medium range from the elevator entrance. The Sentry Bot stays put while the Protectrons advance. PCs can escape back up the elevator shaft.

Test Subject Storage. Add 1 AP to the GM's pool for the Sentry Bot's Aggressive ability. If the trap at the top of the elevator shaft explodes, the forewarned robots attack as soon as PCs reach the bottom of the chamber entrance.

Otherwise, PCs can plan and make a surprise attack. Sneaking through the room unnoticed requires an **AGI + Sneak** test with a difficulty of 4—or a group test with a difficulty of 6. A PC can reprogram the sentry bot if they approach unnoticed and make an **INT + Science** test with a difficulty of 4—if they fail either test, the robots notice their intrusion and attack.

The hallucinating robots believe they are in robot heaven: a dark land of rolling gears where humans silently attend to their every desire. During combat, they reprimand humanoid PCs for being naughty man-bots—and robot PCs for being disgraceful traitors to Atom.

Chemical Weapon Canisters. Attacks in this room have a complication range of 2 (19-20) because of the placement of the canisters. Whenever a complication is rolled during the encounter, canisters break open due to crossfire. A dangerous amount of chemical gas fills the air, inflicting 2 Stun, Poison damage on everyone in the room.

Children Of Atom Protectron

Level 9, Robot,
Minion Creature (22 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
7	6	4	4	2

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
1	13	1

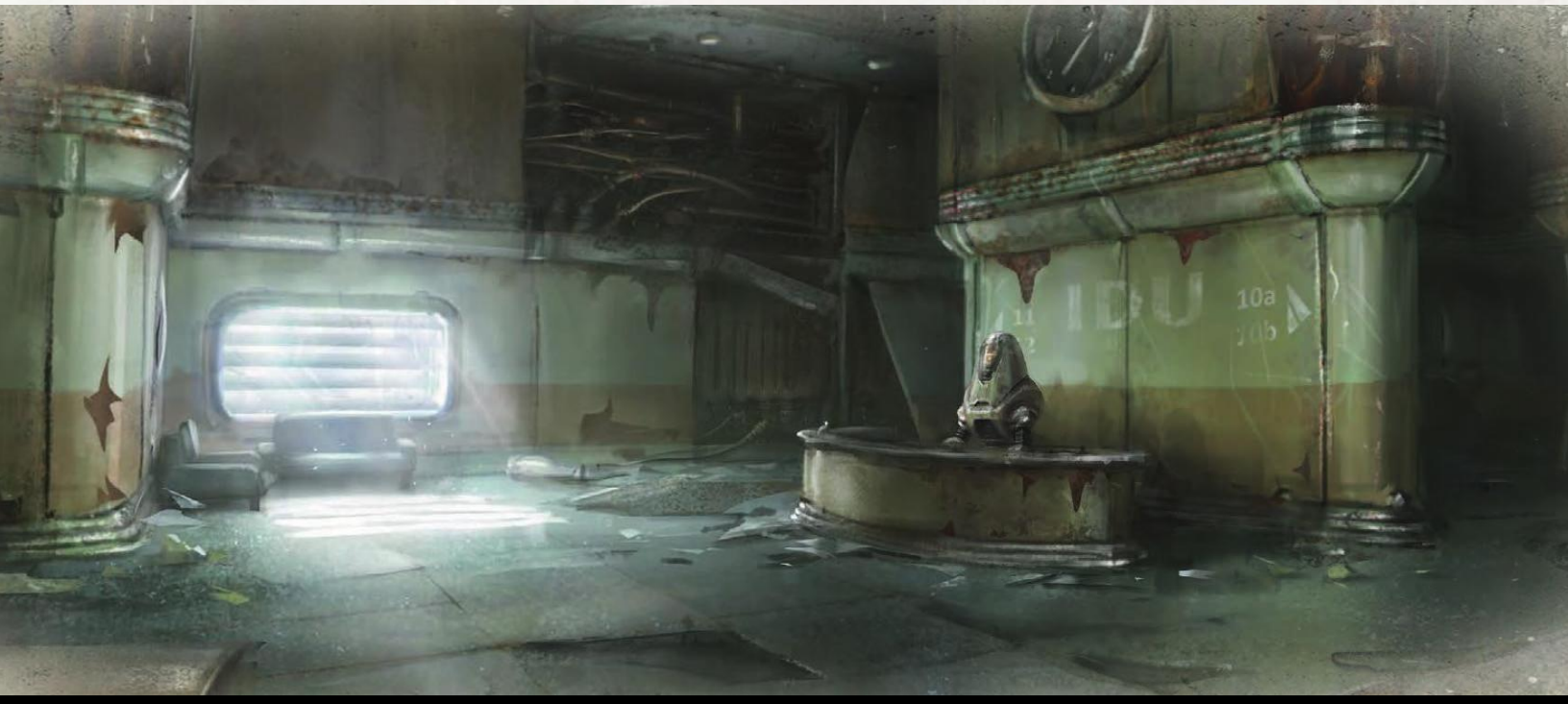
PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
4(All)	3(All)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **ARM LASERS: Body + Guns** (TN 11), 5 Energy damage, Piercing 1, Range C
- **CRUSH, KILL, DESTROY: Body + Melee** (TN 11) 5 Physical damage, Burst

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The protectron is immune to Poison and Radiation damage and their effects. Also, it is immune to all diseases.
- **FINAL GLORIOUS DIVISION:** When the protectron is defeated, it explodes, showering the nearby area with its fusion core's radiation. All creatures within Reach range take 5 Radiation damage.



Children Of Atom Sentry Bot

Level 15, Robot, Mighty Creature (219 XP)

BODY	MIND	MELEE	GUNS	OTHER
12	6	3	3	3

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
52	18	1

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
6(All)	5(All)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **ATOMIC CHAIN GUN: Body + Guns** (TN 15), 8[CD] Piercing, Radioactive Physical damage, Burst, Range M
- **UNARMED: Body + Melee** (TN 15), 8 Vicious Physical damage
- **SELF-DESTRUCT: Body + Melee** (TN 15), 12 Physical damage, Blast, Range Reach

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The sentry bot is immune to Poison and Radiation damage and their effects. Also, it is immune to all diseases.
- **KEEN SENSE:** The sentry bot can attempt to detect creatures or objects by reducing the difficulty of PER tests by 1 (to a minimum of 0).
- **AGGRESSIVE:** When the Sentry Bot enters a scene, it generates 1 AP for the group pool or GM—depending on the bot's current loyalty.
- **NO PLACE LIKE ROBOT HEAVEN:** The sentry bot's reprogramming by the Children of Atom makes it resilient to hacking. Attempts to hack or reprogram it require an INT + Science test with a difficulty of 4.
- **SELF-DESTRUCT:** If both the sentry bot's arms are injured—or if it is reduced to 26 HP or fewer—it moves to the nearest enemy and uses its major action to self-destruct on its next turn. The attack is centered on itself and destroys the sentry bot.

INVENTORY

SALVAGE: Scavengers can salvage from a destroyed Sentry bot by making an INT + Science test with a difficulty of 1. A success yields a fusion core and 3 units of Rare Materials.

Exits. Elevator shaft access ladders lead up to **R3. Collapsing Corridors.** One door leads to a dark, empty chemical storage room, while the guarded door leads to **R4. Test Subject Storage**.



R4. TEST SUBJECT STORAGE

Wide metal stairs descend to a circular chamber, its floor obfuscated by a rolling layer of cold fog. An inert mechanical crane arm hangs over a bulky command console in the center of the room.

Nine large glass storage tanks line the walls. Each tank is filled with liquid nitrogen and contains four aluminum cryogenic pods with glass windows. The windows reveal frozen faces within the pods. Only two tanks are lit and working—they illuminate the chamber with a grotesque green glow.

Increasing Tension. As PCs explore, they might sense the following:

- **Sights.** Run-down maintenance bots that appear to be praying, swirling shapes in the fog, and constellations crudely spray painted on walls
- **Sounds.** Bubbling liquids, gas hissing from broken pipes, and fingernails scraping against glass from somewhere indiscernible
- **Smells.** Rotten eggs, maple syrup, and carbon dioxide

GM NOTE: CONTINUING THE QUEST

PCs must find a way into **R5. General Whately's Office** to proceed. If they struggle to decide what to do next, guide them to retrieve General Whately's Hand by describing it as unusually large—just like the handprint on the biometric scanner.

Cryo Pods. All frozen individuals are dead—the cryogenics failed. Only skeletons remain in the broken tanks. The two working tanks contain preserved corpses:

- Three proud scientists wearing pre-war military uniforms
- The upper torso of a Protectron painted with the symbol of Atom
- Two Children of Atom men, frozen forever in a tender lovers' embrace
- **John Whately**—perfectly preserved—wearing Four-Star General regalia. His neatly trimmed black beard is frozen. His dead, icy-blue eyes are open wide in terror. The Last Son of Atom previously removed him long enough to hack off one of his hands—but left the other. PCs can remove General Whately's Hand to unlock his office.

Command Console. The crane arm can remove and open individual pods by operating the console. Logs indicate the only recent activity was new user **Adam Whately** several weeks ago—they opened General John Whately's pod before returning it.

Exits. Stairs ascend from the storage chamber to **R3. Testing Floor**.



R5. GENERAL WHATELY'S OFFICE

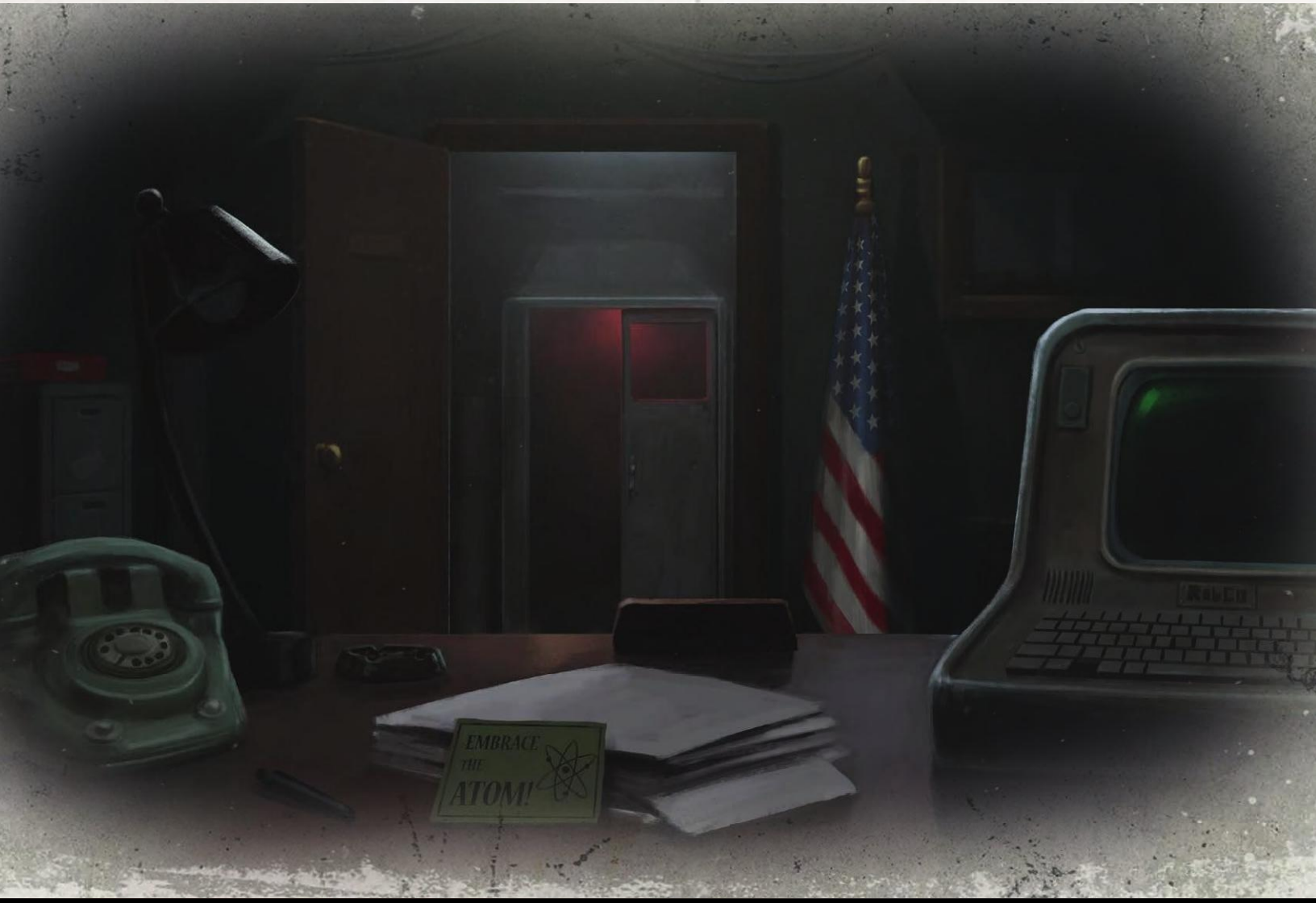
Miraculously, this small office remains in good condition. Its hanging fluorescent lamp flickers eerily, powered by a mysterious source. On the right wall above a moth-eaten couch, an old painting of the Washington Monument rests askew. Filing cabinets lie overturned along the left wall.

A dusty red rug cuts through the middle of the room, leading to an alcove behind a set of heavy purple drapes. Beyond, a battered old wheelchair sits behind a rusty desk. The American Flag hangs limply from the wall, barely brushing against the top of a working computer.

Whately's Office is unoccupied and well-preserved. Several Church of Atom pamphlets lie scattered about, and footprints through the dust suggest many Children have come and gone through this room.

Filing Cabinets. The few remaining files detail Whately's cruel chemical weapon experiments on volunteer citizens—kept frozen in cryostasis to observe its impact on their conditions. Mysteriously, Hancock's Tricorn Hat sits atop one of the filing cabinets, unless it was returned to him previously. The hat appears to be 500 years old and smells like mothballs. If the PCs give it back to him, Hancock will literally lose his mind.

Desk. The cracked walnut desk plaque is embellished with four stars and reads John Whately; Protect and Serve. Its single drawer requires a **PER + Lockpick** test with a difficulty of 4 to unlock. It contains Whately's pistol—**The Magnumnomicon**—loaded with 4+2 .44 magnum rounds, and a King James Bible. Whately scrawled furious rants about Christianity's lies in the bible's margins—claiming the only true God is The Black Star Who Dreams Beneath.





THE MAGNUMNOMICON

Ammunition: .44 Magnum Rounds

"With each pull of the trigger, another mind is opened to the incomprehensible."

WEAPON NAME	WEAPON TYPE	DAMAGE RATING	DAMAGE EFFECTS	DAMAGE TYPE	FIRE RATE	RANGE	QUALITIES	WEIGHT	RARITY
The Magnumnomicon	Small Guns	8	Vicious	Special	1	C	Close Quarters	6	Unique

This magnum features a mix of heavy iron in its frame. Strange runes are engraved into its solid gold barrel. The magnum's oversized grip is crafted from rough leather of a questionable origin. Tentacle-like symbols are etched into the leather's surface. Ammunition fired from the Magnumnomicon becomes imbued with strange energies of an unidentified scientific origin.

Commissioned by General John Whately, this one-of-a-kind gun incorporates several teachings of his family—most notably, to never raise up that which you are not prepared to put down. It must have been a weird coincidence that the gunsmiths involved in its creation died in mysterious accidents.

Special: The Magnumnomicon inflicts all types of damage. Roll damage as usual, and then reduce the total by the target's lowest Damage Resistance (Physical, Energy, Radiation, or Poison) in the location hit.

When this weapon's attack reduces a non-Robot character or creature to 0 HP, they immediately die, and their corpse begins to mutate in terrifying ways. If you spend 3 AP, the slain target rises again on your next turn with half its maximum HP and gains immunity to Radiation and Poison damage. The risen target acts immediately after you in the initiative order and follows your commands. At the end of the current scene, it melts into a radioactive puddle, leaving behind a cloud of stomach-churning green fumes.

The Magnumnomicon can be modified using any mod applicable to a .44 Pistol.

Computer. A prompt appears when a PC uses the computer: "Will you wake the Dreamer? Y/N?" If they do not type Y, a sobbing Vault Boy animation flickers on the screen, then disappears. When they type Y, a series of disturbing videos play:

- A serpent devours its own tail.
- Atomic explosions flatten thirteen significant landmarks on different continents.
- Black-robed individuals ritually sacrifice an elderly man with wickedly curved daggers.
- Tree-sized tentacles writhe, intertwined around a star-shaped obsidian statue.
- At a sunny family cookout, everyone smiles and laughs way too much.

Afterward, the floor in the middle of the office rises, revealing a secret mining elevator.

Exits. The office door leads to **R1. Reception Ruins**. The secret elevator descends to the buried city a mile below—proceed to *Scene Two: Descent Into Madness*. Encourage the PCs to rest, recover, and prepare before they descend. This is an excellent opportunity for one final campfire scene between the characters before the end of the quest line.

SCENE TWO: DESCENT INTO MADNESS

As the PCs begin their long descent to the buried city, events do not go as planned when they enter the most potent area of the ancient device's maddening energy field. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *The descent from Whately's Office is long, uncomfortable, and pitch black. The rusted cage of the rickety mining elevator rattles violently. It is difficult to know how far you drop—hundreds of feet, a thousand feet, maybe miles beneath the earth. The deeper the elevator goes, the louder its gears shriek. It feels like forever before you finally come to an abrupt stop, kicking up a cloud of old debris and dust.*

Give PCs a moment to interact after the elevator comes to a stop. When the elevator door opens, PCs immediately begin to experience visions of other realities. Each character finds themself alone—without their companions—in an unexpected place. Choose one PC to start with and allow them to explore until they resolve their **moment of choice**. For groups that prefer not to split up the party, several or all PCs can experience the same vision. However, each character must have their own moment of choice.

VISIONS

Each PC experiences a unique vision that plays out over a short scene. Their experience might be a glimpse into an alternate universe or merely a vivid hallucination—but present it as reality. Craft each short scene so that it is meaningful to the player and their character. Every vision features the following elements:

- A reality that personally appeals to them
- At least one important person they care about
- A growing sense of dread
- A moment of choice to either embrace or resist their new reality

REALITY

When crafting a vision's reality, consider what you know of the character. What are their goals? Do they mourn something they lost? Do they have a favorite place or faction? What are their flaws and vices? Their first impression of this reality should be of a near paradise. Examples:

- A peaceful settlement of Commonwealth settlers and Children of Atom living in harmony
- A powerful settlement where everyone worships and fears them
- A pre-war suburban paradise of blue skies, white picket fences, dogs barking, and friendly neighbors

IMPORTANT PERSON

The important person or people should create a strong emotional reaction for the character. They give the PC precisely what they need, whether it be comfort, catharsis, forgiveness, or something else entirely. Examples:

- A dead friend, family member, or lover is happy to reunite
- A legendary figure, or someone they look up to, tells them how proud they are
- A bitter rival admits that the PC is better than them—and offers to serve them

PCs may not trust or understand what they are experiencing. The important person does what they can to keep them calm. They explain that there are infinite universes, some very different than theirs and some very similar—but happier. They tell the PC they have begun to cross over to a better world.

DREAD

As the scene continues, increase the tension by describing elements of the world that feel wrong. Consider things you know the character (not the player) is afraid of or disturbed by, then introduce them to the vision. Present 1-3 increasingly unsettling occurrences before moving to the moment of choice. Examples:

- People begin acting oddly—speaking in a non-existent language and smiling too wide.
- The environment becomes less real—colors bleed, the sun turns black, or buildings collapse.
- A deadly monster, such as the gigapede or Sister Dawn, appears in the distance.

MOMENT OF CHOICE

The vision's important person presents the moment of choice. As events become more horrific, they tell the PC that the world they came from is trying to drag them back. To resist, they must state out loud that they choose to stay in this world. The NPC implores the PC to decide to stay by leaning on whatever emotional connection is between them.

After a character resolves their moment of choice, start the next PC's vision. When all characters have resolved their moments, allow characters who chose to resist their alternate reality to attempt escaping their vision (see Escaping the Vision)—one at a time.

Embracing the Alternate Reality. If the PC states out loud that they choose to stay, all the strange occurrences fade away, and the vision becomes peaceful. Find a good moment to end the scene—it should feel like a final happy moment for the character. It is not.

Add 2 AP to the GM's pool. The PC remains trapped within their mind and begins *Scene Three: Atom's Glow* under the Last Son of Atom's control.

Resisting the Alternate Reality. If the PC does not state out loud that they choose to stay, the vision becomes hostile towards them. Friendly NPCs may grow violent and monstrous, cursing them for past sins and blaming them for ruining paradise. The environment itself may come to life and attack them. Find an ominous note to end the scene on—it should feel like the PC is trapped in hell, a terrifying final moment for their character. And they very well might be.

If all the PCs remain trapped in their visions, decide how to proceed. Some options include:

- Skip to *Scene Three: Atom's Glow, The Fallout: Other Worlds*. Winter of Atom, as written, ends there.
- Allow one or more PCs to succeed at cost, escaping their vision and waking up. They gain 2 Fatigue that lasts until the PCs conclude Winter of Atom.

After all moments of choice and attempts to escape the visions are complete, begin *Scene Three: Atom's Glow.*

Escaping The Vision

After resisting their alternate reality, a PC's vision becomes hostile towards them. Everything they encounter wants to hurt them, physically or emotionally. To escape and regain control of their senses, PC(s) must succeed on three **vision tests** before failing three tests. A vision test can be any appropriate **Attribute + Skill** or **Attack** test. As the scene unfolds, present varied challenges to force PCs to make different kinds of tests. Every time they fail a test or roll a complication, the situation becomes more nightmarish and dire.

The base test difficulty is 3 with a complication range of 2 (19-20). Modify the difficulty in the following ways (to a minimum of 1):

- -2 if they take *Berry Mentats, Ultra Jet*, **and** *X-Cell* during this scene
- -1 for each test previously succeeded during this scene
- +1 for each complication rolled during this scene
- +1 per additional PC for assisted tests if characters experience the same vision

Each escape attempt has one of two outcomes. After revealing the outcome's final moment, begin the next PC's escape attempt.

- **Failure.** The PC witnesses the explosion of an atomic bomb. Its blast wave destroys everything in the vicinity and turns them to ash. Then they wake up, see the elevator door open, and the vision begins anew just as it did before. Their mind remains trapped in a loop, and they start *Scene Three: Atom's Glow* under the Last Son's control.
- **Success.** The PC finds the secret elevator again and can escape into it. If they do, they witness the explosion of an atomic bomb nearby just before the elevator door closes. When the door opens again, the vision ends before they see what is on the other side.



SCENE THREE: ATOM'S GLOW

PCs who escaped their visions in the previous scene wake up in an underground tunnel. Unknown to them, during their mind-bending experiences, their bodies delved deeper into the tunnels at the bottom of the elevator shaft.

PCs who did not escape their visions are mysteriously absent at the start of this scene—their bodies continued further to the end of the tunnel, drawn by the Last Son of Atom's energy field. They are currently under his thrall, while their minds remain trapped in visions of alternate worlds. Do not reveal their whereabouts until the rest of the party reaches **R6. The Obsidian Obelisk**.

Give the waking characterst a few moments to get their bearings. Then read or paraphrase the following:

You find yourself in a tunnel dimly lit by iridescent crystals embedded into its jagged walls. The obsidian passage is nearly twenty feet wide, twelve feet high, and slopes steeply downward. The air is hot and choking, without a breeze to clear it. Chisel marks scar the walls and floor. A few signs of human excavation remain—broken tools, digging machines with battered drills, abandoned lanterns left unlit, and tracks of many footprints that zigzag through the dirt.

A deep, recognizable voice begins to echo off the walls, coming from somewhere lower in the tunnel. The Last Son of Atom's words sound strained and a little mad.

"Let's talk of graves. Of worms and eulogies. Let's make atomic dust our sermon—and with rainy eyes—write sorrow in the ruined ashes. For you have but mistook me all this while. I live with canned dog food, like you. I feel want and taste grief. Need friends. How can you say to me that I am a king?"

Increasing Tension. As the PCs explore, they might sense the following:

- **Sights.** Drooling Children of Atom huddled up against the walls, foul liquid dripping from the ceiling, and pulsating patches of alien plants that grow out of the stone
- **Sounds.** A high-pitched whirring, deep chanting in the distance, and the echo of the Last Son's occasional prayers giving thanks to Atom for his Division
- **Smells.** Rotten eggs, ammonia, and something unrecognizable and very unpleasant

If PCs scavenge in the tunnels, they can take samples of the crystals of the strange crystals or plants present to trade later, otherwise they don't find anything useful to their lives on the surface. The Last Son does not respond if they call out to him.

If PCs return to the facility instead of delving deeper into the tunnels—or seem unsure of where to go next—the Last Son and any enthralled PCs come to them instead. Adjust the scene from **R6. The Obsidian Obelisk** accordingly.

Exits. A several-minute walk down the tunnel in the direction of the Last Son's voice leads to **R6. The Obsidian Obelisk**. Ascending the tunnel in the opposite direction for ten minutes leads to the elevator connected to **R5. General Whately's Office.**

R6. THE OBSIDIAN OBELISK

The Children of Atom only managed to excavate a tiny portion of the buried city that pre-dates known history before the Last Son uncovered the crystalline device he'd long dreamt of. The PCs arrive after the Last Son finally integrates the device into his power armor. While wearing the modified armor, he controls the actions of anyone under the effects of the device's energy field. Wherever he goes, the device's energy field affects the minds of creatures within several miles.

When the PCs encounter the Last Son of Atom, read or paraphrase the following:

The excavated chamber beyond reveals a small portion of a buried ancient city. Three star-shaped buildings of smooth obsidian lie partially toppled. Beyond them extends a massive abyss descending into endless darkness. From the chasm's depths, pale purple tentacles the width of tree trunks emerge. There are dozens of the grotesque, gently writhing tendrils. They spread throughout the area, clinging for purchase on the walls and ceiling.

A tall, obsidian obelisk rises like a finger in the chamber's center —pointing to the world above. Mysterious hieroglyphs are inscribed into each of the statue's four sides, glowing with a cold blue light. Several shadowy figures stand around the obelisk, too dark to make out from here.

Allow PCs a moment to prepare before they proceed. If they call out to the Last Son of Atom, he merely invites them to join him so they can speak peacefully. If they attack, proceed to *Encounter-3A: The Last Son of Atom*. When they approach, read or paraphrase the following:

The Last Son of Atom stands with his back turned to the obelisk, watching your approach. He is mounted in dark red-steel power armor painted with yellow atomic symbols. A fist-sized cluster of crystalline shards embeds the Last Son's chest plate, glowing with the same light as the obelisk. A modified gamma gun is attached to his hip. Bladed biomechanical tendrils hang from his steel arms. The Last Son's helmet is transparent, revealing most of his face. He looks gaunt and sickly—most of his hair has fallen out, and dark circles ring his yellowed eyes.

The Last Son raises his hands with a peaceful gesture and addresses you in a calm, slightly strained voice. "Welcome to the City of Atom, my persistent friends. I am certain you have many questions. Before you ask them, hear my offer. It is not too late for you to know Atom's Glow."

Enthralled PCs. Any PCs under the Last Son's thrall are present, standing guard around him. Describe their expressions as vacant, their eyes glowing with the same light as the crystalline object adorning the Last Son's chest plate. Tell players of affected PCs their bodies are under the Last Son's control while their minds experience alternate realities. Players can role-play their enthralled PCs' physical actions but cannot act against the Last Son's telepathic commands.

If the PCs threaten the Last Son or attempt to damage the obelisk, he immediately becomes hostile—proceed to *Encounter-3A: The Last Son of Atom*.

The Last Son's Offer. If the PCs speak to the Last Son, he is forthcoming, calm, and totally unrepentant of his actions. His beliefs cannot be swayed. He tells them that if they stop fighting Atom, they can live in a paradise of their choosing. They can even reunite with their companions and people they have loved and lost.

If a PC agrees to give in to Atom, their minds return to the reality they experienced in the previous scene—you may even allow them to describe their character's idea of paradise. The PC's body, however, immediately becomes enthralled. If all PCs agree, proceed to *The Fallout: Other Worlds*.

During the conversation, PCs may learn the Last Son's perspective on the following:

- **Identity.** He was once called Adam Whately, a descendant of General John Whately. John Whately was a heretic who followed a false god. He and his followers were unworthy of finding Atom's Glow and were punished for their blasphemy.
- **Motivation.** Years ago, he met a righteous man named Cromwell, who taught him of Atom and Division. That night, he first dreamed of finding Atom's Glow in a forgotten city beneath the earth. He continued to have the same dream every night. His visions were harrowing and nearly killed him. When he left the Church to search for the city, the pain stopped. He continued his search, building his flock ever since.
- **The Device.** He calls the crystalline device **Atom's Glow**. Its energy field allows him to guide his flock to Atom's infinite universes. It will soon help him usher in the Day of Division.

- **The Day of Division.** He is dying from chem use and exposure to Atom's Glow. He believes that Atom will be reborn in his body when he dies. Then Atom will walk the Wasteland to guide the masses to infinite universes.
- **The Abomination and Obelisk.** He considers the tentacled abomination his literal brother—the First Son of Atom. It whispered to him in his dreams and showed him how to read the hieroglyphs on the obelisk. That is how he learned to remove Atom's Glow from the obelisk and control its power.
- **The Buried City.** He believes the city was the world's first great civilization and that they turned away from Atom's glory. They got precisely what they deserved.
- **Other Sects.** Other Church of Atom groups are misinformed about their God's truths. It may not be too late to show them the Glow. He intends to try.
- **Previous Actions.** He believes that every innocent he harmed was a necessary sacrifice—they will find their reward waiting for them in new universes. He mourns the loss of his brave friend, the gigapede, whose sacrifice bought him the time he needed to find Atom's Glow. He cared deeply for Sister Dawn, and he regrets that she forced him to punish her betrayal so harshly.
- **Plans.** He intends to begin a pilgrimage across the wastes, stopping at every settlement he finds to bring them the Great Division. His flock will grow. The faithful will travel to endless perfect worlds—and the wicked will know worlds of eternal suffering.
- **Hancock's Hat.** Yes, he stole it. No, it doesn't fit him well. Yes, they can keep it.

Once the Last Son grows tired of talking, he more firmly demands PCs make their choice. Once they do, he orders his thralls to fill those who refuse him with Atom's Fire. Proceed to *Encounter-3A: The Last Son of Atom.*

ENCOUNTER-3A: THE LAST SON OF ATOM

Add 6 AP to the GM's pool at the start of this encounter. Players control their enthralled PCs, directed by the Last Son of Atom's telepathic commands. Portray the Last Son as a calm, talkative, narcissistic killer. He prays for Atom's strength and taunts the PCs by telling them he hates that they are forcing him to punish them.

The Last Son and his allies attack whichever characters have acted most antagonistically towards him. If a character targets an object he considers holy, he instead attacks them. He prioritizes defending the following:

- Atom's Glow
- The obsidian obelisk
- The buried abomination

Spending AP. At the start of each round, you may spend 2 AP from the GM's pool to add 1 Children of Atom Berserkers (minimum of 1) under the Last Son's control to the encounter. They rush in from surrounding tunnels or crawl out of the rubble.

Atom's Glow. To free enthralled characters, PCs must destroy the crystalline device in the Last Son's chest plate. They can damage it by choosing it as a hit location to target, but cannot hit it by rolling a hit location randomly. The device has 10 HP and is immune to Energy, Radiation, and Poison damage. A PC can determine how to free enthralled characters by succeeding on a **PER or INT + Science** test with a difficulty of 2.

If Atom's Glow is destroyed, the Last Son's calm demeanor shatters. He attempts to inflict maximum pain upon those who ruined his plans—add 1 AP to the GM's pool per PC. Enthralled PCs immediately regain control of their bodies. Children of Atom Berserkers flee when their minds return to their bodies, and new berserkers cannot be added to the encounter.

Hieroglyphed Obelisk. The hieroglyphed obelisk provides 4 of cover. PCs can target it by making an attack with a difficulty of 1. It has 20 HP and is

immune to Energy, Radiation, and Poison damage. If the obelisk is destroyed by the PCs or the abomination's Tentacle Smash attack, the Last Son's crystalline device shatters—see **Atom's Glow**.

Buried Abomination. PCs can target one of the creature's tentacles by making an attack with a difficulty of 2. If the test succeeds, the abomination is unharmed; it becomes enraged for the remainder of the encounter. At the end of each round, it attacks a random character.
Tentacle Smash Attack: TN 16, 12 Breaking Vicious Physical damage. To determine the target, roll a d20.

- 1-5**:** The Last Son of Atom
- 6-10**:** A random Children of Atom Berserker, or the Last Son if there are none
- 11-20**:** The last character to attack the abomination



Using The Chem Suppressant Syringe

To inject the Last Son with the syringe, a PC must first **damage** a piece of his power armor by reducing its HP to 0 or scoring a critical hit against it. A damaged armor piece provides no DR; damage dealt to that location is inflicted on the Last Son directly.

Once PCs have damaged a piece of his armor, they can attack that location with a syringer using the syringe as ammunition—or by making a **STR or AGI + Medicine or Unarmed** test with a difficulty of 2. If they succeed, the Last Son loses the Nucleus of the Atom ability. Unable to resist the area's mind-altering effects, he hallucinates seeing the ghosts of all the people he's hurt surrounding him—filled with Atom's Divine Glow—and realizes he is damned. On his next turn, he removes his power armor helmet and, screaming for forgiveness, crushes his own skull with his power armor fist. After he dies, enthralled characters become inert until **Atom's Glow** is destroyed.

The Last Son of Atom

Level 17, Human,
Major Character (369 XP)

S	P	E	C	I	A	L
5(11)	10	7	10	10	8	8

SKILLS			
Barter	2	Science	6
Energy Weapons	4	Small Guns	1
Medicine	4	Speech	6
Melee Weapons	3	Survival	2
Pilot	1	Unarmed	3
Repair	3		

HP	INITIATIVE	DEFENSE
PERSONAL: 40, Power Armor: (14 Head, 14 Arms, 14 Legs, 27 Torso)	22	1

CARRY WEIGHT	MELEE BONUS	LUCK POINTS
260 lbs.	+3	8

PHYS. DR	ENERGY DR	RAD. DR	POISON DR
9 (Head), 11 (Torso), 8 (Arms, Legs)	8 (Head), 9 (Torso), 7 (Arms, Legs)	Immune	Immune

ATTACKS

- **SHARPSHOOTER'S ELECTRIFIED IMPROVED GAMMA GUN: PER + Energy Weapons** (TN 14), 9 Piercing 2, Radioactive, Stun Energy damage, Range Medium, Burst
- **BIOMECHANICAL BLADED TENDRILS: STR + Melee Weapons** (TN 14), 10 Piercing, Vicious, Breaking Physical damage, Parry

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **IMMUNITIES:** The Last Son is immune to Radiation and Poison damage and their effects.
- **NUCLEUS OF THE ATOM:** The Last Son is augmented by powerful chems and the crystalline device embedded in his chest plate. He reduces the difficulty of PER, INT, and CHA tests by 2 (minimum of 0). Extra actions cost 1 less AP for him—and whenever he spends AP to buy a d20, the first one is free.
- **ATOMIC BONDS:** Whenever an ally assists the Last Son, their first success generates an additional success.
- **AT-0M POWER ARMOR:** The Last Son of Atom wears custom AT-0M Power Armor. See Fallout: The Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook, p.137 for details on Power Armor. The armor allows him to automatically detect non-robot creatures within Long range and have a vague sense of their actions, physical health, and emotional state.

INVENTORY

Power Armor Frame, Fusion Core, Full Suit of AT-0M Power Armor installed with Biomechanical Bladed Tendrils mod, Sharpshooter's Electrified Improved Gamma Gun, 5+5 Gamma Rounds, Wealth 5

Victory and Ruin. If the PCs defeat the Last Son of Atom, the buried abomination becomes enraged. It tears down the obelisk if it still stands, causing Atom's Glow to shatter. Then it thrashes wildly, causing the ceiling to start to collapse. PCs have just enough time to pick up the wounded, grab easy loot, and escape towards the elevator. Narrate their escape as tense; however, they reach the surface safely so long as they do not linger too long. The elevator shaft collapses behind them, burying the ancient city once more.

The Last Son Spared. If the PCs leave the Last Son alive, he loses all will to resist them. He becomes quiet, remorseful, and relents to whatever they choose to do with him. If they escape the city with him, the Last Son of Atom's **AT-0M Power Armor** and other equipment are theirs for the taking.

AT-0M Power Armor

ARMOR PIECE	DAMAGE RESISTANCES			HEALTH POINTS	LOCATIONS COVERED	WEIGHT	COST	RARITY
	PHYSICAL	ENERGY	RADIATION					
AT-0M Helm	9	8	7	14	Head	12	800	Unique
AT-0M Chest Piece	11	9	9	27	Torso	20	900	Unique
AT-0M Arm	8	7	7	14	Arm	15	750	Unique
AT-0M Leg	8	7	7	14	Leg	15	750	Unique

The Last Son of Atom created this custom suit of power armor from an unfinished X-01 Power Armor prototype. He painted its dark red-steel casing with numerous yellow atomic symbols. Long, bladed tendrils hang from the suit's arms. When the armor is powered, the arm tendrils sometimes writhe with a biomechanical mind of their own. The helmet piece is partially transparent, revealing the face of whoever wears the armor.

Special: When powered, the armor's strange and experimental scientific alterations allow its helmet to show the wearer details about nearby creatures. The wearer automatically detects non-robot creatures within Long range and gains a vague sense of their current actions, physical health, and emotional state.

Unique AT-0M Power Arm Mod

ARM MOD	EFFECTS	LOCATION	WEIGHT	COST	PERKS	SKILL
Biomechanical Bladed Tendrils	While armor is powered, you can make a unique melee attack. **BIOMECHANICAL BLADED TENDRILS:** 10 Piercing, Vicious, Breaking Physical damage, Parry	Arm	+8	+200	Science! 3	Science

Final Moments. Allow PCs the opportunity to resolve their last moments together in the elevator or Whately's Office. Shine the spotlight on each of them by asking their player questions like:

- What does your character look like right now?
- After what they experienced below, how are they feeling, or what are they thinking?
- What is the last thing we see them do in the scene?

After giving each player a chance to frame their final moments, you may proceed immediately to *The Fallout*. Alternatively, you can allow PCs to continue to play from where they left off in Whately Research Center.

THE FALLOUT

All good stories must end to make way for new tales. This quest line, as written, ends when the PCs complete *Main Quest: The Buried City*. Your most important job is to make the players feel like the conclusion is the culmination of their characters' actions. Discussing the consequences of their successes and failures with them makes *Winter of Atom*—and any future quests—even more meaningful.

When you are ready to proceed to the ending, advance time forward one month to the arrival of spring. *Winter of Atom* features three recommended endings and their possible impacts on the Commonwealth. Adapt them to your table and story—or imagine your own.

Read or paraphrase the following before revealing the ending:

> *War. War never changes. During one long, deadly winter in the Commonwealth, its people fought desperately for their lives against a megalomaniac and his devoted cult. Settlements were pushed to the brink of ruin. Souls were lost to the twisted machinations of a Buried God. Too many good people died, their hopes and dreams buried beneath the atomic ice.*
>
> *But ice thaws. Snow melts. Winter passes. Spring always returns. And with it, fortune rises again in the ruins of old Boston. Settlers come and go, as impermanent as the seasons, making way for new stories to be told in the nuclear wasteland.*
>
> *Only one thing is certain. Peace never lasts. And war never changes.*

The following conditions trigger suggested endings:

- If the PCs chose to stay in—or never escaped—their alternate realities, proceed to **Ending: Other Worlds**.
- If the PCs failed to stop the Last Son of Atom from returning to the Commonwealth with Atom's Glow, proceed to **Ending: Great Division**.
- If the PCs stopped the Last Son and prevented the Day of Division, proceed to **Ending: Sweet Spring**.

ENDING: OTHER WORLDS

Surviving PCs' minds remain in idealized alternate realities that may be hallucinations or entirely real. Meanwhile, their bodies join the Last Son of Atom's flock as he begins his pilgrimage to bring the Day of Division to the world. Allow players to describe their characters' lives in alternate realities and ask them to frame their final moments in whatever way they wish. Add one or two details of your choosing to what they imagine, building on their descriptions to tease the possibility of future stories and uncertainties of their reality.

You can leave the truth of their experiences vague, allowing them to believe they achieved a happy ending of sorts. Or you can reveal that, while their minds live in paradise, their bodies join the Last Son's flock—if you do, see ***Ending: Great Division****.*

ENDING: GREAT DIVISION

Should the Last Son defeat the PCs or otherwise succeed in returning to the Commonwealth with Atom's Glow, he meets fierce resistance from the Minutemen and settlers from Diamond City. They successfully drive his cult out of the region at a high cost. He flees westward, continuing to build his flock of mind-controlled followers on a pilgrimage across wasted America.

The Commonwealth's victory over the Last Son is not without its costs. Reveal what has been lost to your players. Possible consequences may include:

- *The Last Son takes over the USS Germination as soon as he re-emerges. There, he grows new stores of flesh fruit to build his stronghold, New Eden. He launches his invasion from the harbor until he is eventually defeated.*
- *Mirage and its inhabitants fall under the Last Son's thrall. When he flees the Commonwealth, their roaming fortress becomes his mobile base of operations.*
- *The Last Son's followers place a cache of mini nukes within the walls of Mechminster Abbey under cover of night. The resulting detonations level the settlement, and few live to tell the tale.*
- *The residents of Big Top join the fight against the Last Son, but many perish. The survivors are too weak to resist an unexpected attack by the Institute. The Institute captures the Big Top's synth refugees. The few remaining settlers depart the Commonwealth to go their separate ways.*
- *The final battle against the Last Son takes place outside the junkyards of Beatsville, resulting in the commune's destruction. The survivors integrate into Diamond City, forced to survive in its capitalist society.*
- *Mother Isolde's sect at the Crater of Atom continues to be ostracized by other settlements, considered guilty by association with the Last Son. Surviving in the Glowing Sea without meaningful allies proves very difficult.*

ENDING: SWEET SPRING

Should the PCs defeat the Last Son, peace returns to the Commonwealth with the arrival of spring. Peace may be short-lived, but many settlers revere the characters as heroes for a time.

The defeat of the Last Son heralds a time of significant change in the region. Reveal new developments in the Commonwealth to your players. Possible consequences may include:

- *The USS Germination, under new leadership, manages to disembark from land and prepares to set out to sea. Its destination lies across the Atlantic Ocean to unknown lands.*
- *Mirage hosts a grand going-away party for one night only, inviting all friendly groups in the Commonwealth to attend. During the event, they announce they intend to road-trip south as far as the coast takes them. The Freeques of Big Top and The Jambakers band from Beatsville join them on the road.*
- *The commune of Beatsville votes to leave the Commonwealth and seek out the Chelsea Arts District in the ruins of fabled New York City. There, they hope to find more like-minded people and build their commune anew.*
- *The people of Mechminster Abbey rebuild their defenses. They continue to do their best to support those living on the Commonwealth's fringes. The Sisters of the Forge melt down the unholy weapons and armor of fallen Children of Atom. They use the scrap to build a great monument for all who perished during the cruel winter.*
- *Despite strained relations between Mother Isolde's sect at the Crater of Atom and other settlements, the Children of Atom move about and trade more freely. They sustain their isolated lives in the Glowing Sea, dedicating themselves to Atom's true Glow.*

FUTURE QUESTS

If they survived, the characters are now legends in the Commonwealth. However, their tales may only be beginning. Several ideas for future high-level quests follow, encouraging you to create new locations and challenges for your players to enjoy.

THE GREAT JOURNEY

If the PCs join one of the groups leaving the Commonwealth come spring, their journey could take them almost anywhere. They may find themselves exploring the bombed-out ruins of New York City, passing south through the Capital Wasteland, or crossing the Atlantic Ocean to unexplored continents with very different ways of life than the American Wasteland.

Some keys to creating a good road-trip include:

- Keep quests short and episodic before moving on to a new area.
- Use real-world locations and twist their details in surprising ways to make each area colorful and unique.
- Challenge high-level PCs with difficult moral choices and show them their actions' consequences on the people they meet on their journey.

RETURN TO THE BURIED CITY

The world of *Fallout* contains many mysteries that have never been fully explained. If the PCs want to learn more about the buried city they glimpsed beneath Whately Research Facility, they may attempt to excavate and explore the ruins. What they find is up to your imagination. The city could be the remains of an alien race like the Zetans or tie into the Dunwich Borers mystery (see **Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *Core Rulebook***, *Chapter 6: Corporations of Pre-War America*).

Some keys to building a good quest to explore the buried city include:

- Build the scope of the city with the understanding of how many sessions you want the quest to last, assuming most player groups explore 3-4 detailed rooms of a location in a 3-hour session.
- Populate the rooms with eerie descriptions of what characters sense, unsettling clues to the mystery, and challenging traps.
- Design unique items and scavenging tables of oddities, then guard them with original high-level abominations.

THE COMMONWEALTH IS OUR HOME

The PCs decide to continue living in the Commonwealth, working with existing settlements, or building their own. Now that they are powerful, they require new antagonists capable of challenging them. They may conflict with factions like the Institute, the Railroad, or the Brotherhood of Steel. **Fallout: The Roleplaying Game *GM's Toolkit***, and other resources from Modiphius Entertainment provide more tools to support factions and settlements in your game.

Some keys to designing a good politically driven Commonwealth settlement quest include:

- The video game *Fallout 4* takes place sometime soon after the end of *Winter of Atom* and may provide ideas for stories and quests.
- Give each faction clear motivations and goals that put them in opposition, then ask the PCs to pick sides to see how conflict plays out.
- Emphasize the importance of the PCs' relationships with important NPCs and how their choices impact those people.

FAR HARBOR

The PCs receive a message from a harborman from the town of Far Harbor in what was once Maine. The harborman believes the Children of Atom on the island unleashed a super-radioactive fog that threatens to wipe out their town. After hearing that the PCs overcame the Last Son of Atom, the harborman's message promises what little they can offer in reward if the characters come to Far Harbor and help them get rid of the fog.

Some keys to designing a good Far Harbor quest include:

- The video game add-on *Fallout 4 Far Harbor*—and online resources—detail the happenings on the island and may provide ideas for stories and quests.
- Detail the key NPCs and motivations for the island's significant factions—the harbormen, the synths of Acadia, and the Children of Atom led by High Confessor Tektus.
- Emphasize the island's crumbling New England structures, ghostly radioactive fog, and ambushing mutants like anglers, gulpers, and fog crawlers.





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The index contains references to helpful stat blocks, items, rules tables, maps, and sidebars found elsewhere in Winter of Atom. The book's final pages provide blank character sheets and settlement sheets you can use to keep track of Settlement Reputation, other variables, and general notes.

To reference the page numbers for chapters, new rules, main quests, side quests, and settlements, check in the Table of Contents in the front of the book.

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Fallout
THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

CHARACTER NAME

XP EARNED	
XP TO NEXT LEVEL	
ORIGIN	

LEVEL

STRENGTH | PERCEPTION | ENDURANCE | CHARISMA | INTELLIGENCE | AGILITY | LUCK

LUCK POINTS

SKILLS

NAME	TAG	RANK
Athletics [STR]	☐	
Barter [CHA]	☐	
Big Guns [END]	☐	
Energy Weapons [PER]	☐	
Explosives [PER]	☐	
Lockpick [PER]	☐	
Medicine [INT]	☐	
Melee Weapons [STR]	☐	
Pilot [PER]	☐	
Repair [INT]	☐	
Science [INT]	☐	
Small Guns [AGI]	☐	
Sneak [AGI]	☐	
Speech [CHA]	☐	
Survival [END]	☐	
Throwing [AGI]	☐	
Unarmed [STR]	☐	

COMBAT

MELEE DAMAGE | DEFENSE | INITIATIVE

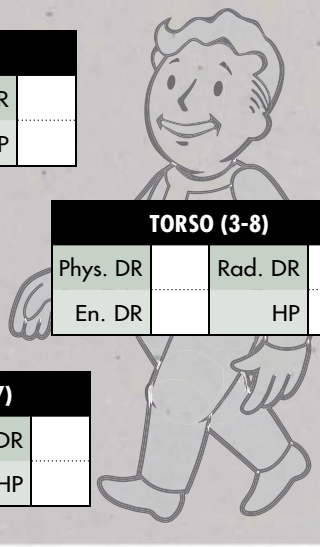
POISON DR

HEAD (1-2)			
Phys. DR		Rad. DR	
En. DR		HP	

HEALTH
Maximum HP
Current HP

LEFT ARM (9-11)			
Phys. DR		Rad. DR	
En. DR		HP	

RIGHT ARM (12-14)			
Phys. DR		Rad. DR	
En. DR		HP	



TORSO (3-8)			
Phys. DR		Rad. DR	
En. DR		HP	

LEFT LEG (15-17)			
Phys. DR		Rad. DR	
En. DR		HP	

RIGHT LEG (18-20)			
Phys. DR		Rad. DR	
En. DR		HP	

WEAPONS

NAME	SKILL	TN	TAG	DAMAGE	EFFECTS	TYPE	RATE	RANGE	QUALITIES	AMMO	WEIGHT
			☐								
			☐								
			☐								
			☐								
			☐								

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CAPS



AMMO

CALIBER	QUANTITY

GEAR

ITEM	LBS.
CURRENT CARRY WEIGHT	
MAXIMUM CARRY WEIGHT	

PERKS & TRAITS

NAME	RANK	EFFECT

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Fallout
THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

CHARACTER NAME

XP EARNED	
XP TO NEXT LEVEL	
ORIGIN	

LEVEL

STRENGTH | PERCEPTION | ENDURANCE | CHARISMA | INTELLIGENCE | AGILITY | LUCK

LUCK POINTS

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Barter [CHA]	☐	
Big Guns [END]	☐	
Energy Weapons [PER]	☐	
Explosives [PER]	☐	
Lockpick [PER]	☐	
Medicine [INT]	☐	
Melee Weapons [STR]	☐	
Pilot [PER]	☐	
Repair [INT]	☐	
Science [INT]	☐	
Small Guns [AGI]	☐	
Sneak [AGI]	☐	
Speech [CHA]	☐	
Survival [END]	☐	
Throwing [AGI]	☐	
Unarmed [STR]	☐	

COMBAT

MELEE DAMAGE | DEFENSE | INITIATIVE

POISON DR

HEAD (1-2)			
Phys. DR		Rad. DR	
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HEALTH
Maximum HP
Current HP

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WEAPONS

NAME	SKILL	TN	TAG	DAMAGE	EFFECTS	TYPE	RATE	RANGE	QUALITIES	AMMO	WEIGHT
			☐								
			☐								
			☐								
			☐								
			☐								

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CAPS



AMMO

CALIBER	QUANTITY

GEAR

ITEM	LBS.
CURRENT CARRY WEIGHT	
MAXIMUM CARRY WEIGHT	

PERKS & TRAITS

NAME	RANK	EFFECT

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SETTLEMENT

NAME

GM NOTES

POPULATION

DEFENSES

FOOD SUPPLY

DENIZEN OUTLOOK

REPUTATION RANK

DETAILS

SETTLEMENT

NAME

GM NOTES

POPULATION

DEFENSES

FOOD SUPPLY

DENIZEN OUTLOOK

REPUTATION RANK

DETAILS

SETTLEMENT

NAME

GM NOTES

POPULATION

DEFENSES

FOOD SUPPLY

DENIZEN OUTLOOK

REPUTATION RANK

DETAILS

SETTLEMENT

NAME

GM NOTES

POPULATION

DEFENSES

FOOD SUPPLY

DENIZEN OUTLOOK

REPUTATION RANK

DETAILS

SETTLEMENT

NAME



GM NOTES

DETAILS

SETTLEMENT

NAME



GM NOTES

DETAILS

SETTLEMENT

NAME



GM NOTES

DETAILS

SETTLEMENT

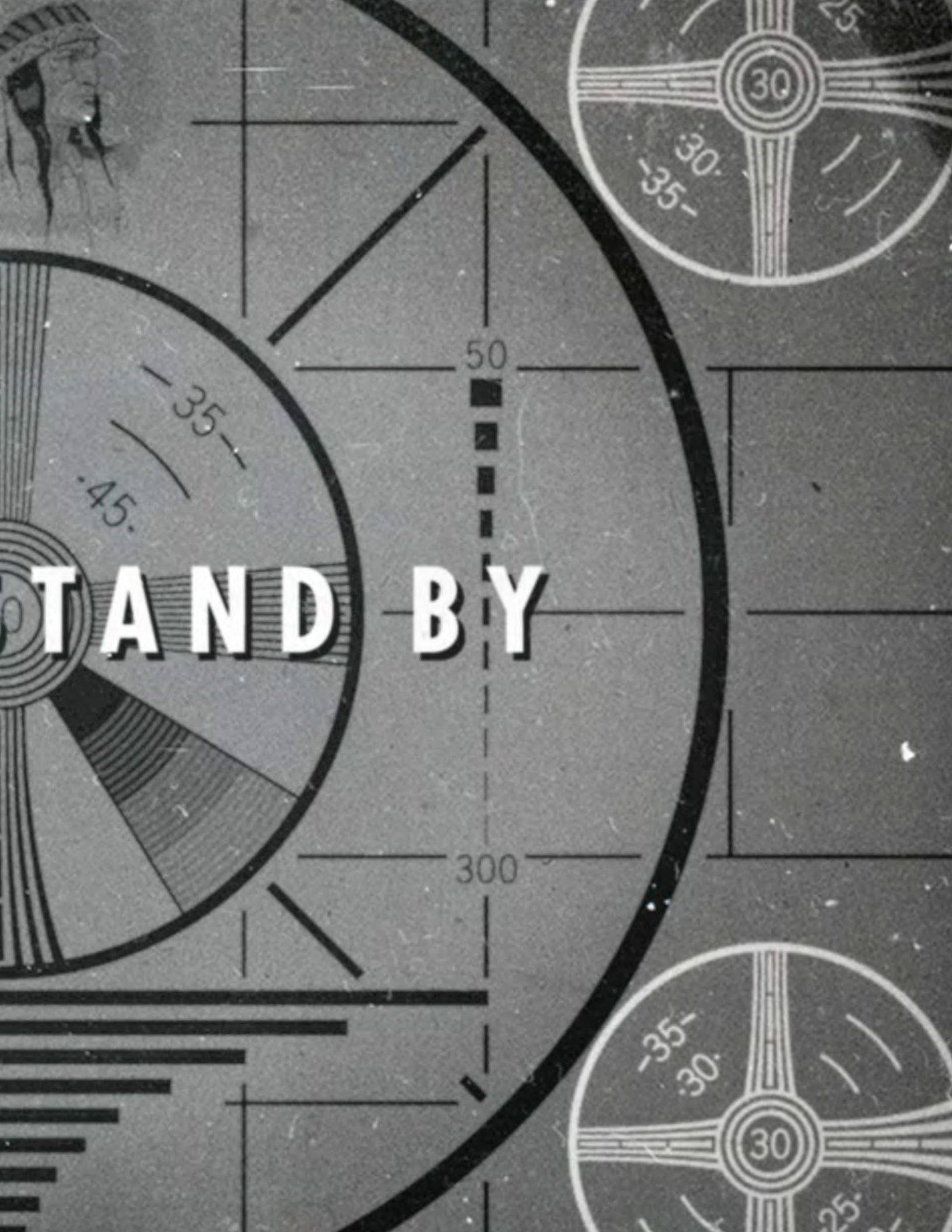
NAME



GM NOTES

DETAILS


325
575
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TAND BY

You're SPECIAL



Immerse yourself in a whiteout nuclear winter in the Commonwealth Wasteland.



Face a fearsome evil sect of Children of Atom, led by the Last Son of Atom.



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