

Dangerous Elements



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Written and Photographed by Jason DeWitt

Edited by Angela L. Jones

www.samwyx.com

sam@samwyx.com

Dangerous Elements is a followup to **A Bigger Fish**. It was photographed entirely on virtual location in Cormac, The Cape of Ruin, and The Great Fissure, which are parts of The Wastelands in Second Life®. Consent to use these locations specifically and only for this project has been graciously extended by the creator, owner, and game administrator of The Wastelands, NeoBokrug Elytis.

Special thanks to Sandusky Kayvon, owner of the lovely desolation that is Cormac, and to the creator of SANTOS avatars, please go back in business and sell me everything you've got!

Thanks to Catherine DeWitt, NeoBokrug Elytis, Aposiopesis Fullstop, Angharad Greggan, Dan Seawwconds, Bartleby Ricantaur, Cliban Callow, ZTAR, Marko, Gnawbert, Briel the Fallen, Abrahambone, The Mutant Witch of the Wastes, Itch, Beans, NickCitrus, Jedidiah Stone, Kayanite, and PanPot for their inspiration and encouragement.

The characters of Bec, Nils, Irk, and Honcho Uno, and the content of their story, are the exclusive property of Wyx Press and Jason DeWitt, copyright 2016, unless otherwise noted. No part of this work may be reproduced without the explicit (and we mean explicit) consent of the creator. Virtual donkeys were not left to die fully loaded out in the desert.

I met the one-eyed mutant out in the desert again. I told the boys to lay low until I had the deal done, just to be on the safe side. Irk was always fair in a trade and he had the parts I needed. Things were looking up for a change...



Yeah this is perfect, thanks for keeping it for me!



I know a guy who really wants it, hell if I know why.




What are you looking for in trade?


Do you have the arrows?




Sorry my friend, they traded fast.



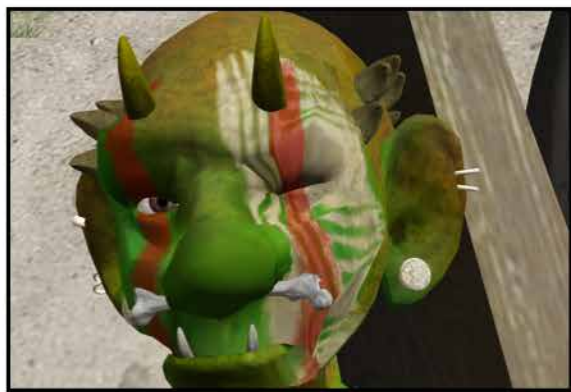
Well, if you still have those monstrous rattler Pangs they will do.



We have a deal! Always good doing business with you, Irk. You headed out on a hunt then?



Soon, when the sky spirits are in the right mood.





I will look for you here again in three moons. I may have those sewing kits by then.



I'll be here! Good hunting and...



Hold still...



THANKS!



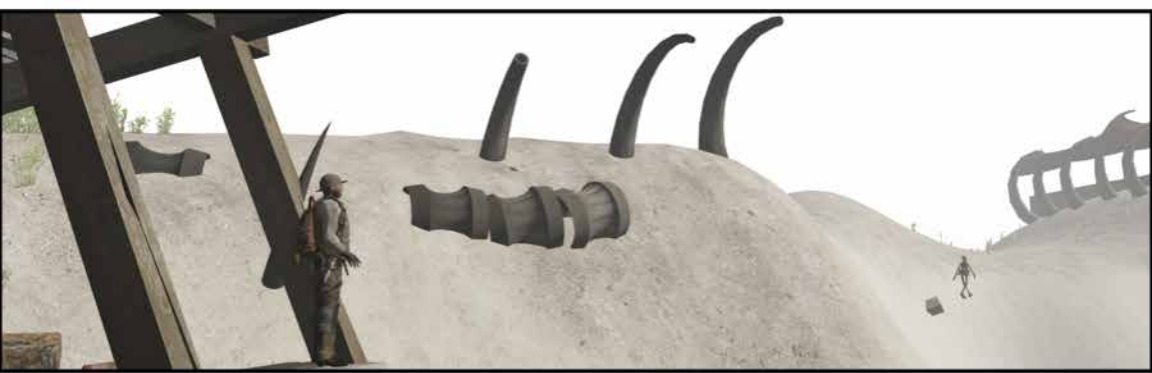
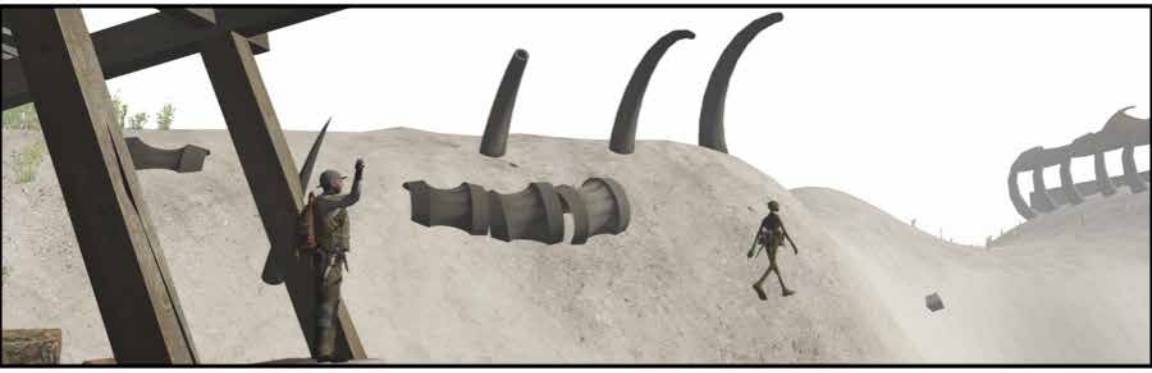
These things can kill a man with one bite!




For a mutant it is only a little sting. But thank you.




Well, they're dangerous elements, best to be rid of 'em.



Okay, he's gone. You can all come out...




I know, I know! I'm sorry it took so long!




Oh, is that right? And you two feel the same way?




Alright then, we'll leave now but honestly guys, I don't see the hurry.



Can't we just have a nice, casual walk together through all this lovely desolation?



If we don't get lost or killed we should be at Itch's place in three days. Then unload the parts in town, get paid, and we can all go home. If it's still there...



Alright then, come on!

From here to there is full of a lot of nothing. I've always liked the silence of the open desert but it makes the men suspicious and edgy at times.



Being the oldest puts me in charge and we all seem to agree on that. So when things get tense I play it cool for their sakes, and try to keep spirits up with humor and food.

I'm starving...





Who wants lunch?



Aren't you all hungry? I mean if you're not gonna eat this flatbread, I wouldn't mind...

Thanks guys!



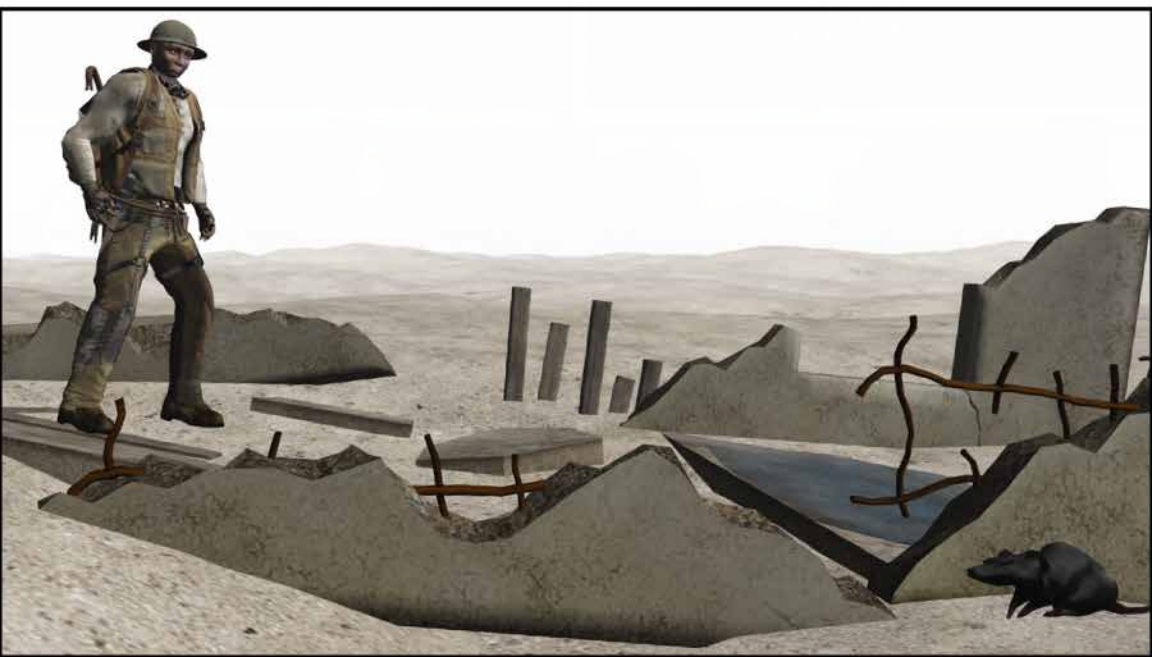
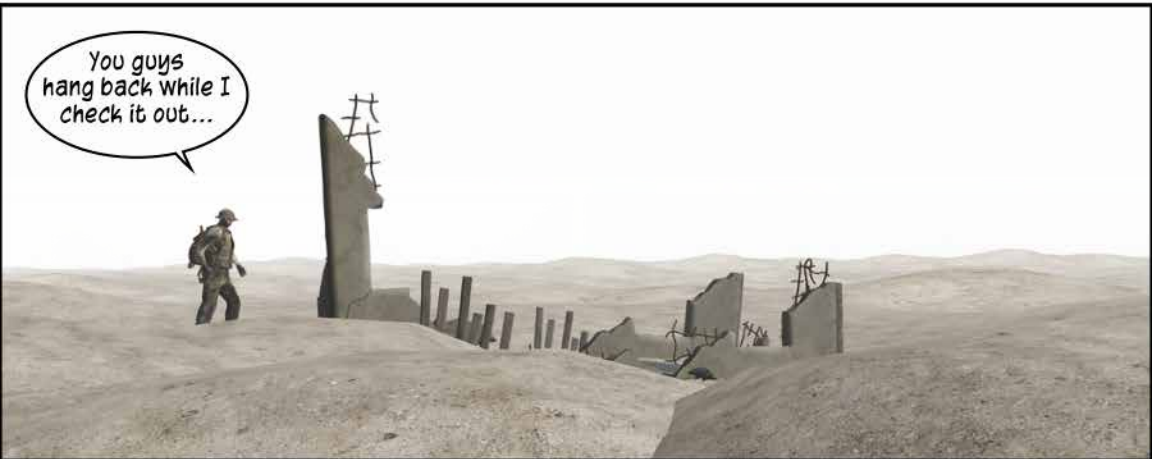
Lunch is over, try to keep up!

It's amazing how a few chunks of rubble can look inviting when it's surrounded by dunes as far as the eye can see.

We've been on our feet all day, let's stop up here.



You guys hang back while I check it out...







Then I saw them on the horizon...



Aw hell,
what's this...



You guys take
cover and don't do
anything unless I give
the signal!

We kept low and scrambled behind a wall
nearby. It's best to stay unseen most times.





... this doesn't look good.

Keep up, girl! Or your arms will get a lot longer.

Yessir.



Please don't stop here...



This is where we stop and wait for my friend to arrive. He's going to love you.

If you are good to him I might let you eat.



Cool it you guys, they'll spot us if we run! Let's just watch and wait until we know what's what...



I'll cut you loose but your wrists stay tied. I expect you to behave.



Now get up, girl! Gather some of those boards for a fire and get out the grain for Betty.

I'll tell you when you can rest!



Yessir.



Whoa...

KICK!




Idiot girl! I said get some wood for...




HMMM...
What's this?




I think he's on to us...



Seems like
we have some
company.



What to do,
what to do...



Girl, I want you to do
something. If you run I'll
shoot you and eat you,
understood?

Now listen...





He's gonna kill me! He's gonna kill you too unless you leave. But please mister...

...don't leave!



Tell him I left! Tell him I'm scared!



Please cut these ropes...



He'd see and kill us all!



You gotta help, he's a monster!



We don't need this...



She looked so sad, so desperate. Being a monster's slave will do that I guess.

But what could we do about it?



Then again, could we really just walk away and live with ourselves after?



Aw hell... wait until dark and we'll see what we can do. Be strong...



You're gonna run. It's ok, I don't blame you.



He's got sacks of coins and cargo on that donkey.

If it matters.



Walk away!
She isn't our problem
and things are tough
all over...



Good girl for not running.
What did they say?



He's scared. He's
going away.



Hmmm... What did
he have with him?



... a big crate. It looked
full of something.





You a thief??



No, just me and my boys passing through! We don't mean no harm!



I don't like thieves.





THANK!




Well done, and it almost worked! Now keep your hands where I can see them.




W-w-we haven't done anything! We're just trying to get home!






We'll see if that happens.




Empty your pockets and strip. I hate searching corpses.



Come on now, can't we just...



No.



You know, sometimes life just opens up and swallows folks.

You're probably a nice guy, nicer than me anyway, you don't deserve this. Yet here we are, I want your stuff and I'm happy to plug you for it.



Don't take it personal, it's just the way life worked out for you. It's almost poetical.

The world is barren and mostly dead, yet still somehow a bountiful harvest can be reaped at the point of a gun.





A close-up shot of a man's face. He is wearing a dark, wide-brimmed hat and has a slight, weary smile. The background is a blurred desert landscape. A speech bubble to his right contains the text: "Thanks... I bet that felt good."/>

Thanks... I bet that felt good.



Is he dead?



Yeah, I think that did the trick! I'll take the gun if you don't mind.



We need to go, and fast!
Uno was meeting someone
and I don't want to be around
when he shows up.

Uno?





I'm... *Laura*.



Hmm... I wonder why I don't believe that...



Why would I lie to you?

Habit?





I'm sorry old girl
but we need to move fast
so we can't take you!

I'll put the rest of
your grain and water out but
you're going to have to fend for
yourself in the world now, just
like everything else...



She said goodbye to that animal like it was a sister. I
was thinking we should kill it for meat after she's gone.

... as if she was leaving.



So, where are
we headed?



Oh no, this is it for us!
You're free and you got some
supplies so you're on your way,
and so are we!

I don't even
know where I am!

You must know your
way around these dunes but I'd be
buzzard food in no time out here on my
own! You gotta get me to a settlement at
least, or wherever you're headed is
fine with me...



Look, we don't know you,
"Laura". There was a dangerous
element and you were in a situation,
and now you're not. That doesn't
make us all travel buddies.



Who the
hell do you keep
talkin' about?

Right, where are my manners? *Laura*... these are my boys, my solid team.

That's *Keb* with the sour look, the little one there is *Rico*, and *Sott* is behind that dune keeping an eye on things.

Gentlemen, say hello to ...*Laura*, I think.



Uh, nice to ... meet you... all.



So where is our merry band off to?



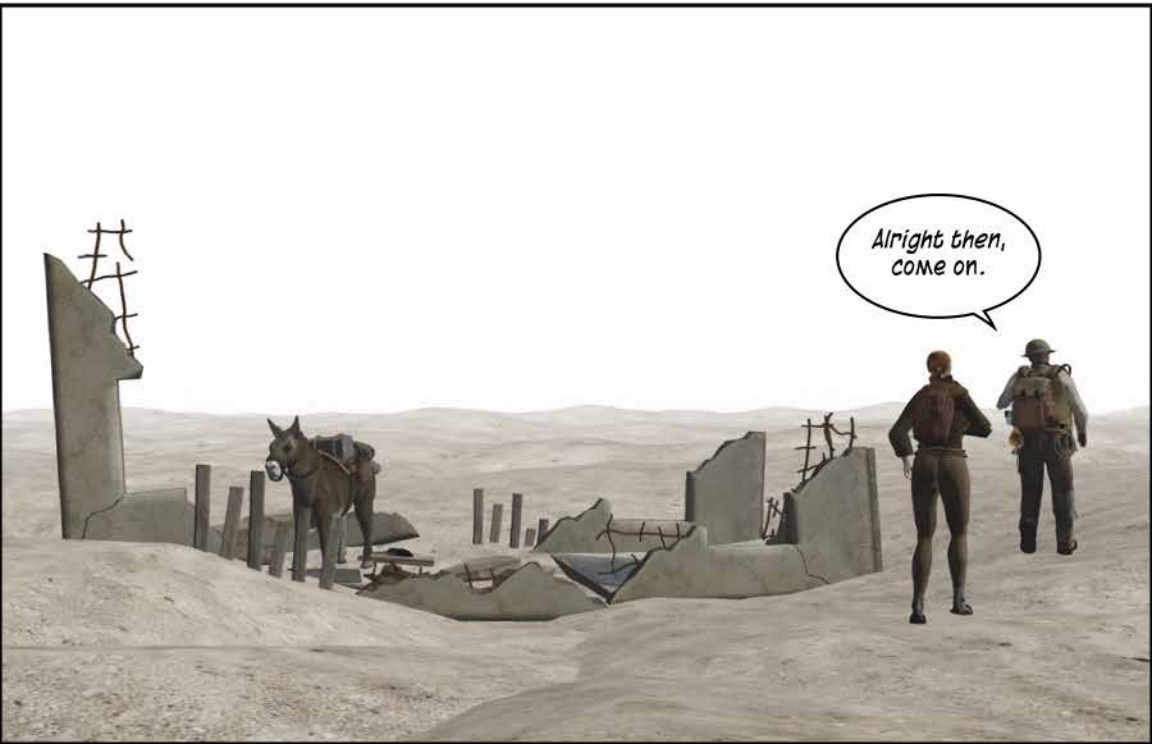


>sigh< We can drop you off in town, but only because we're headed that way already.


And we'll be watching you, girl. Don't mess with us!



I wouldn't dare with so many of you.




Alright then, come on.




So uh, how long have you all been traveling together?

Since way back, when we were young and stupid.




Good, we'll need the muscle if bandits come after all the loot you're carrying!

Naw, no bandits are gonna catch us. We're too good lookin'!



We did have pretty good luck on this run, though. Keb keeps complaining about the weight of his pack but we'll do alright when we unload all this stuff in town.

Well, that's good...



A lot of stuff, huh?





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