

# NEW YORK

## IN THE STRANGER's EYE

New York isn't particularly picturesque. In comparison to Miami, it's - to be frank - unremarkable. Grim, charred, half-decayed walls, rubble and reinforced concrete buildings. The city's colors are gray and black. Nothing green will ever grow in New York - because of the war. No one except the native inhabitants can last here more than a year. On the other hand, there's hardly anyone who'd like to live in a place made mostly of cinders. Smoke, sirens, search lights. In the night the lights scan the burned bricks and barracks. They briefly pause at the silhouettes of heavily armed policemen and late bypasses. The sirens are always howling somewhere afar - or you can hear gunshots. And

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during the day? During the day it's all roughly the same - you can't really see much in the smoke. Maybe you've heard some myths about the pre-war New York sewers? Even back in the day they weren't a pleasant place - now they're outright deadly. The north winds bring in chemical and biological pollution, which react with the contents of the sewers. As a consequence, the city is drenched in heavy smog. You won't notice a man standing 10 meters away.

Besides, you'd be lucky to find a man here anyway.

There are manholes and rifts in New York which ooze black smoke. The sewers are swarming with mutants - the mutts are one of the most dangerous things here. Moloch sends them in





from the north; some come from underground, from the sewers. And don't forget the rats - they're a mysterious race and most probably they're up to something. There is a special police department that deals only with pest control. The only factories in NJ which haven't stopped operating during the war were the smelters. The citizens have megatons of steel in all forms and variations at their disposal. All inhabited buildings are barracks made from soldered metal sheets. Likewise, a protective wall has been built from metal sheet and barbed wire.

But the life of the citizens of New York is buzzing mostly underground - in the metro tunnels.

## PEOPLE

I'm a New Yorker and I'm proud of it. It is a city of paradoxes. Relatively healthy and robust people live in a burned land. The proudest of America's cities, the first target in the war, has risen proudly, challenging the enemy. And you know what's funny? The Statue of Liberty ain't even scratched. Like in a cliché D-category movie.

We owe a lot to a single man. Peter Collins is a cop, who lost his family during the war. He's

not an exception. But this guy became tough like steel and untouched like a robot. Today everyone thinks themselves that, but Collins was a different pair of shoes. It seems that at some point he was the only New York's policeman on duty. He organized the police and firefighters a year before the war ended. It didn't matter that the policemen were using spiked planks and firefighters were running around with buckets. Peter Collins imbued the New York people with fighting spirit. He made himself mayor, gathered the survivors, fought against gangs, and established central food banks. When it turned out that Washington D.C. is a black crater hole, Collins became a self-proclaimed president. A couple of years ago he died in the streets, after being struck by an axe. At the moment New York is ruled by Paul Collins - Peter's son, the next President of United States of America. The city is the capital of the country, at least to its inhabitants.

During the war the city was one of the main targets. We did get a beating, I'll admit it. New York probably got hit the hardest out from all the towns in the US. Now it's a ruin - a huge, burned hole. We don't use Geiger's meters,

## FACTS

### ENEMIES AND ALLIES

'cause we wouldn't get any sleep with all the beeping. But New York is still inhabited and its citizens walk with their heads high and proud.

If anyone wants to know my opinion - I think that what helped us was ironically the biological warfare. As you probably know, the first stage of war was epidemiological and then biological warfare. The last thing to go was the atomic bombs. The only thing I know about viruses is that they mutate pretty fast. The first time we got hit really hard - in the first 24h hours 30% of the population was down with something that looked much like the plague. And it was getting progressively worse. The city fell into chaos; this attack took us down for the rest of the war. There was a silver lining to this, because in the first years the enemy's intelligence came to the conclusion that we're not a threat and there's no use in wasting ammo on us. But let's get back to the point - a couple of weeks after the war broke out the wind coming from the sea brought in mutated viruses. Again many people died, but something changed - the ones who survived and stayed in the city flourished, because dozens of little mutations occurred. When the chemical and nuclear attacks struck, there weren't all that many casualties. People died from direct hits - crushed by the hit wave or burned to death, but aside from that there weren't many killed.

My people are hardheaded and used to hardship. They do care about the small stuff, like culture and education. They know history and science. New York is one of the bastions of resistance against Moloch. The youngsters are trained not to carry on the fight against the Beast - but to destroy it. We're open to newcomers, especially if they come from somewhere civilized. But we have no mercy for enemies and mutants. New York exists only thanks to discipline and law.

New York is one of the best organized cities. Collins gathered food and equipment; he assembled the technicians and scientists. The city's trademark is the patrols in armored vehicles, piercing the smoke with their searchlights. The Police - or should I say the army - is well equipped and loyal. Paul Collins carries on his father's work and is preparing to bring order to the rest of the country. His first challenges will be Moloch and the rumaging motorcycle gangs.

The city has many enemies and very few friends, but none of them tried and tested. In the struggle against Moloch NJ is allying with the Federation and the Outpost. Many citizens serve for some time at the Outpost, gaining experience and contacts. Unfortunately, in our fights within the city we are alone. With equal ruthlessness we exterminate the machines and the pests, even though I personally do not support the extermination of rats. The vermin are not aggressive - actually, I've only heard about a few attacks on people, and I'm pretty



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sure they were provoked anyway. The rats are very mysterious and we know little about them. That's all. I don't think we know anything of value about them, which is a huge mistake. Intelligent and overgrown rats are unsettling - New York cannot afford to have a potential enemy growing behind our lines, while Moloch's crawling slowly in from the north. The sanitary troops of the Third Police Dept. armed with flamethrowers and battle gases are merciless for the sewer-dwellers. But if someone tried to reason with the rats, understand them... Maybe we could gain a valuable ally.

## A BASTION OF PRE-WAR CIVILISATION

New York is probably one of the three places in the US where they still conduct serious scientific experiments. They managed to launch a power plant, a couple of factories - even a school. Using two of the runways of the Kennedy Airport they built the biggest landing site on this side of the Great River.

New York still struggles to best Moloch, and it's making progress. Moloch is clever, so to beat him you need to be smarter. The Outpost is guerilla fighting - spreading out your forces of well-equipped soldiers, ready to adapt to any

situation. NY in turn organizes bigger and better coordinated troops. The soldiers are less versatile, but an appropriately managed brigade can hit the Machine harder than the guerilla.

Everything is bigger in New York, and that's what the citizens firmly believe. I haven't seen the east coast in a while and after a couple of years of voluntary exile I see the city in a different light. I don't tend to listen to the whining of the people who claim nothing's perfect, though. They say that NY is essentially a police state, controlling its citizens and prepared to incinerate anyone who's off Collins' norm. But I disagree.

## QUIRKS AND ODDITIES

Paul Collins is still a very young man. He has been born after the war. The bloke is ambitious, charismatic and very smart. But what he most probably lacks are the visionary plans of his father. He's constantly compared to him, burdened by the ever-present trust, which makes him more and more anxious. As a result - he makes mistakes, which he unfortunately fails to acknowledge. The rat issue and army are the weak points of Collin's governance in the past years. The boy is playing it tough and forgets that he's just human. He believes that he's threatened not only by Moloch, mutants



and rats, but also by the resistance organized against his rule by high-seated civilians. I don't know the truth for sure, but there are many new Yorkers who don't enjoy the military drill and chasing shadows.

An oddity - but not a human one - is ALTAR. A specialized Wall Street computer. I have no idea what this is supposed to mean. I only know that before the war ALTAR had some kind of primitive intelligence, it was also equipped with self-development modules, based on genetic algorithms. Its creators didn't believe it would last that long - no one could suspect that fed with the right information it would change its modus operandi.

New York created a monster. Stock market simulators and advanced game theory algorithms, influenced by the new data served to transform the civilian computer into a tactician with a personality of its own.

The equipment is heavily guarded - people are afraid to move it to a safer spot, because no one knows how to plug in all the cables in

correctly. The ruins of Wall Street have been transformed into a stronghold - as safe as the circumstances allowed. Since I knew old Collins, a couple of years ago they let me near the computer. I played a game of chess with ALTAR and I wish I didn't lose so quickly. It was a charming company.

## NEW YORK DOLLARS

New York has its own coin, obviously called a dollar. The mint is very primitive and the coins aren't very pretty, but they're the official legal tender in New York and the material continuation of the existence of the US (as pompous this may sound). The coins are about an inch in diameter and they're made of a nickel alloy - its precise composition is held in secret. There are one, two, five and ten dollar coins, cents you get by breaking dollars. On the common side there is a symbolic eagle, the flip features the profiles of people significant to the pre-war cultural and political life.

Due to the pollution of the alloy, New York dollars shine dimly in the darkness. Two years ago they tried to issue higher values on paper, but it turned out that paper money is very easy to forge.

