

The Iron Shelter (Private Vault 16)

The Iron Shelter is so named because it was converted from an underground iron mine. Before the Great War, a group of academics and scientists from the nearby University of Wisconsin foresaw the very real threat of nuclear war. Hoping to preserve human civilization, they hired Vault Tec engineers to refit the mine with a miniature nuclear reactor and recycling systems for water and air. They stockpiled food and set aside a section for indoor gardening, complete with powerful lamps. Finally, they gathered massive libraries of reference materials, textbooks, technical manuals, historical accounts, and popular fiction; anything that would help future generations understand what human civilization was like before the fall. They hoped to one day return to the world above, but if need be they believed they could maintain a small population indefinitely. When the missiles flew, the Private Vault 16 closed itself off from the outside world, and the hundred inhabitants escaped the destruction that followed. For decades everything proceeded as planned. Through careful rationing and proper recycling, the inhabitants of the shelter lived completely cut off from the world outside. But all that is about to change.

History

Things were looking bad before the Great War, and many sought a way to avoid it. One such attempt was started by a group of university students and professors. They sought to establish a long-term shelter deep beneath the earth. For the site they chose the Soudun underground iron mine. This mine was already being used for physics experiments, and there was plenty of unused mine space that the new project could expand into. They sought funding under the pretense of an experiment studying the ability to create a self-sustaining community, the kind that would be necessary for long term space flight. They began fitting the mine with living quarters, subterranean gardens, and a micro nuclear reactor to power it all.

Almost everything was in place when the Great War broke out. Almost. People scrambled to get their friends and families into the shelter and to find last minute supplies. Fights erupted at the mine entrance about who was allowed in. Finally, the cage screeched to the bottom of the mine shaft for the final time. For a few days the sheltered watched broadcasts from the surface, showing images of death and destruction. Then there was nothing left but static. The survivors were on their own. They soon formed new rules to govern their isolated society, creating a constitution. In many ways this mirrored the laws of the American society they came from, but they also added crucial laws governing population control. The founders thought they might be down in the mine for generations, and their resources were finite, so they instituted strict controls to ensure that they didn't overuse their resources.

Daily Life

Inhabitants of the shelter spend most of their time maintaining the shelter's electrical and mechanical equipment, tending to the indoor gardens, and learning about pre-war society in the shelter's library. While the shelter is filled with books and computer files describing nearly every aspect of pre-war life, their knowledge is purely academic. While they might have thousands of pictures of everything from dogs to spacecraft, nobody who currently lives in the shelter has heard the call of a wild animal, smelled dew on the grass, or seen a sunset.

All this comes from the Broken Earth Campaign setting. Don't be a douchebag and try and steal their ideas. This document is intended for online gaming purposes only and the guy doing the copy/pasting isn't making a dime.

Democracy

The Iron Shelter is governed by an elected council of five people that act as both legislators and executives. They serve five-year terms, with one slot up for election every year in a five year cycle. Because they tend to govern well and stay clear of controversies, incumbents almost always win reelections, and most contentious elections occur when there is an open seat. The current members of the council are Jack Reynolds, Samantha Vang, Marguerite Olsen, Frank Muhammad, and Ernesto Morales. Though legally they all have equal power, Jack Reynolds and Samantha Vang are looked to as the primary leaders. Most of the day-to-day work of the council is bureaucratic bookkeeping like tracking food production and consumption and ensuring all key labor roles are filled. Only rarely do they deal with major decisions or create new laws. When they do, Jack Reynolds tends to be the conservative voice while Samantha Vang argues for change.

Apprenticeship

Because of tight population controls, there are never more than a handful of children in the Iron Shelter at any time. Young children are educated together in a school that resembles the one-room school house of old. Here they learn the basics of reading, math, history, and science, as well as information about life in the Iron Shelter. When the youths turn thirteen, they leave school to start what is called their "rotation" where they try a range of the different jobs that are vital to keeping the shelter functioning, including engineering, medical, agriculture, inventory, and food preparation. This rotation typically takes two years to complete, at which point the youths begin their apprenticeship. The council assigns the youth a job based on their aptitude and interests, as well as the needs of the shelter. The teens learn their trade by working alongside experienced members of the society. While it is possible to appeal the council's assignment of apprenticeship, doing so is rare, and would require extraordinary circumstances.

Rumors of Return

In the months leading up to the start of the adventure, rumors circulate that the council is considering an expedition to explore the surface. This has sparked a vibrant debate among the citizens of the Iron Shelter. Many would happily remain in the shelter and forget about the world above. Compared to much of the rest of the world, life in the Iron Shelter is safe and peaceful. The inhabitants are safe from marauders and mutants. They're well educated and, thanks to strict population controls, there's always enough food to eat. Others, however, are less enthralled with life in the Iron Shelter. Boredom is one of the chief reasons, though few admit it. Others dislike many of the stifling rules, like the strict limit on how many children a couple can have or how much energy they can consume. They also point out that with a small population genetic diversity will become a problem in only a few more generations, and there's no way to refuel the reactor. The most powerful argument however, is that they should be a beacon of hope. They should return to the surface not for themselves, but because they alone have the knowledge that the rest of humanity needs to once again return to a productive, safe, and prosperous civilization.

World-View

The extreme isolation of the Iron Shelter has led to a common world-view among most people in the shelter.

- You live in a community of one hundred people. You've known them your whole life.
- You've never met anybody from outside the shelter.
- Of all the communities in the Campaign, the Iron Shelter is probably closest in culture to the modern day(Fallout modern day).
- You know a lot of things about the world before the war, but almost all of it is theoretical, not practical.
- You've never seen a plant larger than a corn stalk or an animal larger than a beetle.
- You understand what technology is, and might even know how it works.
- There were no Ghouls , or mutant monsters in the world you've read about.
- Everything you own was originally made before your parents were born. They've been mended and repaired countless times.

Iron Shelter Slang

Brighty: Happy, excited, full of energy.

Broken: Dumb.

Deep: Safe, secure.

Iron: Strong, impressive, true.

Kell: Cool, interesting.

Rack or Rack-It: An interjection to express anger or frustration (similar to darn).

Sheltered: People who are native to the Iron Shelter.

Surfacer: People who live on the surface.

Iron Shelter Background Edges

Born in the Library

Requirements: Novice, Iron Shelter, Knowledge (Pre- War History) d6+

Your character spent most of her free time in the Iron Shelter's extensive library. She gains a +2 bonus to a Knowledge skill of your choice, and +2 to Investigate checks when she has a sizable library to draw from. Additionally, she begins play with an atlas.

Dark Eyed

Requirements: Novice, Iron Shelter

Your hero's eyes have adjusted to a lifetime spent underground in dimly lit conditions. He gains Low Light Vision, and suffers penalties in only pitch blackness. In addition he begins play with a crank action LED flashlight.