

rustbelt

AN AI-RUN POST-APOCALYPTIC SURVIVAL RPG · THE LONG ROAD

A FREE ONE-SHOT ADVENTURE

What Jack Scratch Wants

For eleven years the warlord of the Firebrands has never asked for anything. Towns pay before he does. Now he has sent for you, by name, under a white rag.

LEVEL 4 | 4 SURVIVORS | ABOUT 3 HOURS | READY-MADE CHARACTERS INSIDE

READ THIS ALOUD

The Job

> A Firebrand rider comes into camp alone with a rag tied to her handlebars and a message she has plainly memorised: Jack Scratch would like a word, in the Carrion Yards, at the crew's convenience, and guarantees their coming and going. Nobody has ever been invited into the Yards. Tollmaster Okonkwo, when asked, goes quiet for a long moment and then says that she would give a year's tolls to know what he wants, and that she will pay the crew to find out.

4	4	3h	3
SURVIVORS	LEVEL	TO PLAY	SCENES

Play it with the AI Dungeon Master

No prep, no rulebook. Scan the code on the back page or visit rustbelt.world, press play, and the AI Dungeon Master runs this adventure for your table — every voice, every roll, every rule. Solo or with up to six friends.

Run it yourself

Everything a Game Master needs is in here: what really happened, the cast and their secrets, the locations, the scenes, the opposition with full stats, three endings, and 4 ready-to-play characters. Players: stop at the end of this page.

Inside

1. What Really Happened
2. The Cast
3. The Locations
4. The Scenes
5. Trouble on the Road
6. How It Can End
7. Ready-Made Survivors

THE TRUTH

What Really Happened

Jack Scratch is dying. He has field lung from the Dust Years, and the Red Satchel he keeps has given him until winter. He took the Firebrands in one evening without raising his voice and has held them for eleven years by never once having to prove he would do what they feared. There is no one to hand them to.

His captains are three. Cinder wants the western Road burned end to end, as the Firebrands were made to do. Pike wants what the Hollow Kings have: towns, tithes, a ledger. The third, a woman called Margit Sloe who runs the war-rig pit, wants to stop, and has nobody she can say it to. When Jack dies they will settle it among themselves, and whichever wins, the Truce is finished.

What he wants is a witness and a courier. He will make an offer to the Roadies that only he could make and only while he lives: the Firebrands keep the Truce, hold the Yards as a toll post, and guard the western Road they have spent thirty years burning. He needs it carried by people his captains cannot accuse of being his. And he needs the crew to see who tries to stop them leaving, because that will tell him which of the three to kill before he goes.

WHO'S WHO

The Cast



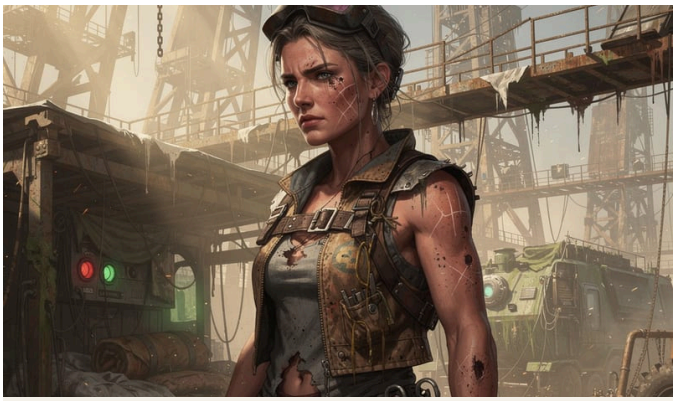
WARLORD OF THE FIREBRANDS

Jack Scratch

Soft-spoken, patient, courteous. Coughs into a folded cloth and looks at it afterwards.

SECRET

He does not know if the offer is mercy or a last piece of cunning. He burned his first town at sixteen. He would like, once, to have built something, and does not expect to be believed.



MISTRESS OF THE WAR-RIG PIT

Margit Sloe

Scarred, laconic, best welder in the Yards. Sleeps under the rigs.

SECRET

She will back the offer with every rig she has. She has also built one truck that is not armed at all: a water tanker, finished and hidden, because she wanted to see whether she still could.



FIRST CAPTAIN, AND THE ONE WHO WILL NOT HAVE IT

Cinder

Young, bright, beloved by the riders. Believes in fire the way the Ash Choir believes in the Cradle.

SECRET

She already knows Jack is dying. She has known for a month, and has been waiting out of love, not caution. The offer is the one thing that could make her move early.

WHERE IT HAPPENS

The Locations



01 The Wreck Maze

Ten square miles of dead cars, piled three deep, with lanes only the Firebrands can follow.

What happens here. The way in, blindfolded for the last mile, and the way out, which is the adventure. Every lane is Bad Ground and half of them are trapped.



02 Firebrand Camp

Oil-drum fires among the wrecks, and three hundred people sitting round them, very quietly.

What happens here. The audience. Jack Scratch speaks for ten minutes and then lets the crew look at his captains' faces. One of them has already left the fire.

03 The War-Rig Pit

Trucks on jacks being armoured at night, so the glow can be seen from the Road.

What happens here. Margit Sloe, the hidden tanker, and the fastest way out of the Yards if she can be persuaded to lend it.

HOW IT PLAYS

The Scenes

1

SOCIAL ●●●○ HARD

The offer, and whether it is real. Jack will answer anything. The captains will not. A DC 14 read of the fire shows which of them is frightened, which is calculating and which has gone to fetch her riders.

Opposition: Raider Warlord *(full stats in the gallery)*

2

EXPLORATION ●●●○ HARD

Leaving. The guarantee holds only while Jack is believed. Through the maze without a guide: Bad Ground on every stack, fuel traps, and a DC 13 check each stretch or a wrong turn into someone's camp. The dust is rising in the west.

Opposition: Firebrand Rider *(full stats in the gallery)*

3

COMBAT ●●●● DEADLY

The western Road, at the edge of the Yards. Cinder's riders and a war rig run the crew down in a dust front, to burn the offer before it reaches the bridge. Whether Margit Sloe's rigs come out of the pit behind them depends on what was said to her.

Opposition: Firebrand War Rig *(full stats in the gallery)*, Firebrand Rider *(full stats in the gallery)*, Raider *(full stats in the gallery)*

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

Trouble on the Road



Raider Warlord

The biggest, meanest thing in the gang — and it knows it.

AC 16 **HP** 76 (9d8 + 36) **Speed** 30 ft **Threat** 4

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Multiattack. Two attacks with its scrap rifle or piston fist.

Scrap Rifle. Ranged +6, range 80/240, 2d8 + 3 piercing.

Piston Fist. +6 to hit, 2d6 + 3 bludgeoning.



Firebrand War Rig

An armoured truck with a plough, a flame nozzle and a crew of six.

AC 17 **HP** 126 (12d10 + 60) **Speed** 60 ft **Threat** 5

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)

Ram. Moves at least 20 ft in a line: every creature in its path makes a DC 15 Dex save or takes 4d8 + 6 bludgeoning and is knocked prone.

Flame Nozzle (Recharge 5–6). 30-ft cone, DC 14 Dex save, 6d6 fire (half on a save).

Crewed. Killing the driver (AC 15 behind armour, 22 HP) halts the rig.



Firebrand Rider

A raider of the Firebrands — fast, branded, and carrying something that burns.

AC 14 **HP** 27 (5d8 + 5) **Speed** 30 ft **Threat** 1

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)

Sawn-Off. +4 to hit, range 20/60 ft, 2d6 + 2 piercing.

Fire Bottle. Range 30 ft, 10-ft radius, DC 12 Dex save or 2d6 fire and the On Fire hazard; the area burns for 1 minute.

Ride-By. While mounted, moving out of reach does not provoke attacks.



Raider

A desperate scavenger who decided taking is easier than finding.

AC 13 **HP** 22 (4d8 + 4) **Speed** 30 ft **Threat** 1

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Pipe-Gun. Ranged +4, range 40/120, 1d8 + 2 piercing.

Machete. +3 to hit, 1d8 + 1 slashing.

EVERY CASE CLOSES SOMEHOW

How It Can End

I

The offer reaches Halfway Bridge and is heard. The Firebrands hold a toll post by winter. Jack Scratch dies having named Margit Sloe, and the western Road is quieter than anyone living remembers.

II

The offer reaches the bridge and is refused: nobody believes it. Jack dies in the autumn. Cinder takes the Firebrands, and the first town she burns is the one that would have been their toll post.

III

The crew does not get out. The Roadies never learn what was asked. Okonkwo sends a second party in the spring, and finds the Yards under new management and the white rag still tied to a handlebar by the Road.

These are the likely ends, not the only ones. When your table finds a fourth, let it.



READY-MADE SURVIVOR

Mae Harlan

GUNSLINGER · LEVEL 4

Former convoy outrider who rode shotgun for the Roadies until a load went wrong.

14	36	+3	30	+2
ARMOUR CLASS	HIT POINTS	INITIATIVE	SPEED (FT)	PROFICIENCY
Patched Armor	hit die d10			

STRENGTH	DEXTERITY	CONSTITUTION	INTELLIGENCE	WISDOM	CHARISMA
-1	+3	+2	+0	+1	+1
8	17	14	10	13	12

Saving throws

○ Strength	-1
● Dexterity	+5
● Constitution	+4
○ Intelligence	+0
○ Wisdom	+1
○ Charisma	+1

Skills

● Acrobatics DEX	+5
○ Animal Handling WIS	+1
○ Athletics STR	-1
○ Deception CHA	+1
○ History INT	+0
○ Insight WIS	+1
● Intimidation CHA	+3
○ Investigation INT	+0
○ Medicine WIS	+1
○ Nature INT	+0
● Perception WIS	+3
○ Performance CHA	+1
○ Persuasion CHA	+1
○ Sleight of Hand DEX	+3
○ Stealth DEX	+3
● Survival WIS	+3

Weapons

WEAPON	HIT	DAMAGE	RANGE
Hunting Rifle	+5	2d6 + 3 piercing	100/300 ft
Shiv light, finesse, concealable	+5	1d4 + 3 piercing	melee

Gear

- **Canteen**
- **Rifle Cartridges**
- **Dust Goggles** — with a mask or wet rag, the wearer is not blinded in a dust storm and has advantage on its saves
- **Bandage** — end Bleeding Out; regain 1d4 HP

Who they are

Personality Counts bullets the way other people count water. Never fires first; never fires twice.

Ideal A promise made on the Road is kept on the Road.

Bond Owes a Roadie captain a debt she cannot pay in chits.

Flaw Holds a grudge longer than she holds her breath.

> WHY YOU TOOK THE JOB
>
> Jack Scratch asked for you by name. Whatever he wants, you would rather hear it than spend the rest of your life wondering.



READY-MADE SURVIVOR

Jonah Rook

SCAVENGER · LEVEL 4

Picker who has been into more ruins than anyone his age and come out of all of them.

14	27	+3	30	+2
ARMOUR CLASS	HIT POINTS	INITIATIVE	SPEED (FT)	PROFICIENCY
Patched Armor	hit die d8			

STRENGTH	DEXTERITY	CONSTITUTION	INTELLIGENCE	WISDOM	CHARISMA
-1	+3	+1	+1	+2	+0
8	17	12	13	14	10

Saving throws

○ Strength	-1
● Dexterity	+5
○ Constitution	+1
○ Intelligence	+1
● Wisdom	+4
○ Charisma	+0

Skills

○ Acrobatics DEX	+3
○ Animal Handling WIS	+2
○ Athletics STR	-1
○ Deception CHA	+0
○ History INT	+1
○ Insight WIS	+2
○ Intimidation CHA	+0
● Investigation INT	+3
○ Medicine WIS	+2
○ Nature INT	+1
● Perception WIS	+4
○ Performance CHA	+0
○ Persuasion CHA	+0
● Sleight of Hand DEX	+5
● Stealth DEX	+5
○ Survival WIS	+2

Weapons

WEAPON	HIT	DAMAGE	RANGE
Pipe-Gun jams on a natural 1	+5	1d8 + 3 piercing	40/120 ft

Gear

- **Geiger Counter** — detect radiation zones and irradiated creatures nearby
- **Lockpick Set** — open locks without a key or explosives
- **Scrap & Salvage** — crafting and repair material; barter
- **Duct Tape**

Who they are

Personality Restless, curious, never sits with his back to a door. Tests every floor with a thrown brick.

Ideal The old world left everything behind. It is a crime to waste it.

Bond Keeps a map of every ruin he has cleared, and the one he has not.

Flaw Cannot pass a locked door without trying it.

> WHY YOU TOOK THE JOB
>
> Nobody has ever been invited into the Carrion Yards: a hundred thousand cars nobody has picked over. You are going.



READY-MADE SURVIVOR

Dr. Hesper Vale

FIELD DOC · LEVEL 4

Travelling doctor who works the Long Road town by town for whatever people can pay.

12	27	+1	30	+2
ARMOUR CLASS	HIT POINTS	INITIATIVE	SPEED (FT)	PROFICIENCY
Patched Armor	hit die d8			

STRENGTH	DEXTERITY	CONSTITUTION	INTELLIGENCE	WISDOM	CHARISMA
-1	+1	+1	+2	+3	+0
8	12	13	14	17	10

Saving throws

○ Strength	-1
○ Dexterity	+1
● Constitution	+3
○ Intelligence	+2
● Wisdom	+5
○ Charisma	+0

Skills

○ Acrobatics DEX	+1
○ Animal Handling WIS	+3
○ Athletics STR	-1
○ Deception CHA	+0
○ History INT	+2
● Insight WIS	+5
○ Intimidation CHA	+0
○ Investigation INT	+2
● Medicine WIS	+5
○ Nature INT	+2
○ Perception WIS	+3
○ Performance CHA	+0
● Persuasion CHA	+2
○ Sleight of Hand DEX	+1
○ Stealth DEX	+1
● Survival WIS	+5

Weapons

WEAPON	HIT	DAMAGE	RANGE
Pipe-Gun jams on a natural 1	+3	1d8 + 1 piercing	40/120 ft

Gear

- **Med-Stim** — regain 2d4 + 2 HP; ends Bleeding
- **Rad-Flush** — removes the Irradiated condition and reduces Rad Sickness
- **Field Surgery Kit** — advantage on Medicine; auto-stabilise
- **Purification Tablets** — purify one canteen

Who they are

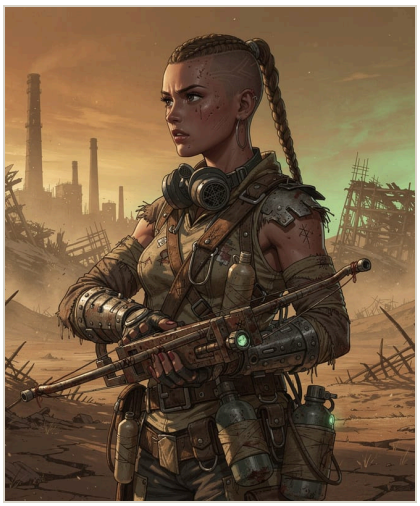
Personality Gentle with patients, merciless with fools. Has seen every way a body can fail.

Ideal Everyone gets the same measure — of water and of care.

Bond Trained under a Wellkeeper healer at Dry Wells.

Flaw Trusts anyone who is sick, which the wrong people have learned to use.

> WHY YOU TOOK THE JOB
>
> Whatever is said in the Yards, someone sensible should hear it. And if it goes wrong, someone should be there who can stitch.



READY-MADE SURVIVOR

Tamsin Reyes

SURVIVALIST · LEVEL 4

Raised in the wastes between towns; reads weather, tracks and people with the same patience.

13	27	+2	30	+2
ARMOUR CLASS	HIT POINTS	INITIATIVE	SPEED (FT)	PROFICIENCY
Hide Wraps	hit die d8			

STRENGTH	DEXTERITY	CONSTITUTION	INTELLIGENCE	WISDOM	CHARISMA
+1	+2	+1	+0	+3	-1
12	14	13	10	17	8

Saving throws

○ Strength	+1
● Dexterity	+4
○ Constitution	+1
○ Intelligence	+0
● Wisdom	+5
○ Charisma	-1

Skills

○ Acrobatics DEX	+2
○ Animal Handling WIS	+3
○ Athletics STR	+1
○ Deception CHA	-1
○ History INT	+0
○ Insight WIS	+3
○ Intimidation CHA	-1
○ Investigation INT	+0
○ Medicine WIS	+3
● Nature INT	+2
● Perception WIS	+5
○ Performance CHA	-1
○ Persuasion CHA	-1
○ Sleight of Hand DEX	+2
● Stealth DEX	+4
● Survival WIS	+5

Weapons

WEAPON	HIT	DAMAGE	RANGE
Scrap Crossbow silent; reload	+4	1d10 + 2 piercing	60/240 ft
Machete	+3	1d8 + 1 slashing	melee

Gear

- **Gas Mask**
- **Canteen**
- **Water Filter** — filter water
- **Snare Trap** — DC 12 Dex save or restrained

Who they are

Personality Quiet, watchful, laughs rarely and loudly. Sleeps cold and wakes first.

Ideal The land is honest. People should try it.

Bond Her family's camp was lost in a dust storm; she has never stopped looking for the others.

Flaw Distrusts walls, towns and anyone who lives behind them.

WHY YOU TOOK THE JOB

Tollmaster Okonkwo will pay a year's tolls to know what he wants. You know how to get in and out of a wreck maze alive. Mostly.

rustbelt

Play it tonight. No prep. No rulebook.

Scan the code and the AI Dungeon Master runs **What Jack Scratch Wants** for your group: every voice, every roll, every rule — with battle maps, character sheets and a world that remembers what you did.

Free to start — three sessions a month

Solo or with friends — up to six at one table

A world that remembers — every faction keeps score

Play it: rustbelt.world/adventures/one-shots/what-jack-scratch-wants
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