

EXODUS
POST-APOCALYPTIC ROLEPLAYING
ADVENTURE

THE WATERING HOLE

Written by: Neal Bailey and John Wyatt

Edited by: Aijalyn Kohler

Play Testers: Philip Dunn, Steve Parks, Scott Reid
Jason Sanford and Wayne Ward

An Exodus OPS Campaign Adventure

Requires the *Exodus Survivor's Guide* and *Exodus OPS Campaign Manual*

A merchant who runs the Watering Hole Trading Post in the rugged badlands north of Alamogordo needs more help than he had bargained for. He needs an escort back to the Watering Hole after losing all to the Wasteland critters on a trip to Alamogordo. Dare you answer the call of the merchant and venture deep into the Wasteland to the Watering Hole? The Watering Hole is an Exodus OPS campaign scenario for 4 to 6 characters of 1st to 3rd level.

This scenario has been updated from the original to reflex the new Experience system used in the Exodus OPS campaign. OPS players that have already played this scenario, cannot re-play it, or gain any benefits from the changes within.

Exodus, OPS®, and the GCG logo are trademarks of Glutton Creeper Games. This OPS scenario (The Watering Hole) is copyright Glutton Creeper Games ©2008, 2010 and is e-commerce and may not be redistributed after purchase without written consent from Glutton Creeper Games. Persons distributing this file without permission of Glutton Creeper Games are subject to Copyright and Piracy laws and may be prosecuted to the fullest extent of these laws.



OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document Copyright 2000-2003, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, Andy Collins, David Noonan, Rich Redman, Bruce R. Cordell, John D. Rateliff, Thomas Reid, James Wyatt, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Modern System Reference Document Copyright 2002-2004, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Bill Slavicsek, Jeff Grubb, Rich Redman, Charles Ryan, Eric Cagle, David Noonan, Stan, Christopher Perkins, Rodney Thompson, and JD Wiker, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, Peter Adkison, Bruce R. Cordell, John Tynes, Andy Collins, and JD Wiker.

Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) and Adobe Reader are registered trademarks of Adobe System Inc.

Open Content Declaration:

All game mechanics presented in this text are Open Gaming Content (OGC).

Product Identity (to include Techno-Reapers) descriptive text, characters, proper names, and pictures or maps are closed content and may not be reproduced without written consent of Glutton Creeper Games and Author(s).

END OF LICENSE

Legal and Contact Information

OPS is a registered trademark of Glutton Creeper Games.

Exodus and the GCG Logo are trademarks of Glutton Creeper Games.

Exodus OPS: The Watering Hole is copyright ©2008, 2010 Glutton Creeper Games. This product is e-commerce and may not be redistributed after purchase without written consent from Glutton Creeper Games. Persons distributing this file without permission of Glutton Creeper Games are subject to Copyright and Piracy laws and may be prosecuted to the fullest extent of these laws.

This PDF document requires the use of Adobe Reader. Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) and Adobe Reader are registered trademarks of Adobe System Inc.

Glutton Creeper Games

Contact and Website: www.gluttoncreeper.net

Adobe System Inc.

Website: www.adobe.com

Adobe Acrobat Reader: www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readmain.html

OPS Introduction

This is an *Exodus OPS* campaign adventure designed for the OPS setting and consumes between 3 to 5 hours of game time. This adventure can also be used outside of the OPS setting as a stand-alone home game adventure set in a post-apocalyptic setting.

This adventure requires the *Exodus Survivor's Guide* and the *Exodus OPS* campaign manual. The *Exodus* campaign manual can be found at the GCG website listed above.

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario supports single and double-sided printing. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure.

Read this entire scenario at least once before you run your game. Familiarize yourself with any special rules, or new equipment not presented in the books listed above. Highlighting particularly important passages may help with the flow of the game mechanics.

A grid map (one-inch square) or graph paper and a representation of adventurers, NPC's, and creatures will enhance game play, as well as the other necessities (scrap paper, writing materials, and a set of dice) needed to run the game.

Game Time: Have the players prepare their characters accordingly to *Exodus OPS* campaign rulings, get them to the scenario start point and read the scenario introduction.

There is descriptive text in this scenario that is written so that you may present it to the adventurers, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players is bold text highlighted within a shaded box (commonly referred to as "box text"). It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and needs to be adapted to a specific situation, or to the actions of the adventurers.

THE WATERING HOLE

EXODUS OPS

SCENARIO 6

The Watering Hole

Location: Alamogordo, New Mexico

Number of Characters: 4 to 6

Average Character Levels: 2

Max CEL 18/SC 24

Max Purchasable Equipment Value: 3500 Steel coin

Adventure Summary

The characters have traveled to Alamogordo, New Mexico in search of adventure. After a brief tour of Alamogordo's markets and Space Museum, Alan Terness offers them a job as escort guards to reunite him and his brother at a Wasteland trading post. If the characters fail to take the job, a Techno-Reaper forces them to take the job after Alan dies.

On the road to the Watering Hole, Alan becomes very sick and is in need of medical aid, as he is suffering from a festering infected wound. Should Alan die, the characters must make a decision whether to continue to the trading post or return to Alamogordo.

Arriving at the trading post, an old ranger's station, the characters are greeted by Bart, who is very concerned about his brother Alan's condition. After some negotiations, Bart employs the characters to guard the trading post while he returns to Alamogordo to take care of Alan. The characters are tasked in protecting the trading post and keeping the water pump running. A robot sentry, called B.B., watches the characters while Bart is gone.

A few days after Bart's departure, some Mutants scout out the trading post and attack the characters. Two days later, a Mutant defector runs into the camp with two Mutant canines hot on his tail. The characters are forced to defend the post from both invaders.

After 8 days, Bart returns to the trading post, gets a report from B.B., and rewards the surviving characters.

The Watering Hole

Population: 2 merchants (100% human), 2d4 visitors

Military: One Man's Army

Trade Goods - Uncommon up to 1000 steel

Services - Hotel Rooms, Kitchen Meals, and Repair Service

The Watering Hole is a small pre-Exodus mountain resort, originally used by hunters. The Terness brothers, merchants from Alamogordo discovered the site not far from the old highway and decided to set up shop for travelers following the northern/southern route to or from Alamogordo.

Alamogordo

Population: 500 citizens (95% human, 3% *ghul*, 2% other)

Military: 200 soldiers, 100 volunteer militia

Trade Goods - Infrequent up to 3500; Rare (10%) up to 5000 steel.

Services - Doctor Services, Hotel Rooms, Kitchen Meals, and Repair Service

Alamogordo is a technological center that draws scavengers and merchants that deal in pre-Exodus technology. The city is the main hub of the Techno-Reaper Cult housing their Headquarters in the old Space Museum.

Techno-Reaper's attitudes on Outsiders

Techno-Reapers accept anyone except Trans-Genetic Mutants within their domain. Trans-Gens are seen as a menace due to their upbringing in the Mutant Army, which is a constant threat to the Alamogordo way of life.

Mutants that are employed by caravans must stay outside of Alamogordo, unless they purchase a license, called a "Day Pass". A Mutant character can buy a one day license for 100 Steel and must forfeit all weapons at the license office until leaving Alamogordo.

Introduction

The characters all have made their way to the Space Museum in Alamogordo. The reasons that the characters are here are their own. However, several methods are presented below to get a character to Alamogordo:

Techno-Reaper: The character either belongs to the Techno-Reaper organization or is interested in joining the Techno-Reapers and has traveled with other Reapers back to their base, located in an old aircraft junkyard built on an underground military base.

Caravan: The character has served as a caravan guard or has purchased passage on a caravan that ended its journey in Alamogordo.

Exploring the Wasteland: The character has gone walk-about hitch-hiking his way through the Wasteland, ending his tour in Alamogordo.

Traveling through the Wasteland has brought you to the far Eastern reaches of the known region: New Mexico. New Mexico is known for many things, and most rumors speak of them all as being dangerous. In the North are the militant Trans-Genetic Mutants that are rumored to kill adult humans and *Ghūls* on site and to capture children. In the Southern reaches are the Meat Claw and Cruces Lizard breeding grounds and the extremely hostile area of Roswell, which militant rogue robots patrol, killing all living targets. Also in the Southern reaches, in between the breeding grounds and Roswell, is the only human controlled area in New Mexico, Alamogordo. Alamogordo is controlled by the Techno-Reapers, an extremist cult of humans and *Ghūls* set on collecting the technology of old and bringing it back to the Wasteland for use. The Reapers have set up their base in an old military aircraft junkyard in the ruins of Alamogordo, and have restored the Space Museum as a place to display operational technical items, as well as a portion of the city for living space and commerce.

Alamogordo

Alamogordo is sprawled out across an endless stretch of dead earth with an occasional large pile of debris that was once a pre-war structure. Unlike most communities, rubble strewn and decayed, Alamogordo has largely been cleaned up. However, the place looks as if it's been fighting a losing battle with the elements of the Wasteland – even worse than the other communities that stagger on in the Known Lands. The sun beats down on cracked, barren earth, drying out the water sources and killing any vegetation. It is very hot and very dry.

Life, however, still survives in this corner of the Wastes. There are still people who make their living in this hellhole. While most of the town is long abandoned, a cell of dedicated Techno-Reapers has set up shop in the largest and most well fortified building in town – the remains of the old Space Museum, itself the remains of a small Air Force base.

Alamogordo always was a military town, and the current trade shows it. The long line of trading caravans that brings food, clothing, and other goods leaves with military grade weaponry, from firearms and heavy weapons to technical survival gadgets and armor. These constant arms deals attract a varied clientèle, especially mercenaries, guerrillas, and survivalists. Maybe it's a little bit of the pre-Exodus come home to roost – nevertheless, this is a modern-day bazaar, catering to a very particular group of people.

Militiamen patrol the perimeter of the city proper and the Space Museum, overseeing all of the visitors entering into the city. Any Mutants are asked to remain outside the city with their caravan or master or be escorted to the Space Museum to buy a Day Pass for 100 Steel. They must forfeit all weapons at the License Booth and can retrieve them upon exiting the city. Failure to buy a Pass will result in great bodily harm and possible death. The Day Pass is a random color determined each day, and comes on a chain that can be draped around the neck, leaving the Pass itself to hang in the mid-chest region. A Day Pass must be openly worn at all times while in the city.

The Space Museum, a large polished white stone building with an aerodynamic design much like a tall thin triangle, points high into the sky. An automatic double door opens for people as they walk in and out of the building. To the left side of the museum lies an old airfield that stretches beyond sight, filled with the rusted and junked out remains of various models of aircraft. On the right side is a line of caravans entering into the merchant area within the old aircraft hangers.

The plot hook for the adventure lies in the Space Museum with Alan, a wounded merchant who is looking for guards to escort him back to his brother at the Watering Hole, a location only known to him and his brother. However, if the characters go to the market first, they'll see Alan attempting to barter a deal for a bovine and a hauler.

Space Museum (SC 1)

After stepping through the automated doors, a woman's voice speaks from the air above. "Greetings, Wasteland travelers. Welcome to the Alamogordo Space Museum, the Wasteland's only hope to restore the Earth and sky from eradication by Man. Within this museum, you'll find the wonders that the Techno-Reapers have recovered from the pre-Exodus world. Please enjoy your visit, and don't forget to leave a donation to help further the recovery of technology."

The Space Museum is a large circular room that extends several stories high and ends in a dome with a large telescope that is currently under repairs. The entry floor contains a twenty foot tall construction robot with many other, much smaller, technological wonders surrounding it. Amidst the wonders, hanging from the walls, are several faded pictures of Man's historical aeronautic accomplishments. All of the technological displays are roped off with red plush ropes and an armed narrator speaks about the pieces as Wastelanders view them.

To the left of the entryway is a ticket booth. A sign on the booth, written in several languages, reads "Law and Licenses". An attractive woman sits in the booth, reading a book.

Only the first floor of the museum is accessible to the characters. The characters can view the technical items or visit the Law and Licenses booth. After the characters spend some time in the museum, Alan Terness will approach one or more of them, preferably a combative looking one. Each of these options is presented below.

The Museum's Attractions

When a character approaches a technical display, read the narrative below or start in mid-narrative to represent the other people viewing the display as the narrator guard is describing the item. If a character attempts to move past the ropes, the guard will quick draw a laser pistol and point it at the character, saying, "Stay behind the rope, sir or ma'am. I am authorized to use lethal force."

Alpha Station 4: This pre-Exodus game system, recovered from a residential district, was displayed on a screen and used wireless controllers resembling nun chucks. This system provided entertainment in the form of visual stimuli involving the use of hand eye coordination within simulated military scenarios or while perpetrating random violence against innocent bystanders within a game context.

Ballistic Missile: This is a missile that was recovered from an army vehicle found in the Wasteland. Ballistic missiles are considered WoMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction). They were used for short ranged attacks by military forces. This type of missile is powerful enough to destroy one-thousand square feet of land along with any living thing in the blast area. Many of these missiles do not contain explosive warheads, but, instead, contain biological warheads, such as nerve gas and other gas based toxins.

Construction Robot: This giant yellow robot was a construction demolition bot before the Exodus. A single man would sit in the control cockpit located in the center of the bot. As the controller moved, the demolition bot would mimic his movements, such as walking and arm swinging. The robot's powerful arms were manufactured of thick metal to smash buildings into the ground from top to bottom, while the thick leg stabilized the robot. A three story building could be demolished within a few hours using one of these construction robots.

Fusion Powered Toaster Oven: This portable toaster oven was found in the ruins of the Alamogordo residence district and has been restored to working order. As you can see, the toaster uses a fusion cell. A fully powered fusion cell will run this oven for over 5000 hours of cooking time. Yummy. Lizard, it's what for dinner.

Power Armor: This suit of RoboCore Power Armor was discovered near Roswell. However, it is non-operational, due to extensive damage to the fusion core. Power Armor was created a few years before the Exodus for military use to strengthen the power and senses of elite soldiers. Power Armor works via the power core attaching to the wearer's central nervous system, thus increasing his strength while still maintaining normal user mobility under the weight of the armor through the use of assisted servos.

Whoosh 2000: This normal looking stainless steel toilet is equipped with a motion sensor that detects when waste has entered into its bowl and automatically flushes itself. It then shoots a wisp of flowery scent into the air from the back of the toilet. The Whoosh 2000 was made by the Rotor Router Company for use in the wealthy man's house and upscale hotels. A single fusion cell will power the Whoosh 2000 for 200,000 flushes before the cell is depleted.

The Law and License Ticket Booth

The Law and License Ticket Booth is where characters can learn about the Three Laws of the Techno-Reapers or where Mutants can buy a license to enter the city without being gunned down. The booth is run by the lovely young lady, Lana Flame. In addition to her jobs informing interested parties about the Three Laws and selling licenses to Mutants, Lana also runs a personal fan club. She passes out membership cards with her image on them, which she makes on a technical machine that she repaired called a XAN-5000 color copier.

If a Mutant is escorted to the booth, he or she must buy a "safe passage" license, called a Day Pass, for 100 Steel (no bartering) and forfeit all weapons until the time that the Mutant leaves the city. The Day Pass is good for one day, from Sunup to Sundown. No mutants are allowed to roam the city at night. If a Mutant refuses to buy a license, he must immediately leave or Techno-Reapers will gun him down in cold blood.

Lana will state all of the written laws of the Techno-Reapers and Alamogordo for the characters to commit to memory. They can also purchase a copy of the laws for 2 Steel.

The Laws of Alamogordo

Law 1: A citizen or visitor must respect all technology (broken or operational) that is in the domain of Alamogordo, regardless of the owner of said technology. Damage to a technical device is punishable by hard labor equal in the number of days to the repair cost value of the device or 1 year if the device is destroyed.

Law 2: A citizen or visitor must keep the peace while in the domains of Alamogordo. Acts of Violence and Theft are dealt with harshly through banishment of the First Law of Gulag. The First Law of Gulag is removal of all of a person's equipment, except one metal canteen filled with water. The guilty party is then taken into the Wasteland, 3 days away from civilization, and left to fend for survival alone.

Law 3: No Mutants allowed in Alamogordo without a license during Sunup and Sundown. No Mutants allowed period during the night. Mutants that fail to purchase a license will be sentenced to death.

The Three Laws of the Techno-Reapers

Law 1: A Techno-Reaper must seek out and learn about advanced working or non-working Technical Devices. He or she must either return with a found device, a blueprint, or a description and the location of the device (if unable to acquire the device) to the Master of Technology at a regional base for acquisition and/or recreation.

Law 2: A Techno-Reaper must protect and preserve all rare and unique technical devices that fall into the jurisdiction and category of Law 1.

Law 3: A Techno-Reaper that fails to follow the edicts of Law 1 and Law 2 will be ejected from the order and subject to the First Law of Gulag.

Alan Terness

After the characters spend some time in the Space Museum, Alan Terness, a trader and water merchant who runs supplies to his brother in the Wasteland, will approach a character if he is separated from the rest of the characters or approach the entire group if they stay together.

A little pale man, casually dressed, but with dried blood trailing down his right pant leg, approaches you and speaks. "Hello there chaps. Name is Alan. You look like the kind of people that can help a bloke out. I am in need of some escorts through the Wasteland. Let me buy you a drink at the Atomic Café and we can discuss this further. Come, come. What is the worst that will happen? You'll get a free drink."

If the characters follow Alan, continue with the next box text, otherwise Alan finds other escorts. If the players don't go with Alan, go to the "Alternative Plot" text, presented later.

After a few drinks and some chit-chat about your Wasteland survival skills, Alan pipes up with his proposition. "You know, I'm looking for some decent blokes to help me out on the morrow, and I'll be paying in more than drinks, but at the end of the trip – when we reach our destination. I need an escort to keep the beasties off of me, and I couldn't ask for better traveling buddies in the Wasteland. You guys seem alright, like really good chaps. Four days out for 200 Steel each. Do we have a deal?"

Alan will offer to pay the characters 200 Steel each to get him to the Watering Hole. The characters can attempt to barter it up to 240 Steel with a Barter skill check DC 20 or 300 Steel with a Barter skill check DC 25.

If the characters ask about Alan's injury, he'll brush it off, stating that it is just a superficial flesh wound that he received from some Wasteland critters on his trip here and that it will heal in a few days. Alan is unconcerned about his wounds, which he thinks are minor. They actually aren't, though. A Treat Injury DC 15 check will reveal that his leg has a long, infected cut running down it, which could obviously cause some problems later on. If pestered about it more than once, he'll allow himself to be treated.

Once the characters accept the job, Alan will relate the following:

After you accept Alan's deal, he spells out the situation. "My brother Bart operates a small trading station out in the badlands, where he sells fresh water and salvaged gear to travelers passing through the area. This is where we'll be traveling to. I'm the other half of the equation, running supplies to Bart every other week. This week, though, I came across some bad luck and was attacked by a Meat Claw (a deadly bipedal Mutant reptilian). My bovine was killed in the assault, and my hauler abandoned. I escaped with a few wounds, but I know that Bart is depending on me to bring some food in. So, at Sunup, meet me in front of the Space Museum and we'll head out to the Watering Hole Trading Post.

Alan will meet the characters in the morning at 5 and will wait for them to arrive. Once all of the characters show up, he'll head into the Wastelands, directly north. Jump to the encounter "Into the Badlands".

The Alamogordo Market

The Alamogordo market is behind the Space Museum in and around several aircraft hangers. There are literally dozens of merchants, and the place has a distinct bazaar type feel to it. There are militiamen who patrol the market area in an attempt to keep the peace if anything uncivilized goes down.

Makeshift awnings shield the shops clustered around and in the old hangars next to the Space Museum. Many tiny stalls cling to the edges of the sides of the hanger like barnacles to an oil tanker, and plaintive cries of “armaments and ammunition” and “RAD free water” drift over the baked, dusty square. Merchants and customers fill the square in the endless dance of commerce, bartering for just about anything – scraps of metal to the bare necessities of life.

The marketplace is full of goods, with outside stalls packed with clothing, simple weapons, and supplies of all varieties. Food vendors are mixed in among the others, lending an aroma of spiced ground lizard with roasted peppers to the entire square. Inside of the hangers are the more elite merchants. These merchants display their wares on huge racks that rise to the ceiling, hiding their rarer treasures in the gloomy heights of darkness.

The Alamogordo market is quite large and contains every item up to Infrequent Scarcity listed in the EXS up to a 3500 Steel value. The merchants in the hanger house some rare items for sale, but it takes time to find these rare items. These rare items are listed on the table below, along with some regional items. The descriptions for the regional items are provided below the table.

The characters can barter with the merchants of the market, up to a 20% discount. All of the outside merchants have a +8 to their Barter skill check, and the merchants in the hangers have +12 to their Barter skill check.

Alamogordo Market

Item Descriptions

Bitter Cactus Juice: This is some harsh medicine. It causes Nausea for 2 hours, but it restores 1d3 hit points, and cures one point of STR, DEX, and CON ability damage. A character can only benefit from the Cactus Juice once per day.

Caruso Sunglasses: These sunglasses were the style of the rich and powerful in tropical environments at the turn of the century. Wearing these sunglasses grants a +1 Circumstance bonus to Bluff, Gather Information, and Intimidate skill checks.

Father Time's Pork Rinds: Pork Rinds, an ageless treat.

Desert Cloak: This is a light, Mojave patterned, sand-colored cloak that provides a +2 Circumstance bonus to Hide checks in a desert environment.

Desert Weave: This scaly sand-colored armor is made from several Cruces Lizard hides sewn together.

Regional Item	Cost	Rare + Items	Cost
Bitter Cactus Juice	165	.10 gauge shells (box of 20)	340
Father Time's Pork Rinds	1	Caruso Sunglasses	245
Desert Cloak	120	Combat Vest	3100
Desert Weave	1000	Concealed Mesh Vest	2500
Meat Claw Dirk	185	EM 500 Laser Pistol	3500
		Glock 10mm	2200
		Inferno (2)	400
		Riot Shield (2)	1800
		Scrubs (light blue) (4)	300
		Suppressor	850

Light Armor	Defense	PDR	EDR	LDR	XDR	Dex	AP	SPD	WT	SCRC	Cost
Desert Weave	+2	2	0	0	0	+6	-1	30	5	I	1000

Meat Claw Dirk: This curved dagger is made from the sharpened claw of a Meat Claw.

Melee Weapons	DMG	CRIT	SIZE	WT	PROF	SCRC	COST
Meat Claw Dirk	1d3	18-20/x3	Tiny	1	simple	I	140

Alan Terness (Market)

Should the characters go to the market before the Space Museum, they'll encounter Alan attempting to barter a fair price for a hauler and an ox. If they intervene on Alan's behalf, he'll offer them the job as guards.

Merchant (human): Defensive 2, Master Trader 4
WIS 12, CHR: 15; Barter +16, Sense Motive +6.

The hot sun beats down on the market square relentlessly, as sweaty merchants and customers make exchanges of goods and Steel. As you view the wares of the market, pushing your way through the vast throngs of people, you see a stern-looking hulk of a bovine merchant push a little fellow down on the ground. The little man, pale and exhausted looking, with dried blood trailing down his right pant leg, stands and retorts to the hulking merchant: "I, as a fellow merchant, cannot believe your prices. You want 300 Steel for this ox that is half dead? That's robbery! I will not pay you more than 200 Steel or I will find a better deal elsewhere."

The characters can attempt to aid Alan at this point or they can continue on their way. If the characters intervene, they can attempt to persuade the hulking merchant to lower his price for the ox, with an opposed Barter check. However, Alan is looking for the best deal and will use the characters' intervention to strengthen his bid to include feed for the ox and a small hauler for a total of 300 Steel. If a character looks over the ox, he can determine with a Treat Injury skill check (DC 20) that the ox is very old and is suffering from malnutrition. The value of the beast at best is half of what the hulking merchant asks for. Should a character point this out to the merchant, Alan will make a new offer to include the feed and hauler, which the merchant will take (giving the worst looking hauler to Alan). Alan will thank the character(s) that aided him in the transaction and will ask them if they are interested in a job escorting him back to his base of operation, several days North of the city. If the characters are interested, he'll offer to pay them each 200 Steel to get him there. The characters can attempt to barter it up to 240 Steel with a Barter skill check DC 20 or 300 Steel with a Barter skill check DC 25.

Alternate Plot:

If the characters are not interested in accepting Alan's job, then Alan leaves the next day. Since Alan was seen talking to the characters, a Techno-Reaper Master later approaches the characters to tell them that Alan Terness was last seen talking to them and is now dead. The characters are obligated to go and inform his brother of his death. If they refuse to do so, they will be sentenced to the First Law of Gulag. If the characters accept, the Techno-Reaper will hand them Alan's Map and tell them that the Techno-Reapers expect to see Bart, Alan's brother, in no more than 10 days or a bounty will be put on their heads. If the characters skip town and do not go to the Watering Hole Trading Post, they earn +5% infamy in Techno-Reaper circles.

Into the Badlands (SC 1)

Nobody likes trekking through the badlands, not even Alan. Baked earth, scrub, and an occasional cactus stretch on for miles, illuminated in all too bright shades of pink and red by the early morning sun. Even at this time of morning, the heat is becoming perceptible, seeping in as the hot wind lathers you in a slick film of grime and sweat. Buzzards wheel overhead and call against the brightening sky; you hope this isn't some type of omen.

Alan seems cheerful, but looks tired. He sits astride an old half-dead ox, driving his rusted hauler full of dried food stocks down a path. He's chatting to you about this and that as you all lurch back and forth to the rhythm of the path's ruts.

Travel Time and Difficulty

Reaching the Watering Hole from Alamogordo requires 4 days of North by Northeast travel. The terrain gradually changes from flat, cracked desert to open sand dunes, then eventually to ridges and narrow gulleys. The actual trading depot is right at the southern tip of a range of mountains. Alan has purchased 70 days of food for one person in order to feed everyone for the trip and Bart and himself after the trip is completed. He is also a skilled Navigator and is familiar with the route.

Alan's Injury

The Badlands live up to their name and they're worse when you're sick or injured. Alan came prepared with food and water, but he didn't come prepared to deal with a festering wound. He is suffering from Blood Poisoning and takes 1d3+2 points of Constitution damage each day. If Alan receives a Treat Injury (disease) DC 15, he suffers no damage for that day. If any Treat Injury check fails, the next day's DC increases by 2. If Alan's Constitution score reaches 0, he dies.

If Alan *does* worsen, he becomes increasingly feverish. He's also increasingly insistent that he's fine, even when ghostly pale and beaded with sweat. If he bites the Big One, consult Encounter "Alan's Death". If Alan survives the journey and the party reaches the Watering Hole, consult "Reaching the Watering Hole".

Alan Terness, Defensive 1, Master Trader 2

Personality: Talkative and Inquisitive

Human Male; HP 21 (currently 15); STR 10, CON 14 (currently 10), DEX 11, INT 13, WIS 15, CHA 13; Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +6; Appraise +5, Barter +12, Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +3, Navigate +10, Sense motive +4, Survival +8.

Alan's Death (sc 2)

If Alan dies in transit, conditions rapidly worsen for the characters. Without the aid of his navigation abilities, there's a good chance that they could get very lost on their way to the Watering Hole. It doesn't help that Alan never revealed a set path or route. Then again, the characters can always attempt to return to Alamogordo.

The base Navigation DC to reach either Alamogordo or the Watering Hole is DC 25. If the party bothers to search Alan's body, they'll find a map that provides a +5 Circumstance bonus to the Navigation check. Keep track of the amount of the day it takes the characters to reach a destination based on Navigation skill.

If the characters remain lost for more than three days, they stumble upon the following encounter:

Since being lost in the desert is really terrible and makes for a poor session, this encounter was designed to provide the party with a bit of an upside. In essence, the characters come across the rusted out remains of a car, which some other traveler had used as shelter before he died.

After days of wandering in the Wasteland, the heat from the sun feels like an oven, baking your bones. Your skin burns and prickles like a sharpened rake is being continually dragged across it. It doesn't help that the desert looks identical in all directions.

After days of nothing, an oasis of paved road running roughly east to west suddenly peeks out from beneath shifting sand and dust. A rusted out car, likely an ancient Roadster, casts a pool of tempting shade next to the pavement. It looks like it was made into a makeshift tent, with white, floral print sheets stretched over the passenger-side windows, facing into the sun. Then again, maybe it's just the heat making you hallucinate.

If the characters opt to investigate the illusion, read the following when they get closer.

There is a figure huddled within the car, motionless, with one arm hanging out the driver's side window. Even from this distance you can tell he's very, very dead.

This was a human man and he hasn't been dead more than a month, although the heat has desiccated him quite severely. A Treat Injury DC 15 skill check reveals that he was killed by a rattlesnake bite. A DC 15 spot check finds a similarly dead rattlesnake under the car, whose head has all but been obliterated by a boot stomping. There are numerous bullet holes in the dirt and pavement around the snake, as well.

There are 4 metal canteens full of irradiated water (50 RAD) in a leather backpack on the back seat, a wool blanket, 2 doses of Radium X, a first aid kit, and an empty vial that once held a poison antidote. It looks like it was spilled on the floor. There's also an ancient, rusted wooden axe in the trunk, and a new MAB P15 handgun with 2 magazines stashed in the dashboard. The man was wearing casual clothes and had a cache of coins - 240 Steel.

If the characters manage to make it back to Alamogordo, read Conclusion C. If they make it to the Watering Hole, continue with the Encounter "The Watering Hole". If they wind up good and lost, you're looking at Encounter 1b.

The Watering Hole

Traveling onward - it's like the Wastelands never end. The hours pass, and the small rocks and sand dunes become flat cracked earth and jagged rocks that rise all around you, looming like silent sentinels. Cracked and broken hills appear against the dusty horizon, giving way to majestic mountains that you never quite seem to reach. As you round a bend on the trail, a blasted-out building comes into view. This ruin rises up from behind a rocky escarpment that hugs the left hand side of an old concrete road. This, however, is not just any building, but one that shows some signs of life - wheel tracks, discarded foil wrappers, cigarette butts. The building itself is whitewashed, scorched and roofless; it pokes from the dusty nook in the rock like a decayed tooth. Oil drums cluster together in front of one corner of the walls, and a shaggy bison chews placidly on a patch of scrub nearby. You can also see a beat up box van parked beneath a makeshift awning.

A scratchy voice calls out from inside the building. "Hey, customers! You're lookin' pretty tired! Need a place to stay? This here's the best inn in the Wastelands!"

"It's the only inn in the Wastes," another, tinnier voice squawks.

"Shut up!" And then a man steps out from the ruins, waving openly. He's short, round, and covered with grime, yet his broad grin seems to light him up.

The little round man is Bart, Alan's brother. He is loud, friendly, and incapable of silence; he talks constantly and excitedly about everything. Bart will readily go into a spiel on any subject, regardless of whether or not he knows a thing about it.

Bart is a small-time merchant who operates a makeshift water-selling operation. He traveled here via his van and bison, carrying a small supply of goods in the back. Bart has fixed the place up a little bit; he stretched a tarp between the walls in the ruin and set up a number of oil barrels to collect the water that he sells to passers-by. Bart can supply the characters with any equipment up to an Uncommon Scarcity under 300 Steel and will barter up to 10% off of prices. Bart only has a stock up to 1000 Steel value, so once the characters spend 1000 Steel, Bart is out of supplies.

There's also another 'person' at the shop, a small robot Bart scavenged from the ruins of a ranger's station. Bart's companion is a small robot called B.B.

B.B. stands for 'Birding Bot', which is exactly what B.B. originally was. He was designed to recognize birds by their calls and appearance and then to catalog their migration patterns in the Wastelands - tasks he is more than capable of performing. All Birding Bots were also programmed with some 'conversational skills', to keep the rangers from going insane due to isolation. Results have been mixed.

B.B. no longer catalogs birds. Now he catalogs goods and transactions. He isn't so great at it and his frequent mistakes provoke curses or hurled shoes from Bart. The little robot has an infuriating love of puns and wordplay which disgusts and alarms anyone who talks to him.

Bart Terness, Defensive 3, Master Trader 3

Personality: Talkative and Gregarious

Human Male; HP 31; INT 15, WIS 12, CHA 16; Appraise +8, Barter +18, Diplomacy +8, Handle Animal +3, Navigate +6, Sense motive +8, Survival +12.

B.B., Bart's Robot CR N/A; Small-sized construct; HD 1 (1d10+5), HP 15, BAB +0, Mas NA; Init +0, Spd 30 feet; Defense 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+4 Natural +1 Dex); BAB +0, Grap +0, Atk none; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +5.

SQ: Darkvision 60 feet, construct traits

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 12, Con -, Int 16, Wis 20, Cha 9

Skills (preprogrammed): Knowledge (Nature) +7, Listen +11, Search +7, Spot +11

Feats: Alertness

Possessions: A quick 'wit'

Wealth Bonus: None

Languages: Arabic, English, French, Spanish

Next to Bart is a strange device. This device is little more than a vaguely head-shaped appendage with a cluster of lenses spread across the 'face'. Its head is at the end of a long, swiveling arm that unfolds from a small, wheeled box sitting on a beat-up table and it speaks in a sharp, metallic voice, following your every movement with a weird bobbing motion.

Bart's initial reaction varies according to whether or not Alan has survived the journey. If Alan is alive, the two brothers greet each other right away; Alan pipes up as soon as Bart finishes his intro spiel. They embrace and Alan gives Bart a glowing account of the party members. You can now basically proceed right into Encounter "Running the Joint". With Alan alive, Bart's reactions all start at Friendly.

If Alan is dead, things are a little different. Although Bart appears to be friendly, he is actually Indifferent if the party conceals Alan's death or Unfriendly if they are open about it. Bart's reaction must be shifted to Friendly or Helpful before he offers the party the "Running the Joint" mission. This can be done either through simple diplomacy by the characters spending a night at Bart's inn and talking to him, or through their helping him out in the small combat encounter "Coyote Ugly" and eliminating the beasts. Either method can be chosen, depending on the makeup of the party, and whether interest permits a bit of combat for the group at this time. At your option, the encounter "Coyote Ugly" can even be used if Alan has survived – so long as the party is looking for some action.

The following are general descriptions of the details within the Watering Hole, which will come in handy later in the scenario.

The Depot

The depot is really the only man-made structure at the Watering Hole. It consists of a small, burnt-out ranger's station.

The depot really doesn't look like much. Its whitewashed walls are blackened with soot and scorch marks. The entrance to the place faces West and has a dilapidated look to it, save for a bright yellow sign that says 'REST EASY' in cheerful letters. The Northern section of the roof has completely collapsed, but is covered over with a waterproof tarp. Overall, the building is squat, square, and maybe a story and a half high.

The interior of the building is not much more exciting.

Bart's home is not impressive. The layout is simple, consisting of four rooms. The main room, the one you're standing in, is dimly lit by a few small electric lanterns set out on a small wooden table to the left. In the flickering yellow light, you can see that all the walls are lined by ramshackle shelves crammed with junk of every description. There's an area of open floor to the left, dominated by a faded rug and an old TV next to a small generator, a hot plate, a game station system, and a space heater. This is the only corner of the store not packed with shelves. A square, shuttered window opens out of a bare spot on the southern wall behind it.

In the back of the main room are two doors in an alcove on the east wall. The one on the left leads to what looks like Bart's Bedroom – a bunk bed, end table, dresser, and more shelving units stuffed with dry goods. The other door, on the right, seems to be a tiny restroom with a hole busted into the floor and a toilet placed over it.

On the right from the restroom is yet another doorway, this one closed. It opens into a long, narrow room that contains more storage space, with shelves on the left converted into makeshift bunks.

The Yard

This is a broad area of open, caked dirt that stretches to the west of the depot. The road leads to this location after curving around from the South.

A disintegrating wooden fence is the dominant feature of the yard. There's a gap in its center that allows a narrow dirt trail through, but, aside from that, the area is little more than cracked, caked earth. On the Northern side of the path, you see what looks like a little camp site – there's a fire pit, some old lawn chairs, a couple of oil drums, and a few tattered flags on poles. A rusted old van slumps right behind this makeshift camp.

The van can be hauled by an animal (indeed, Bart uses it to transport goods when he has to), but it's unfueled and gutted. The engine, gas tank, and most of the internal machinery were removed to reduce weight.

The Gully

The gully stretches to the East and South of the depot. It consists of a dry stream bed and a stretch of scrubland, clustered up against a high, limestone ridge to the East. The ridge initially blocks the view of the depot to those approaching from the East, as the party is.

This is probably the most verdant place near the depot, but that isn't saying much. Some scrub huddles around the remains of a dry stream bed, which winds itself up against a limestone ridge to the East. A couple of scrawny pine trees poke out of the scrub. As you look Southward, both the vegetation and the ridge gradually taper out into sparse grassland, then rolling, sandy badlands, and eventually to open desert on the horizon. You can see the road you traveled to get here winding amongst the scrub in the distance.

The Ridge

Here we have what is likely the dominant feature of the area. The ridge is a Southern outlier of the Mountains and it shares many of the same traits – limestone composition, square and blocky appearance, color ranging from brownish to white. The ridge curves from the North, around the Eastern side of the Depot, before gradually diminishing Southward.

The ridge towers above you, its pale brown stone cracked and riddled with small tufts of grass. The light here is dappled by a few slender, barren trees, and the scent of pine wood floats thinly in the arid breeze. Many crevices and crannies greet you – you imagine there are probably a few caves here.

Alan and B.B at the Watering Hole

Alan, if alive, and B.B. can be present for all of the encounters that take place at the Watering Hole. Alan is basically inefficacious due to his infection and subsequent Constitution loss – he stays inside and occasionally asks for food or water. He won't help with fighting or interact with the party except to play cards and demand a fire each night. B.B., on the other hand, has a convenient 30 speed that allows him to keep up with the party to serve as comic relief and/or a source of nature information.

Coyote Ugly (CEL 1)

Bart has asked the characters to eliminate some wolves that return to his camp every night, attempting to kill him and his bovine. They already got his dog, Bandit.

Night falls rapidly out in the desert, and the cold hits the moment the sun dips beneath the horizon. As daylight drains out of the sky, like water from a broken dam, you catch the distant cackle of barking and howling on the breeze, singing the song of the badlands' night. Bart stands up almost immediately. He walks into the station, over to a beat-up end table, and opens a drawer, revealing a carefully maintained handgun.

"You boys want a little target practice?" Bart chuckles, maybe a little bit nervously. Even though the fire-pit is already stoked, you're starting to get the impression that simple fire isn't about to keep these particular coyotes away.

The party has the option of helping Bart or not. If not, only one Coyote appears, and he sends it running with a few warning shots.

Whiteback Coyotes are vicious, rippling masses of canine muscle with two skunk-like stripes down their backs. They're noted for their chilling howls and complete lack of fear toward humans.

The battle should begin with the coyotes attempting to sneak into the perimeter around the Southern edge of the ridge. Once they're within 100 feet, they'll charge. Thankfully, the coyotes are more stupid and vicious than they are cunning, and will attack everyone, as opposed to just focusing on a single target.

Whiteback Coyote (4): small animal; HD 1d8+2; hp 7; Mas 13; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; Defense 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+1 Dex, +1 size, +2 natural); BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk bite +2 (1d4+2 melee); FS: 5ft. by 5ft.; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills: hide +5, listen +4, move silently +5, spot +4.

Feats: Improved initiative

Night Scent (Ex): As per the scent special quality, but also counts as the blindfighting feat.

Whiteback Pack Attack (Ex): For every additional Whiteback Coyote in a battle beyond the first, all Whitebacks gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls.

When the battle is finished, Bart will accept the characters as friendly, and invite them to stay at the inn free of charge. He then offers them a chance to protect the trading post in "Running the Joint", while he attends to his brother and returns to Alamogordo for a short period.

Running the Joint (SC 1)

If the players have won Bart's trust, he offers them a special job. He has to run into town to either get medicine for Alan, or to inform his family of Alan's death (choose the appropriate reason based on Alan's status). While Bart is off, he wants the party to look after the Watering Hole, protect it, and keep the extraction of water working properly. If Alan is still alive, he has to rest up at the depot, and will stay with the characters. If Alan is dead, obviously he gets buried (out in the front yard) after a brief and awkward service during which Bart has to repeatedly shush B.B.

Bart should give the party a quick rundown of the joint; he offers the following basic information and intro without being questioned.

☞ *"This here is my place, and I try to keep it together. While I'm gone, you gotta make sure that the pump keeps working. There's a big aquifer underneath the caves in the ridge back there, and I've got a bunch a pumps that pull water from outta the place. Then I seal it up in barrels and roll 'em topside. Most of the machinery's in the upper parts of the larger cave out back behind the depot - the one marked with the 'Caution' sign. Heh. To keep vandals and such out. Actually, it's the safest of all the caves by far. Ain't nothin' in there I haven't gotten round to killing yet. So just mosey down there in the morning with a barrel, fill 'er up, reset the pumps for the day, then head back. No problem. I'll take you on a little tour so you know what you're doin'."*

If Bart is asked about the other caves, he looks briefly uncomfortable, before piping up:

☞ *"Yeah, there's some kinda critter livin' in the other cave. He comes out on warmer nights to hunt and so on; he's kinda like a big lizard, all red and black. Weird lookin'. I keep my distance, and he seems okay to stay away from me. Although, I used to have a dog... poor Bandit."*

If questioned about raider attacks and other travelers coming to the depot, Bart answers readily. He also offers this info as an afterthought, right before he leaves, if not already questioned about it.

☞ *"I get a few people in a month, but this is the hot season and it slows right down. I time it so I run outta stock about now so it's okay to get Alan to come in with refills without me having to worry about disappointing any customers, ya see. Better not to have to stock up more than a few times a year. As for bandits... yeah. It's the hot season, and the mutants out there start getting desperate around now. There's a chance you might get attacked. That's another reason I want Alan here, because with two of us we're less likely to get rolled. I ain't worried about traveling myself; they're always on foot and can't hope to catch a bovine. But you guys should watch out."*

After he supplies all the information, he takes the party on a tour of the extraction cave.

The entrance to the cave is nothing more than a narrow crack in the cliff with a wooden 'Caution' sign screwed into the wall nearby. But once you pass through the rough hewn sandstone entrance, it feels like a whole different world. The relentless dry heat of the desert is gone, replaced with cool, moist air carrying the faint scent of moss and wet stone. The smooth, limestone walls have an almost organic appearance, and come to a gradual meeting point about 15 feet above you while the floor pitches steadily downward. You follow a trail of cigarette butts into the depths of the ridge.

The lantern light reflects bright white off the walls as you spiral downwards. Cool air wells up from below. At the edge of the darkness, you can see it – a large, open chamber that was clearly once some type of reservoir. Stalagmites hang from the ceiling and sparkle with traces of gypsum. Small pools of water litter the ground, rippling with each footstep. Here is the pump – a massive conglomeration of cobbled pipes and valves, clearly the remains of some great, pre-war machine. A dozen or so oil drums cluster at the device's feet.

"Pretty ain't it?" Bart chuckles a bit while he saunters over to a series of dials and levers. "Don't worry, there's nothin' to it."

Bart explains the basics of operating the pump and that the pump must stay running in order to extract the water. Each day the pump requires a maintenance check to make sure there are no problems. This requires a Repair DC 15 check; characters cannot take 10 on this check. If a character has ranks in Profession (mechanic), he may add his ranks to his Repair check. If all the checks are made, then the machine operates smoothly, but if at some point a character fails the check by 5 or more, then the pump begins to moan and groan 4 hours after the character last checked it. When the character next checks the pump, he'll find that the chamber is flooded.

If the characters manage to mess this up, Bart only pays them half his promised price when he returns, unless the party can repair the pump and get it operational again. The pump will require a Repair check DC 18 to get up and running, and it will take a full day of work to pump out the water, and a maintenance check every 4 hours to make sure that the pump does not overheat.

The Lizard King (CEL 2)

If the characters choose to explore the other cave, they will encounter the Lizard King, a giant Gila Monster.

This cave is much smaller than the one which holds the water pump. The air is thick with a musty aroma, and a single narrow pathway spirals downwards into the gloom. Here and there, wisps of what looks like tattered white parchment are kicked up as you pass by, short-lived as white ghosts in the flickering light.

This is the cave Bart warned the party against, the home of a Giant Gila Monster. Those white floating tufts are bits of shed lizard skin which can be identified with a Knowledge (nature) DC 10 skill check. A Search DC 15 skill check will discover fine scratches on the walls, and DC 20 will reveal claw shrapnel.

The Gila Monster lives in a large, stalagmite-studded cavern at the end of the winding entrance passage. The ceiling here is extremely low (only about 4 feet high), effectively making all characters squeeze into the area, except for characters with the Flexible trait, rendering combat difficult if it takes place in the cavern.

The Gila Monster's chamber contains little more than a pile of bones, some shredded skin, a grooved Gila Monster tooth that houses a single application of venom, and a dog collar.

Unlike some Mutant Gila Monsters, this one has a venomous bite which renders it somewhat more dangerous. Bite aside, the lizard is formidable and surprisingly quick-moving. It is broad, squat, and low to the ground, with pebbly red and black skin.

Mutant Lizard (Venomous Gila Monster): Medium Animal; HD 3d8+9; hp 22; Mas 17; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., swim 30 ft; Defense 15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 13; BAB +2; Grap +5; Atk Bite +5 melee (1d4+3 plus poison); SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +6 (+10 in rocky surroundings), Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Spot +4, Swim +11

Special Attacks

Venomous Bite (ex): The Gila Monster's bite attack contains a potent toxin. Damage is 1d4 dexterity, secondary damage 1d4 dexterity; Reflex save DC 14 to negate.

Special Qualities

Scent, Low-light vision

The Gila Monster itself is not always present in the den. At around 9 PM and until Midnight, every night, the lizard goes out on the prowl. During this time, players can explore the den without fear of encountering the creature. They won't find anything aside from the aforementioned bones, tooth, and the dog collar. However, if any party members are wandering around outside at this time of night, they have a 20% chance of encountering the lizard while he's hunting. He tends to spend most of his time in the gully.

Harvesting

The hide makes a rather fetching leather jacket, but requires a Survival DC 14 skill check to skin, and a Craft (mechanical) DC 12 skill check to actually manufacture. A Gila skin jacket has a market value of around 300 Steel, and has stats identical to a regular leather jacket. The Gila Monster's bottom teeth are grooved and contain a reservoir of toxin. There are 2d4 teeth, each of which contains a single application of Gila Monster venom. The Market price for the toxin is 15 Steel per dose.

Mutant Attack (CEL 4/SC 1)

On the third day at the Watering Hole, a pair of Mutants discovers the area and is scouting it out. They want to drive the party off and capture any women or *Ghūls* for use as slaves. Allow alert characters an occasional Spot DC 17 skill check throughout the day to notice the stealthy Mutants. If one of the party members spots them before they can attack, read the following:

A bulky shape moving from a stone outcropping to a tuft of brambles, and from the brambles to a stand of pines, catches your eye.

If the Mutant cover is blown, and a character sounds an alarm, the Mutants will charge in. Read the following if this is the case or if the Mutants sneak in and make the first attack.

Appearing before you, are two huge muscular monsters carry baseball bats studded with metal shards and strips of tape outfitted in what looks like the remains of umpire padding. Streaks of yellow paint in some type of warrior pattern are clumsily applied to their faces, marking them as obvious members of the Mutant Army.

One of them smiles with a wide gapped-tooth grin; these Mutant brutes clearly do *not* come in peace.

The Mutants scout the camp from early afternoon to dusk. They spend several minutes skulking about the edges of the Front Yard, trying to get a feel for the place and to see how many people dwell there.

Once combat begins, the Mutants first rush in and attempt to engage the party in melee. Both will approach any human male character and beat him down into unconsciousness.

The Mutants will continue to fight until one them is dead and the other fleeing (preferably with a woman or Ghūl), or they capture the Watering Hole. If a Mutant escapes, the characters will earn +1% infamy within the Mutant Army.

Mutant Raiders (2)**Aggressive Class 2**

Medium Humanoids; HD 2d10+10; hp 26; Mas 20; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 12 (+0 Dex, +1 Class, +1 armor), touch 10, flat-footed 11; BAB +2; Grap +10; Atk Baseball bat +7 melee (1d6+6); FS: 5 ft./5 ft.; SV Fort +8, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 18, Dex 10, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Feats: Brawl, Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Archaic)

Skills (10): Hide +5 (+7), Survival +5

Talents: Melee Smash

Traits: Physically Fit

Special Qualities

Trans-Genetic Mutant Traits

Equipment: backpack (cloth), baseball bat (2), flashlight (solar powered), flat bread (10), improvised armor (2), meat jerky (20), metal canteen (4).

The Refugee (CEL 4)

On the fifth day at the Watering Hole, Bruno, a Mutant defector, comes running into the front yard being chased by Mutant canines. The characters can act as they wish in this encounter.

The last few days have been pretty quiet. However, the barking of dogs draws your attention to the yard. You can see a Mutant in full stride, running into the compound's front yard.

At this point, it's a good idea to ask what the characters do. The characters have two rounds of actions before the Mutant canines arrive. Bruno will run right by the characters, ignoring any dangers, and flee straight into the building to hide.

Seconds later, as the Mutant runs into the building, two large black mastiff hounds run into the yard. Both stop, sniffing in the air, while foaming from the mouth.

The canines will attack everyone in their area of scent, starting with whoever is closest until they get Bruno. They attack in a pack mentality, choosing the same target until it stops moving.

Bruno**Trans-Genetic mutant, male; Defensive 1**

Medium Humanoid; HD 1d8+3+1; hp 12; Mas 16; Init +1; Spd 25 ft.; Defense 13 (+1 Dex, +2 class), touch 12, flat-footed 12; BAB +0; Grap +11; Atk punch +7 melee (1d4+7 non-lethal); FS: 5 ft./5 ft.; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 24, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Background: Mutant Defector

Occupation: City Worker

Feats: Brawl, Strong back

Skills (12): Craft (Structural) +0, Listen +4, Repair -1, Sense Motive +2, Spot +4, Survival +4

Talents: Robust

Traits: Big and Dumb

Personality: Slow, Dull, Apologetic and Obedient

Special Qualities

Trans-Genetic Mutant Traits

Mutant Canine (CR 3): Medium Animal; HD 4d8+12; hp 30; Mas 17; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; Defense 14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 12; BAB +2; Grap +5; Atk Bite +6 melee (1d6+4); FS: 5 ft./5 ft.; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Feats: Improved trip, weapon focus (bite)

Skills: Jump +5, Listen +5, Spot +5, Spot +5, Survival +1 (+5 when tracking by scent), Swim +6

Special Attacks

Take Down (ex): If a mutant canine lands a successful bite attack, make an immediate opposed strength check versus the bitten target. If the canine wins, the target is knocked prone. Take down has no effect on individuals who are already prone.

Special Qualities

Scent, Low-light vision

Bruno is a Mutant defector. He isn't the brightest fellow around, which is why he figured that defecting from the Mutants by running out in the middle of the mountains (with no equipment!) would be a wise idea. He is insanely lucky, though - lucky enough to stumble across the only clean watering hole for probably a hundred miles in any direction.

Bruno's been on the lam for 2 days, and the Mutants weren't all that happy to see him go. In retaliation, they loosed a pair of near-feral Mutant canines on the poor guy in the hopes that the dogs would kill him. One

could hardly call these canines ‘trained’ – they’re simply vicious and persistent, and the Mutants don’t even try to control them. The animals got wind of Bruno’s scent and have pursued him out of pure tenacity and a touch of bestial cruelty.

If the characters do not gun down Bruno and they save him from the Mutant canines, he will be insufferably grateful, fawning over whichever character seems like he would be irritated by it the most. Bruno begs to stay at the Watering Hole, with promises that he’ll work for his share, and that he can lift *really heavy* things. If they let him stick around, check his stat block above. Even if the party tells him to get lost, Bruno will secretly hang around at the edge of the Watering Hole.

Bruno is very powerful, good-natured, and profoundly stupid. He is so dim that even his former Mutant friends were leery of giving him any combat training, and instead tasked him with carrying really large things around. While he is trained in construction and repair work, it probably isn’t that wise to let him build or fix anything unless it can be repaired with a well-placed hammer smack. While he may be as dumb as a sack of doorknobs, he certainly has keen senses and fairly polished survival skills.

The party can question Bruno easily; his reaction starts out at Friendly even if a character put a couple of plugs in him. Bruno reveals who he is and that he came from a Mutant city ‘that way’, pointing north.

I'll Call him George (CEL 2/SC 1)

This encounter happens only if Bruno is alive. Late in the night, following Bruno’s harrowing Mutant canine experience, Bruno flips out when his pet rat escapes.

In the middle of the night, you hear a loud rustling noise from behind the building. A soft, gravelly voice calls over and over, “George, George... George?” The night quiets for a moment and then erupts with a high-pitched scream, like that of a terrified little girl.

It’s fairly likely that the party will want to investigate this disruption of their idyllic evening. The sounds are clearly coming from behind the ruin of the ranger’s station. Turns out it’s Bruno, and he’s having a personal crisis.

Peering through the darkness before you, you see, dashing around behind the back of the Depot, Bruno, the lunk-headed Mutant. He’s squealing and crying like a little girl; frankly, you don’t understand how he can even make that noise. The giant man sobs and shudders, letting out tiny gasps as he relates in a mouse-like voice, “It’s... it’s George. George is gone! And I just met him... Please guys, we have to find George! I think he went over into the brush. He’s my friend!”

Bruno will sob loudly, drawing attention to the Watering Hole’s location, until the characters help him out.

George, the Goddamned Enormous Packrat (CR 1): Small Animal; HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Mas 12; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; Defense 16 (+3 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 13; BAB +0; Grap -3; Atk Bite +4 melee (1d4+1); FS: 5 ft./5 ft.; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 2.

Feats: Weapon finesse (bite)

Skills: Balance +11, Climb +13, Hide +11, Move Silently +11, Sleight of Hand +12, Swim +11

Special Attacks

Foul Bite (ex): Rats are a well-known vector for plagues. It stands to reason that the larger the rat, the more plague you can get from it. All Goddamned Enormous Packrats bites force a DC 11 fortitude save on a successful bite, to prevent the contraction of a mild disease that inflicts 1 Con damage per day for 1 week.

Special Qualities

Scent, Low-light vision, +8 racial bonuses on balance, climb, swim, and sleight of hand checks.

A Search DC 15 skill check finds some scratchy footprints and drag marks leading off into the bush at the base of the ridge. A Knowledge (nature) DC 14 skill check will reveal that they are from some type of giant rodent. A Track DC 18 check will track the rodent back to a nest about 100 feet south of the yard. In the nest is George, a Goddamned Enormous Packrat, who has been stealing little trinkets from the depot for months. As soon as the players manage to stumble across his nest, read out the following:

You find what looks like some kind of nest made of matted scrub and mud, carefully hidden between the rocky ridge wall and a clump of brush. There is all manner of junk – old foil, cigarette butts, and whatnot – scattered around the entrance. Looks like whatever lives in there is a hoarder. You barely have time to wonder if anyone's home when there's a flash of brown fur followed by a high-pitched chittering. Oh holy hell, that is a Goddamned Enormous Rat.

Bruno caught George and tried to make him a pet, but the creature had none of it and fled at first opportunity. George is more or less cornered in his home and will fight back if provoked (making a single attack against the closest person and then a full retreat Southwards into the desert the next round), but he can also be coaxed out and placated with a DC 12 handle animal check. A player who has placated George can make another handle animal check with a DC of 18, and George will follow the party back like a puppy – a really greasy and diseased puppy. (If George is handed over to Bruno, the big dumb Mutant pets him to death overnight as per below).

If the characters don't kill George (which will cause Bruno to cry for hours), they can coax him out as per above, or they can just leave him alone, in which case Bruno eventually catches him and pets him to death. Bruno is too stupid to realize that he killed the thing, and so continues petting its corpse for the next several days before tiring of it.

Of course, there are a lot of trinkets to be found in the nest. There are several coins (12 Copper and 5 Steel), a bag of chips (half eaten), bullets (12 rounds of 10mm), old bullet casings, 2 dead fusion cells, a gold chain with a cross on it, and a tattered faded adult pin up magazine (called 'Grape Grenade' - a cheap knockoff of *Cherry Bomb* featuring women who could be generously described as 'simian').

Conclusion A: Bart's Return

On the evening of the eighth day of guarding the Watering Hole, Bart returns with supplies.

Late in the evening, you hear the whine of rusty axles and the snort of a bovine from down the bend. Soon enough, you see your patron heading up the path, piloting his rusted old bovine-drawn van. Bart's finally returned from Alamogordo. After a round of hearty thanks and back-slapping praise, the little round man absolutely insists that you all stay at the depot for one more night, so that he can treat you all to copious amounts of liquor, cigars, and various other delicacies. He's also more than eager to hear about what went on while he was gone.

Bart's absence should cover a total of 8 days. When he does get back, he's bursting with praise, although he will be somewhat disappointed if the place is damaged. He still stays friendly and thankful even if that is the case. Bart demands that the party stay one more night with him and share a selection of fine cigars and not-so-fine liquor that he purchased for the occasion.

Successfully Defending the Watering Hole

The party has managed to keep a lid on things, and Bart returns to see his place in decent shape. Bart thanks the characters and provides them the reward that Alan promised, in addition to another 300 Steel each for looking after the Watering Hole. Finally, Bart rewards the characters with the sale of one piece of equipment of Infrequent Scarcity from the EXS at a 50% discount (sorry, no bartering on this item); see Bart's Favor on the OPS Log.

The characters also gain +1% with the Techno-Reapers as Bart talks them up on his next visit to Alamogordo.

Conclusion B

The Characters Abandoned the Watering Hole

Either the characters let the Mutants drive them off or just up and left.

If Alan is still alive, he'll thank the characters for their effort, but state that Bart has all of the money, and, unfortunately, he cannot pay them.

The characters will not get any reward from Bart. Bart will also talk badly of the characters on his next visit to Alamogordo. The characters gain a +1% infamy within the Techno-Reapers.

Conclusion C

The Characters Couldn't Even Find the Watering Hole

For whatever reason, the party was thwarted by the desert and forced back to Alamogordo, never even reaching the Watering Hole.

Once more, the dusty city streets of Alamogordo stretch before you. Your endeavor seemed particularly fruitless; the desert chewed you up and spat you out without so much as a second thought. You hope this doesn't impact your reputation too badly.

If Alan is still alive, he'll thank the characters for their effort, but state that Bart has all of the money, and, unfortunately, he cannot pay them.

If Alan is dead, then the party suffers no negatives unless they bring Alan's body back to town – dead men in the desert tell no tales. Bringing back the body grants a +1% to infamy within the Techno-Reapers.

The End...

Experience

Experience is divided into three categories: combat, skill, and role-playing, as denoted below. First, determine the character's APL as it will be important to calculate Combat XP. Second, add all XP earned together and divide by the number of characters to get each character's earned XP. Record their earned XP upon their OPS Certificate Log.

Average Party Level (APL): To determine APL, add together all of the player character levels, including any animal's CR (that is not an Advanced Class feature) or NPCs that are aiding the characters and then divide by the number of characters, assisting creatures, and NPCs to determine the APL of the group. APL plays a factor in the amount of Combat XP earned and represents the challenge presented by the group.

CEL (Combat Encounter Level)

Combat XP = CEL (plus/minus difference of APL) times total HP of the creatures or NPCs

SC (Skill Challenge)

Skill XP = 250 times SC

RP (Role-Playing)

Conclusion and Story Rewards

Experience		
Combat Encounter (CEL)	Achievements	XP Earned
Coyote Ugly	Defeat the Coyotes	1 (+/- APL) x 28
The Lizard King	Defeating the Gila Monster	2 (+/- APL) x 22
Mutant Attack	Defeating the Mutants	4 (+/- APL) x 22
The Refugee	Defeat the Mutant Canines	4 (+/- APL) x 22
I'll Call Him George	Defeat the Packrat	2 (+/- APL) x 11
Skill Challenges (SC)	Achievements	XP Earned
Space Museum	Detecting that Alan leg is infected from his wounds (treat injury)	250
Alamogordo Market	Determining the health of the Ox Alan is haggling for (treat injury)	500
Into the Badlands	Keeping Alan alive during the journey to the Watering Hole (treat injury)	250
Alan's Death	Continuing to the Watering Hole or Returning to Alamogordo (navigate)	750
Alan's Death	Finding the old car, and determining how it occupant died (spot, treat injury)	250
Running the Joint	Keeping the Water Pump Operational (repair)	325
Mutant Attack	Spotting the Stealthy Mutants	250
I'll Call Him George	Tracking Down the Packrat	250
I'll Call Him George	Domesticating the Packrat	325
Role-Playing		
Space Museum or Alamogordo Market	Speaking with Alan Terness	50
Alamogordo Market	Searching the Market for Rare+ items	100
The Watering Hole	Interaction with Bart and taking the tour of the Watering Hole	100
The Refugee	Interaction with Bruno	250
Conclusion A		1000
Divide by the number of players for each player's total EXP		
Time Units Spent: 12		

Reputation

Reputation is gained through the actions of the characters as a group or those of a single character during the scenario. Each character earns either fame or infamy in the Reputation category as defined by the actions listed below. Record all of the results on the Scenario Log.

Alternative Plot: +5% infamy in Techno-Reapers for accepting to travel to the Watering Hole and failing to do so.

Mutant Attack: +1% Infamy in the Mutant Army if a Mutant Raider escapes.

Conclusion A: +1% infamy in Techno-Reapers.

Conclusion B or C: +1% infamy in Techno-Reapers.

Treasure

To determine the amount of treasure (loot and coin) that a character earns, consult the results below for items and add up the coin earned from the encounters in which the character participated. A chart of potential coin earned is included below for quick reference. Allow the players to determine the items that they are keeping and those they are selling. Only one player can attain items with a quantity of (1), and it is up to the players to determine who gets the item without in-character fighting. A common method to determine who gets a disputed item is a dice roll off; or one of the characters

adding the sell value to the coin earned that is split amongst the other characters. Selling items is broken up into three categories below with a base sell price (1/2 cost) and two barter categories (5% and 10%).

All Rare, Very Rare, and Unique scarcity items are no longer listed on the certificate. These items are entered under the acquired items, just as acquiring normal scarcity items unless otherwise noted by the treasure entry.

Encounter	Maximum Attainable Coin
Alan's Death	240 Steel
I'll Call him George	12 Copper, 5 Steel
Conclusion A	Up to 600 Steel each

Equipment	Sell Value (individual)	Sell Value (total)	Barter DC 20	Barter DC 25
9mm ammunition (30 rounds)	2.5	90	+5%	+10%
10mm ammunition (12 rounds)	2	24		
Backpack (cloth)		25		
Backpack (leather)		50		
Baseball Bat (2)	22.5	45		
Casual Clothes (2)	10	20		
Fatigues (2)	250	500		
First Aid Kit		100		
Flashlight (solar powered)		20		
Flat Bread (10)	.5	5		
Gold Crucifix		110		
MAB P15 Handgun		112.5		
Meat Jerky (20)	2.5	50		
Metal Canteen (8)	12.5	100		
Radium X (2)	150	300		
Tattered 'Grape Grenade' magazine		150		
Total	---			

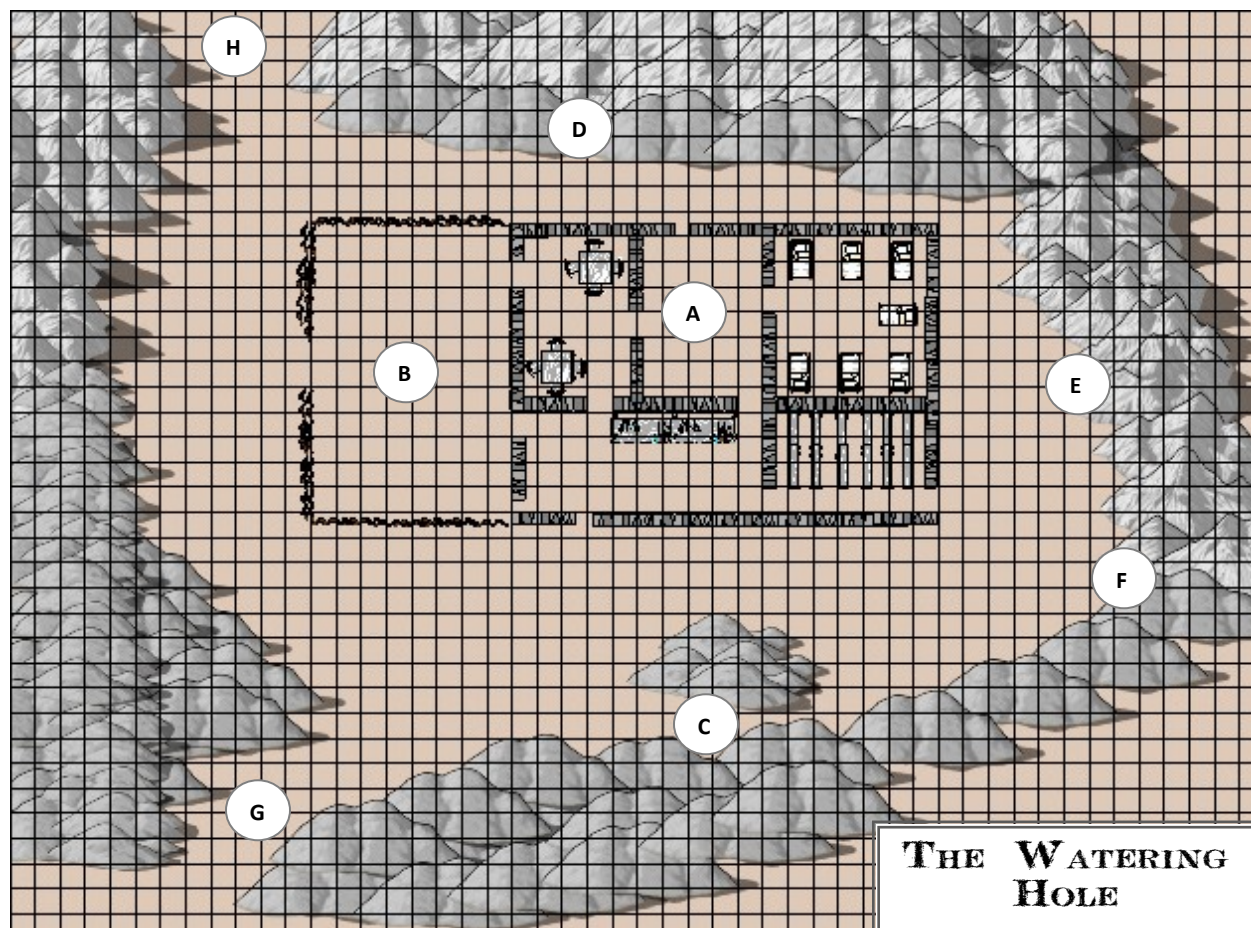
Certificate Entries

Special

Bart's Favor: The characters may purchase one piece of equipment of Infrequent Scarcity from the EXS at a 50% discount from the Watering Hole Trading Post or from a Techno-Reaper merchant. This service can only be redeemed once. Note the item purchased on your current *OPS* log (if different than here) and strikethrough this service when cashed-in.

Rare and Very Rare Items Acquired: Items that can be purchased from the Alamogordo market. Cross off all items that the characters do not buy from their *OPS* log.

Overseer's Map



KEY

A: The Depot

B: The Yard

C: The Gully

D: The Ridge

E: The Watering Hole

F: The Lizard King

G: Trail to Alamogordo

H: Path to Mutant Army Base