

KILLIAN'S KRAWLS

Adventure Module DS-00
Refugees of the Desolation
A Zero-Level Funnel Adventure

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COMPATIBLE WITH

**DCC
RPG**

III

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Adventure Module DS-00 Refugees of the Desolation A Zero-Level Funnel Adventure

This product is compatible with the Dungeon Crawl Classics Role Playing Game.



**Special Thanks to Darren Egelhoff
The REAL Zarcane Vah**

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INTRODUCTION

Refugees of the Desolation is a zero-level funnel adventure for four to six players. It is recommended each player have three zero-level characters for this adventure. 18 pre-generated characters can be found in the GM Tools section of this adventure module, or players may create their own characters utilizing DCC RPG® Pages 18-24.

BACKGROUND

The adventure takes place in the Illucid Valley of the Felhold Mountains. The valley has been annihilated from the unholy quest of a power-hungry wizard. The characters reside in a village that has been somewhat spared from the destruction, but the desolation has left them with no water or food. Eventually they are forced to make the difficult decision to leave their village, escape the desolation, and find a new haven before they die from exposure. As they flee, they become witness to the horrors unleashed by the cataclysm.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

There is only one motivation for this adventure. Find a way out of the desolation and locate a reliable source of food and water or die. The GM can discourage characters from staying in one area too long by using the exposure game mechanic discussed later. Throughout the adventure remind the party how dire their situation is by describing their ravenous hunger and unquenchable thirst as the heat from the energy globe and the sun beats down upon them all day, every day.

GM'S NOTES

Descriptions in ***bold italics*** should be read to the party. Any additional information not covered in the description is left up to the GM. Occasionally, background information will be found in **highlighted gray boxes**. This information can be shared directly with the party or given out through role play. Additional GM notes for specific areas are in **boxed text**.

The GM should have a supply of zero-level characters available should any player lose all their characters. All new characters added start with an exposure level of 2. See the rules on exposure below.

The addition of the new characters can be easily added to the story line such as meeting up with other refugees along the path, saving them from a creature's attack, searching an abandoned house, etc.

Game Mechanic: EXPOSURE

The GM should make it clear to the players they are in dire straits and are fleeing to survive. They have no water or food and the constant presence of the energy globe exposes the players to extreme heat and radiation. Players will need to find food, water, and protection from the elements. Each character's exposure will be calculated to determine survival. A character's exposure is measured in levels. The characters start at Exposure Level 0 and add levels as follows:

Add one level of exposure when:

- The character has not drunk water in an adventuring day.
- The character has not eaten in 2 adventuring days or longer.
- The character has been exposed to the radiation of the energy globe for an adventuring day without protection (cloak, etc)
- Certain creature attacks and hazards may add exposure.

The effects of each exposure level are detailed in the following chart. Each effect is cumulative.

EXPOSURE LEVEL	EFFECT
0	None
1	Speed slowed by 5'
2	-1 to all Agility checks (including initiative and Reflex Saves)
3	-1 to all Strength checks (including combat stats)
4	-1 to all Intelligence and Personality checks (including Will saves)
5	Lose 3 points of Stamina. Lose hit points if bonus becomes negative. Lose bonus to Fort saves. If a character is reduced to zero hit points or lower, the character dies.
6	Death. Character can not be revived.

Calculate exposure at the END of every adventuring day. For example: Jaq the halfling has been travelling all day without any food or water and has no protection from the radiation. At the end of the adventuring day, he gains two levels of exposure and takes all the penalties of exposure levels 1-2. The next day, Jaq finds an old cloak and a waterskin with just enough water left in it at an abandoned house. He will only add one level of exposure because he hasn't eaten yet. If he finds food and water the next day, he will add no levels of exposure for that day. Otherwise, he will continue to suffer.

GM NOTE: Ensure the players have a copy of the Exposure handout. The handout contains a chart to assist in calculating exposure at the end of each adventuring day.

Exposure can not be magically healed nor can exposure be removed until the character has spent at least two days in a shelter with food and water.

GM NOTE: Exposure IS NOT equal to Hit Points. A character can still die by combat, traps, accidents, etc. Exposure and HP are separate stats, except for Exposure Level 5 if applicable.

The GM should encourage players to find creative solutions to limit their exposure. Making a makeshift hooded shirt out of a small sack or any other idea should be welcomed provided it is realistic to the situation. Avoid letting the players dictate how much food and water is acceptable for one person in a day. The encounters and area descriptions clearly indicate how much food and water can be found. Blood is NOT a substitute for water. It is left to the GM to decide how the mechanics of cannibalism would work. (cannibalism would most certainly lower the character's Personality permanently and may preclude them from becoming clerics, etc.)

ENCOUNTER TABLE

AREA	DESCRIPTION	TYPE
W-1	Silicids	C
T-2	Archer Asps	C
T-5	Trinoconda	C
T-10	Doomsday Prepper	T
W-2	Ctzenizides	C
C-1	Dahakites	C

C= Combat, T= Trap, R= Role play, P= Puzzle

ADVENTURE START

The following background information is for the GM. It is up to the players to determine what caused the cataclysm in their valley. Stress throughout the adventure the confusion of wondering what happened and how did the party get in this horrible situation.

"Wizards make horrible neighbors."

- Jaq Bilberry: Halfling traveler and philosopher

Nothing could be closer to paradise than the Illucid Valley. Nestled on three sides by the Felhold Mountains, and watered by a vast glacier-fed lake, the valley was green and verdant with nearly every type of plant and tree species. Humans, Halflings, Dwarves and Elves found homes in either the

mountains, the dense forests, or the rich, fertile plains that spread out from the base of the mountains. Roads and trails crisscrossed the valley connecting towns and villages and supplying each of them with food, spices, rare hardwoods, precious metals, and gems. The mountains provided protection from harsh weather and invaders. The valley was in every way perfect, and the wizard Zarcain thought so as well.

Zarcain spent the majority of his life in the relentless pursuit of power. He paid little mind to how he would use it; the mere acquisition of it seemed his only reason for being. He bonded with his patron, Azi Dahaka*, early and served him well. He eagerly utilized his acquired power to curry favor with his patron and leave ruin and waste in his wake, while his demon master tantalized him daily with visions of the vast power he was promised.

Drawn by the prodding of his patron master, Zarcain constructed an imposing tower on the peak of one of the mountains in the Felholds. The residents of the valley seemed concerned at first, but the wizard kept himself secluded within the tower and rarely, if ever, made his presence known. Only brief flashes of light and the occasional tendril of lightning from the mountain gave the folk any indication the wizard was still there.

To the delight of his patron, Zarcain became impatient. He was already one of the most powerful users of magic on the continent, but that didn't sate his lust for even more power. Zarcain was not satisfied with merely being the grandest master of magic, he wanted the world to bend to his will.

He began a ritual to make a grand appeal to his patron for his desires. He went days without water and spent his time in a specially made room with a sand floor and a giant lens in the roof to subject him to punishing heat, all the while he was bitten by snakes to show his devotion.

As his fever rose, his sweat dripped, and the snake venom coursed through his veins, his chanting and pleas became more frantic. His mind seemed to fray as he made his preeminent plea for the power he wished: unbridled power; unlimited power.

The demon prince of storms and waste was more than happy to oblige...

Your memory of the day of destruction isn't clear but you are certain that never in anyone's lifetime had such destruction been seen. A titanic, white-hot blast of power ripped through the valley, leveling trees and tearing apart villages as if they were made of paper. The mountains shook and once tall, proud peaks sunk to the ground in massive landslides. Pulverized rock and sand flowed out from the mountains like a giant tsunami, swallowing up the plains and blanketing the land in waste. In the aftermath, a giant globe of intense heat and energy coalesced in the sky, fed with a bolt-like ray of energy from one of the mountain's peaks. The oppressive heat and radiation from the globe dried the rivers and set the ruins of the valley ablaze. Several days passed and it seemed the valley would choke to death on the whirling dust and debris, but eventually it settled to reveal hundreds of square miles of total devastation.

Your village, located on the fringes of the valley, was spared some of the destruction. Your group was able to survive during the initial catastrophe, and even took in refugees from other not so fortunate towns. The refugees came with only the tattered clothes they were wearing and stories of unspeakable horrors lurking out in the desolation that was once the Illucid Valley. They told tales of unbridled chaos, and gruesome creatures that should only be encountered in nightmares.

The days passed and as the cataclysm settled, stores of food dwindled and the cool, clear creek feeding the town dried up and became nothing but cracked clay. The town began to fragment as people became desperate; murder and thievery becoming a daily occurrence.

This afternoon your group met in the storage barn of the old gristmill and committed to fleeing the village. During your discussions you recalled an outpost at the South edge of the valley, a three-day journey by foot. Originally constructed to house a battalion of soldiers to protect against invaders, it would be the perfect place to flee, with ample stores of food and a deep well to hold out against a

* For more information on Azi Dahaka, the demon prince of storms and waste, refer to DCC RPG® pages 330-335

siege. Having cemented your plans, you gathered up what little was left of your possessions, consumed your last tiny scraps of food and water, and waited for the sun to set to begin your journey. The energy globe would still sear your skin, but it seemed better than enduring the heat of the daytime sun as well.

The party possesses only the items generated during character creation, everything else in the town has either been stolen or ruined by the desolation. There are no horses as they have already been killed for food. The village relied on the creek for water and no wells were ever dug. Trying to find water by digging up the creek bed will only yield slightly moist clay.

The Southern road out of town is still somewhat visible and the party will have few problems staying on the path. Straying from the path has a 75% chance of the character getting lost and never returning. Those characters will almost certainly die of exposure.

The energy globe will provide enough light to see normal distances, but it creates an eerie dusk-like feeling. The GM should describe to the players that it seems as if they are seeing the world in black-and-white.

DAY #1

Area W-1: SILICIDS

The well-travelled road out of your village is hardly recognizable. What was once a hard-packed avenue of stone and gravel is now covered in an inch of sand, forcing you to look carefully with each step in order to not get lost. Around you, the land looks like death. Dry, scorched trees spread out around you looking somewhat out of place in the sandy desert-like terrain, while bugs swarm around the bloated carcasses of animals. Above you, the energy globe punishes you with never-ending, intense heat. It's not long before your skin begins to become a painful red and the soles of your feet burn from the baking sand. After several hours, your party spots an overturned wagon harnessed to a team of dead horses. The wagon appears to have been abandoned though no footprints can be found. The

stench of the rotting animals sickens you as you see a dozen large flying insects taking turns ripping pieces of flesh from the horses, their wings buzzing and clacking as if they were made of thin pieces of wood. One of the bugs speeds by your face and reveals its horrible nature; a dragonfly-like body nearly a foot long with a barbed tail and what looks like a tiny human skull for a head. The swarm suddenly senses your presence and leaves their meal to assault you.

The insects are silicids. An insect horror created from the wild magic of the cataclysm. They prefer the rotting flesh of the dead and are merely protecting their meal, but pose a serious hazard to the party. The barbs on their tails contain a potent poison that causes a person's skin to break out in painful, bloody sores, and causes a mild fever until the poison can be cleaned out with a strong solvent. The sting adds 1 level of exposure until cleaned out. Multiple stings will cause pain but will not add to the character's exposure level. However, each party member needs to keep track of the number of stings needing cleaned out before the level of exposure can be removed.



GM NOTE: Keeping track of the stings is important. The level of exposure can not be removed until all stings are cleaned.

The GM should give clues on how to treat the stings. On a few occasions, let the affected players know about the infected, oozing nature of their sores. Describe how the sticky pus seems to be making things worse and collects sand and dirt. Describe the skin around the sting as feverishly hot.

The silicids will continue to attack the party until killed or the party runs away from their meal (one round of movement directly away from the wagon). Any attempt to approach the wagon will provoke another attack.

SILICIDS (12) Init 0; Atk Sting +1 (1 level of exposure), AC 13; HD 1d3; hp 1 EA; MV 30' (fly); Act 1d20; SP Infection; SV Fort +1 Ref +4 Will -1

If the silicids are disposed of, the wagon may be searched. The wagon had five barrels and a crate that have been broken. Most of the contents are gone, but one barrel holds a small pool of water not yet spilled (water for three people for one day). Farm implements are scattered on the ground beside the wagon. The party can successfully salvage a shovel, 20' of rope, and an axe (if used as a weapon, it is two-handed and inflicts 1d8 damage). The white cloth cover of the wagon has been mostly torn away except for five square yards (enough cloth to make 4 makeshift cloaks).

The overturned wagon can provide enough shelter for the party to rest for the day.

Eating a silicid will poison the consumer. The poison will do 1HP of damage per day.

The GM may give a warning to the players by stating a bite of the silicid leaves a strong acid-like reaction on their tongue or something similar.

GM NOTE: Have the players calculate their exposure level at this time.

DAY #2

Plodding along in the sandy waste, you begin to wonder if you've become lost as you are certain you should have found the town of Elgake hours ago. Your feet drag in the sand. The sweat that has drenched your body for the last day and a half has dried away, leaving your skin and clothes dusted with the salty remains. Nothing around you looks familiar, having been blasted away from the cataclysmic blast and scoured by the sand. Hours pass. Your vision becomes blurry, but on the horizon you finally see the remnants of the town of Elgake, the midway point of your journey. As you approach, you are discouraged by the sight in front of you. Once a logging town with a wide river, it is now desolate. Tree trunks fill the empty, mud-caked riverbed and the buildings appear decades older from the blast and searing heat. On the South side of the town several houses have burned to the ground, their stone foundations being the only evidence of their presence. You pray you can find shelter or any food and water to ease your suffering.

Only the areas and buildings marked on the map can be searched or used for shelter. Anything else has been destroyed.



Area T-1: DISTILLERY

The Northernmost building at the entrance to the town houses a distillery where wines, beer, and whiskey were brewed. The warehouse is divided into two sections: the distillery, containing equipment, boilers, and vats, and the sales floor filled with shelves. Both empty and shattered bottles litter the floor. Most of the shelves are empty, however, 3 potent bottles of 150-proof apple whiskey remain.

The whiskey will probably lift the spirits of the party but will do nothing to re-hydrate them. In fact, if too much is drunk (more than three swigs), it will dehydrate the character and add 1 level of exposure. However, the 150-proof liquid can be used to clean out the sores caused from a silicid sting. One bottle can treat 4 stings. If an entire bottle is added to the water in area T-4, it will remove the parasites. The potent liquor can also be lit and used as a missile weapon. On a successful hit the flames will inflict 1d8 damage the first round and 1d6 damage on the second. The vats and boilers have nothing in them having been evaporated many days ago.

Area T-2: TEMPLE/SCHOOL/MEETING HALL

The largest building in the village seems to be spared most of the damage. Only the windows have been shattered in this long-wide hall filled with benches. In the back of the hall, a thin slate board framed with wood dominates the wall while a carved wooden holy symbol rests on a small table with a linen tablecloth. A lectern stands off to the side. Books are stacked neatly to the side of the entrance. Some books contain prayers and hymns while others look like primers for reading, writing, and math. As you move through the hall, five serpents about 10 feet long uncoil from behind the lectern and slither toward you. The serpents are colored dark gray with slanted black lines circling their bodies. Two barbed shafts protrude above their eye slits.

The serpents are archer asps. An archer asp can flex the muscles in its neck causing the darts above their eyes to shoot up to 15 feet. They prefer to use their darts instead of biting but will bite when the darts are expended. The darts are made of hardened cartilage and grow back in 7 days.

ARCHER ASPS (5) Init +3; Atk Dart(2 EA) +5 ranged 15' (1d3), Bite +2 (1 HP) AC 11; HD 2d6; hp 5, 7, 8, 9, 10; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +3 Ref +5 Will 0

Other than providing adequate shelter, there is nothing of value or use in the facility. Archer asps are inedible and will cause violent retching for 5 minutes after eating.

Area T-3: ELGAKE'S EMPORIUM

A large wooden sign above the entryway reads "Elgake's Emporium" giving away the purpose for this facility. Your spirits lift at the prospect of finding food and drink as well as equipment you will need for the remainder of your journey. These hopes become lessened as you enter. Much like your own village, the emporium has been ransacked and looks as if a large wild animal ran roughshod over the interior of the building. Shelves are toppled, and remnants of crates, boxes, and barrels litter the floor. Behind the sales counter, a small chest, used to hold the daily till, has been smashed open and is empty. The storeroom in the rear has seen the same treatment. However, a few goods seem to have been spared.

Party members wishing to carefully search the premises will be able to recover the following:

- An axe handle (Club 1d5 damage)
- A lantern
- A flask of oil
- Ten candles
- A small box of matches (7)
- A grappling hook
- 11 Sling stones
- A crowbar (Club 1d5 damage)
- 3 empty waterskins (2-day capacity each)

Area T-4: RIVERBED

Some enterprising party members may attempt to search the riverbed for traces of water. If so, read the following:

You stare in amazement at what has become of the deep, wide river that ran through the town. Only a week or two ago it carried barges from other towns and tree trunks from the forest, now, it is now a dry,

cracked bed of clay. A large jam of logs lies north of the bridge leading out of town, a mess that resembles a pile of sticks and branches thrown together to start a bonfire. Dead fish, clams, and frogs carpet the riverbed, dried to a brittle husk in the intense heat.

Party members who try to dig for water will only find hard, dry clay. The dead river creatures are inedible. If the party decides to inspect the log jam, they discover they can pick through the giant tree trunks to a small standing pool of water shielded from the radiation by the gnarled mess of timber. The pool is filled with fish. It is an easy task to simply grab the fish and bring them out of the pool. There are enough fish to feed 4 people for one day. There is enough water remaining in the pool for 5 people for one day. However, the water is filled with bacteria and parasites from the river. Anyone drinking the water without purifying it (boiling or adding the apple whiskey) must make a DC11 Fortitude save or be infected by the parasites. The infection will lead to severe stomach pains and cramps throughout the body. It will add 1 level of exposure. The character may attempt a Fortitude save every morning to remove the level of exposure. If an infected character drinks some of the potent whiskey while infected, they receive a +1d modifier to their save.

Area T-5: TRINOCONDA BRIDGE

GM NOTE: If the party decides to cross by walking across the dry riverbed instead of the bridge, there is a 20% it will not attack. Modify the percentage roll by 10% for each 20' the party is away from the bridge. Be sure to know exactly where the party intends to cross. The trinoconda will not attack anyone in Area T-4.

Running West across the remains of the river this large wooden bridge leads you out of town and to the South; hopefully to the outpost you are seeking. As you begin to cross, you are horrified by the sight of a pile of bodies, some intact, some missing extremities or even torn in half. Their dried, caked blood smears the bridge and almost gives it the appearance of being purposely painted that way. As you investigate, you feel the bridge move slightly. Looking around you spy the shape of a giant snake-

like horror with the body the size of a tree trunk and three snapping heads. The beast coils itself onto the bridge and begins to slither towards you.

The party has disturbed the lair of a trinoconda; a wicked cross between an anaconda and a hydra. The trinoconda uses the bridge as a point to ambush refugees fleeing the area and is saving the mass of bodies on the bridge for later meals. The trinoconda makes three bite attacks with its heads and can direct those attacks to multiple targets. Once bitten, the victim is restrained unless they can inflict at least 3 points of damage to the head on a single hit or make a DC12 Strength check. The trinoconda will take a restrained victim and thrash them onto the bridge on the next round, inflicting 1d6 damage per thrash. Once dead, the trinoconda will move on to the next victim as it prefers rotting flesh over fresh.

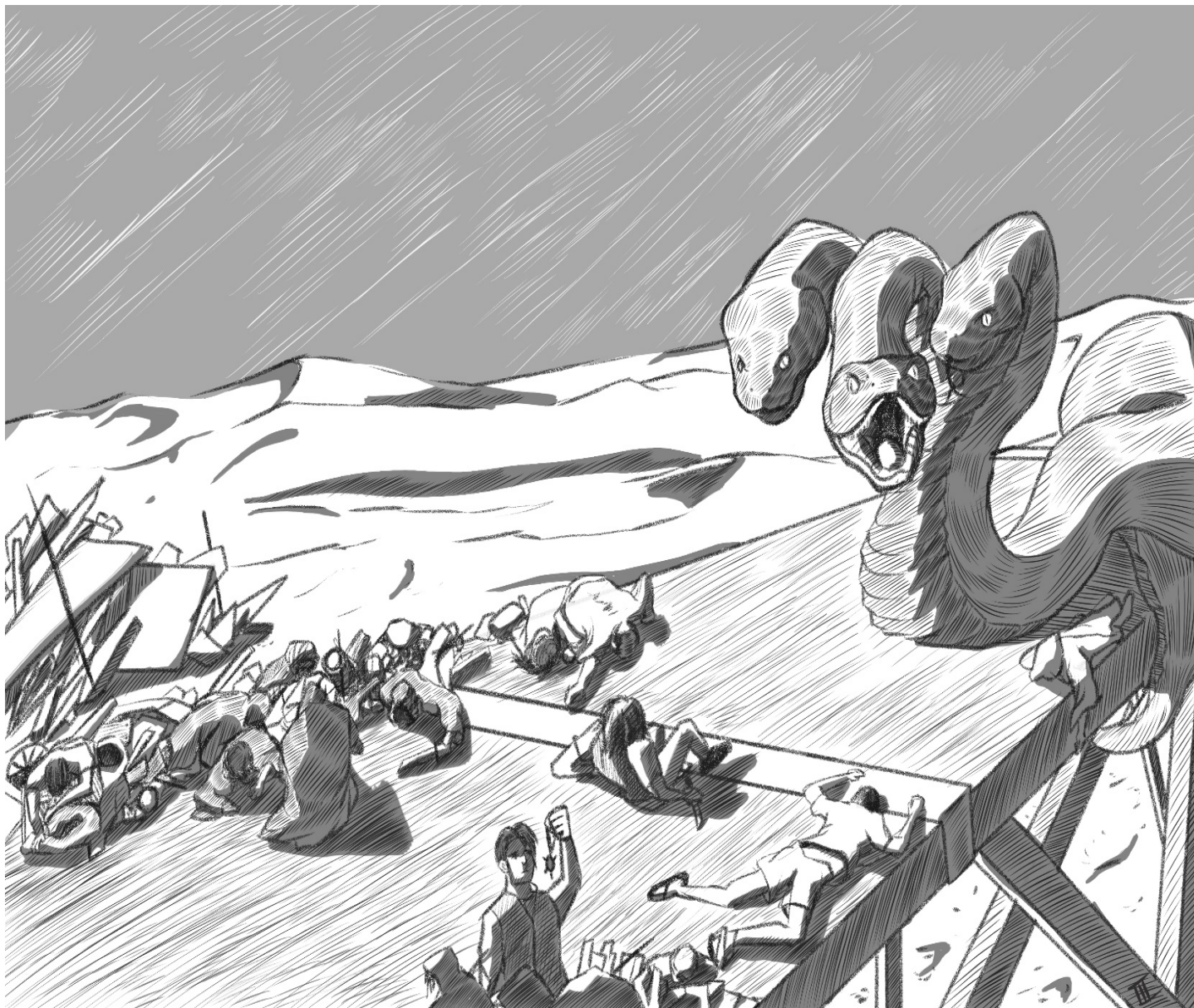
TRINOCONDA (1) Init +0; Atk Bite +3 (1d4+ grapple) AC 13; HD 5d12; hp 31; MV 20'; Act 1d20 + 1d20 + 1d20; SP Thrash (1d6); SV Fort +5 Ref +3 Will 0

Trinoconda flesh is edible and can feed up to 6 people for one day but will contain the same parasites as the river water. Refer to area T-4 for the rules on parasitic infection. Cooking the meat will remove the parasites.

Searching the bodies on the bridge is a gruesome task but yields the following items:

- A gold ring worth 10gp
- A pair of jade earrings worth 25gp
- A hooded linen shirt
- A tattered suit of leather armor
- A spear
- A wooden shield

As the characters approach the South side of town they will encounter the housing area of the town. Describe the area as follows:



You enter what seems to be the main housing development of the town. The houses here are in the same condition as the other buildings. Every window has been blasted out and the exterior has been ravaged by the winds, heat, and sand. Seven houses have been burned to the ground in what seems to have been started with an out-of-control fire that moved through the neighborhood. The remaining five homes show scars from the fire, but somehow survived.

Area T-6: COMMON HOME #1

The home you walk into is a small dwelling with three rooms: a bedroom, kitchen and a common

area. The doors on all the cupboards are wide open and all the drawers in the bedroom furniture are open. It appears the family took all their possessions and left.

The home contains no food or water. A hand axe lies by the fireplace. The bed is covered with a single cotton sheet (enough material to make a single makeshift cloak)

Area T-7: COMMON HOME #2

This two-bedroom dwelling is divided into two wings with a common area in the middle. The house has been torn apart by looters and the bodies of

four people lay about the house: on the floor, in a chair, beside a bed and at the entrance. The victims appear to have been stabbed to death.

There is nothing of value in the house or on the bodies. In one of the bedrooms, a small leather-bound book rests on a nightstand. Reading the book reveals it as a diary kept by one of the occupants. It details daily life, the weather, etc until the last few pages where it describes the writer's experiences during the cataclysm. The author notes a blazing, serrated bolt of pure energy shoot from one of the mountain peaks before the blinding light and deafening explosion. They speculate the dwarves unearthed a hellish horror in their mines and they curse the dwarves for their greed which led to the destruction of the entire valley.

Area T-8: SAWMILL MANAGER

This home, though sparsely furnished, contains high quality furniture and expensive décor. Like the other homes, there is little left in the home, but unlike the others, has not been ransacked. Judging from paperwork in a desk drawer, the house was the home of the sawmill manager, one of the three authority figures in the town.

All of the furnishings would sell for a hefty price but moving them from the home would be next to impossible as no wagons or horses are in the town having been used by the townsfolk to flee. The desk contains a large brass key. However, this key doesn't appear to unlock anything in the home.

Area T-9: MAYOR'S MANSION

The largest of all the homes in the neighborhood, this house is decorated on the outside with colorfully painted shutters and a large veranda held up with carved columns. A pair of double doors opens up into an elegant parlor. Paintings and trophies line the walls and soft comfortable furniture sits in every room. A plaque over a large desk designates the occupant of the house as the Mayor of Elgake.

The desk contains tax ledgers, various contracts, legal proceedings and a large brass key similar to the one found in the Sawmill Manager's home. A careful search of the Mayor's office will reveal a

trap door in the floor under a rug (DC14 to find). Under the trap door is a concrete vault sealed with a steel door having three keyholes. If the party possesses all three keys found in areas T-8, T-9, and T-10, they can open the vault. The difficulty level to pick all three locks is DC17. Inside the vault are property deeds for each parcel of land in the town, a tax assessment ledger, a suit of studded leather armor, two suits of leather armor (one is dwarf/halfling sized), two longswords, one short sword, three shields, and a small chest containing 450sp.

Area T-10: DOOMSDAY PREPPER

Everything about this one-story house seems normal until you attempt to walk in. At the entrance is a sprung trap door in front of the entry leading to a pit approximately 10' deep. The pit is empty. The main door has a series of seven locks on it that have been opened and the door is ajar. The house contains only a rickety bed, dining table for one, an old reading chair with an end table holding an empty iron candlestick, and a step ladder. Every spare inch of the walls is scrawled with prophecies, conspiracy theories, and details of an impending Armageddon. The ceiling is painted with a star chart and inked notes pertaining to certain constellation positions and world events are stuck to the ceiling chart. A staircase leads to a hatch in the ceiling. The body of a thin, bony man lies face down in a dried pool of blood.

The scrawlings on the walls detail a convergence of events relating to star positions, the reigns of kings and princes, conspiracy theories, and elven prophecy. One line in particular grabs your attention:

"...and the unwitting servant shall unleash doom upon all."

The theme of the conspiracy theories is the elven nations will conspire with demonic powers to "cleanse" the Illucid Valley of humans, dwarves, and halflings, and will reclaim the entire valley as their own when the land "heals" in a few decades.

Characters walking up the staircase will notice the stairs feel unstable, as if they are not built properly. The hatch opens into a bare attic. Carefully

searching the attic will reveal nothing but searching the staircase carefully will reveal an oval shaped hole cut into the side of the first stair. Grabbing the hole and pulling will lift the entire staircase, revealing another staircase leading down to a cellar.

The cellar is a 20' x 20' room with a large pantry closed by a double iron grate. On the floor lies a body dressed in leather armor with a crossbow bolt protruding from his chest. Near the body lies a broken tripwire. Besides the leather armor, the body has a pouch with a large brass key, thieves tools, a short sword, and a purse containing several pieces of common jewelry worth approximately 15gp.

Characters who believe the threat of traps is gone are in for a shock. Another trip wire is looped around the iron grates. The wire can only be spotted with a careful check of the grates. Even then, it is DC16 to spot. As soon as the doors are opened, another crossbow will fire point-blank into the chest of the opener doing 1d6+1 damage. If the victim makes a DC13 Reflex save, the damage is half.



Inside the pantry is a stockpile of preserved food in jars. And a small barrel of water. It is enough food and water for five people for one day. The two

crossbows protecting the pantry are easily removable, and 10 bolts are stacked in the corner of the pantry.

Area T-11: TEAMSTER'S HOME

The first thing you notice as you enter this home is all the furnishings are scaled down to accommodate a dwarf or halfling, although a few larger pieces are available for others. A kitchen in the back looks more like a bar with a counter, stools and a keg on its side in a stand with a tap sticking out. Steins for drinking ale have been smashed and litter the floor behind the counter. A large wardrobe near the door contains laborer's gear: a leather apron, gloves, and sturdy boots. Otherwise, the house has been stripped bare.

The barrel is filled with a rich dwarven ale that is spoiled from heat and time and is very skunky. It will not quench thirst and any character drinking it needs to make a DC9 Fortitude save to keep from throwing up. The dwarf/halfling-sized apron is made of thick, supple leather and if worn will provide a +1 bonus to armor class. However, it is d8 for fumble checks.

The party should be reminded there is only a limited amount of food and water in Elgake. Bedding down in a shelter may save them from the heat and radiation, but they will eventually starve or dehydrate. These conditions should motivate them to press Southward.

GM NOTE: Have the players calculate their exposure level before they leave the village.

DAY #3

Area W-2: CTZENIZIDES

"Will this wasteland ever end?" you say to yourself as you continue to drag your beaten body along in the sand, step by faltering step. You can see the intense heat, like translucent waves, rise from the ground and give the landscape an otherworldy feel, as if you are staring into a magic portal to a far away land. Your muscles ache and burn with each step and you notice your skin is beginning to blister. Your

mind continually pleads with you to just stop and sleep. "Just quit" you hear in your mind. "It's hopeless." You regret ever venturing out of your town. You should have just stayed there and died. At least then you would have been with family, in your own home, shielded from this godsforsaken globe of heat. "One more step" you say to yourself for the thousandth time.

You can't recall exactly when the heat started to fade, but you can perceive a difference. A slight breath of air passes by you and cools your broiled skin. As you continue walking, you notice the sand is not as deep and the gravel road is easier to see. After a few hours, you spy the first hint of plant life, a little scrub here and there. Elated, you quicken your pace. As you continue on, you notice what looks like plant stalks growing on the edge of the road, with fine, feathery leaves moving in the slight breeze and plump, juicy purple berries in clusters on each stalk. You may survive after all.

Unfortunately, the long feathery stalks are feelers for a group of ctzenizides, a large arachnid that burrows into the sand and waits to ambush its prey. If a character is an elf or has some knowledge of the wild, they have a DC13 chance to notice the "plants" aren't what they seem to be. When the party gets within 5' of the feelers (choose victims based upon their luck – or lack thereof) all four ctzenizides will lurch out of their holes and, on a successful hit, grab four victims with their large mandibles and drag them under and coat them with a sticky slime consisting of a poison that instantly kills the victim (no save and no revival). The poison and stomach acids will dissolve the characters into a pulpy mass, and the ctzenizides will suck up the slime to digest them.

Once a ctzenizide is located, it can be attacked by simply stabbing at the hole. If harassed, the creature will leave its prey to defend its lair. A ctzenizide uses its mandibles to bite at its foes. A ctzenizide will not venture 20' past its lair as it is sensitive to light and heat, thus, giving the party the chance to run away.

CTZENIZIDES (4) Init -2; Atk Bite +1 (1d6); AC 10; HD 3d6; hp 8, 10, 11, 15; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1 Ref -1 Will +2

The creature's digestive fluids will not damage any adventuring gear. The ctzenizide will simply vomit any non-flesh item out in the bottom of its lair. If the lair is searched after disposing of the creature, they will find the adventuring gear and treasure of their companions plus a pouch made of web-like material. The pouch contains water the ctzenizide collects from the morning dew. The water is enough for one person for one day.

GM NOTE: Have the players calculate their exposure level at this time.
--

DAY #4

The road becomes smoother and the air begins to cool. The oppressive light and heat from the energy globe is much fainter and the land looks as if it is dusk. You fill your lungs with the first fresh air in days and it seems to energize you. You stride over a hill covered in dry grass when you spot your objective, the outpost! As you close in on the fort you see a camp set up at the bottom of the hill overlooked by the outpost. The residents see you and beckon you to them, waving hands and scarves and cheering loudly. You try to avoid them, not knowing what their intentions are, but they soon swarm to you. They are friendly and invite you to their camp for safety.

Area C-1: DAHAKITES

The residents of the camp are fellow refugees from other towns whose names and locations in the valley you can recall. When asked why they are not in the fort their eyes widen and they anxiously plead with you to help them, for the outpost is inhabited by demons who come to the refugee camp and steal people away at night. In fact, they were just raided hours ago and lost three of their members. They have tried to fight but lack effective weapons and skill to defend themselves. They point to the weapons and gear your party possesses and declare: "Now that we have real warriors, we can rid ourselves of the demons and save ourselves!" You find yourself wondering exactly who these supposed warriors are...

The refugees will offer the party a share of the community food and water and provide them tents

to rest for the next two days until the Dahakites attack. The food, water, and shelter automatically removes 4 levels of exposure, except for poison or parasites to all party members. The party members also gain 2 HP from the rest.

GM NOTE: Stop adding any exposure from now on.

The party may also be able to glean some information from the refugees about the cataclysm if they ask. Utilize the table below to perform rumor checks using a d7. The party may continue rolling until the same number is rolled. After that, they can no longer check.

D7	RUMOR	
1	"I recall a wizard who constructed a fortress on one of the mountain tops many years ago. I met him once and the one thing I remember is he had a large amulet in the shape of a hydra."	T
2	"Once again, the Humans were dabbling with magic that should only be wielded by experienced casters! Only the centuries of wisdom that the elves have can control the wild nature of magic!"	F
3	"The ray of light that seems to feed the energy globe is coming from the top of one of the mountains."	T
4	"With the sand, heat, and demonic horrors, this looks like the work of Azi Dahaka"	T
5	"A sage told me the globe can be snuffed out by firing a spear made from glacier ice into it. You'd have to make a giant crossbow the size of a catapult to do it."	F
6	"Isn't it funny how you're not seeing a lot of halflings come to the camp? I think those little devils caused this whole thing by sneaking around where they weren't supposed to!"	F

"If you ask me, this has all the signs of magic gone completely wild. Too many wizards and elves messing with magic and it all came to a head one day."

After enjoying a full 2-day's rest, the party is roused by the refugees. Dusk has come to the valley and the residents inform you the demons come during these hours. Although you are not interested in being the front line against a group of demons, you resign yourself to the fact that unless these so-called demons are dealt with, you will have come all this way only to starve to death in a matter of days.

Utilizing the map of the refugee camp, allow the party to create a plan of defense for the encampment. Give bonuses to checks or attack rolls to characters who come up with creative ideas for defense. The camp contains tents, poles, stones for fire pits, and some basic tools for construction. The GM may add other materials as they wish.

The "demons" the refugees speak of are actually the soldiers who occupied the outpost before the cataclysm. When the blast of magic swept over them it altered their DNA and they began to mutate into a reptilian form. Many died painful agonizing deaths, but a few survived as Dahakites (children of Azi Dahaka), and now use the outpost as a staging area to launch raids against the refugees coming out of the valley. They don't seek any treasure, only beings to torture and flesh to eat.

A scream rises from the encampment and people begin to flee to the North side of the camp. A tent collapses, revealing six reptilian humanoids carrying short swords and torches. Their heads are somewhat human, with two yellow orbs for eyes, no eyelids, slits for nostrils and no ears. Their bodies are covered in a rainbow mix of scales, and two wicked, barbed fangs protrude from their upper lip.

The raiders do not expect to encounter anyone armed, so they have become reckless in their attacks. They will attack head on in a "V" formation, crashing into the camp from the South. They will attempt to take advantage of the chaos and grab the closest victim they can (not kill; they prefer to do that later). Because of their bloodlust and madness

from their transformation, they act alone and will not “team up” on any one target. If attacked, a dahakite will immediately engage the attacker. They will fight only that person until killed.

The GM can bring life to this battle by adding in chaos such as tents being lit on fire. Dahakites grabbing children and trying to flee, refugees getting in the way, etc.

DAHAKITES (9) Init +1; Atk Short Sword +1 (1d6); AC 12; HD 1d8+2; HP 3, 3, 4, 5, 6, 6, 9, 9, 10; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +4 Ref 0 Will +3



After the dahakites are dispatched, the outpost will be open to the refugees.

GM NOTE: Obviously, a military outpost will have armor, weapons and gear for adventurers to use. It is up to the GM to decide how well the outpost is stocked. After all, the party is just starting out, and giving them too much quality equipment would give the party a boring advantage.

CONCLUSION

Though elated from achieving your goal, it is hard not to feel the sorrow of the many families who lost so many relatives and friends; some to the horrible creatures of the desolation and, some who had to be left behind. You find it hard to imagine which situation would be more painful to deal with. Your thoughts wander to your own hometown and how this group of people who hardly know each other will find the strength and resources to rebuild their lives outside the Illucid Valley.

The outpost does not disappoint. Warehouses of preserved food and two deep wells of fresh, clean water will be enough to sustain all the refugees through the growing season. Some prisoners of the Dahakites were found, apparently kept to be tortured and eaten later. Among them is a wild-eyed, unkempt dwarf who keeps spouting nonsense about the cataclysm and the location of a lost dwarven city that may have been unearthed by the destruction.

Even more odd is the position you find yourself in. As your party surveys the outpost and the land around it, you notice the citizens of the refugee camp staring at you in silence. Eventually, an old man smiles at you and says: “So... what shall we do first?”.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

A DESPERATE PLEA FROM THE AUTHOR: I beg you to please not tell the party how the cataclysm came to the Illucid Valley. Further adventures are on the way that will reveal more clues as to what happened, and how the valley may be returned to its natural state. However, adventure modules take time and I understand if the party wants to probe further into the mystery of the valley.

- Family members will pay richly to find out if relatives are still alive and if a party could retrieve them.
- Monster hunting could become a lucrative business to clear out areas for farms and homesteads.

GM's TOOLS

The following gaming aids are to assist the Game Master in managing the adventure. Feel free to make copies of these tools to assist with gameplay.

- Encounter Sheets
- Exposure Rules Handout
- Experience Tracking Sheet
- Treasure Tracking Sheet
- Pre-Generated Zero-level Characters
- Maps

AREA W-1 – SILICIDS

Initiative 0 Movement: 30' (fly)

AC: 13

SAVES	<u>FORT</u>	<u>REFLEX</u>	<u>WILL</u>
	+1	+4	-1

Action Dice: 1d20

Attack: Sting (+1 to attack) Melee Add one level of exposure (one time only)
Special: Infection – exposure can only be removed when all stings are cleaned with a solvent

Hit Die: 1d3

Hit points

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

AREA T-2 – ARCHER ASPS

Initiative +3 Movement: 20'

AC: 11

SAVES	<u>FORT</u>	<u>REFLEX</u>	<u>WILL</u>
	+3	+5	0

Action Dice: 1d20

Attack: Dart (+3 to attack) Ranged 15' 1d3 (each archer asp has only 2 darts)
Bite (+2 to attack) Melee 1 HP

Hit Die: 2d6

Hit points

1	2	3	4	5
5	7	8	9	10

AREA T-5 – TRINOCONDA

Initiative +0 Movement: 20'

AC: 13

SAVES	<u>FORT</u>	<u>REFLEX</u>	<u>WILL</u>
	+5	+3	0

Action Dice: 1d20 + 1d20 + 1d20

Attack: Bite (+3 to attack) Melee 1d4 + grapple (DC12 Strength check or 3 HP damage on one hit)
Special: Thrash – grappled character receives 1d6 damage

Hit Die: 5d12

Hit points

<u>1</u>
31

AREA W-2 – CTZENIZIDES

Initiative -2 Movement: 10' A Ctzenizide will not move more than 20' away from their burrow.

AC: 10

SAVES	<u>FORT</u>	<u>REFLEX</u>	<u>WILL</u>
	+1	-1	+2

Action Dice: 1d20

Attack: Bite (+1 to attack) Melee 1d6 (NOTE: initial grab instantly kills the victim)

Hit Die: 3d6

Hit points

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
8	10	11	15

AREA C-1 – DAHAKITES

Initiative +1 Movement: 30'

AC: 12

SAVES	<u>FORT</u>	<u>REFLEX</u>	<u>WILL</u>
	+4	0	+3

Action Dice: 1d20

Attack: Short Sword (+1 to attack) Melee 1d6

Hit Die: 1d8+2

Hit points

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
3	3	4	5	6	6	9	9	10

EXPOSURE

Traveling in the Desolation is not easy as you are fleeing to survive. You have no water or food and the constant presence of the energy globe, combined with the natural sunlight, exposes you to extreme heat and radiation. You will need to find food, water, and protection from the elements to survive. Each character's exposure will be calculated to determine survival. A character's exposure is measured in levels. A character starts at Exposure Level 0 and adds levels as follows:

Add one level of exposure when:

- You have not drunk water in an adventuring day.
- You have not eaten in 2 adventuring days or longer
- You have been exposed to the heat and radiation of the energy globe for an adventuring day without protection (hooded cloak, etc).
- Certain creature attacks and hazards may add exposure.

Calculate exposure at the END of every adventuring day Using the worksheet on the next page. For example: Jaq the halfling has been travelling all day without any food or water and has no protection from the radiation. At the end of the adventuring day, he gains two levels of exposure and takes all the penalties of exposure levels 1-2. The next day, Jaq finds an old cloak and a waterskin with just enough water left in it at an abandoned house. He will only add one level of exposure because he hasn't eaten yet. If he finds food and water the next day, he will add no levels of exposure for that day. Otherwise, he will continue to suffer.

Exposure can not be magically healed nor can exposure be removed until the character has spent at least two days in a shelter with food and water.



EXPOSURE WORKSHEET

Character #1

DAY #	Did you drink water?	Have you eaten?	Do you have protection from radiation?	Did you avoid hazards?	Add up the total "No" answers.	Add the number from the previous day (in gray). This is your total exposure level.
1						
2						
3						

Character #2

DAY #	Did you drink water?	Have you eaten?	Do you have protection from radiation?	Did you avoid hazards?	Add up the total "No" answers.	Add the number from the previous day (in gray). This is your total exposure level.
1						
2						
3						

Character #3

DAY #	Did you drink water?	Have you eaten?	Do you have protection from radiation?	Did you avoid hazards?	Add up the total "No" answers.	Add the number from the previous day (in gray). This is your total exposure level.
1						
2						
3						

The effects of each exposure level are detailed in the chart. Each effect is cumulative.

Exposure Level	1	2	3	4	5	6
Effect	Speed slowed by 5'	-1 to all Agility checks (including initiative and Reflex Saves)	-1 to all Strength checks (including combat stats)	-1 to all Intelligence and Personality checks (including Will saves)	Lose 3 points of Stamina. Lose hit points if bonus becomes negative. Lose bonus to Fort saves. If a character is reduced to zero hit points or lower, the character dies.	Death. Character can not be revived.

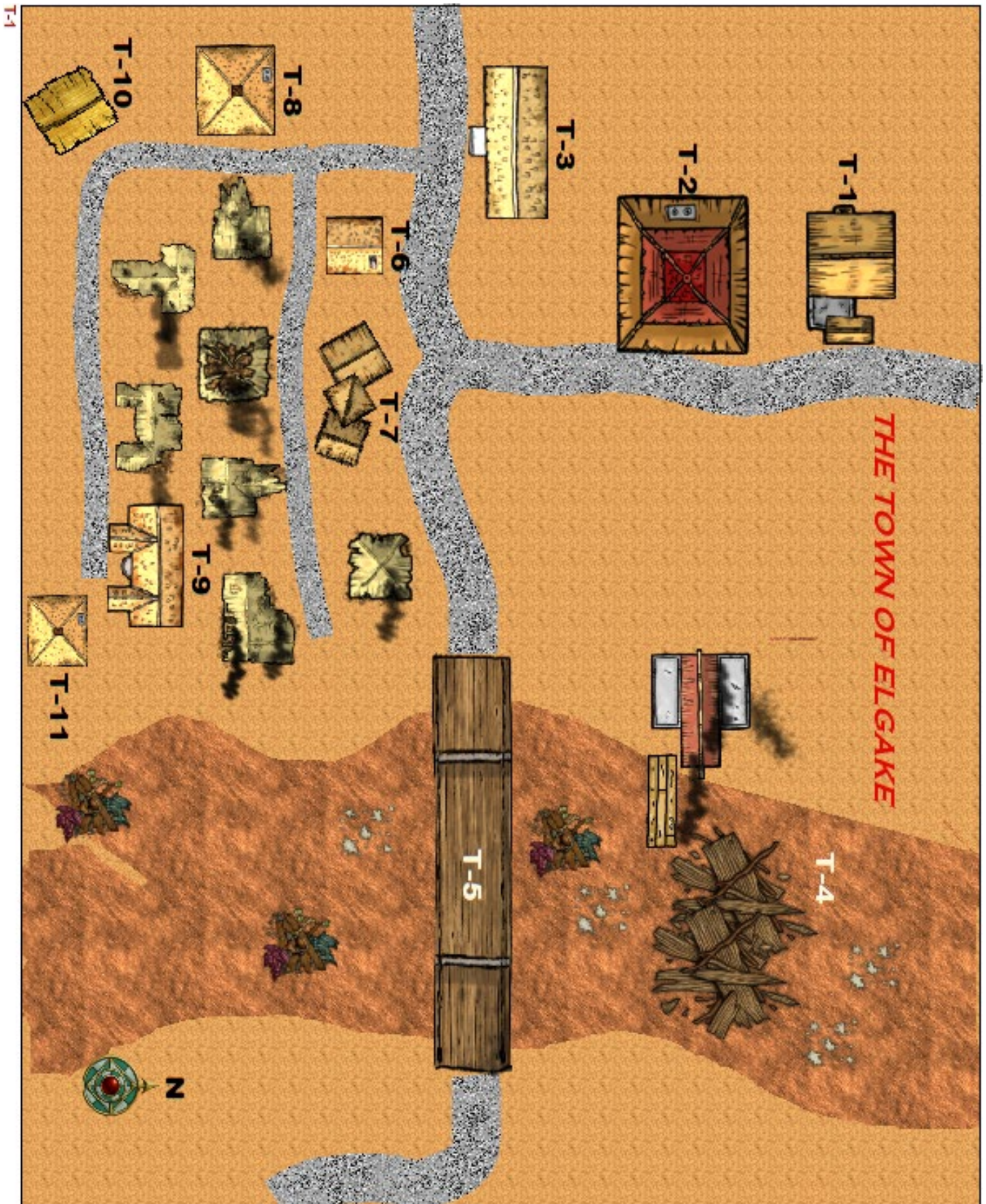
EXPERIENCE POINTS REWARDS		
AREA		EP AWARDED
W-1	Silicids	0-4
T-2	Archer Asps	0-4
T-5	Trinoconda	0-4
T-10	Crossbow Trap	0-4
W-2	Stzenizides	0-4
C-1	Dahakites	0-4
TOTAL EXPERIENCE		0-24

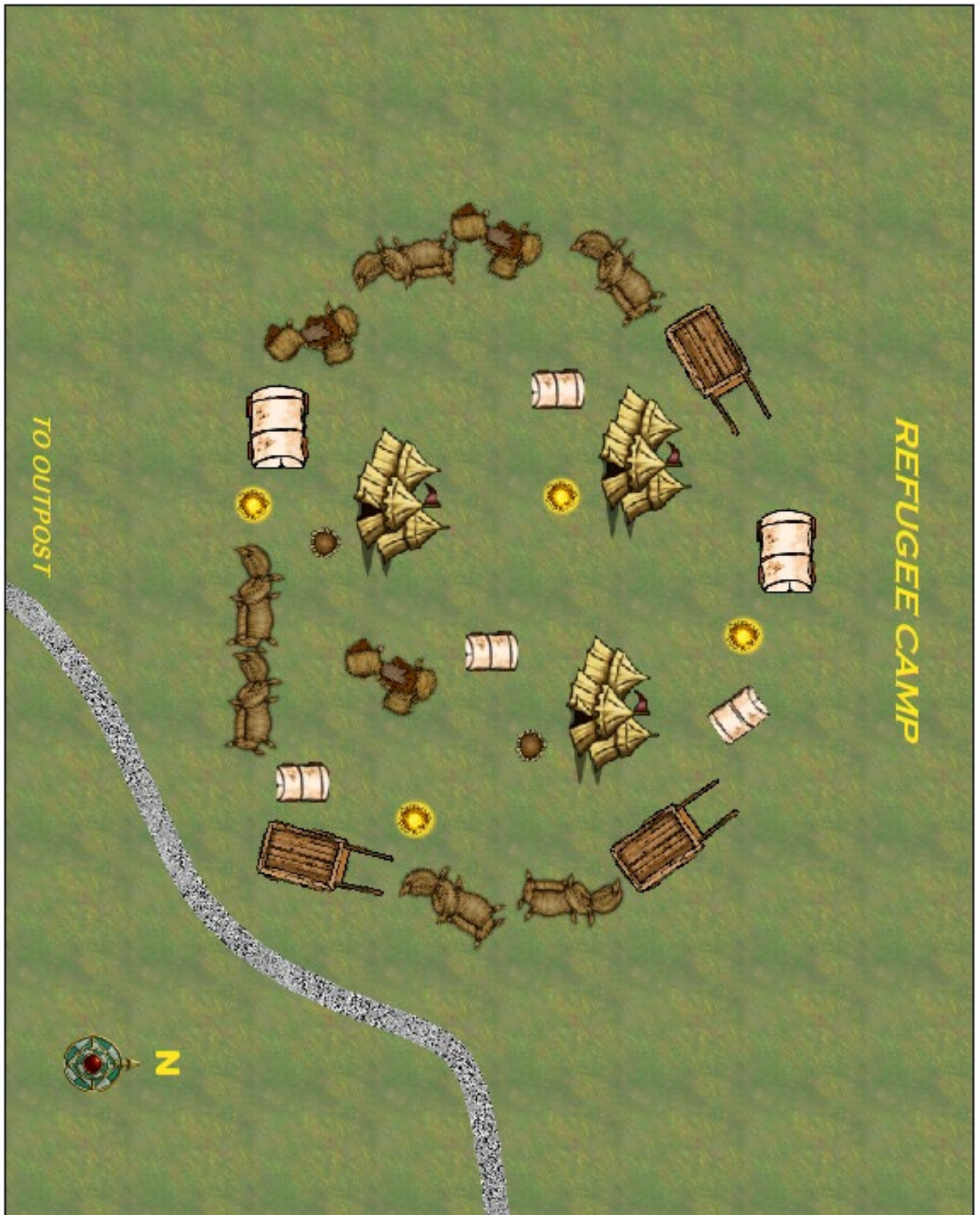
TREASURES			
AREA		ITEMS (VALUE)	COLLECTED
W-1	Silicids	Water (3 people) Shovel Axe (1d8) 20' Rope White Cloth (4 cloaks)	
T-1	Distillery	3 Bottles of Whiskey:	
T-3	Elgake's Emporium	Axe handle Lantern Flask of Oil Candles (10) Matches (7) Grappling Hook Sling Stones (11) Crowbar Empty Waterskins (3) (2-day capacity ea.)	
T-4	River Bed	Fish (Food for 4) Water (5 people) infected	
T-5	Trinoconda	Trinoconda (Food for 6) infected Gold Ring worth 10gp Jade Earrings worth 25gp Hooded Linen Shirt Tattered Suit of Leather Armor Spear Shield	
T-6	Common House #1	Cotton Sheet (1 cloak)	
T-7	Common House #2	Diary	
T-8	Sawmill Manager	Brass Key	
T-9	Mayor's Mansion	Brass Key 450sp Studded Leather Armor – Human/Elf Leather Armor – Human/Elf Leather Armor – Dwarf/Halfling Longswords (2) Short Sword Shields (3)	
T-10	Doomsday Prepper	Food (7 People) Water (7 People) Crossbows (2) Bolts (10) Leather Armor Short Sword Thieves Tools Brass Key Costume Jewelry (15gp)	
T-11	Teamster's House	Leather Apron (+1 to AC)	
W-2	Ctzenizides	Water Pouch (4) (one person each)	

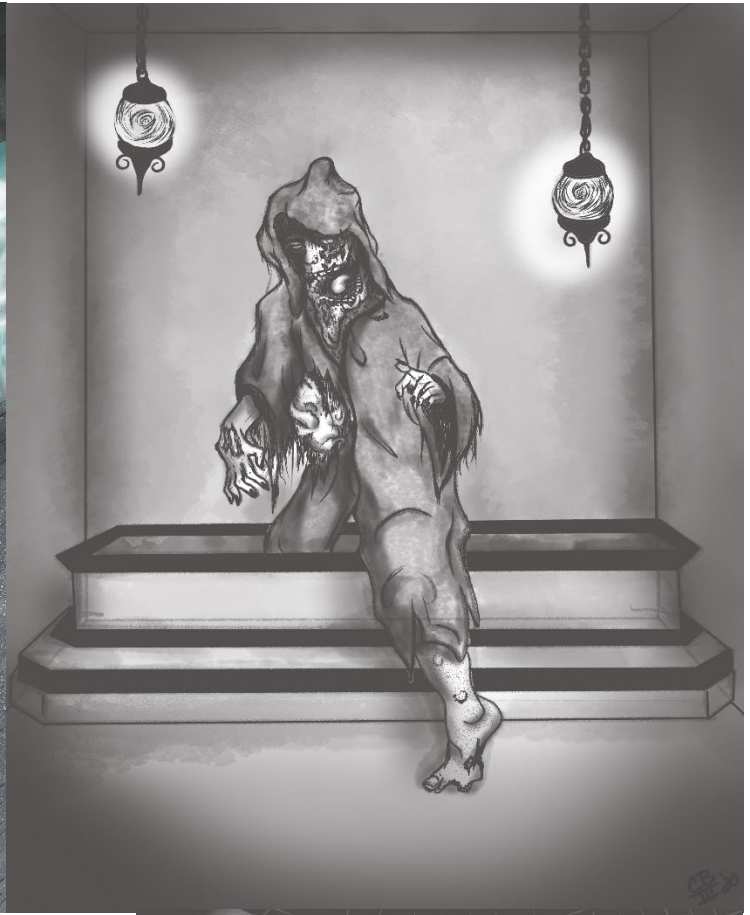
PRE-GENERATED ZERO-LEVEL CHARACTERS

Occupation	Str	Agil	Sta	Per	Luck	Int	AC	HP	Weapon	Spd	Init	Ref	Fort	Will	Equipment	Lucky Sign	Lang*
Dwarven Apothecarist	9	14	6	15	18	4	11	4	Sling (1d4)	20'	+1	+1	+1	+1	1 Flask Oil	Hit Points	C, D
Dwarven Herder	10	10	6	6	13	11	10	1	Staff (1d4)	20'	0	0	0	-1	Small Sack	Fortitude Saves	C, D
Dwarven Miner	15	16	9	10	9	12	12	2	Club (1d4)	20'	+2	+2	0	0	Lantern	Atk&Damage w/ Club	C, D
Elven Artisan	11	9	15	13	17	12	10	5	Staff (1d4)	30'	0	0	+1	+1	Empty Flask	Missile Damage	C, E
Elven Barrister	6	14	5	6	11	11	11	1	Dart (1d4)	30'	+1	+1	-2	-1	Large Sack	AC	C, E
Elven Sage	8	12	15	11	8	9	10	5	Dagger (1d4)	30'	0	0	+1	0	Sm Hammer	Skill Checks	C, E
Halfling Chicken Butcher	14	12	5	10	11	10	10	1	Handaxe (1d6)	20'	0	0	-2	0	Candle	Unarmed Attack	C, H
Halfling Glovemaker	11	13	15	4	12	9	11	5	Dagger (1d4)	20'	+1	+1	+1	-2	50' Rope	Initiative	C, H
Halfling Haberdashery	10	14	16	12	11	8	11	6	Dagger (1d4)	20'	+1	+1	+2	0	Torch	Hit Points	C, H
Beekeeper	14	12	9	8	13	8	10	4	Staff (1d4)	30'	0	0	0	-1	Small Sack	Melee Attack	C
Gambler	8	15	12	13	6	8	11	2	Club (1d4)	30'	+1	+1	0	+1	10' Pole	Fumbles	C
Herbalist	15	13	11	11	7	12	11	4	Club (1d4)	30'	+1	+1	0	0	Large Sack	Skill Checks	C
Locksmith	13	11	9	16	13	9	10	4	Dagger (1d4)	30'	0	0	0	+3	10' Chain	Willpower Saves	C
Mercenary	7	13	16	11	10	6	11	3	Longsword (1d8)	30'	+1	+1	+2	0	Large Sack	Fort Saves	C
Merchant	7	10	7	10	5	11	10	2	Dagger (1d4)	30'	0	0	-1	0	Holy Symbol	Magical Healing	C
Minstrel	13	7	10	10	10	9	9	4	Dagger (1d4)	30'	-1	-1	0	0	Iron Spike	Fumbles	C
Ropemaker	10	15	10	5	14	9	11	1	Sling (1d4)	30'	+1	+1	0	-2	Flint & Steel	Poison Saves	C
Noble	10	11	10	11	13	10	10	2	Longsword (1d8)	30'	0	0	0	0	Iron Spike	Damage Rolls	C
Scribe	13	12	10	13	12	11	10	3	Dart (1d4)	30'	0	0	0	+1	Hand Mirror	Melee Damage	C

Languages* C=Common, D=Dwarfish, E=Elvish, H=Halfling







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KILLIAN'S KRAWLS

Adventure Module DS-00
Refugees of the Desolation
A Zero-Level Funnel Adventure

The Illucid Valley was once the most beautiful and fertile valley on the continent. Nestled within the protection of the Felhold Mountains, it was a haven from harsh weather and enemy attack. In a loud, thunderous flash, the valley was blown apart and laid to waste by an unknown source of extreme power. Now, weeks later, the food and water supply in your town has dried up and your only option is to flee the valley. Unfortunately, you will have to face the harsh climate and nightmarish creatures of the desolation to reach your goal. Will you become a victim of the desolation?



\$8.00 U.S.