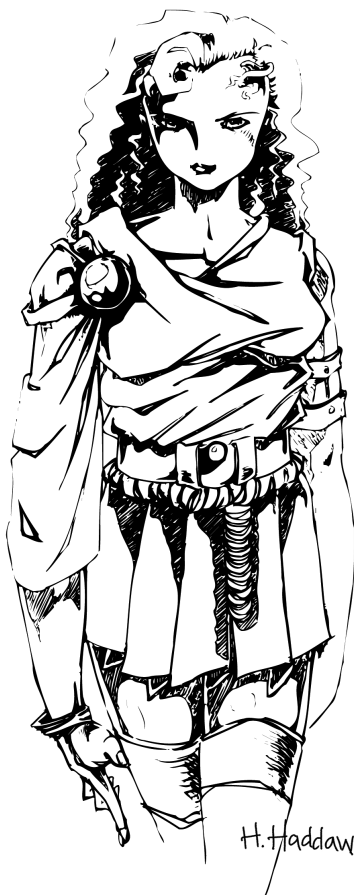


ATOMIC EARTH

The world ended when the moon shattered. Ripped apart by unimaginable forces, the broken orb still hangs in the night sky, but the earth it overlooks is once again primal and unstable. At the time of the Shattering, moon rock cascaded over the entire surface of the world, unleashing primordial forces within the very elements themselves. The largest meteorite struck the base of the Grand Canyon in North America, tearing a hole in the surface of the earth and releasing the monsters that dwelt at the Earth's Core. Bathed in the radiant atomic and stellar energies, these monsters quickly overran civilization. All that's left is Challenger City. Top scientists have purified the primal shards of atomic energy into the constituent quantum elements of gravity, inertia, energy, and density: Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. A refined elemental matrix composed of these energy shards is needed to keep Challenger City alive in the midst of the overgrown Wilderness. You are a Wilderness Scout; your job is to gather the shards of elemental energy, distill their essence into a Refined Elemental Matrix, and return it to Challenger City. Succeed, and civilization survives another brief while. Fail, and you're monster food.





Contents

- 36 Map Tiles
- 48 Atomic Monster cards
- 60 TAQ Device cards
- 6 six-sided dice (d6)
- 6 pawns
- 12 clear Air shards
- 12 green Earth shards
- 12 red Fire shards
- 12 blue Water shards
- 3 Elemental Matrix tokens

Setup

Shuffle and set out the Atomic Monster and TAQ Device decks.

Lay out 27 Map Tiles, including Challenger City and at least one Elemental Refinery. At least one movement space on each Map Tile must connect to a movement space on another Map Tile. Set the remaining Map Tiles aside.

Play Sequence

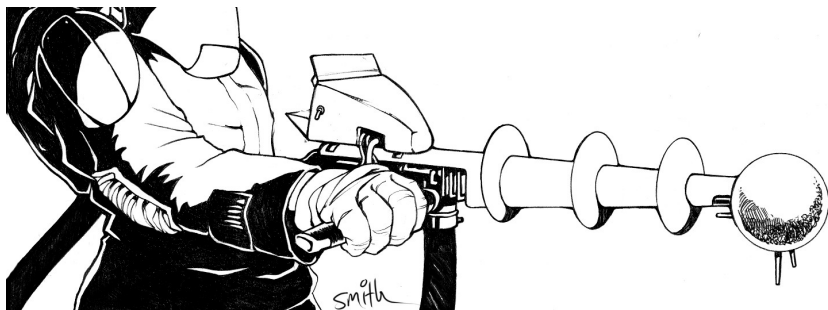
1. Draw a TAQ Device card.
2. Roll 1d6 and move up to that many spaces.
3. Activate a Map Tile.
4. Discard down to five cards.
5. Play proceeds to the left.

Victory Conditions

The first Wilderness Scout to return a Refined Elemental Matrix to Challenger City wins the game.

TAQ Device

Your Trans-Atomic Quantumizer is your lifeline, your only ability to harness and control the unstable Atomic energy that permeates the landscape. The TAQ Device is both essential and unpredictable; with it you gather shards of Atomic Energy, track your competitor's progress, and protect yourself from the giant Atomic Monsters - without it you're defenseless.



Draw a TAQ Device card at the beginning of your turn. If the deck runs out, reshuffle and carry on. TAQ Device cards contain instructions on when they can be played as well as other game effects. Cards may be played in any order, and each card effect is resolved before the next card is played. Your TAQ software only has so much memory; at the end of your turn, you must discard down to 5 cards.

Movement

Even the most experienced Wilderness Scout can only cover so much ground every day. Your TAQ Device provides you with an advanced holographic cartography module that displays viable paths through the Wilderness. By linking with the few S.E.N.T.R.I. satellites still in orbit, real-time data will keep you up to date on changes in the landscape as well as pinpointing the locations of other Scouts, hazardous zones, and Outposts. Due to the unstable nature of the radiant energy fueling the overgrown Wilderness, the path you travel into the Wilderness may not be the path you take home. If you get home.

Each Map Tile contains a number of movement spaces; a Scout may move up to 1d6 spaces in their move sequence. Map Tiles that are face up must have at least one movement space connected to a movement space of another Map Tile at all times. Map Tiles may not be placed illegally or rotated to an illegal orientation. Face down Map Tiles may not be entered or crossed. If a pawn is on a Tile when it is flipped, the player who flips the tile must move the pawn to any movement space on an adjacent tile.



Map Effects

Know your terrain. The vast majority of the world outside is wildly overgrown Wilderness; charged with the properties of pure Atomic elements, the same hot-spots where you will gather shards of Atomic

energy also draw monsters who feed on or bathe in the radiation. Use of your TAQ Device in these areas is not without risk - instead of gathering an Atomic shard, you may very well provoke the inhabitants into mindless rage. Should this happen, your TAQ Device will emit an energy signature synchronized with that of one of the monsters involved in the combat. Through sympathetic quantum alignment, you will be able to direct the monster's attacks and reap the rewards of conquest, or suffer the penalty of defeat.



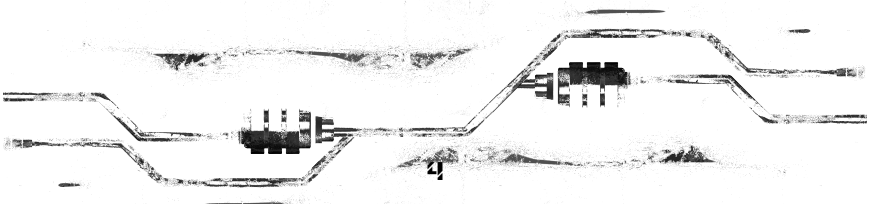
Not all terrain is safe to move through rapidly; a double-walled movement space indicates a Barrier to movement. Scouts entering a space with a Barrier must stop their normal movement on that space until the requirements to pass have been met, and they may continue on next turn. Barriers marked with an elemental alignment require the Scout to spend a shard of the matching element in order to pass. Barriers marked with a Threat

Matrix require a Scout to pass or fail the Threat level of the area. Barrier requirements must be satisfied once for each time the space is entered through normal movement.

Hot Zones will be marked with an elemental alignment as well as a Threat Matrix evaluating the level of Atomic energy in the area. Your Trans-Atomic Quantumizer can gather shards from these areas, but be warned - giant Atomic Monsters are also drawn to the radiant energies.



Scouts who end their movement on a space marked with a Threat Matrix can attempt to gather a shard of Atomic energy from the area. Roll 1d6. If the die is greater than the Threat Matrix of the area, gather one shard of the aligned element and move a number of spaces equal to the Threat. If the die is equal or lower, your TAQ Device has locked onto an Atomic Monster and sparked the fire of primordial bloodlust into raging atomic fury. Your only hope is to locate another monster in the area, synch your TAQ Device to their elemental signature, and mask your presence as they war on your behalf. Knowing that monsters are in the area, a Scout can intentionally track them down and goad them into action by spending a shard of any element through their TAQ Device.





Although Challenger City is the center of mankind's last hope, a number of Outposts provide some degree of shelter from the Wilderness. Courageous Airships plow the skies under cover of the clouds. Ancient Data Vaults contain the secrets of lost civilization. The few remaining Phasic Reactors process and distill the energy of elemental shards. And of course, the Elemental Refineries operate well away from

the populated area of Challenger City. A Scout who ends his movement on an Outpost can benefit from the facilities of these last bastions of safety.

Trans-Atomic Combat

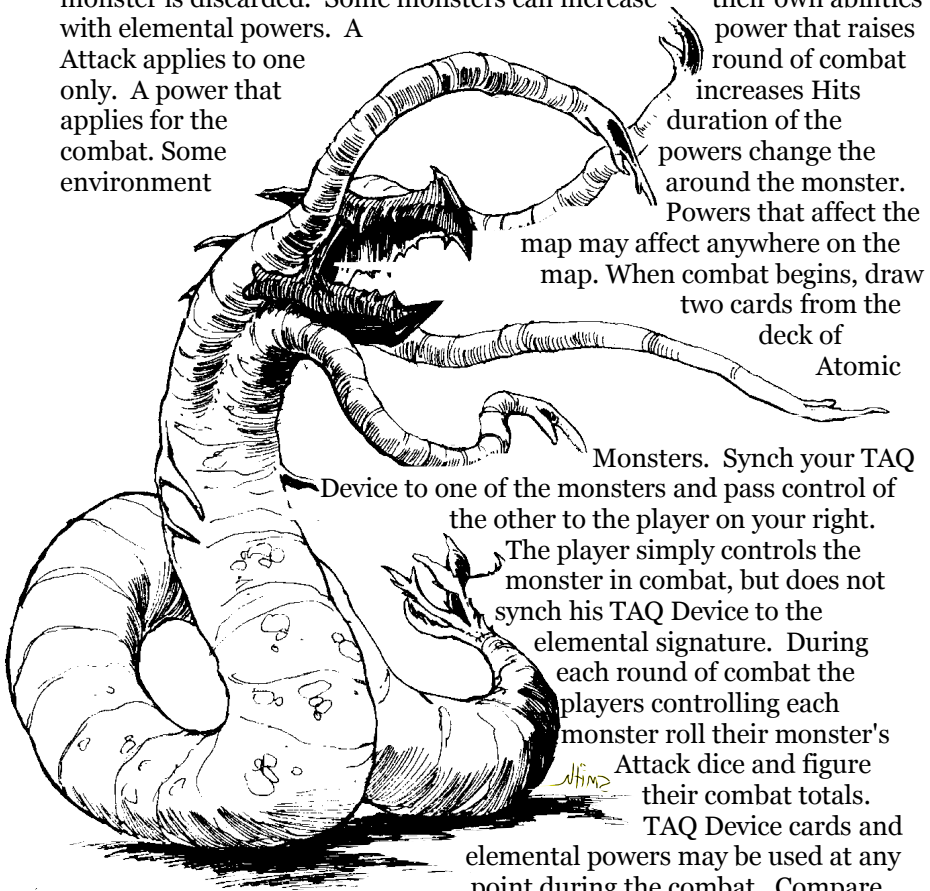
Monsters are dangerous. Giant Monsters are really dangerous. Giant Atomic Monsters are really *really* dangerous. Enraged Giant Atomic Monsters are *end-of-the-world* dangerous. When your TAQ Device scans the area, you stand a chance of locking onto the elemental signature of an Atomic Monster. This is somewhat like being stung by a bee - you knock it off and look for something to stomp. Your only hope of survival is to locate another monster, synch your TAQ Device to its elemental signature, and hide in the shadow of their energy while the two monsters duke it out. While the victor devours the loser's corpse, you can get away through the trackless Wilderness. If you're on the winning side.



The relative power level of a monster is indicated by its Atomic Potential, measured by the number of bars in the top left of the card. Monsters range in power from 2 to 5 bars – a level 2 creature being a

mutant version of local fauna, and a level 5 monster some Atomic nightmare from the heart of the sun. This number is tied to a monster's elemental powers as well; a monster may use its powers a number of times equal to their level. Each use of a power costs its controller a shard matching either of the monster's aligned elements. **“Attack”** determines the combat dice a monster rolls: “2d+4” means “roll 2 six-sided dice and add 4 to the result”. **“Damage”** determines how many Hits a successful attack takes away from the losing monster. **“Hits”** keep a monster alive, when a monster's Hits have been reduced to 0 by damage, the monster is discarded. Some monsters can increase their own abilities with elemental powers. A

Attack applies to one only. A power that applies for the combat. Some environment



power that raises round of combat increases Hits duration of the powers change the around the monster. Powers that affect the map may affect anywhere on the map. When combat begins, draw two cards from the deck of Atomic

Monsters. Synch your TAQ Device to one of the monsters and pass control of the other to the player on your right. The player simply controls the monster in combat, but does not synch his TAQ Device to the elemental signature. During each round of combat the players controlling each monster roll their monster's Attack dice and figure their combat totals. TAQ Device cards and elemental powers may be used at any point during the combat. Compare

the combat totals - the monster with the highest total inflicts Damage to the lowest total's Hits. If more than two monsters are fighting, only the highest and lowest combat totals inflict Damage or suffer Hits. If the combat totals are equal, victory goes to the monster of the highest level. If the levels are equal, then both monsters inflict Damage and suffer Hits. When a Monster's Hits are reduced to 0, the monster is discarded. Combat ends when a Scout has defeated all "wild" monsters, or when his

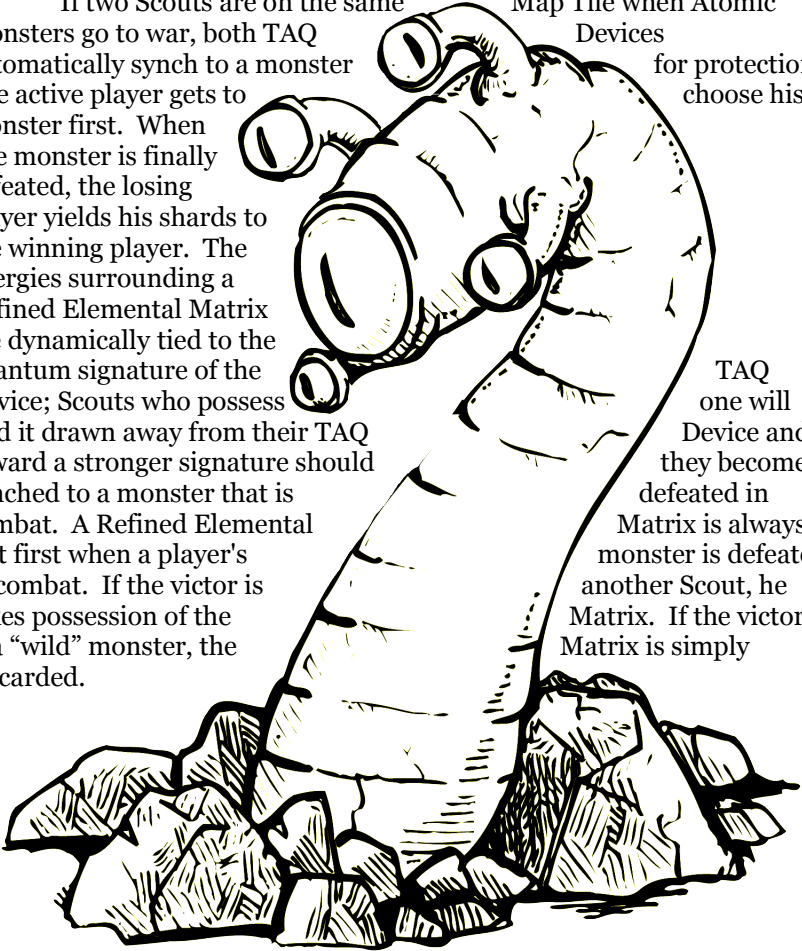
own monster is discarded.

Scouts live or die with the monster synched to their TAQ Device. When an opposing monster is discarded, the Scout gathers a number of Atomic shards equal to the level of the defeated monster, in any combination of elements matching that monster's elemental powers. When a synched monster is discarded, the Scout loses a number of his own Atomic shards equal to the monster's level. If a Scout has no Atomic shards to lose, or doesn't have enough, they get eaten or stomped on. The Scout discards his hand, any shards he still has, and returns his pawn to Challenger City.

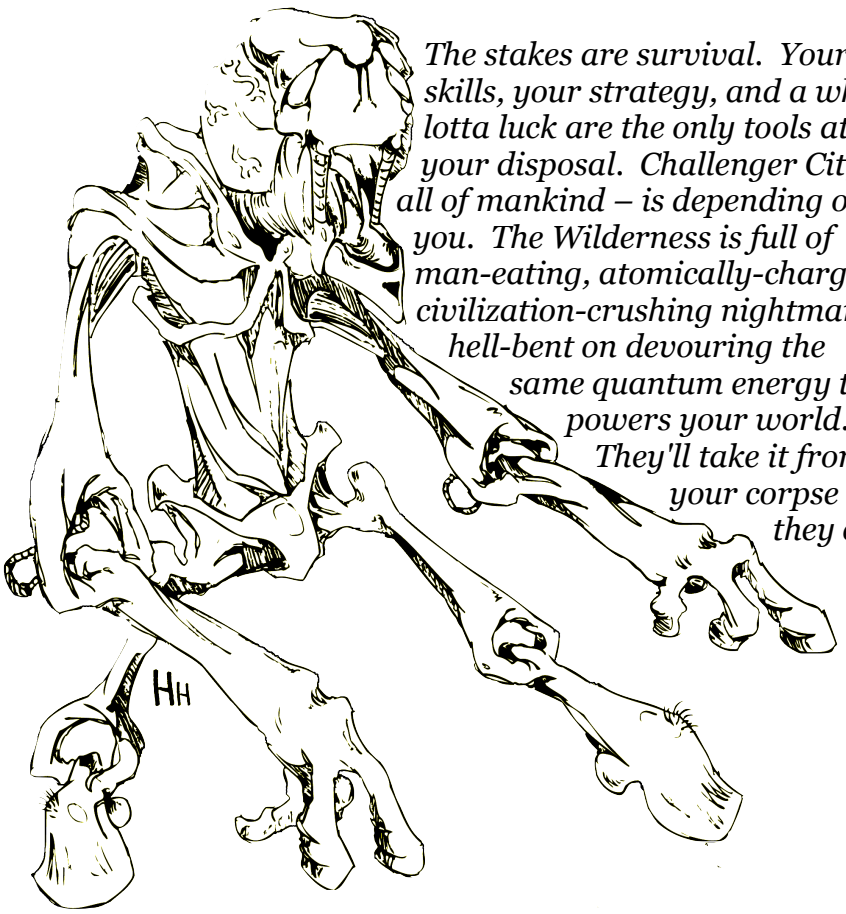
If two Scouts are on the same Monsters go to war, both TAQ automatically synch to a monster The active player gets to monster first. When one monster is finally defeated, the losing player yields his shards to the winning player. The energies surrounding a Refined Elemental Matrix are dynamically tied to the quantum signature of the Device; Scouts who possess find it drawn away from their TAQ toward a stronger signature should synched to a monster that is combat. A Refined Elemental lost first when a player's in combat. If the victor is takes possession of the is a "wild" monster, the discarded.

Map Tile when Atomic Devices for protection. choose his

TAQ one will Device and they become defeated in Matrix is always monster is defeated another Scout, he Matrix. If the victor Matrix is simply



If you can get close enough, if your skills are sharp enough, and if your supply of shards holds out, you can wrest the elemental power from your competition – if they don't take it from you first.



The stakes are survival. Your skills, your strategy, and a whole lotta luck are the only tools at your disposal. Challenger City – all of mankind – is depending on you. The Wilderness is full of man-eating, atomically-charged, civilization-crushing nightmares hell-bent on devouring the same quantum energy that powers your world. They'll take it from your corpse if they can.

ATOMIC EARTH

CRITICAL PRESS MEDIA

For more Atomically powered fun, visit the website at <http://criticalpressmedia.com>

Check out the stories, podcasts, free downloads, and a growing range of goodies and gaming supplements.

CAT#U-231 \$40.00