

THE BURROWS

Type: Farming and Hunting Community of whittle' small animals... :)

Description:

The Burrows is a community made up of the mutant animals that escaped the FSEF facility 60 years ago. It is made up of small, raccoon like animals. These animals speak fluent English, and are highly intelligent. They have set up their own little community that is a link between Nature and Man.

There are two homes that the animals of the Burrows build. One is an adobe type building that is above ground. Called Top-Dwellings, they are clustered around a giant, dead oak tree that serves for their main town hall.

This is the center circle. The outer semi-circle of the settlement looks like simple earth at a first glance. This is actually the Dens, where the "other half" of the town live. These consist of an entrance (usually camouflaged) that leads to an underground den. These homes are usually cluttered and crude, and filled with various odds and ends.

The back part of the outer semi-circle, facing the river, is the farm of the community. Various things are grown here. The Den dwellers are also the hunters of the pack.

The area around the Burrows is pretty lush, compared to the rest of the Wasteland (TM). This is because of the river that runs through it. It is also lush because the original spot was pretty far away from any bomb sights. The plants and tree that grow there are jungle type plants that can survive in the intense heat.

Background:

Neres-Ka, leader of the mutant animals that made their long and hard trek from the Glow, arrived at this beautiful oasis in the late winter, 2101. They quickly set up camp.

For awhile, the animals were peaceful. Their instincts took over, which was a shock to most. They became skilled hunters, and they managed to grow intellectually. They had brought a good many devices and ancient texts from the Glow, and they were discovering new things. They even named themselves the Tribe of the S'Lanter, not knowing or remembering that they were once raccoons. (S'Lanter means The Kindred in their language).

At first they made their buildings like that of mankind. Neres-Ka, knowing that most of his "tribe" remembered the things man had done to them, however, did not model the Burrows after a human city. While the buildings were human looking, the things inside were not. Neres-ka encouraged his followers to revel in their animal side. Most houses consist of twigs and leaves, even to this day.

There were some that were too curious for their own good. Small bands explored outside the oasis, and in 2106 a small band of S'Lanter met up with a retreated group of humans. (who were later to become Jackals). Upon seeing the animals, the humans opened fire. A few S'Lanter made it back to the community.

That's when the first split came. Half of the animals wanted to protect themselves against the humans, so they built the Dens. They also rigged various traps throughout the jungle. And so the division stayed, with those who believed in some technology staying on top, while those who wanted to be more animalistic going underground.

Yet, these divisions did not bother the S'Lanter. It was true that Neres-Ka was their leader, but the animals could more or less do what they wanted, as long as they never violate a few simple rules. This basically stated that no S'Lanter could harm or kill another without having their crimes done onto them. This does not say that contests of strength are not allowed.

Property belongs to everyone. Homes, however, reverted back to the S'Lanter's sense of Territory. Any unauthorized entry on a home must be told to the Head Council. The perpetrator

will then be ostracized until the next moon. (one month). No one is to talk to him, or acknowledge that he exists. This law came into effect in 2108, when two S'Lanter got into a fight over a home.

Anyway, the years passed, with peace. The S'Lanter became fiercely proud of each other, and the tribe grew. A few human stranglers wandered into the jungles, but we either turned away or downright killed by the Den-Dwellers. (Usually the later one.) Thus the Burrows has gained a kind of legend state among humans. No one is sure that it is there, but stories of intelligent animals are about the Wastes.

Finally in 2120, Neres-Ka died. The Burrows was in a state of mourning, and on the day he died each S'Lanter lifted their howling voice to the heavens. What resulted was a mourning song that is sung to this day whenever a S'Lanter dies.

After Neres-ka died, his son, Minishen, took over. His leadership lasted until 2140, when he retired and his daughter, Rinar took over.

Before I go on, something must be said about the religion of the S'Lanter. The "Old Ones" as they were called, never told the younger generation about their experiences back at the Facility. They simply said that came from "The Glow". (It was named this after an Old One tried returning once and all he saw was a great glow on the horizon. He turned back.) The Old Ones told their children to forget the Glow, that this was their home now.

But when Neres-ka, who was the last original survivor from the Facility, died, the younger generation started to wonder where they came from. They read the Old Ones journals, read the old books written from before the war, but nothing else was mentioned except that The Glow was where the S'Lanter came from.

The winter of 2130 was especially harsh for the S'Lanters. Known as the Great Winter in many parts of the Wastes, the S'Lanter had nothing to fall back on. Despair set in. Finally, Minishen, their leader, realized that something must be done, in order to give his tribe hope. Thus he invented the "Religion of the Glow". He told his followers that there were gods living in the Glow, and that these gods made them. He made references to them in the histories that they had, showing various journals of the Old Ones talking about "Masters", and how they made them.

When the Great Winter ended, Minishen knew that there would be more hard times. Thus he kept the religion going, saying that the Gods of the Glow helped them survive. And for the next 30 years, this has been passed down to the next generation.

Only Minishen knew that this religion was false. When he died in 2050, he took the secret with him. And no one could disprove him, since anyone who went looking for the Glow never returned.

Which brings me to the beginning of 2061, which is just before the player is let out of the Vault. During this time, a group of Top-Dwellers, intent on finding out the truth behind the Gods of the Glow, went seeking their ancient home. And they found it. Since the radiation from the Facility is very high, most of them died. Only one made it back.

When he returned, he had a severe case of radiation poisoning, and he was dying. He reported that "There are no Gods, only Death..."

This, of course, caused quite a stir. Now the Burrows is once again divided, but this time it might lead to outright war. The Den-Dwellers, being more fierce and feral than their cousins on top, believe in the Gods with all their hearts. The Top-Dwellers, being the intellectuals, believe the dying S'Lanter, stating that that is proof that these Gods do not exist.

Who Rules:

Rinar, granddaughter of Neres-Ka. She sleeps in a small house behind the entrance to the Great Tree. (At the end of the garden). She has nine offspring, all of who she is extremely protective. (This might have to change, depending on our art.)

Population:

is the
of those to save us

The community is made up of two factions, the Den-Dwellers and the Top-Dwellers. For sixty years the two have been able to love each other like brothers, but the current debate on religion have made the ties thin...

Both sides would die for their leader, however, and right now she is the only thing that keeps war from breaking out.

Most are distrustful of humans, especially the Den-Dwellers, but if you can get past them, talking to the Top-Dwellers shouldn't be that difficult. The Top-Dwellers have only the texts that say humans are evil, but they are much too skeptic of what is true. They will be curious.

Armed Forces:

The Den Dwellers are armed with knives, claws, teeth and even some small spears. They usually hunt in packs. There is no "guards", if a crisis happens, everyone in the Burrows, young and old will fight.

Notable Location:

THE GREAT TREE: This is used for a meeting hall, tavern and entertainment. In the middle of the dead tree is an area that is used for contest of strength. The tree is also made up of:

Behind the Meeting Hall area is a section that houses three storage areas. One is a library, filled with books and information. Another area is an area uses for research. There are some interesting devices in here. The third houses a small Shrine to the Gods of the Glow. In here are multiple journals, as well as a crude altar.

THE GARDEN: This is a garden, behind the Great Tree.

Notable People:

- Rinar, leader of the S'Lanter.
- Kally-Ya, an offspring of Rinar's.
- Mek, the Den-Dweller guide who knows where the Glow is.

Current Situation:

- The Burrows is split into two factions. Those who still believe in the Gods of the Glow, and those who are skeptical. The situation is becoming volatile.

When Character First Enters:

- There are various traps in the jungle to keep out strangers, and there are various ways to get around them. Once through those, however, the player will be ambushed by four Den Dwellers. From out of the other side will come two Top-Dwellers who will come to the player's aid. Before the battle starts, however, a voice will ring out and say "Stop!" Then Rinar will appear.

She will chastise the Den Dwellers and the Top-Dwellers both for trying to kill each other. She will also look at the player very closely, and seeing that he is not a mutant, will tell him to go to the Great Tree. One of the Top-Dwellers is assigned as a guide. The player is NOT to stray from the path, and if he tries to do so, the Den-Dwellers will attack him in force. (Of course at this point the player could be Erik and just fill the four Den-Dwellers anyway....)

Once at the Tree, the Search For the Glow adventure seed begins.

Adventure Seeds:

- * The Search For the Glow

This is the opening seed when the player first enters the town. Rinar tells the player their troubles and says that the player is the first human in 60 years to hold a conversation with the

S'Lanter. But these are desperate times. She tells the player about the division, and that the player must go and search for the Glow.

When asked why him, and not a S'Lanter, Rinar brings him back, behind the table, and to a secret panel in the wall. There she pulls out an old diary, written by Neres-Ka himself! There are pages missing, but humans are mentioned as being the S'Lanter's captors back in the old days. It talks about weapons, and other such stuff. Rinar believes that these humans are what the S'Lanter considers gods. She wants the player to bring back proof of this, so that the Den-Dwellers will not declare war on their cousins.

To guide the player to the Glow, Rinar assigns a Den-Dweller to lead him there. The Den-Dweller is also there to confirm that there are no Gods of the Glow.

The player can bring back Chi-Pa's journal for proof, or any other things. (Maybe a hologram or something). If he does this, then the S'Lanter will be allies. (With the Top-Dwellers giving the player loyalty, while the Den-Dwellers giving him respect).

NOTE

If the player returns to the Burrows without the proof, he will be let in, and asked about his progress. He will be given food.

The following adventure seeds can happen at any time after this initial entrance. (In other words, you could still be looking for the Burrows, and have the To Catch a Wisp adventure seed happen.)

* The Wood Cutter's Wife

One of Rinar's offspring, Kally-Ya has disappeared. Now normally this wouldn't be thought unusual, but others found the place she was last seen. The area was smashed, as if a great fight happened. And there were footprints. Human footprints.

Rinar thinks that one of the human groups have somehow made it past the traps and guards and taken her. She has already sent out two S'Lanter hunters, only to have them disappear also. She thinks the player can reason with whoever did this.

When the player comes to the scene of the disappeared, he sees the tracks, dried now, but still visible. (It hasn't rained in a long while). If the player has any kind of tracking skill, he will see that the tracks are human... but slightly strange.

Anyway, if the player follows the tracks, he will come to a wooden bridge that spans the river. Any PC or NPC with Detect Traps will see the trip wires on the bridge. If not, and the player trips over it, the bridge will collapse, sending him into the water.

Once on the other side of the bridge, the player will have to get past all sorts of traps and puzzles. This is because the one who set the traps is a descendent of an old survivalist.

Before this gets confusing, here is the background behind this seed.

An old survivalist, named Bill Hatch, having mutated a bit by the virus (hence the human, but not human tracks), is living alone on the other side of the river. His father was the son of a survivalist that made his family a home in the woods by the river. (Bill's father kidnapped a Jackal woman a while ago and had Bill).

Bill is completely insane. The mental illness started when his parents died, and he was bitten by a mutated beetle awhile back. After he survived that, it was downhill from there.

Knowing that he must continue his line, however, Bill kidnapped a short mutant woman from Junktown about three years ago. She died.

In his grief, Bill went out hunting one morning and came across... Kally-Ya. In his grief, he kidnapped her. He currently thinks that she is his wife.

The traps around the area were set by Bill's grandfather (to ward off them damn Liberals... Bill still uses the term, although he doesn't know what a Liberal is...). Bill keeps them up to defend him against an unknown evil (Liberals), that he thinks is after him.

Meeting up with Bill, the player can talk him for a little bit, but Bill will probably fight to protect his "bride". Inside his house, the player can find ammo and a few weapons.

* To Catch a Wisp

Something has been stealing the children. The S'Lanter, being a superstitious lot, believe that a ferocious beast has taken them. The only sign of its passing they find is an area that is broken and disheveled, as if from a fight. (The children are also ferocious fighters as well). But, there are never any tracks, or any scent. They call this beast the Wisp and it has taken an almost mystical quality. A curfew has been set, and the Den-Dwellers have been setting up extra traps along the river.

The mother of the latest missing cub asks the player to find her child.

On investigating the scene of the latest disappearance, the player will see broken branches, etc, as indicated by a struggle. A closer look will reveal that whatever did this covered up their tracks quite masterfully. (The S'Lanter, who have had no contact with humans, do not know about nor do they use this trick to hunt. To them, stealth is something to do while hunting, not while trying to escape something.) Also found around there will be various pieces of clothing that the S'Lanter have overlooked. These bits of cloth have definite markings on them. Any run-in with the Jackel's will make the player recognize the symbol as theirs.

If the player has never seen the Jackel's yet, and he shows the cloth to Rinar, or any other S'Lanter, one shown will shrug and say that it looks human. They also make a suggestion to look to a human encampment for the answers.

Either way, Rinar will say that if it is true that humans have kidnapped their children, there will be blood shed.

Both Junktown and the Hub will know the Jackal's symbol.

Once in the Jackal's encampment, the player can gain information any number of ways. The only thing for sure is that the Jackal's do not have the children, but they know who do. Seems a Jackal named T-Bone was hired by someone to check out the legends of the "Animal Men" who live near the radiation crater down south. Looking down there, he stumbled across a S'Lanter child who was wandering too far from the river. Since then, he and a band of thieves have snuck past the traps and stolen the children. They figure that the animals are just that: animals. (Children talk the S'Lanter language until they come of age. After that they learn English only as a remembrance of the Old Ones.)

T-Bone will tell the player that they sold the children to a strange caravan that goes back and forth across the Wastes. This caravan is owed by a man who calls himself the great P.T. Barnum. The caravan itself is made up of several "exhibits". (The cool thing is that if the player is really mad about T-Bone taking the children, he can kill them. The rest of the Jackal's couldn't care less.)

Through various pieces of information, the player can find his way to the caravan and confront the owner. His strange story is as follows:

His whole line of descendants were circus owners. Even after the great war, his grandfather taught his father everything about the business. He knew that one day things would settle down and people would need entertainment again. Their family lived in the Vault for some time (They come from the Vault the Hub people came from), until finally coming to live in the Hub. Once there, P.T.'s grandfather set up a nightclub there, filled with magicians and such.

Well, his father took over that business (which is still doing good over in the Hub). P.T. knew he was different, though. He wanted to travel, to see the world. So he bought a caravan and set out into the Wasteland. (TM).

He has collected quite a few things, and he has even made a few creatures of his own. (Taking the original Barnum's advice that "there's a sucker born every minute".) He actually started out with a show that consisted of a few dancers, some acrobats and other things, and for a while he did well. (Especially with the Khans, who loved his dancing women). For awhile things went well, but as time went on, the performers started to leave.

Finally he was left alone with his mutated animals and his make-shift wonders. He was on his way back to the Hub in defeat when he heard the stories about the "Animal Men". They were strange creatures, it was said, that lived down by the radioactive pit down south. It was said that they were animals that walked like men, and who hunted with weapons. Few have returned from there, and those who do cannot actually say what they saw. When P.T. asked questions, everyone shrugged. Who cared about stupid animals when there was families to feed, mutants to ward off, lives to live.

(Quick side note: That one of the main reasons why the S'Lanter have been undetected for so long. Most people have bigger problems, and no one really cares anyway).

P.T. became obsessed with these rumors. He knew that these things, which no one had ever seen, would make him famous. For a year he collected information, until he finally pinpointed an approximate location. Knowing that he wasn't equipped for this type of thing, he went to a Jackal he knew and asked him to capture the legendary beast.

Which he did.

When the player finds the caravan, P.T. will be paranoid, and in possession of a shotgun. The player can talk him down, or sneak into his camp, or Erik can just blow him away.

If the player talks to him, P.T. will tell him his history, but under no circumstance will he give the children back. That is, unless the player gets him something better. (The thing is, he tried showing the children to some travelers, who were completely bored by the small furry rodents). There is said to be a rare red scorpion that lives up by L.A. that he wants. It seems that after the disappointment of the "Animal Men", P.T. wants to move back to the Hub, but his father needs the Red Scorpion's venom for something. Not too many people make it through the Barrens and back.

Once the player kills the Red Scorpion, P.T. will give the player the children and be on his way.

Once the children are returned, even the Den-Dwellers will be loyal to the player, since a few Den children were also taken. The mother of the recent lost cub will also give the player some cool stuff.

The following adventure seeds will only be played
if the player has brought back proof that the "Gods"
do not exist.

* The Trade Line

After the player gains the trust of the S'Lanter (at least of the Top-Dwellers), Rinar will ask him to open trade lines with humans. But only those humans that the player deems appropriate.

If the player tells Junktown, they won't care. The only places that will care are the Hub. And the Khans.

The Hub will open trade lines, and every now and then the player will be able to see a caravan going there. The Hub will also reward you for finding them another customer.

The Khans will attack the town and try to kill them all. If the player returns after this happens, all he will find are ruins, and a few S'Lanter, who will attack on sight. (The S'Lanter will become his enemy, and any S'Lanter in the player's party will attack as soon as they enter the village.)