

A BIGGER FISH



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A Bigger Fish was photographed entirely on virtual location in The Junk Yard 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 Jubal Quintus for allowing me use his Fantastic Trade Post as a set. My ever-lovin' thanks to Catherine DeWitt, NeoBokrug Elytis, NickCitrus, Aposiopesis Fullstop, Angharad Greggan, Dan Seawwconds, Cliban Callow, ZTAR, Marko, Tralala Loordes, Lunesta Matova, Gnawbert, Briel the Fallen, Abrahambone, Sandusky Kayvon, The Mutant Witch of the Wastes, Itch, Beans, Irk, Jedidiah Stone, Kayanite, and PanPot for their inspiration and encouragement.

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This issue is dedicated to the many awesome Wastelanders who turned out to fill the Trade Post, you know who you are! I was honored to have such participation. Wastelanders Rule!

Look for the followup issue, **Dangerous Elements**.





It was easy pickin's at the market that day.



I was so good...



... I could have stolen the shine off gold.



I had a hole in the bottom of my pack and things just seemed to fall in there somehow...



It made me feel good to be good at something.



And I was really good at what I did.







My bag was Pat with lifted food and some hardware that Mavis told me to grab for him. Just one more mark and I'd call it a day.



HMMM... ○○○



Please Mister, I ain't had anything to eat for three days!



Here, let me give you a crust of my bread.



Hey!

Gimme that!



Come back here!!



When I ran into a guy by accident I couldn't help myself...



...and grabbed his coin pouch on the way down.



!@#%\$



My hands just do it, I don't even have to think about it.



It was a pretty good haul but I'd fished the waters dry for the day so I headed back to camp. It was time to learn more from the man who'd become my teacher, my mentor. Time to learn from the master.

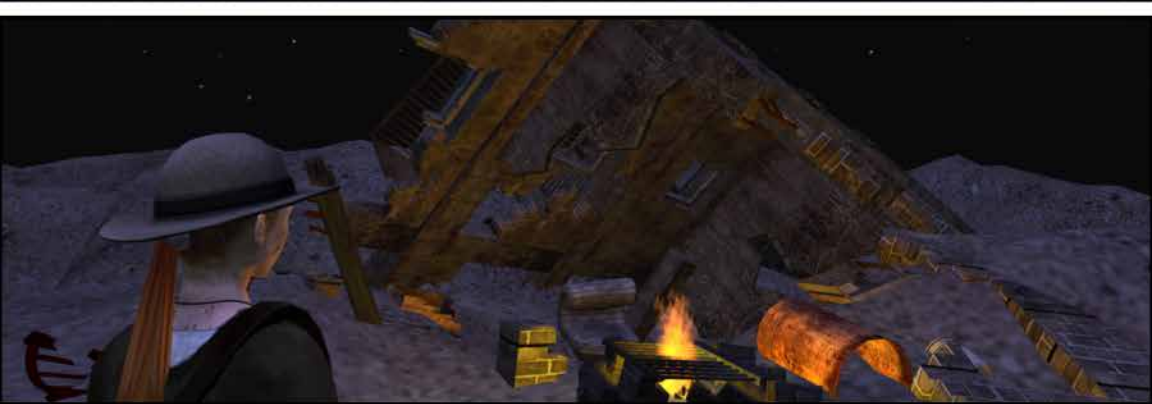



I was thinking how lucky I was, being naturally talented and having someone to teach me the finer points of the trade.




Yeah, lucky me.









That pistol hasn't had slugs in it forever.




Besides, who is gonna be out here but me anyway?




Oh, you'd be surprised. Lots of things come crawling out of the sands around here. Things you can steal, sometimes.




I've been seeing those wild dogs roaming around again, keep an eye out.



So, what did you bring me today, kid?




Stop calling me kid! I can bury you old man!



The best bit today was two coins I lifted off a guy I ran into by accident.

You should'ah seen how fast I grabbed that pouch!



That's my girl, always watching for that flash of opportunity... You took your part off the top I expect.



You know I would never do that!!



Save the dramatics for the marks, I know who you are.



Well, when are we gonna work together, huh? I bet we could hit a caravan you and me, or maybe that trade post we saw a few days back. Just let me in on a big one, I'm ready!

I'll tell you when you're ready...

... and right now you have a big mouth and think nobody can touch you.



And that can get you and people around you killed!

You're right though, we need a bigger haul. I'm tired of living on scraps from town. What we need is a big target, some fat merchant out on his own, loaded with salvage and cargo...

You should'ah seen the guy with the bread! He just stood there like a post with this dumb expression. Why do they always say *COME BACK HERE!* Like I'm gonna turn around!

People are such idiots, just waiting for me to come and take what they got!




It's the way of the world, Bec. But be careful because you're a part of that way, too. They say in the big waters there are fish of all sizes, but no matter what kind of fish there's always a bigger fish that can come along and eat it.

Your mark today was a small fish, so good for you. But you are someone's small fish and you best watch out for him.



I don't like fish.




Shhh... someone
is coming...

Get that loot
back in the bag...



I think I
see a nice fat
little fish...

You just keep
your yap shut and
wait for my move...



Hello friend, we saw
you riding up. What can
we do for you?



Well now that's the kindest greeting I've had in awhile! My name is Ned, I'm a trader passing through these parts. I saw your camp and wondered if I could join you.

O' Betty here needs a rest and so do I.



Then come join us, Ned!



I'm John and this is my idiot sister, Laura. We're on our way north to look for work.



I've been up north, not much work there but I wish you both luck. I've just come from the Outlands, good trade there with those hill people, kind Folks.

Someone of my size and age finds himself depending on the kindness of strangers far too often!



Well you can rest easy here for the night, Laura and I are off in the morning.



Now, I have a bottle of something here I'd like to open for you, as a thank you.



Let me see, yes here we are!



It's pretty strong so don't get it too close to the fire.

Just like Mavis taught me, I watched to make sure the guy with the bottle drank some of it first, which he did.







You know, I have a campfire tale about a mutant and a buzzard, if you'd like to hear it I'd be happy to recite!



Why Ned, I think that's a fine idea! Laura here won't understand much but I love a good tale!



Well, it all begins with a mutant who is walking alone in the desert...

And there they sat, the best thief I know
and a lone Merchant Pat with treasure. I
just sat quiet and waited for his signal.



They just kept on laughing and
telling stories like old friends.



I figured Mavis would walk off for a second then come
back with the gun out. I'd seen him pull that caper before.

It felt like knowing the punchline
before the end of the joke.











Let's see you get on your knees now, and drop that gun in your belt out where I can see it.

Move slow.



Hmmm... what to do, what to do...





The next morning I woke up with a headache and a shiner.



Well now, good morning! I have to hand it to you two, you managed to steal some good salvage that will fetch me a nice pile of coin!

But you, you're the best bit on this run.



What are you going to do to me?



Girl, what am I *not* going to do to you?

I never did find out what happened to Mavis...



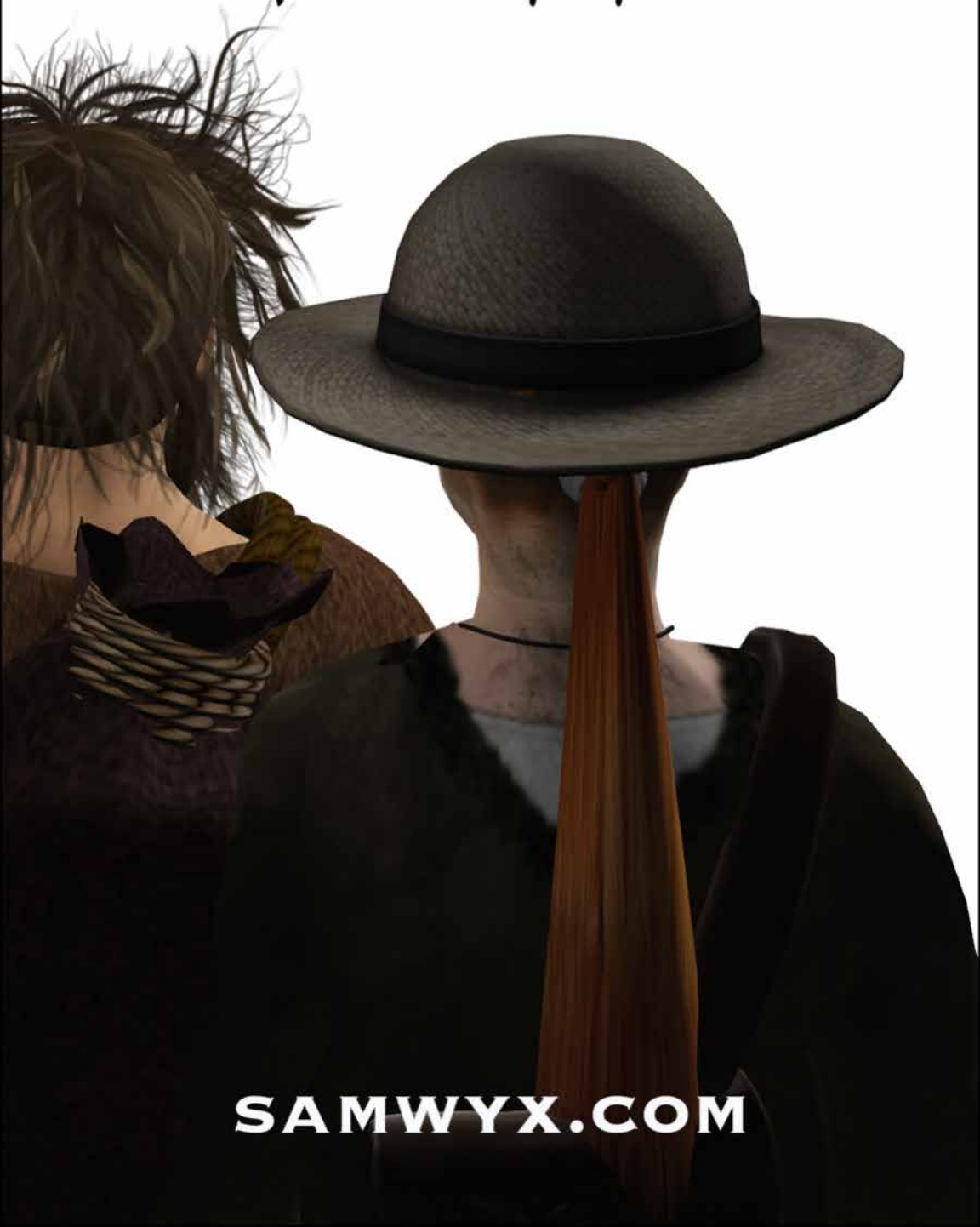
And as for me...



It turns out I was a pretty small fish.



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