

THE SCAV

SPECIAL EDITION

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SPECIAL REPORT ISSUE

Fire in the Fog: The Junktown Expedition to Fort Klamath

The first official Junktown expeditionary force gathered with a plan already in hand, something that had been prepared long before anyone believed they would truly need it. It was structured, deliberate, and filled with the kind of careful organization that comes from experience. Roles were assigned, authority established, and for a brief moment the expedition resembled something more disciplined than the loose collection of survivors it usually was. People listened, and more importantly, they trusted that someone else would be making the decisions when things began to go wrong.

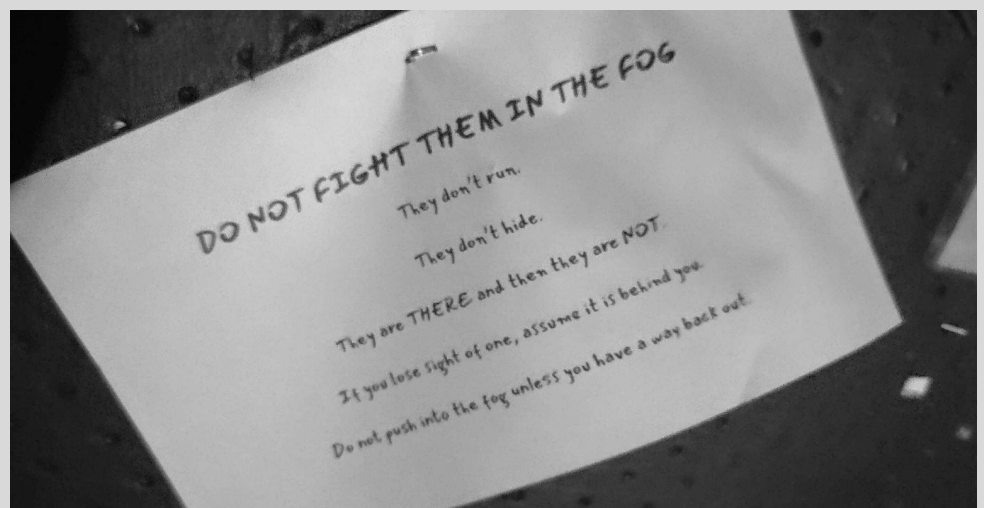
That sense of order carried with them as they boarded the train and began the short journey south. It was easy, in that moment, to believe that preparation might be enough.

When they arrived at the Dig Co Freight Depot, that belief began to fracture. The station still stood, but it no longer felt abandoned. The presence of the Blight was unmistakable, not only in the shapes moving within the low blue fog but in the way the place itself seemed to resist being reclaimed. The initial engagement came quickly and without any sense of negotiation, forcing the expedition into a defensive posture almost immediately.

The cost of securing even a small portion of the depot was paid in injuries and hard-fought ground. By the time they established control over the area they would come to call the Foothold, it was already clear that whatever they were facing would not be overcome through simple force alone.

Within the depot, the remains of Fort Klamath's earlier efforts began to tell a story. Equipment had been left behind in various states of disrepair, but among it

was a damaged flamethrower that could be salvaged. The engineers of the expedition were able to bring it back into working condition, and in doing so uncovered the first reliable answer to the conditions they faced. Fire proved capable of doing more than dispersing the fog. It could destroy the structures that sustained it, growths embedded into the ground and surrounding buildings that continued to generate the haze even after it had been pushed back. **(Continued on page 2)**



Notifications found all around Fort Klamath.

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The warnings left behind by those who had come before them made sense at that moment. Fighting within the fog itself had been discouraged for a reason, and the expedition understood why even if they did not fully accept the conclusion.

The discovery of the hazmat suits came as both a relief and a confirmation of what the expedition had begun to suspect. They were not advanced pieces of equipment by any pre-war standard, but they had been carefully maintained and deliberately set aside, suggesting that those at Fort Klamath had relied on them heavily in the final days. Once worn, the difference was immediate. The fog no longer pressed in with the same weight, and the subtle distortion of thought and perception faded enough to allow clear judgment again. Movement through contaminated areas became possible without the same creeping uncertainty, and the shapes within the haze lost some of their unnatural advantage. The suits did not make the environment safe, nor did they offer protection against the creatures themselves, but they restored something essential. They allowed the wearer to trust their own senses again, which in a place like that was often the difference between survival and becoming lost in the fog entirely.

Their first attempts to move carefully confirmed what the warnings had implied. Small groups that ventured into the fog found themselves cut off and overwhelmed, unable to maintain cohesion in an environment that favored the enemy in every way. Those who returned did so shaken, and not all of them returned at all. The idea of advancing cautiously began to lose its appeal as the cost of doing so became clear.

What followed was not a careful decision so much as a collective shift in approach. Rather than continue to divide themselves, the expedition chose to move as a single force, consolidating their

strength and pushing forward together. It was a difficult path, one that ignored the advice they had been given and forced



Photo found by Expedition, photographer unknown. Notation on back of photo: "He walked right up to them. Didn't get attacked. Just stood there. Then he turned and walked back like nothing happened. I don't trust any of them anymore."

them into direct confrontation with the Blight under conditions that were far from favorable. The fog did not thin for them, and the creatures within it did not falter easily, but there was a certain resilience in refusing to be separated. They burned the growths they encountered, knowing that each one

removed weakened the hold the Blight had over the area, even if only temporarily.

It did not take long for the expedition to understand that the fog was doing more than limiting visibility. Prolonged exposure dulled focus and slowed reaction, creating hesitation at the worst possible moments. Movements at the edge of perception became unreliable, and shapes within the haze appeared to shift position without warning, giving the impression that the Blight could appear and disappear at will. Survivors who had been wounded by the creatures reacted differently still. Some reported a sense of disorientation that went beyond simple confusion, while others found themselves drawn toward the fog in ways they struggled to explain. It became increasingly difficult to separate what was actually happening from what the fog was making them believe was happening, and that uncertainty proved just as dangerous as anything waiting within it.

As the expedition climbed toward Fort Klamath, the cost of their advance took on a more personal form. Those who had fallen during the earlier stages of the expedition began to return, marked by



Photo found by Expedition, photographer unknown. Notation on back of photo: "They built this. We thought it was a flesh pit at first. It's not. They're stacking bodies. Packing them together. Something is growing out of it. The fog is thicker here."

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the same blue corruption they had been fighting against. Their voices carried across the path, familiar in tone but wrong in intent, calling out to former allies and attempting to draw them away from the group. It would have been easy to falter in those moments, to hesitate or to turn back, but the expedition continued upward, choosing movement over doubt even as the past tried to pull them back.

By the time they reached Fort Klamath itself, the settlement had already been lost for some time. The structures remained, but the life that had once filled them had been replaced by the Blight's work. Progress through the town was slow and methodical, each section cleared through the same process of identifying and destroying the growths that sustained the fog. In the remnants of the settlement's records, they found evidence that the people of Fort Klamath had understood more about the Blight than anyone had realized. The existence of a second strain, one that altered the nature of the infection, had led to attempts at treatment. These treatments were not a cure, but they were enough to disrupt the influence the Blight exerted over those it had marked, allowing the expedition to stabilize those who might otherwise have been lost.

At the center of the settlement, the expedition encountered the final and most unsettling result of Fort Klamath's fall. A massive pit filled with the remains of its inhabitants had become something more than a resting place for the dead. The bodies within it moved as a single entity, voices overlapping as though the entire mass spoke at once. When the expedition approached, the pit responded with force, surging outward in a chaotic assault that broke formation and threatened to overwhelm even a unified defense. The nature of the attack made it clear that conventional methods would not be enough to bring it down.

The solution they carried with them had been intended for a moment exactly like this. A large container of volatile chemicals, transported throughout the



Photo found by Expedition, photographer unknown. Notation on back of photo:
"That thing was there. I swear it was. I only looked away for one second. Nothing. Fog wasn't even that thick. They're using it somehow."

expedition despite the risk it posed, was brought forward and thrown into the center of the mass. The resulting explosion was powerful enough to tear through the structure of the pit, destroying what could not be fought directly. The blast caused injuries among those who stood too close, but the presence of a prepared medical team ensured that those injuries did not become losses.

When the dust settled, the pit lay quiet, and whatever force had bound it together was gone. The Blight's hold over Fort Klamath had been severed, its growths burned out and its advance brought to a halt within the settlement. Though the fog still clung to distant edges and the infection remained active further south, this place was no longer part of its spread. For the first time since its fall, Fort Klamath stood free of the Blight's control. The expedition had not ended the threat entirely, but it had done something just as important. They had stopped its progress here.

While not the safest approach, nor the most efficient, the expedition stands as a

complete success and an example of how other survivor communities may be able to resist the Blight. There were moments where a more cautious path might have reduced the cost. However, the decision to move together, to refuse to divide even when the environment encouraged it, carried them through situations that might otherwise have ended in complete failure.

In the end, the expedition did not succeed because it followed the plan perfectly. It succeeded because, when the plan proved insufficient, the people carrying it refused to break apart.