

The Atomic Beast

Keeper's Introduction

The year is 1954, and the time of the Atom is upon us. Since the H-bombs were dropped during WWII the world has been a different place. Fear of both the Red Menace and the devastating power of the A-bomb runs deep in the hearts of the everyday American citizen. The government is working to ensure the safety and security of the country. Selfless men and women toil in the southwestern United States to develop weapons to keep the Commies at bay. The progress is slow, and some fear that we may be losing ground, but that just makes the dedicated scientists work even harder.

Dr. Fritz Schmidt is a prime example of this. He is a good man; he fled to the U.S. to avoid persecution at the hands of the Nazis. Since then he has flung himself whole-heartedly into his work, becoming a loyal American. His knowledge of atomic science is on par with the best minds in the country. When you add that brain-power to his expertise in botany then you have a veritable genius pioneer in the small discipline of atomic-agriculture. However, sometimes the drive to protect the nation is too much, and even the best men break under the unforgiving pressure.

Dr. Schmidt commonly works eighteen hours a day, devising new ways to blend the immense energy of the sun into fragile plants. His goal is to create new crops that can exist in the harshest of environments, including the arid desert. Thus far his efforts have yielded only slight successes; the crops he has grown are misshapen and terribly bitter. However, the promise of plump tomatoes, bright green peas, and crisp radishes growing in the unforgiving sands drive him to continue his noble work.

Was it Fate that intervened in the doctor's work, or Providence? Did some unseen hand move to stop Man's tampering with nature? Or was it what it seemed, a simple accident and unforeseeable chain of events that led to the creation of the Atomic Beast?

Late one September afternoon, Dr. Schmidt's gardener, Lupe Perez, was working in the laboratory's small plot. As he was tending the doctor's plants, a rabid coyote, deranged by the awful disease, surprised him. As Perez backed away, fending off the beast with his garden hoe, it lunged forward and bit his hand. Perez struck the mad animal with the hoe, driving it off him, and mortally wounding it in the process.

Recognizing that the animal was rabid, Perez knew he needed medical aid immediately. Clutching his mauled hand, he entered the lab and grabbed a nearby cloth to staunch the bleeding. He wandered through the lab calling out for assistance. Young Danny Byers, a junior lab assistant, heard his call. Seeing that his friend was hurt, Byers grabbed the keys to his hot-rod and the two were quickly on their way to the nearest hospital.

Perez was suffering from his wound far more than Byers would have imagined. He was growing listless and pale, and sweating profusely. Pushing his car to its limits, they flew along the lonely highway. Byers stole glances at his friend, alarmed by his steady decline. Then he saw the cause. The cloth that Perez clutched to his wound- Byers himself had used it to clean up a careless spill of Dr. Schmidt's botanic growth formula! Momentarily stunned at the horrific notion of his friend's bloodstream being contaminated with the atomic powered serum, Byers allowed his hot-rod to slide onto the shoulder of the highway. The loose earth dragged it instantly off the road where it careened, end-over-end, exploding in a fiery blaze. The crash killed Danny Byers instantly, and Lupe Perez was flung free to lie in a broken heap. Byers' suffering was over, but for Lupe, the release of death was cruelly denied.

The strange chemical formula, energized by atomic power, reacted with the virus from the infected coyote. The formula played havoc with the dying man's body, changing it in terrible ways. It siphoned vitality from the crushed cacti and desert grasses and blended them together with the feral instincts of the wild coyote. Within hours the thing that dragged itself away from

the still burning car, was no longer human, nor even wholly an animal. It could only be called. . . the Atomic Beast!

Quick Facts:

The scenario takes place in late September 1954 in Chaves County, New Mexico. The average daytime temperature is 86 degrees Fahrenheit. The lab where much of the investigation takes place is located outside of Dexter, New Mexico near the county seat, Roswell.

Non Player Characters

Danny Byers- A recent graduate of UCLA (MA, Biology), young Danny Byers was killed driving Lupe Perez to a medical facility in Roswell, New Mexico.

Ed "Tex" Fetta- Disturbed resident who becomes involved in the investigation. He develops murderous intentions aimed at eradicating the Atomic Beast

Chuck Ingram- Security Guard employed at the laboratory. Ingram works second shift at the facility.

Sheriff Jack Lawrence- The top law enforcement official in Chaves County, Lawrence is competent, and cooperative. He is a skilled politician, and as things progress in the investigation will slide blame and claim credit as the situation dictates.

Michael Murdock- This fellow, a former Sheriff's deputy, is head of security at the lab. He is a gruff, abrasive fellow who is not very good at his job, but makes up for it by being a horrible human being.

Larry Munroe- The duly elected coroner of Chaves County. Munroe is a dentist by trade and is not truly qualified for the position of coroner. He knows this, and will defer to those more professionally qualified.

Ray Ortega- A janitor and handyman at the facility. He is the jealous, albeit unrequited, rival for the affection of Lupe's wife, Margarita. Now he sees Lupe's disappearance as an opportunity to win her. Lupe helped Ray, who he had known since childhood, to get a job at the lab.

Lupe Perez- The gardener and groundskeeper for the lab. A kind man and dedicated father, Lupe has fallen victim to a tragic series of events that have left him a monstrous shell of his former self.

Margarita Perez- The wife of Lupe, she cares for the household and the couple's two children. At the time of the investigation she is also harboring her cousin, Rosalita, an illegal immigrant.

Dr. Calvin Russo (Kostya Rusomarov)- A scientist working under Dr. Schmidt. He has radical ideas that run contrary to Schmidt's, sometimes leading to disagreements. A Russian ex-patriot, he is being threatened by Soviet agents who will injure family members still living in Russia, unless he gives them what they want. (See "Investigating Dr. Russo" for more details.)

Dr. Fritz Schmidt- The administrator and head scientist of the New Mexico Botanical Research Institute. Schmidt earned his PhD at Humboldt University in Berlin in 1935. Fearing Nazi persecution (he was an outspoken critic of their policies) he fled to the United States in 1938. He has worked for the government since 1940, and started the institute in 1948. He is a dedicated researcher and prefers the joy of discovery to the tedium of administration. Dr. Schmidt lives in Roswell.

Day One

Lupe's Activities

Following the crash Lupe lay in a crumpled pile amidst the broken vegetation as the mutagenic formula played havoc with his wounded body. When his broken limbs had mended enough for him to move, he began slowly moving toward his home, fully believing that he was dying, and wanting to bid his family farewell. As he staggered along his form began to change rapidly. He felt strength surge through his limbs, quickly followed by wracking convulsions as unearthly changes proliferated throughout his body. By the time he reached his home, hours later, he knew that he was no longer human. The depth of his changes were confirmed when he saw his son, who no longer recognized him and called him a monster. Heart-broken, he fled.

Exhausted by the utterly unthinkable events, he wandered off into the desert. Along the way Lupe discovered a stray lamb. Realizing that he had not eaten in hours, he quietly approached the helpless animal and, moving with a predatory swiftness that amazed and terrified him, killed it. With sickening ease he tore off one of its rear legs and took it with him. Not long afterwards he took up refuge in an abandoned bunkhouse on a deserted ranch. Over a long unused stove he cooked the leg of lamb before enjoying his bittersweet repast. Then he slept a fitful, tormented slumber.

Player's Introduction

The investigators will be called to the scene of the accident by law enforcement. Hondo McGill drives a tow-truck and was called in to clean up the wreckage. Jeffrey Petersen was contacted by the police. He called Diane and Skip Foster to let them know that Danny was in an accident. While they will all be saddened by what happened the strange events will pique their curiosity (especially the Dick Tracy infatuated Skip Foster.) They know that Danny's scientific mind would not want them to leave a lingering mystery unexplored.

It is September 1954. The sun burns down on the still smoldering wreckage of a fire-engine red 1932 Ford Roadster. Inside are earthly remains of Danny Byers.

Byers was a bright lad, a recent graduate of UCLA, come to use his freshly minted knowledge of science at a small United States Department of Agriculture think-tank. The future was boundless for this young man, and his death is a tragedy, both for his family and his country.

But why was Danny Byers even on the road at this time? He should have been busy in the lab, conducting experiments, performing research and documenting results. Looking at the wreckage it's plain to see he was traveling at high speeds. Why? Where was he going? Was he being followed, or maybe even chased?

You have all been summoned to the site for personal or professional reasons. The flashing lights of his car mirrored in his aviator sunglasses, a tall lean man in a Chaves County Sheriff department uniform stands beside the wreckage. Nearby another uniformed man is making notes on a small pad of paper.

The Crash Site

The investigators will begin the game at the site of the car crash. The tall man is Chaves County Sheriff Jack Lawrence. He will explain that a passing motorist discovered the crash around 5:30am. Deputy Buck Rhodes was first on the scene, and he confirmed that Byers was dead. Byers was last seen alive the previous day, at the New Mexico Botanical Research Institute, his place of employment for the past year. The last person to see him was Mike Murdock.

(When mentioning Murdock, Sheriff Lawrence's face twitches a bit and a successful *Psychology roll* detects this slight shift. If asked about his reaction, he mentions, in slightly sardonic fashion, that Murdock used to work for him. A savvy politician, Lawrence says no more.)

Danny's body is still in the vehicle; an ambulance is on its way to take him to the morgue and the sheriff will not prevent it from being examined. Examining the body necessitates a *Sanity roll (0/1-4)* The body itself reveals little. Casual observation shows that it has been burnt and suffered some broken bones. A *Medicine roll* confirms that he likely died as a result of the crash, and the burns were post mortem.

By looking at the gouges in the earth and other similar physical evidence, the investigators can determine the vehicle left the road, then rolled end over end before coming to rest at its current location. This suggests a high speed, but it does not reveal if the vehicle crashed accidentally or was forced off the road.

Scouring the crash site itself reveals significant information as determined by a series of successful *Spot Hidden rolls*:

Spot Hidden Roll #1—The passenger door was jarred free of the main wreckage. It lies about 25 feet away. If it is examined, a soiled towel is discovered. This towel is stained with blood and a weird purplish substance that gives off an acrid smell and is always warm to the touch. At this point the substance cannot be identified.

Spot Hidden Roll #2- About midway from where the wreckage rests and where the vehicle left the road is a section of crushed desert grasses and a mangled cactus. Closer scrutiny in this area reveals some blood on the vegetation.

Spot Hidden Roll #3- Nearly ten feet away from the patch of disturbed flora, a few footprints can be seen leading away from the site. These are rather unusual tracks; one print is apparently made by a work boot, the other is a narrow dragging track, quite indistinct. These tracks continue until they intersect with the road at which point they are lost. A *Track roll* allows the trail to be followed to its termination, and rewards the investigator with a clear glimpse of the strange print. Just prior to vanishing on the unyielding pavement, a single well-defined print is visible. This appears to be a very long, exceedingly narrow human foot with very distinctive nails that indent the soil.

Spot Hidden Roll #4- About 100 yards away, nearly invisible against the surrounding landscape, is a shredded shirt sleeve. It is caught on a cactus and flaps forlornly in the wind. Close examination reveals it to be a rather common variety of khaki cloth. (If this is shown to Margarita Perez, she can identify it as the shirt Lupe was wearing.)

The sheriff does not speculate as to how the crash occurred, preferring to state the obvious and hard facts of the case. If the investigators are law-enforcement professionals, or government agents, Lawrence says his department will cooperate fully. Personally he believes it was merely a tragic accident.

If shown any of the things found at the site, Lawrence merely shrugs, lights a fresh cigarette and explains that the winds blow all kinds of things into the desert.

Further searching in the desert is futile. Any other evidence has, as the sheriff suggested, been spoiled by the wind.

The most likely course of investigation leads to the lab, located several miles south of the crash site.

Those interested in learning if Byers had any Communist sympathies might delve into his private life. Danny lived in a small house in Roswell, with a well-equipped garage. Searching it reveals very little. A bachelor, Danny had lots of automobile magazines, dirty dishes, and soiled laundry lying around. He did not take his work home; no lab materials besides a few pens and notepads are present. His neighbors recall a friendly fellow who spent most of his time working in his garage on his hot rod.

The Laboratory Facility

The New Mexico Botanical Research Institute is small cluster of newly constructed whitewashed, cinderblock structures standing forlornly in a barren expanse of desert. The lab facility consists of a central building, a small storage shed and a few well-tended garden plots. The parking lot holds 5 vehicles.

Upon their arrival Ray Ortega will greet the investigators in the parking lot. He will direct them to the main building and tell them to ask for Mike Murdock, the head of security or Dr. Schmidt. Ray is a chatty fellow and will talk as long as the investigators would like, and probably longer.

Murdock will greet the investigators gruffly and (after checking credentials) step into Dr. Schmidt's office to announce their arrival. Schmidt will see them after only a few moments' delay.

The investigators will be escorted around by Dr. Schmidt. The lab is equipped with state of the art equipment, as well as many modern conveniences. The facility is funded by grants from the state, the federal government and the University of New Mexico. Their guide will explain that the institute is a research facility exploring methods for growing plants in harsh climates. Depending upon which researcher is giving the tour the investigators will be told a bit about their favored theories. Both scientists will mention that their work is vital because credible estimates suggest that by 1997 the earth's current agricultural capacity will be incapable of producing sufficient food for the world's populace.

The investigators will not be allowed to wander around the lab unescorted. However, neither scientist is terribly concerned with security; unless the investigators behave in a bizarre fashion, they might be able to sneak away or pilfer a few small items.

Please refer to the maps (Player Aids 1 & 2) for details. Descriptions will be given for areas containing anything of interest.

Dr. Schmidt's Office

Schmidt's Office is a modestly appointed room, with functional furnishings that favor comfort and thrift over appearance. His sturdy metal desk is covered with lab notebooks displaying chemical formulae and esoteric equations. There are numerous bookcases here filled with monographs on botany and atomic theory.

Schmidt will conduct any initial meeting in his private office. The books are a nigh-definitive library on the niche study of atomic-botany. A significant number of these were authored by Schmidt. Many of the texts, both his own and others, have been significantly annotated by Dr. Schmidt's formidable red pen.

Library and Office

This serves as a reference library and archives for the staff. Additionally Dr. Russo, the lab assistants, and Michael Murdock have desks here. Danny Byers' desk contains a few personal effects, the sum total of which paints a picture of a bright young American lad. On the desk is a photograph of his hot-rod. (See Play Aid #5A) If the investigators make a *Spot Hidden* roll they will discover a personnel memo to Byers from Dr. Schmidt (See Play Aid #3)

Main Laboratory

The bulk of the research and experimentation is conducted in this modern, well-appointed room. A vast array of equipment is present; steaming phials on Bunsen burners rest beside beds of strange plants that only somewhat resemble common garden vegetables. In one corner of the lab is a small table containing a glass case, a bright diffuse light permeates its interior. A number of shining industrial steel cabinets stand sentinel in the room.

The cabinets are locked (but can be opened with a *Locksmith* roll, or pried open with *Mechanical Repair*). If opened these contain vials of different varieties of Dr. Schmidt's formula, mostly ineffective early versions awaiting disposal.

The glass case is Russo's experiment in his pet field Photo-Crystalline Dynamics. The light source is focused through a bank of crystal fragments. Closer inspection reveals that a few small tomato plants are struggling to survive amidst barren, dry, rocky soil.

Investigators searching the lab can find a number of interesting clues.

Spot Hidden Roll #1- Near the entrance to the lab are a few drops of dried blood. (These are from when Lupe paused to explain his injury to Danny Byers, just prior to their hurried exodus.)

Spot Hidden Roll #2- On the leg of one of the lab tables is a drizzling of a strange smelling purplish substance. This substance is identical to that found on the bloody cloth at the crash scene.

Spot Hidden Roll #3- In one of the plant beds a brilliant green insect, about an inch long, can be seen happily munching one of the plants. A *Biology* roll reveals that this looks like a common aphid, but it is nearly 20 times normal size! If the scientists are questioned regarding the enormous insect, they will both say that the formula being developed does, on occasion, display unexpected results. Finding and understanding this necessitates a *Sanity* roll (0/1-3).

Utility Room

This room contains a number of common items, a washer and dryer, trash bins, and cleaning supplies. The laundry machines are situated on the north wall, beside them is a folding table. Atop this is a small waste bin containing a pile of soiled cloths. Casual observers will, on a *Spot Hidden* roll, notice that these are covered with the same purplish substance found on the bloody cloth at the crash. If someone actively rummages through the waste bin, they learn this without a roll. A search of this room reveals a few dried drops of blood.

Storage

The door to this room is locked (a *Locksmith* or *Mechanical Repair* roll is required to open it.) Supplies for all the functions of the facility are stored here. In a lead-lined cabinet at the rear of the room is a small supply of radioactive material.

The Grounds

(See Play Aid #2 for a map of this area.)

The grounds of the facility are separated into a handful of different gardens. Various shades have been constructed to alternately shield or expose the plants to varying degrees of sunlight. Signs by the plots give specific instructions regarding the plant's watering and care. One area appears intentionally isolated; it is surrounded by a short wall, completely enclosed with wire caging, and its door is sealed with a padlock.

The grounds are dotted with many gardens that Lupe Perez tended skillfully prior to his accident. These contain many common (unaltered) specimens of vegetables. The separate section is the experimental garden, enclosed on all sides by a wire fence; it contains a few transplanted vegetables that have been treated with Dr. Schmidt's formula. These are all mottled and bloated specimens with unsightly hues, and bulbous nodules. The plants radiate an unhealthy aspect that is undeniably repellent.

If a thorough search is made of the eastern garden, a discolored area will be discovered near the shed. A concentrated study accompanied by a *Biology* or *Medicine* roll suggests that this is likely blood. This is where Lupe killed the coyote. Ray Ortega discovered the dead coyote and dragged it off into the desert where he buried it. He mentioned this to Michael Murdock who dismissed it out of hand, saying that it was probably sick, or (as improbable as it sounds) killed

by eagles. The burial can be discovered with a successful *Track* roll by following the trail a short ways off into the desert.

If the carcass of the coyote is exhumed, the grisly exercise can yield a bit of information. A *Medicine* roll determines that the animal was killed by several lacerations around the head, neck and back. A *Medicine* or *Biology* roll suggests that the animal was diseased at the time of its death. If a skilled technician uses the lab facilities a *Medicine* or *Biology* roll can determine that the animal had rabies.

The garden shed contains a large amount of bagged soil, vegetable seeds, and conventional fertilizer. There is a motorized rotor-tiller, and a half-full five-gallon tank of gasoline. Along the back wall is a rack of garden tools. If these are examined, a cursory glance will show that with the exception of one hoe, all the implements are clean. Scrutinizing the soil on the tarnished hoe, with a successful *Spot Hidden* roll reveals that in addition to simple dirt are small bits of fur, bone and blood. (This was the weapon Lupe used to kill the coyote. Ray Ortega found it and replaced it in the shed, but took no notice of the gore.)

Interviewing the Staff

General Information (known by all staffers):

- The lab is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the State of New Mexico and to a lesser extent the University of New Mexico.
- Dr. Schmidt opened the research center in February of 1949.
- The lab employs a staff of six, not counting Danny Byers.
- Chuck Ingram is not present during the day; he works in the evenings.
- Someone is on site 24 hours a day.

Dr. Fritz Schmidt

The chief administrator and research scientist at the facility, Schmidt is deeply saddened by the untimely death of Danny Byers. He will explain that Byers was an intern at the facility while still at UCLA and took a full-time position following his graduation in 1953. He has nothing but good things to say about him, praising his ingenuity, and creativity. Schmidt saw Danny briefly the previous day. Atypically for him, Schmidt left the laboratory early to see a film at the theater in Roswell. (The film he saw was Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*.)

If asked if he had ill feelings toward Byers, Schmidt mournfully admits that just this morning he noticed that Byers had not removed his research notes from the lab. Schmidt is adamant that the staff keep their notes in their desks when not in use. He was in the process of writing another memo chastising Byers when he learned of the crash. (See Play Aid #3 for the first memo, discovered in Danny's desk.) He feels quite bad about this now. If pressed about Byers' habits, Schmidt admits that sometimes Danny was careless, but he attributes it to his youth, and a slight lack of discipline. It was not a detriment to the quality of his work, however.

Dr. Schmidt will allow the investigators to search Danny Byers desk, but will not allow any research material to be removed (unless legally forced to do so.)

Dr. Calvin Russo

If the investigators interview Dr. Russo he comes across as abrupt and rather abrasive. The junior scientist at the facility, Russo admits that he did not know Byers well. He says that it is a shame for such a young man to die. Danny was an amiable fellow, but he was distracted and sloppy. He seemed as interested in cars as he did in science. He made messes in the lab, and was not truly imaginative in his thoughts. Other than that Russo has nothing more to say, and begs off saying he has important work to attend to.

Russo is not pleased by the intrusion and is visibly nervous. This can be detected on a *Psychology* roll. In addition something about his "Italian" accent seems off. For more on Russo's eccentricities see the section titled "Investigating Dr. Russo."

Michael Murdock

The only staff member on site when Danny and Lupe left, Murdock was sound asleep at his desk and did not hear them leave. He had had a drink or two and was oblivious to the commotion that forced their departure. Murdock awoke two hours later, moments before Chuck Ingram arrived to relieve him. He was alone but this was fairly common, so he thought nothing of it.

When speaking with the investigators Murdock will be very evasive and lie to cover his negligence. He will say he was checking the shed, making sure that it was secure, and when he returned Byers had left. He insists that his evaluation took about an hour, and that Byers could have left anytime during that period. He suggests that perhaps Lupe knows more- he was still around when Murdock left last night. (Murdock infers this since he saw Lupe's truck in the lot when he left; of course, Lupe was not there.)

Personally, Murdock liked Byers. He wasn't an egghead like the other scientists. If Murdock is asked about his employment with the Sheriff's department, he claims that he quit, because Lawrence is a "horse's ass politician, who couldn't find a crook in the State Pen." (Confirmation of this requires a trip to city hall in Roswell, where it is discovered that Murdock was fired for drinking on duty.)

Chuck Ingram

(Note: It is unlikely that Ingram will be present unless the investigators visit the institute after 7 pm. Ingram lives in Lake Arthur, New Mexico. Though he knew Byers only slightly he felt he was a "stand-up guy.")

If Ingram is questioned about Lupe's truck, he will recall that it was there all night. He did not think much about it since it had broken down there before. Lupe was not around, and Ingram assumed that Ray Ortega had driven him home.

Ray Ortega

Ortega will happily talk to the investigators. He is a friendly fellow and speaks English fluently with only a slight accent. He was born in Texas and has lived for years in New Mexico. He has no family in the area, but is good friends with the Perez family.

He knew Danny Byers and felt that he was a good man, very intelligent and a hard worker. Ray and Danny would often talk about cars, a shared passion, and Ray admits that he loved Danny's souped-up hot-rod.

Ray will mention to the investigators that they should be sure to talk to Lupe, who was very friendly with Danny.

Schmidt's Serum

It is quite likely that the investigators will want to obtain a sample of the experimental serum for their own (often deranged) purposes. This can be accomplished in a number of ways. It is usually being brewed in the lab, and a quantity is also in the locked cases.

The serum appears as a thick pinkish-purple viscous fluid, with an acrid smell. Even when it dries the substance remains warm to the touch.

The effects of ingesting, injecting, or otherwise introducing the serum into one's body forces the recipient to make a CON check on the resistance table against the serum potency rating of 18 or suffer 3d4 hit points of damage.

They do not undergo any metamorphosis; Lupe's unique condition was a result of the interaction of a singularly unstable version and the rabies virus from the coyote bite.

Where's Lupe?

After speaking with the other staff it should become apparent that Lupe is missing. He is mentioned by several staffers, but cannot be located. In addition, observant investigators will note there are more vehicles than staff present in the facility's parking lot. If any of the staff are

questioned about it, it will quickly be determined that Lupe has not been seen recently, but his rusty truck is sitting in the lot. If the investigators make an issue of Lupe's absence with the staff, it can quickly be confirmed that no one has seen Lupe the entire day. With the hubbub over the tragic death of Byers, this went unnoticed. The last time he was seen was yesterday afternoon.

All the staffers have similar opinions about Lupe. He is a hard worker with a green thumb. Dr. Schmidt believes that he would have made a fine botanist. He is also a dedicated family man, with a wife and a couple of children. If the investigators wish to visit his home, either Ray Ortega or Dr. Schmidt can give them directions.

Ray, who knows Lupe personally, can provide a bit more detailed information. Lupe was born in 1919 in Culiacán, Mexico. His parents brought him to the US when he was four. He served in the army during World War II.

If Ray is asked about Lupe's family, he has nothing but praise for them. Lupe has two beautiful children—a boy, Julio and a sweet baby girl, Ana. He speaks especially highly of Lupe's wife, Margarita. A *Psychology* roll suggests that he may have feelings for her. If asked about this he will remark that she is a fine woman. If circumstances were different he could make her very happy, however she is married and Lupe is a good man.

Investigating Dr. Russo

Over the past few months, a rift has developed between the two researchers. Dr. Russo has developed a radical theory he calls Photo-Crystalline Dynamics, which he believes superior to Dr. Schmidt's ideas. His increasing commitment to this has led to his neglecting some of the tasks assigned to him by Schmidt. However, there is an even more unsettling problem that is troubling Dr. Russo.

Calvin Russo's real name is Kostya Rusomarov. Like Schmidt, Rusomarov fled Europe during a dark and horrifying time, but where his colleague fled from the vile Nazis, he fled Stalin's dreaded gulags. Using forged papers he assumed the identity of Calvin Russo. Though he is of Russian heritage, Rusomarov is no Communist; he is in the country illegally, and, though not a citizen, he has whole-heartedly embraced his adopted land. Sadly, his buried past has been unearthed by Russian agents working in the US. These dastardly villains are trying to force Rusomarov to smuggle sensitive information to further their nefarious cause. Initially they threatened to expose his ruse, but when he proved uncooperative, threats were made against his relatives still living in the USSR. As of yet, he has not given into their demands.

Russo's speech is heavily accented. He claims this is from growing up in an Italian speaking home, but a PC making a successful *Idea* roll (if the PC speaks Italian or Russian this can be made with a +20% bonus) detects that it is a Russian accent. Rusomarov denies this, even going so far as to throw out some Italian words he learned from a phrase book. If he is confronted about this he becomes extremely upset, ceases speaking and glares balefully at his accusers.

Should the investigators become suspicious about Rusomarov, they will discover that he lives in nearby Hagerman, just south of the lab. If, on the first night of the investigation, they stake out his residence, they will discover that the doctor has little in the way of a social life, keeping to himself when not working. Should the surveillance continue through the night, they will see a late model sedan arrive and a pair of men in dark suits enter the home. Inquisitive investigators who approach the house should be asked for *Sneak* and/or *Hide* rolls. Barring any catastrophic failures, the investigators can approach close enough to hear a heated discussion in a foreign, decidedly Slavic, tongue. Any Russian language proficient PC will be able to determine Rusomarov is being coerced in some fashion. The conversation will end before the details can be discerned.

Should the agents be confronted as they leave they will try a variety of excuses (expressed in perfect, unaccented English.) Any attempt to involve the authorities or otherwise detain these men will be met with stern resistance. The men will try to overpower and silence the investigators. Each carries a knife and a pistol, which they will not hesitate to use to protect

their ruthless scheme. If they think that an assault on the investigators will fail they will try to escape.

The Perez Family

Lupe lives on a simple farmstead several miles from the laboratory. The house is modest, but well maintained. The barn is old and sags with the weight of years, creaking in the unrelenting desert wind. A few goats and sheep are penned near the barn.

Lupe's wife, Margarita, has not seen him since he left for work on the day of the accident. She is extremely frightened and worried. She seems even more rattled than would be expected. The reasons for this are twofold—she is harboring an illegal immigrant, and the previous evening she saw a strange shadowy figure near the barn. She fears that it is a werewolf. (See below for additional details.)

She will be very reluctant to let anyone in the house. She will nervously greet visitors at the front door and close it behind her, speaking with them on the front porch.

Margarita is quite concerned that her husband did not return. This is very unusual for him; he is a dedicated father and treasures the time he spends each evening with the children. She will vehemently deny any insinuation that Lupe was involved with spying, stating that he loved America. To illustrate this point, she will point to the flagpole, which proudly displays Old Glory.

At some point during the conversation a crash will be heard emanating from within the house. This will be followed by a torrent of Spanish. Margarita will become very uneasy and tell the investigators that she needs to go, offering any sort of excuse that comes to mind. At this point she will turn and try to enter the house, closing the door behind her. If the investigators are insistent, Margarita will relent tearfully.

Inside they will find her cousin, Rosalita, a resident of Mexico who is illegally in the United States searching for work. She is cleaning a bottle of milk that Margarita's daughter Ana broke. When Rosalita sees Margarita crying, she begins to as well, as does young Ana. When the investigators manage to quell the distraught ladies, the situation is explained to them.

When the investigators prepare to depart, Lupe's son, Julio, catches their attention and beckons them to come to where he crouches hidden in the doorway to the barn. He will ask them a few questions to determine that they are searching for his father (and not come to take Rosalita away), then tell them what he saw the previous night.

Senors (and Senoritas,) last night I was out very late waiting for my papa to come home. Mama came out to check on the goats, they were making lots of noise. If she had caught me I would be in very big trouble. So I hid in the barn and peeked out the gaps in the wall. I saw Mama coming over to the goat pen. Then something big passed in front of me, on the other side of the wall. It was very stinky, it smelled some liked rotted cabbages Papa once had in the garden. I couldn't see it at first, then Mama was calling to the goats to be quiet, and they ran to her. Then I saw it. It was following them, maybe going after Mama too. It was very ugly, a monster. I was very scared, but I didn't want it to get Mama. So I called out to it, "Go away you monster, leave my Mama alone!" It turned and looked at me, Senors. (At this point Julio begins to shake and cry.) It looked right at me and made a horrible noise, and then ran off. I think Mama may have seen it too, for I heard her gasp when it ran.

Julio will provide the investigators with a drawing of the monster (see Play Aid #4), and point in the direction it fled. If the investigators speak with Margarita about this she will be hesitant to speak of it. With a successful *Persuade* roll, she will consent to speak with them. She confesses that she did see something the previous night. She believes it was a werewolf. She will not say anything more specific, instead offering the cryptic warning, "To speak of *El Hombre Lobo* is to invite its unquenchable wrath."

Following Julio's vague directions, the investigators will (with a *Track* roll) find the trail. The bizarre prints that are found cannot be called human, nor are they fully animal. A series of *Biology* rolls yields the following based upon the level of success:

Biology Roll #1- The footprints show signs of very long toenails, almost suggestive of canine claws.

Biology Roll #2- The weight of the prints is unevenly distributed, suggesting something other than bipedal locomotion.

Biology Roll #3- A particularly well made print shows signs of a unnaturally long human foot.

Attempts to track the maker of the prints by following the trail are frustrated when the trail turns onto some very rocky ground. A search of the surrounding territory (*Spot Hidden* roll) will reveal another set of tracks, these somewhat older, leading to the farmstead. If the investigators succeed in an *Idea* roll they can extrapolate a very general course of direction for their quarry. The tracks leading to the farm came on an easterly course (from the site of the car crash); the ones leading away proceeded in a northeasterly route, leading more-or-less towards the laboratory.

Margarita and the Werewolf

Growing up in a small village in Mexico, Margarita was terrified by the tales her Uncle Marco told about *El Hombre Lobo*. According to these stories this fearsome werewolf lived high in a nearby cave and would descend to the village in the night to steal children. Uncle Marco scared her with these stories for years. As she grew older she became less afraid of the silly stories her uncle told. Eventually she forgot them altogether.

Then one evening when she was fourteen, she and a few of her girlfriends were out late smoking cigarettes behind an old barn. They were giggling and talking about boys, and enjoying the stolen moments away from their parents. They finished and Margarita was sneaking back home. She walked in the still darkness, now free of laughter and utterly quiet, when out of nowhere a man turned the corner. His face was utterly covered with thick black fur, and even more dreadful he was holding a swaddled bundle to his chest. She cried out from the depths of her soul a terrified wail and she fled, her very life depending on her swiftness, as the stories of her uncle were proven true.

It took months for Margarita to recover, and for years she was petrified of being alone after dark. Finally her parents sent her to New Mexico to live with relatives.

As for *El Hombre Lobo*, stories persist that a bestial man lives the mountains. Legend has it that on certain nights he creeps down from the mountains and travels to the Church where he receives a bundle. Perhaps this is merely a charitable parcel of food, or perhaps it is something else.

Day Two

Lupe's Activities

After night has fallen Lupe awakens and wanders back to the lab, hoping that Dr. Schmidt might be working late, as he does so often. Lupe desperately hopes that his condition can be cured. He perceives that his mind has become more addled and confused as his humanity slowly diminishes. He fears his time may be growing short.

However, Lupe is not the only visitor to the lab. Since Dr. Russo is proving resistant to the efforts to pressure him, the Soviet Operatives have decided on a less subtle approach. An operative stealthily approaches the lab, intent on breaking in and taking what Russo was unwilling to give. (If the investigators took care of the Soviets troubling Dr. Russo, assume that this fellow was the third in a triumvirate of Communist espionage.)

Lupe arrives just as the foreign agent has picked the lock on the north entrance and entered the lab, silenced pistol in hand. Knowing that something is amiss, Lupe, forgetting what he has become, confronts the uninvited visitor. The spy, seeing the hulking man-beast standing before him, screams. His scream alerts the dozing Chuck Ingram who wakes with a start. Lupe tells the spy to leave the premises, which emerges from his mutated vocal chords as a garbled growl. Terrified by this the spy fires his pistol. Injured and enraged, Lupe lashes out, throttling his attacker. The violence being meted out spurs Ingram into action. He draws his sidearm and fires it at the monster, inadvertently killing the beatnik. (In his confused state he mistakes the black-clad soviet spy for a member of the Beat Generation.) Never having been a talented marksman and being badly rattled, Ingram misses all but one of the five shots he fires. Feeling the searing pain from the shot, Lupe hurls the lifeless intruder at Ingram and flees into the night. Ingram is knocked unconscious by the blow.

Wounded and frustrated, Lupe returns to the bunkhouse, resting for a few hours as his mutated metabolism quickly mends his injuries. When he awakes in the pre-dawn hours he is ravenously hungry. He leaves, looking for food. His newly acquired hyper-acute senses lead him towards a likely food source. Slipping over a crest he sees a small cluster of sheep. He hesitates for a moment before his ever-increasing animal instinct and hunger spurs him to action. He springs at one of the helpless animals, killing it with one blow and then begins feasting on the warm blood and raw flesh.

The Aftermath

A few hours later Dr. Schmidt arrives at the lab and finds Ingram lying with a dead man sprawled beside him. He immediately rushes to Ingram and, once assured that he is alive, telephones the sheriff. Depending upon the investigators relationship with Schmidt, the laboratory staff and/or the sheriff, they will be contacted as well. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, the sheriff and some deputies arrive before the investigators.

Depending on how quickly the investigators arrive, the body of the Soviet agent may still be present. If they are tardy it will have been removed to Roswell to await examination by the Chaves County coroner, Larry Munroe. In either case the information is the same. (See the "A Dead Man Tells No Tales" section for more information)

Dr. Russo will be working at the lab. He is very disturbed by the events. He recognizes the dead man as one of the Soviets who have harassed him in recent weeks. He will share this with the investigators if they have learned his secret. If his history and current tribulations remain hidden, his behavior in the wake of the previous nights events will likely expose him. He will be in the lab, but will make numerous forays to the crime scene, pacing nervously between the two locations. A *Psychology* roll notes this; an impale suggests that his behavior is too severe for someone simply seeing a dead body and crime scene.

A confrontation with him at this point will be productive; the guilt-ridden scientist will ask for a closed door meeting with the investigators and Dr. Schmidt. There he will reveal his history and his current predicament.

(The above assumes the investigators were not involved in the encounter Russo had the previous evening. If the investigators have stepped in and thwarted the Soviet agents bothering Dr. Russo, it can be assumed that this agent is a lone confederate monitoring their progress clandestinely).

Should the investigators examine the ground around the entrance to the facility, they will be initially frustrated- the heavy traffic has marred any evidence. However, a *Spot Hidden* or *Track* roll picks up the trail punctuated with drops of blood some 30 feet away leading to the NE into the desert. If the investigators decide to follow the trail, see the section titled "Chasing Lupe" below.

In the dusty soil outside the Library/Office a satchel sits beside the door, presumably belonging to the dead man. It contains lock-picks, wire cutters, and some safe-cracking tools. Any investigator making an impale on an *Idea* roll ascertains that these are professional quality items. Inside the room is a .22 caliber pistol equipped with a silencer; in addition there are a handful of spent casing lying about. All of the items are clean, almost polished, and utterly free of any fingerprints. The equipment clearly speaks of something other than an ordinary crook.

A *Spot Hidden* roll inside the Library/Office detects a few dark red droplets on the floor. At first glance these appear to be blood- there is a fair amount splattered about from the dead Soviet- but closer examination reveals that there is an unexplainable greenish tint to them. Should a qualified PC, who succeeds in a *Biology* roll, examine the substance under a microscope, it appears to be blood, but it exhibits mutations that defy explanation.

If Schmidt examines the substance he makes a startled exclamation and continues scrutinizing it for a few minutes. Then he turns, ashen-faced, addressing the investigators in grave tones.

"Friends this is dreadful, dreadful. This is blood, yes. But it shows unmistakable signs of mutation. Mutation that is consistent with the botanical changes that result from the application of my latest serum. Ach! It is too horrible to imagine. My serum was never, NEVER meant for animal life; it is too unstable, too unpredictable. Who knows what the product of such a union could be! . . . I only wish the sample was better preserved, fresher. It is contaminated such that I cannot fully understand what has occurred."

A Dead Man Tells No Tales

Examination of the body, which is dressed in tight fitting black clothes, yields little information. There is no personal identification, nor any personal effects. Furthermore there are no unusual scars or identifying marks. If a photo of the deceased is shown in any of the nearby communities no one recognizes him.

The neck has been snapped and there are some deep lacerations as well. With a *Biology* roll it can be surmised that the cuts are consistent with a massive hand or articulate paw gripping the neck. The spacing of the wounds suggests the hand would be much larger than anything occurring in the natural world.

If the investigators enlist the aid of Larry Munroe, the Chaves County Coroner, they will be disappointed. Munroe is a dentist who was elected to the office unopposed. He has absolutely nothing to offer. However he knows he is out of his depth and will welcome assistance or advice from qualified candidates.

Interrogating Ingram

By the time the investigators arrive, Ingram is still incoherent, though he is conscious. He stares blankly, mumbling about monsters and beatniks. If the investigators have medical or psychological skills they can attempt to treat him. His addled mind requires a *Psychoanalysis* roll to rouse, and this state only lasts a few minutes. His permanent recovery will require many days

of rest and a few soothing jolts of electrotherapy. Providing the investigators do manage to reach him, he can reiterate the following before lapsing back into his confused oblivion.

"Heard a shouting... There it was a-standing there, bigger'n a bear. The beatnik, he didn't have no chance. That thing, claws as long as scythe, big ole teeth. Big bad wolf. Poor feller, shaking him like a dog with a toy. He looked like a drowned puppy all limp and dead. But Chuck shot it, he did. Got it with five shots. Shoulda been kilt. But it looked right there (Ingram points to his eyes) with them eyes. Yellow eyes like nothing living. Burned right into ole Chuck, right through his brains. Gawd, it's too awful."

Chasing Lupe

The trail leads into the desert and can be followed readily unless considerable time has passed. Assuming the investigators follow it, they are led three miles into the desert. If they follow the trail to its termination, they will arrive at the abandoned ranch.

The trail ends as it crosses onto a rough gravel drive. The drive leads to a ramshackle bunkhouse that sags under the weight of years and neglect. Boards cover some of the windows, but not all, as if the carpenter realized the folly of his efforts. A well-maintained blue pick-up truck idles outside, a telling contrast to the obviously abandoned structure.

Inside the building is rancher Ed "Tex" Fetters who owns this property. As the investigators approach, Tex exits with a rifle slung over his shoulder and asks the investigators what they are up to.

If the investigators explain that they are tracking some sort of wild and dangerous creature, Fetters will tell them that he is on a similar errand. As he puts it, a "dag-gum critter" killed a sheep nearby. He found a scattering of tracks that led this way. He goes on saying that he thought whatever it was may have been holed up in the old bunkhouse. He has concluded that this is, or at least was the case, owing to a singularly pungent odor detected within. (Lupe was in the bunkhouse resting, but heard the truck approaching and fled into the hills.)

Fetters will welcome the investigators to take a look about. As they are doing so he will ask questions trying to determine who they are. An intelligent man, Fetters will be very curious if he discovers that the investigators are government agents or anything else that could be considered unusual out here in this sparsely populated area. Should he be told anything bizarre or outlandish about the creature he is tracking, he will become even more curious, but play the part of an unbelieving yokel. Fetters will do his best to gain a complete understanding of the events.

Though he seems little more than a wide-eyed good ol' boy, in truth, Fetters is a dangerous, somewhat deranged fellow.

Tex Fetters

Fetters is the scion of a wealthy Texas oil family. Since his youth he has lived in New Mexico, enjoying an easy life his considerable fortune granted him. That was until he volunteered to serve as a fighter pilot during World War II in the European theater. During his days as a flyer, Fetters encountered a strange glowing disc in the skies above Germany. Later he met others who had seen similar things and referred to them as foo fighters. Fetters, along with the others, was convinced that these strange objects were otherworldly craft.

Once the Hun was defeated, Fetter returned to Chaves County intent on living an easy life engaging in frequent hunting trips and dabbling in ranching, hoping to put the horrors of war behind him. His illusion of a quiet peaceful life ended on July 8, 1947, the date of the so-called Roswell Incident. This news deeply affected Fetters. Coupled with his experiences in the war, the idea of an alien craft crashing mere miles away from his home fanned the flames of fear and paranoia within him to a burning rage. (Fetters utterly rejected the feeble attempts by the government to cover up the events.)

Fetters scoured the deserts in the days that followed, staying out all night, rifle in hand, searching for any survivors of the crash. Though he found nothing, he remains firmly convinced that each passing day brings Earth closer to an invasion. Fetters knows that his ideas are not well-received, and he generally keeps them to himself.

The Bunkhouse

The interior of the bunkhouse is dark, dirty, and hot. A strange odor permeates the air. It smells like a bizarre mix of human sweat and animal waste, over which an unexplainable acrid smell can be detected. In one corner a collection of stained and rotting mattresses are heaped up. The terrible stench is strongest there.

Examining them, with a successful *Spot Hidden* roll reveals the following:

Spot Hidden Roll #1- There is a stain, a very deep red, with a slightly luminescent greenish tint on the top mattress. It is sticky, more like sap than blood. This substance, if examined in a lab, proves to be the same as found that in the lab earlier in the morning.

Spot Hidden Roll #2- Imbedded in the padding of the mattress is a strange quill-like spine to which is attached a few coarse hairs. Analysis of the spine reveals that it is weird a conglomeration of animal and plant. A *Biology* roll reveals that the spines are similar in structure to porcupine quills, but are composed of plant matter. The hairs seem to be animal fur, likely canine. (See Play Aid #5C)

Spot Hidden Roll #3- On the floor beneath the pile is a cigarette lighter with a rodeo horse design on it. If this is shown to Ray or Margarita, they can confirm that it belonged to Lupe. (See Play Aid #5B)

A search of the grounds around the bunkhouse turns up a fresh set of tracks; these lead away from the ranch into the rocky hills. The ground is here is loose soil, which imprints easily, but is completely unsheltered from the blowing desert winds. An *Idea* roll suggests that these tracks must be very fresh.

Quick-acting investigators will be able to follow the trail into the nearby hills with a *Track*. The sandy ground quickly gives way to firmer soil, but the tracks can still be followed. The trail continues, winding around a rocky hill. Unless he is prevented from doing so, Tex Fetters will accompany the investigators, rifle in hand.

Trail of Terror

Lupe retreated only a short distance, curious and somewhat concerned about the visitors. From his vantage he can observe the investigators, but is hidden from view. As he watches them he realizes that he has lost his precious lighter, a gift from Margarita. This causes a wave of anguish to wash over him, temporarily unhinging him, and giving sway to his ever-increasing bestial instincts. This happens moments after the investigators turn the corner following the trail, and unable to control himself Lupe lurches out, bellowing his rage.

The clearly discernable, utterly unnatural footprints lead around a rocky hill, onto stony soil that holds no prints. Scarcely a moment passes before a horrible figure lurches out of a secluded spot between two boulders. A twisted greenish limb clutches one of the boulders, the arm gnarled with ropy muscle. Its other arm is small and withered. Some seven feet tall it stands, or more accurately squats, and lurches forwardly unevenly on twisted, knotted legs. The torso and back are covered in a greenish skin dotted with patches of viscous barbs, and tufts of brownish ill-colored fur. Its head, its face, is more terrible, more hideous than can be imagined--a half-formed, vaguely canine snout filled with mismatched teeth, some huge and fanglike, others undeniably human. The eyes too are paired incongruously, one a feral terrible yellow, wolflike and hate-filled, the other a man's brown eye, made more eerie by the devilish light mirroring the fury in the other.

Lifting its terrible head to the sky, a scream or roar of inhuman wrath explodes, shattering the stillness of the surrounding desert, and with a flick of its hideous limb, a cascade of boulders descend upon you.

The investigators will need to make a *Sanity roll (1/1d8)* upon first encountering the Atomic Beast. Failure results in a –20% penalty to the *Dodge* roll all the investigators need to avoid the small avalanche. The small rockslide causes 1d6 damage unless the *Dodge* roll was successful.

While the investigators are dodging the boulders, the Atomic Beast escapes using its preternatural speed.

The Dust Settles

Once the investigators have recovered, they will have to spend precious moments getting their legs beneath them, and clambering over and around the rubble. This delay gives the creature sufficient time to frustrate pursuers.

Brave investigators who venture to look at the area where only moments before the beast stood, are rewarded by several important clues. A *Spot Hidden* roll notices a spattering of the strange blood, and nearby an inch long jagged claw with a bit of bloody flesh attached can be found. A *Track* roll follows the drops of blood up the trail, and then to a sheer rock wall. It appears the monster scaled the wall, a challenging feat even for an experienced climber with the best equipment. (If investigators are insistent, all *Climb* rolls are at -20% and they must ascend 137 feet to the top. By the time the summit is reached the creature is long gone and only a few scant traces, nothing substantial enough to track, remain on the top of the barren mesa.)

Following this frightening encounter, the investigators have now caught their first glimpse of the Atomic Beast. They should have ample evidence to deduce that the creature is, or perhaps more accurately was, human. In addition, several clues point to Lupe Perez, the gardener at the lab, as the unfortunate victim.

Providing Fetters was present, he will be visibly shaken by the events. He will ask the investigators what they intend to do about “that thing.” Though he keeps his opinions to himself, he is utterly bent on eradicating this threat with extreme prejudice. Should the investigators suggest any lesser course of action, Fetters will outwardly agree with them. However, at the first opportunity he will depart, declaring that he is too old or afraid to pursue such a dangerous quarry. He volunteers to inform the investigators if he notices any other bizarre occurrences, and asks if they would do the same. (A *Psychology* roll suggests that there is more to his behavior than he is letting on. There seems to be a dangerous edge beneath his good-ole boy exterior.)

An Emergency Parachute

Seeing as Fetters is the nominal villain of the piece and meeting him is essential to the plot development, all is not lost if the players somehow miss the leads pointing to the bunkhouse. Fetters will visit the lab, which he has always viewed with suspicion. This occurs after he has inspected the bunkhouse. He does not pursue the trail, and does not encounter the Atomic Beast. This visit should be staged to occur when the investigators are there. He will mention his findings at the cabin, and will allow the investigators to inspect it, or lead them there himself.

If the investigators shoo Fetters away and keep him out of their investigation, he will call on Mike Murdock. The two are acquaintances; Fetters allows Murdock to hunt and fish on his land. Being of large mouth and small brain, Murdock quickly brings Fetters up to speed, informing him of Byers’ death, the disappearance of Perez, the attempted break-in and so forth. Fetters utters a “Gosh, things ain’t been dull around here,” and asks that Murdock keep him informed of anything else, hinting that there might a few bucks in it for him.

Maybe, Just Maybe

Dr. Schmidt and any qualified investigators will be able to use the considerable resources of the lab to examine the tissue samples recovered from the site of the attack. These better preserved samples will allow for much more detailed analysis than others obtained earlier. (See Play Aid #5D)

If an investigator succeeds in a *Biology* roll, the following elements can be isolated. The sample contains cells that appear to be an amalgamation of human, canine, and plant. The human and canine elements are both tainted by the rabies virus. All the elements have been mutated by exposure to the atomically charged serum of Dr. Schmidt. (Dr. Russo will take this opportunity to issue a few critical comments about Schmidt's theories.)

Continuing the grueling inspection of the material, Schmidt (and any assisting investigators) comes to the realization that, maybe, just maybe, the condition could be reversed.

"My friends, it is very good that you got this specimen to the lab so quickly. I (or we if he was assisted) have reached the conclusion that an antidote might be possible. Yes, if we are fortunate the terrible misdeeds that fate and my own hubris have caused can be cured! It will be very difficult. A way must be found to neutralize the mutating effects of the serum and the atomically altered virus. If we are to be successful it must be administered without delay. Our findings suggest that soon the effects will be permanent!"

Concocting the serum to cure Lupe requires several hours of intense effort. Schmidt will volunteer without a moment's hesitation. Providing he is still a free man, Russo, putting aside his ill feelings toward his mentor, will step up to assist. If any investigators offer to help, they will be told that their efforts will better used by locating the beast and determining a way to deliver the cure. However, the scientists will not refuse any offer of aid.

Day Three

Fetters Unfettered

Fetters, whether or not he has been involved with the investigators or carrying on his own peripheral investigation, will determine that the Atomic Beast is somehow tied to the Perez family. Fetters believes that the Institute is a terrible lab where a Nazi scientist is growing aliens from spores recovered from the 1947 Roswell crash. He theorizes that Perez was either infected accidentally or implanted intentionally with these spores, and Byers, being an honest red-blooded American, wanted nothing to do with it. Then, in a leap even he will concede has little corroborating evidence, a death ray from outer space was fired causing Byers' car wreck. Suspecting that the rest of the Perez clan may have some involvement, or at least know where to find the Beast, Fetters goes there to question them about it. He busts in, brandishing his rifle, demanding to be told where the monster is hiding. Witnessing this, young Julio runs for help to the nearest pocket of civilization, the lab.

(If the investigators are at the Perez residence, Fetters will approach in a less hostile fashion, and try to convince them to leave. He will claim he was seeking them out to tell them he heard a monster was spotted outside Dick's Uranium Mine in nearby Hagerman. He will nobly volunteer to stay behind and safeguard the family.)

Once Julio reaches the lab he will breathlessly tell whoever is present about the intruder. Ray Ortega, fascinated by the recent events, will be on hand to hear. Providing the investigators treated Julio with kindness and appear competent, he will beg for their help. (If they are not present he will implore Schmidt to seek them out. Acquiescing to this, Schmidt will hastily dispatch Dr. Russo to find them and bring them the news.) Ortega, realizing this is his chance to be a hero and win the heart of Margarita, slips away to the Perez farmstead.

Conveniently the special antidote will just be completed when these new developments occur.

As these events are unfolding, Lupe feels the last vestiges of his humanity slipping away. He has decided that before this happens he will fling himself from the top of mesa. Before he sheds this mortal coil, he wishes to once more see his home and family. Resigned to his fate, the Atomic Beast goes home.

Unless the investigators have left the state, Russo finds them and informs them of the recent events.

Calling in the Law?

Should Sheriff Lawrence be contacted, the caller will be told that the department is occupied with a serious investigation at the far northern terminus of the county. He will be contacted but will be unable to be on the scene for a considerable amount of time. The investigators will be on their own.

New Mexican Standoff

The Atomic Beast, Ray Ortega, and the investigators arrive roughly at the same time. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise Fetters will be in the house interrogating the frightened family. Ray, knowing the lay of the land quite well, drove a circuitous route, and parked his vehicle out of sight. He then makes his way in from the north. The Atomic Beast crosses to the farm from the east. Ray will try to be as quiet as possible, but he is not accustomed to skulking about, and makes a fair amount of noise. His clumsy efforts can be detected with a *Listen* roll. He can easily be intercepted by the investigators. Guileless, he will explain his rationale and ask the investigators for help. The Atomic Beast glides in with considerable stealth despite his awkward bulk. Lupe intends to slip up in-between the garden and barn to peek inside, stealing a last glance at his beloved family.

Fetters, alert and paranoid, hears any commotion made by Ray Ortega and anticipates a confrontation. Providing he has the time to act, he will hastily order Margarita to tie up Rosalita and Ana. He will bind her and order them all to remain silent. At this point assuming the man-turned-monster is lurking about, Tex will fire his rifle into the air, and bellow the following:

"I know you're out there, you no-good critter. Well 'fore you go off and go something crazylike, I am warning you. I got me 3 purty ladies in here who'll get a belly full of buckshot if'n you do something stupid."

Fetters will wait a few moments for this to register. Ray Ortega will be very upset, but his emotional turmoil will pale in comparison to Lupe's. The Beast will bellow out a horrible roar that shatters the tense silence. The cry of the Atomic Beast under these stress-laden circumstances necessitates a *Sanity Roll (0/1-3)*.

A bit shaken by the inhuman, otherworldly nature of the sound, Fetters stammers out, "Best not do that again, Mac. I might get scairt and do something you'll regret. Now listen here, the front door's open and I want you to come on up, real easy-like, so I kin get a better look at your ugly mug."

Contrary to his statement, Fetters will not fire upon the women. His aim is to draw the monster into the open where he can get a good shot at it.

If the investigators do nothing, the scene plays out as follows: after a couple minutes of hesitation, the Atomic Beast, frothing with rage, stalks around the house towards the front door. It unceremoniously rips the door open and enters. A terrified Fetters fires one barrel of his shotgun wildly, and the creature charges. His next shot, at extremely close range, strikes true, mortally wounding Lupe. At the same instant the Atomic Beast strikes Fetters with terrible force, breaking his neck. The Beast then looks upon his family before staggering away to expire alone in the desert.

The investigators can intervene in any number of ways. Fetters, despite his violent behavior, will only fire (upon humans) if he is fired upon first. He will club intruders with the rifle. Also he erred in allowing Margarita to restrain Rosalita. The latter was very loosely bound and can wriggle free given a few minutes. Allowed this time, she will spring up when Fetter's back is turned and strike him with a lamp. Staggered, he turns and clubs her with the rifle. She collapses with a cry. This distraction could allow for some timely intervention.

Caging the Atomic Beast

The antidote must be injected; time does not permit for a dart to be obtained to deliver it. This will require a standard melee attack on the Beast. When the antidote has been injected, the curative properties are not immediate. It requires 10 rounds, minus 1d8 rounds. (This simulates how effectively it was delivered.) During the intervening period, Lupe is subjected to incredible pain, such that he loses control of himself and lashes out at his assailants. He considers anyone who is not his immediate family in this unfortunate group. Once the requisite number of rounds has elapsed, he staggers back, collapses, and reverts back to his normal self. Seeing this unearthly transformation requires a *Sanity Roll (1/1d4)*.

The Beast Formerly Known as Lupe Perez

STR 18 CON 16 SIZ 19 INT 7 POW 9 DEX 17 APP 4

Skills: Dodge 75%, Track 90%, Jump 90%, Scent Prey 60%

Combat: Claw 60%, (1d6 + 1d6) Kick 45% (1d6 + 1d6) Grapple 30%

Sanity cost to see the Beast: 1/1d10

In the spirit of films of the day, investigators should be applauded if a male investigator cautions a female that a given action is too dangerous for a woman. If the female investigator refutes the statement with spunk she should receive an equal applause.

Appendixes:

Special Sanity Effects

Memo from Schmidt to Byers

Map of Lab

Map of Lab grounds

Lupe's drawing of the Monster

Photographic Play Aids

Investigators

Special Sanity Effects

These tests are used to simulate the mind-numbing and soul-wrenching fear resulting from encounters with space aliens, giant insects, and Atomic Beasts. Because of the cinematic theme of this game use the list below to determine effects of insanity.

Results (Roll 1d6 to determine)

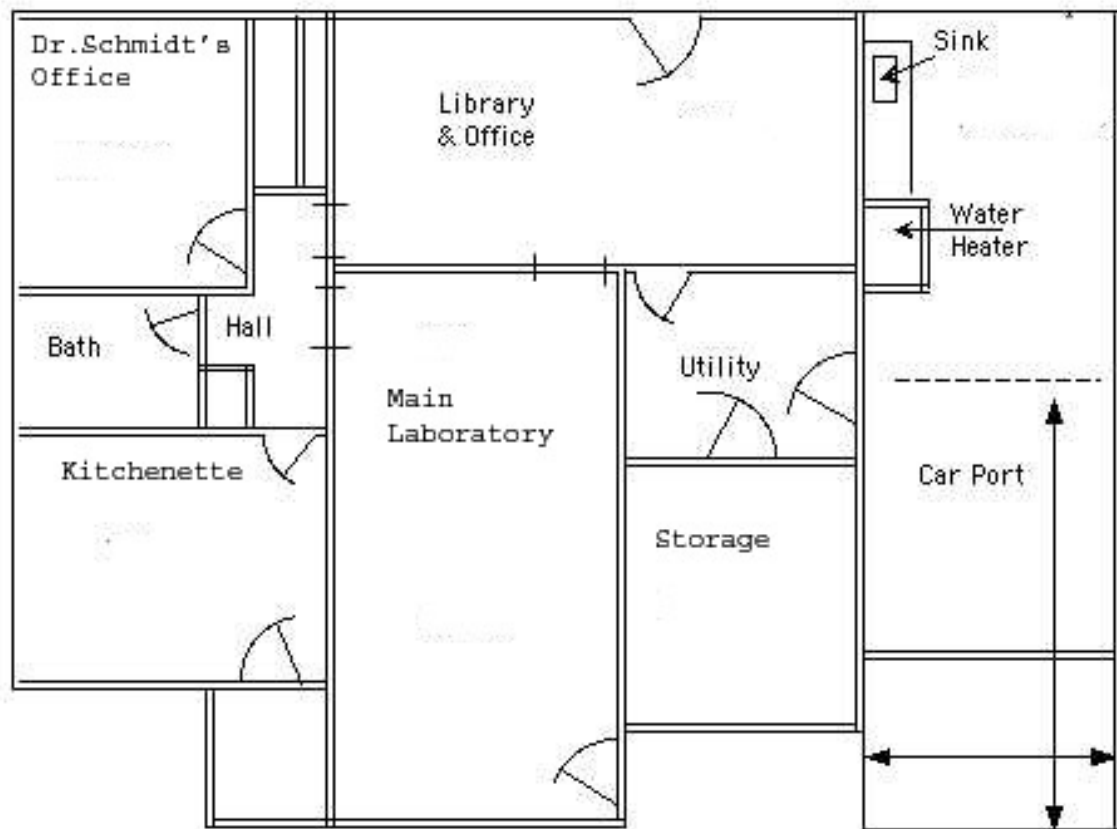
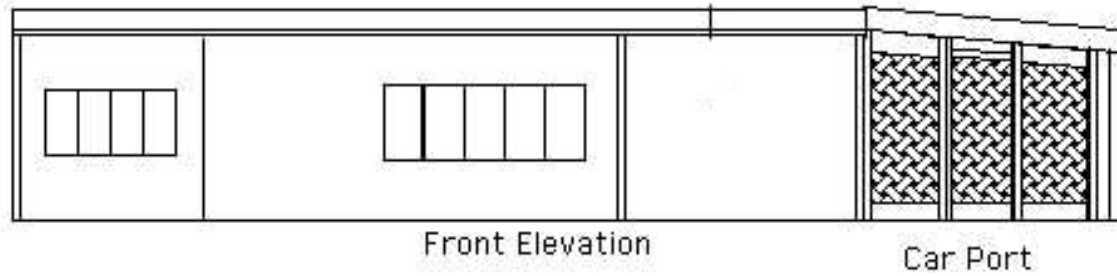
- 1 Character Trips and Falls
- 2 Character Laughs Manically
- 3 Character Screams (with hands clutching head)
- 4 Character Flees
- 5 Character Faints
- 6 Character Cries out to his or her parents or deity for intervention.

The duration is 2-5 rounds.

The Final Curtain

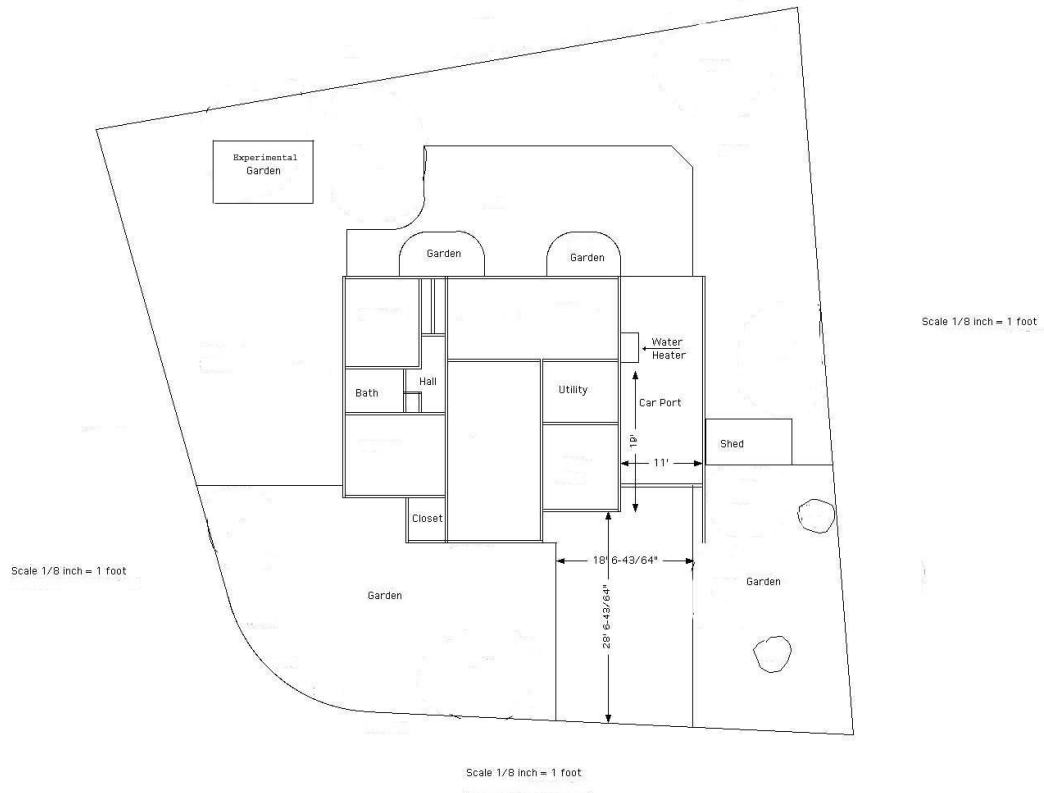
Should an investigator's Sanity be reduced to zero, that character (not the player) dies of fright.

Play Aid #1 Map of Lab



Play Aid # 2 Map of Lab grounds

Scale 1/8 inch = 1 foot



Play Aid #3 Memo from Schmidt to Byers regarding his carelessness in the disposal of lab materials.

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
BOTANICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
INTRAOFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

Date: June 16, 1954

TO: Daniel Byers, Research Associate

FROM: Dr. Fritz Schmidt, Administrator

SUBJECT: Laboratory Safety Policies

After many verbal warnings I have no choice but to issue a formal reprimand. We have established the lab policies for a reason, Danny. We are dealing with many dangerous substances, and you must be more careful. Dr. Russo and I are constantly finding your little messes. I do not wish to be dramatic but if state or federal inspectors, or even our friends from UNM, were to visit and find one of your accidents it could jeopardize our grant funding.

You are a good researcher Danny--but please clean up after yourself!

Dr. Fritz Schmidt
Botanical Research Institute
Administrator

Play Aid #4 Julio's drawing of the Monster



Play Aid #5 Photographs

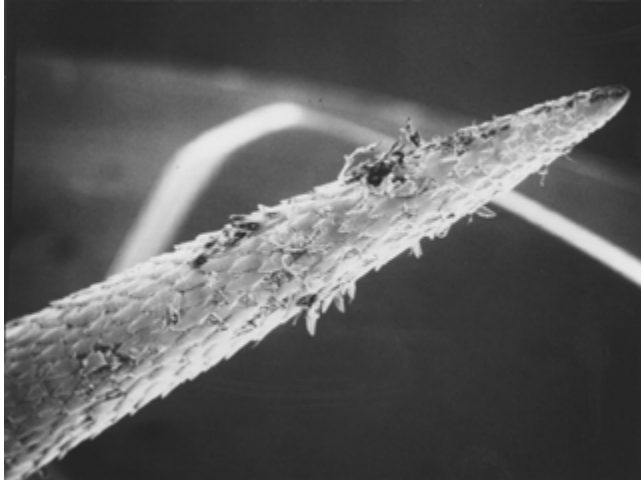
A: Danny Byer's Hot Rod (before the crash)



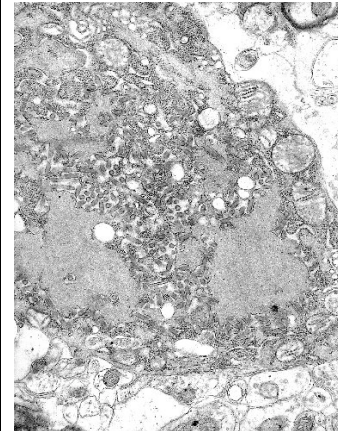
B: Lupe's Lighter



C: Microscopic Image of the Atomic Beast's Claw



D: Microscopic Image of the Atomic Beast's Infected Blood



Investigators

Diane Foster

Investigator Name: Diane Foster	STR: 10	DEX: 14	INT: 15	Idea: 75
Occupation: College Student	CON: 14	APP: 17	POW: 15	Luck: 75
Colleges, Degrees:	SIZ: 10	SAN: 75	EDU: 16	Know: 80
Birthplace:				
Mental Disorders:				
Sex: F Age: 22				Damage Bonus: none

Accounting 10%	Anthropology 1%	Archaeology 1%
Astronomy 1%	Bargain 5%	Biology 61%
Chemistry 46%	Climb 40%	Conceal 15%
Credit Rating 25%	Cthulhu Mythos 0%	Disguise 1%
Dodge 35%	Drive Auto 20%	Electrical Repair 10%
Fast Talk 5%	First Aid 40%	Geology 1%
Handgun 20%	Hide 10%	History 20%
Jump 25%	Law 25%	Library Use 25%
Listen 45%	Locksmith 1%	Machine Gun 15%
Martial Arts 1%	Mechanical Repair 20%	Medicine 25%
Natural History 55%	Navigate 10%	Occult 5%
Operate Hvy. Machine 1%	Other Language: Russian 21%	Other Language: Spanish 36%
Persuade 65%	Pharmacy 1%	Photography 10%
Physics 1%	Psychoanalysis 41%	Psychology 60%
Ride 5%	Rifle 25%	Shotgun 30%
Sneak 20%	Spot Hidden 45%	Submachine Gun 15%
Swim 25%	Throw 25%	Track 10%
Fist/Punch 50%	Head Butt 10%	Kick 25%
Grapple 25%		

Investigator Background

You have lived in Roswell your entire life. It's a quiet town where nothing unusual ever happens. You were really bored until you met Danny Byers. Danny is a scientist who works at the New Mexico Botanical Research Institute. He inspired you to go to college where you study biology. Now you hope to be a scientist too and someday settle down with Danny.

Investigators

Hondo McGill

Investigator Name: Hondo McGill	STR: 14	DEX: 15	INT: 14	Idea: 70
Occupation: Tow-Truck Driver	CON: 15	APP: 12	POW: 12	Luck: 60
Colleges, Degrees:	SIZ: 12	SAN: 60	EDU: 14	Know: 70
Birthplace:				
Mental Disorders:				
Sex: M Age: 23				Damage Bonus: +1D4

Accounting 10%	Anthropology 1%	Archaeology 1%
Art: Hot Rods 30%	Astronomy 1%	Bargain 5%
Biology 1%	Chemistry 26%	Climb 40%
Conceal 15%	Credit Rating 15%	Cthulhu Mythos 0%
Disguise 1%	Dodge 35%	Drive Auto 75%
Electrical Repair 75%	Fast Talk 5%	First Aid 45%
Geology 26%	Handgun 20%	Hide 25%
History 20%	Jump 25%	Law 5%
Library Use 25%	Listen 35%	Locksmith 26%
Machine Gun 15%	Martial Arts 1%	Mechanical Repair 80%
Medicine 5%	Natural History 10%	Navigate 10%
Occult 5%	Operate Hvy. Machine 1%	Persuade 30%
Pharmacy 1%	Photography 10%	Physics 26%
Psychoanalysis 1%	Psychology 25%	Ride 5%
Rifle 25%	Shotgun 30%	Sneak 20%
Spot Hidden 50%	Submachine Gun 15%	Swim 25%
Throw 25%	Track 10%	Fist/Punch 50%
Head Butt 10%	Kick 25%	Grapple 25%

Investigator Background

The scene in Roswell is pretty lame-o. It would be a total drag if it wasn't for you and other cool cats like Danny Byers. The two of you are always talking cars. It really surprised you when you found out he wasn't a grease monkey like you but a scientist. Even though Danny's in a square racket he's OK by you.

Investigators

Jeffrey Petersen

Investigator Name: Jeffrey Petersen	STR: 16	DEX: 16	INT: 10	Idea: 50
Occupation: Unemployed Janitor	CON: 14	APP: 10	POW: 10	Luck: 50
Colleges, Degrees:	SIZ: 16	SAN: 50	EDU: 12	Know: 60
Birthplace:				
Mental Disorders:				
Sex: M Age: 23				Damage Bonus: +1D4

Accounting 10%	Anthropology 1%	Archaeology 1%
Astronomy 1%	Bargain 25%	Biology 1%
Chemistry 1%	Climb 40%	Conceal 15%
Credit Rating 15%	Cthulhu Mythos 0%	Disguise 1%
Dodge 40%	Drive Auto 20%	Electrical Repair 10%
Fast Talk 50%	First Aid 30%	Geology 1%
Handgun 20%	Hide 45%	History 20%
Jump 25%	Law 5%	Library Use 25%
Listen 50%	Locksmith 41%	Machine Gun 15%
Martial Arts 1%	Mechanical Repair 20%	Medicine 5%
Natural History 25%	Navigate 10%	Occult 5%
Operate Hvy. Machine 1%	Own Language: English 60%	Persuade 15%
Pharmacy 1%	Photography 10%	Physics 1%
Psychoanalysis 1%	Psychology 5%	Ride 5%
Rifle 40%	Shotgun 30%	Sneak 45%
Spot Hidden 60%	Submachine Gun 15%	Swim 25%
Throw 25%	Track 40%	Fist/Punch 65%
Head Butt 20%	Kick 35%	Grapple 25%

Investigator Background

Life has never been fair to you. You were the best in your field, but politics and jealousy robbed you of the day shift janitorial job at Dick's Uranium Mine. Now you've been out of work for going on a month. If it wasn't for the kindness of your roommate Danny Byers you would be living in the street.

Investigators

Skip Foster

Investigator Name: Skip Foster	STR: 6	DEX: 14	INT: 16	Idea: 80
Occupation: Precocious Kid Brother	CON: 14	APP: 11	POW: 13	Luck: 65
Colleges, Degrees:	SIZ: 8	SAN: 65	EDU: 6	Know: 30
Birthplace:				
Mental Disorders:				
Sex: M Age: 12				Damage Bonus: -1D4

Accounting 10%	Anthropology 1%	Archaeology 1%
Astronomy 1%	Bargain 5%	Biology 41%
Chemistry 41%	Climb 45%	Conceal 15%
Credit Rating 15%	Cthulhu Mythos 0%	Disguise 1%
Dodge 40%	Drive Auto 20%	Electrical Repair 25%
Fast Talk 5%	First Aid 30%	Geology 1%
Handgun 20%	Hide 10%	History 25%
Hypnotism 1%	Jump 25%	Law 25%
Library Use 25%	Listen 25%	Locksmith 1%
Machine Gun 15%	Martial Arts 1%	Mechanical Repair 20%
Medicine 13%	Natural History 25%	Navigate 10%
Occult 5%	Operate Hvy. Machine 1%	Own Language: English 50%
Persuade 15%	Pharmacy 1%	Photography 10%
Physics 41%	Pilot 1%	Pilot Boat 1%
Psychoanalysis 1%	Psychology 30%	Ride 5%
Rifle 25%	Shotgun 30%	Sneak 10%
Spot Hidden 65%	Submachine Gun 15%	Swim 25%
Throw 25%	Track 25%	Fist/Punch 50%
Head Butt 10%	Kick 25%	Grapple 25%

Investigator Background

Your big sister is watching you while your folks are visiting Uncle Milt in San Jose. Diane is all right but you like to give her a hard time. The best thing about this situation is that you get to hang around Danny Byers, Diane's boyfriend. He's a gosh-darned scientist! The two things you like best are science and Dick Tracy!

