

Arses of Darkness

A Role Gamers Apocalypse

By: Adrian Jones

adrian@lickspace.freemove.co.uk

Where to begin?

With the End of Days and the nuclear fireball that annihilated civilization, or with the bullet triggered fireball of gasoline and dynamite that ended this scenario?

When Tommy asked if he could put this scenario on his site, I agreed on the proviso that I could write some sort of introduction to explain (or should that be excuse?) it. I was originally going to run a different, much larger, scenario on the gaming sessions that 'In the Ruins of Riverton' was played on, but basically I ran out of time...

So, in urgent need of material to run I wrote this mini-scenario (its not much more than an extended encounter really) on a Saturday afternoon.

My main intention was to introduce the players to a world outside of Riverton. The first few scenarios established Riverton as a fairly minor population centre, and I was eager to move the players in the big bad world of the Slavers and the Rich Five. This scenario was designed as a prologue to future mayhem.

With that in mind, most of the other aspects of the scenario are mixture of pure personal indulgence and a few experimentations with the players.

The main thing I wanted to do was to play up the superstitions of the Riverton folk, and their lingering fears about the return of the Imps. The idea was to get them to believe that the Slaver's Enforcers were the spirits of the dead Imp's. This didn't actually work out as I had planned, but hey, you gotta try...

The end section of the scenario was meant to run an assault on the Slaver's base and the improvised arena battle of the captured team member in parallel... which sort of worked. The main inspiration for the arena was the scene in "Escape from New York" where Snake fights one of the Duke's men in a improvised boxing ring, with a bit of WWF thrown in for good measure. This went pretty well, moving from fists to baseball bats, until one of the players storming the building opened up on the crowded warehouse, followed by several CS gas grenades. The Slavers piled out of the building into sights of the two players set up as snipers in the woods outside.

The final showdown moved into the mine, which contains tanks of gasoline and boxes of dynamite, where what was going to be Kurtis' last stand turned into topography altering fireball via a fumbled burst of SMG fire at a Slaver standing behind a drum of fuel!

The end result: a big bang and lots of innocent people instantly Kentucky fried.

Well, that's as far as I can explain myself. Hope you find something of use in the encounter that follows...

Ade.

In the Ruins of Riverton

A Morrow Project Mini-Scenario

By Adrian Jones

Set two months after the events of Operation: Link-Up, after the players have returned to Riverton to recover from their injuries...

This scenario is meant as an interlude between the previous events and the up-coming scenario Operation: Wildfire.

Now, more or less, fully recuperated the players are under the impression that they will be heading straight out to uncover the location of the mysterious *Wildfire*. Unfortunately, fate will intervene before they get a chance to embark on that quest.

PD Information:

In the past couple of months a large group of Slavers have moved into the nearby area, taking over an area of the ruins of old Riverton. They have been watching the town for a little over a month now, sizing up the townies and the players.

A full on assault of the town is out of the question; the Slavers have had plenty of time to size up the towns ironmongery, and prefer to remain well out of its way for now.

They plan to slowly spiral inwards, raiding the outlying farms and households, hopefully being able to snatch as many locals without having to resort to open combat against the team. If, however, they get a chance to take out some of the Morrow Personnel (both NPC and PC) they certainly won't hesitate... Particularly if there is a good chance of getting their hands on some of the teams weaponry.

The scenario starts on a warm, sunny morning not long after sun up, preferably before most of the team are awake (evening watches notwithstanding).

Timeline of the Mornings Events:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 3.05am | Leo Burkheart is out hunting with a short bow. He couldn't sleep, so decided to wander into the northern woods to catch the next days dinner. He hears movement in ahead and hides. Just in front of him, he sees several tall robed figures moving silently through the trees. He stays out of sight until they are gone. |
| 4.30am | A small squad of Slavers attacked one of the smaller farms on the outskirts of Riverton. The Cassidy Family's homestead was taken out with swift and silent efficiency. The raiders carried some firearms but only ever use them as a very last resort, mainly relying on terror tactics to immobilise their prey, and crossbows and knives if that fails... |
| 5.45am | Jerry Watson arrives at the Cassidy farm to pick up Billy Cassidy, the head of the family, and go fishing as they had planned to do the day before. |

he finds the farm empty and signs of a struggle. He becomes aware that someone is watching him from the woods, and decides its time to leave. The Raiders have left two Enforcers behind as a rear guard. They watch him as he checks the farm buildings out, and decide to *spook* him. They emerge out of the edges of the wood, appearing as tall dark figures. They activate the tasers they are carrying, causing each to appear to have a crackling blue ball of blue light centred on their chest. Jerry rides like the devil out of there, whilst the two Enforcers laugh and laugh...

6.10am Jerry arrives back in Riverton in a panic. He rouses Doc first, telling him what he saw at the farm.

What happens next depends upon where the players are located at that moment in time. If, they're in town they will be contacted by Doc straight away. If not, it will be around 7.20am by the time that Doc and Jerry ride over to the old imp base to tell them.

8.35am Leo drifts into town. Depending on whom he finds about in town first, he will tell the players and / or Doc what he saw earlier in the night.

The Children of the Night

The players will now have two stories of mysterious strangers, and a missing family to think About. The Enforcers deliberately travel about in a *sinister* manner to help feed the air of hysteria and fear that they like to breed. The main aim of such theatrics within the scenario is to push the players buttons to jump to daft conclusions about ghosts and vampires. The Slavers would never have moved on Riverton while the Imps were in control, so in a strange way their terror tactics did the town some small favours. But, with them gone, the players are about to learn the price of responsibility.

It's anticipated that the player's first move will be to check out the Cassidy farm:

The Cassidy Farm

Due to the previous time line of events the players will be heading out to the farm early morning. It is a bright and sunny morning; the sky is cloudless and only a light breeze rustles through the trees. The farm is located to the north of Riverton close to the road that runs parallel to the highway. As the players approach, all is silent...

Main Farm House

A large log cabin with shuttered windows. The door is swinging open in the wind. On entering the building it is obvious that there has been a struggle. Basically, a single room dwelling, the furnishings are smashed and strewn about. Yet, there appears to be no signs of a forced entry. The door was locked, but several of the Enforcers are good lock-picks, and managed to open it without waking the family. There is no blood anywhere.

Stables

A standard stable with horse pens, and straw. The door is ajar, and there are no horses in there. There are hoof prints in the dirt. The Slavers requisitioned the horses to carry the unconscious family members.

And the Rest

There is nothing special about the rest of the buildings on the map, and they are as explained by the map key.

Clues Anyone?

The tracks from the stables lead into woods on the west of the clearing, along a narrow dirt track through the trees. They can be followed for about 100 yards until they lead into a stream that is nearby. It is impossible to be sure which way the horses went from there. They do not appear to have crossed straight over, and so could have gone either north or south.

They actually went southwards back towards old Riverton. If anyone starts down that way, they will come across the body of Mrs Josie Cassidy. She is dead, and bears two deep blackened marks upon her neck.

* If the team's medic examines her body, he will be able to tell that the marks are caused by electrical burns and that was definitely the cause of death. He will also notice that her left arm is severed just below the elbow. It is an old wound, caused by a farming accident, long since healed. This disability, however, is the reason for her death.

The Slavers noticed it while moving down the stream and realised that it would seriously affect her sale price at the auctions, and so decided not to carry the extra weight. They emptied a full charge from a Taser into her neck to kill her, completely draining the battery.

If she is not found by the players, she will be discovered by David and Mark Burke as they explore the woods later that afternoon.

The evidence suggests that the remainder of the family is still alive, however...

The Panic Begins

This incident will profoundly shake the people of Riverton, who were just starting to get a handle on the concept of being safe and free. But whoever said that freedom is free? As the next evening draws in the streets will fall silent very early on, just like the good old days of imp rule, the townies are now fearful to venture out after dark.

There are several other homesteads in the nearby area, but it will prove difficult to contact all of them before nightfall. The ones that the players do manage to contact will be reluctant to leave their homes just yet, but future events may change that.

For the players and the townies, the night passes uneventfully. But the next morning will tell a different tale for the farming communities...

The Rot Starts to Set In

Just as the sun rises the next morning, there is a commotion in town. A farmer from the Westside of town, Jack Kelsey, has run into town screaming up a storm. His neighbours, the Hale family have all vanished over night. Jack has brought his entire family into town with him; he is fearful to leave them alone even during daylight.

This news runs through town like a riot. The air of terror is palpable. Everyone is talking about it. And the townies suspicions are starting to take on a slightly surreal quality. Most of the town seem to think that the imps are back. The players failed them, and allowed enough to escape to recruit reinforcements.

But, Frank Finney has a slightly different take on events. On yes it's the imps all right, but they're still dead... He starts to spin ghost stories of demon soldiers back to wreak revenge upon the town. And some of the people are starting to believe them...

If confronted directly about his beliefs, he will scream and shout that this is the *player's* fault. They caused this to happen! The hard work of the previous months is starting to unravel a little...

What Next?

The players have several options: They can search the whole area is a desperate bid to find the villains of the piece, or they could wait for the next attack and hope that they find further clues, or they could try and lay a trap for the Slavers.

Depending on how the players decide to proceed, the road to uncovering the Slaves hideout Could take many forms. Whatever happens, at some point the players will confront a raiding party.

The raiders should consist of 5 Enforcers dressed in black robes, and another 5 Slaver regulars. * Only the Enforcers carry Tasers.

Play this whole discovery section by ear... The players will probably try and force a direct confrontation, and eventually they'll get their wish.

If the players manage to capture a Slavers alive, they can attempt to interrogate them about the whereabouts of the hideout.

Big But...!

The Slavers have decided to try and capture a team member. The biggest, strongest ox-like character in the party... so I guess that's Neil then...

No manner what precautions are taken he will be captured. Its essential to the drama of the final act (if the timing works out that is).

The capture of a party member should really shake the rest of the team up and also prevent them from using the direct blitzkrieg approach that they're starting to depend upon.

One of Our Team Members is Missing!

Once a Slaver has been captured, and Neil has been kidnapped, the final showdown should arrive quite rapidly... While the players are locating the base, and planning an attack, Neil will be subjected to a meeting with Kurtis and Fritz.

Both are unaware of the Morrow Project, but have encountered frozen U.S. Army personnel before, and have naturally jumped to the conclusion that that is whom the team represent. And Fritz 'the Fist' wants a piece of them...

His torment will take two forms: 1) Torture by electrocution – inflicting 50Dpw's per zap, and 2) A showcase fist fight between Fritz and Neil for the Slaver's entertainment; a sort of post-apocalyptic WWF match-up moral booster.

The Big Finale

The Slavers Hideout:

Located close to the shore of Lake June, the Slaver's have taken over an old abandoned copper mine to us as their base. The land rises into a low hill, with a dilapidated warehouse style building built into the side of it. The entrance to the mine is right next to this building, but the Slaver's have built a walled annex between them to aid security when moving slaves between the main building and the holding pens in the mine.

Outside:

The open ground between the trees and the main buildings is pretty clear, offering very little in the way of cover. Some shrubs and empty oil drums from the mine are the best this clear fire zone has for the players to conceal their approach.

The three **Watchtowers** are 20ft in height with a ladder running up the centre for access. Each is usually manned by 2 standard Slavers; one of which will be issued with an M16A1 and 3 clips of ammo. The sandbags offer an armour value of 15 to the guards.

The three vehicles parked on either side of the main building are **7 ½ tonne Trucks** with canvas covered trailers. Each is fuelled and ready to go.

1. The Stables

The Slavers keep 12 horses in here. It is filled with straw and is usually unoccupied.

2. Tents

Four two man tents. Usually used as a sleeping area for the guards before of after shifts. At night there will usually be 1d6 Slavers in these tents.

3. Main Approach Road

Little more than an old dirt track, approaching vehicles are visible for about a mile down this road (from position 5.)

4. The Annex

A log structure built by the Slavers to cover the mine entrance. It has a flat roof mounting a sandbagged gun pit. A single Slaver mans this position, crewing an old M2HB with 2x 105rd belts. E-factor: 30.

Just in front of the building the remains of the tracks from the mine rail cart system can be seen.

5. The Warehouse - The Main Building

The largest structure in the clearing; it is largely made of corrugated steel which is rusting and buckling in places. The sandbagged enclosure in front of the doorway mounts a M2HB as per the Annex. See below for more on this building.

The **black ridge** running north to south on the map is a 15ft sheer dirt *cliff face* cut into the hillside. The Main Building backs straight onto it. It is possible to get onto the roof directly from the hill because of this.

Just over 150ft west of the hill is the shore of Lake June. It is too far from the base to offer any tactical advantage, as per the Imp base.

The Main Building:

1. The Warehouse A.k.a. The Arena

The largest room in the building, open right up to the corrugated ceiling. A mezzanine level balcony runs round the north and east walls at a height of 10ft.

Against the north wall are several drums of petrol (trigger happy players = kaboom!!)

To the west of the room are 3 large cages, which contain the captives taken from Riverton; the duty guard will have a key (Kurtis and Fritz have the other two).

The room is dominated by a makeshift boxing ring; constructed on top of some oil drums, with rough wood planks covered with an oily tarp. The fistfight between Fritz and Neil will take place here.

2. Bunkroom

Contains 5 bunk beds and personal effects; mainly used by the Enforcers.

3. Cookhouse

An improvised kitchen and food storage area. There is a small table and chairs in the bottom right corner, but this is hardly ever used. It is possible that a couple of the slaves will be literally chained to the sink preparing food for their guards at meal times. What was a window in the east wall has been smashed away to make a rough doorway.

4. The Annex

Covers the entrance to the old abandoned mine. Full of crates of foodstuffs; some ammo; and chains and rope. Several drums of oil stand against the east wall.

There will usually be a guard standing in here.

5. Fritz' Room

When he actually sleeps, Fritz can be found in this room. The window in this room is also used as a doorway to the roof of the annex by the guards.

6. Kurtis' Room

Similarly to Fritz', this room is rarely occupied. It contains little more than a bed and a desk, with some tatty maps of the U.S. tacked to the walls. There are no hints to the locations of Slaver towns because Kurtis commits them to memory for security reasons.

The Old Mine:

Electrical cable snakes over the floor running into the depths of the mine along the rusting rail tracks. A power cable strung with light bulbs hangs the length of the main corridor. Even a short way in, the mine is incredibly dank and cold. The throbbing of the generator echoes from deep within...

1. The Slave Cages

A guard is always on duty in this room, no matter what! The room is filled with four collapsible metal cages that contain the other captives; all chained together. There are 3 drums of diesel fuel against the one wall.

2. Dead End

A section of the mine that has collapsed. It has been propped up by the Slavers to prevent further problems. There are 6 drums of diesel in here.

3. The Old Mine Cart

A old rusting mine cart sits on the rails just in front of another collapsed section of the mine. After Neil is captured, he will awake tied to this cart, facing the cave-in. Fritz and Kurtis will interrogate him, and then leave him chained here until his time in the arena. The crates and oil drum to the left are empty.

4. The Generator

The bases diesel powered power source. It is always running, to provide light (particularly in the mine) and for recharging the Enforcers lead battery power packs for the tasers.

* Several batteries will be charging at anyone time.

It is very very heavy, but can be moved because it is built into a trailer with wheels. It is designed to be hitched to the back of one of the trunks for transport.

FINI

Ironmongery

The Weaponry of the Slavers

Slaver Shotgun

A clip fed 12-gauge semi-automatic shotgun manufactured in the Slaver towns of the Rich Five. It is basically the same weapon detailed in the MP Desert Search scenario, except it is not capable of full auto fire.

E-factor: 8 Eff. Range: 10m Max. Range: 150m Feed Device: 10rd Clip
RoF: 60rpm Wt. Empty: 4.1kg

Dart Gun

A bolt action single shot high-power air rifle used by the Slavers to fire tranquilliser darts. It has a low E-factor, but if it hits the target must resist the effects of a fast acting tranquiliser drug with a virulence class of **D**. Roughly 6 seconds after a strike, the hit character must roll over the listed death percentage to stay conscious each round. If they can stay awake for 10 rounds, their bodies have successfully resisted the toxin, and they will not be affected further. However, a second hit within the next 24 hours will result in a 10% penalty (cumulative for further strikes) to reflect the effect of the toxins still present in the blood stream. Poison rules on page 42 of the MPRB apply.

E-factor: 4 Eff. Range: 15m Max. Range: 100m Feed Device: Single Shot
RoF: 10rpm Wt. Empty: 3.5kg

Taser

A hand-held battery powered cattle prod. It is based around a 10inch-insulated handle with two contact prongs sticking from the end, and a push button on/off switch. A thick power lead runs from the other end to a battery pack worn on a backpack harness that is good for around 30 shocks before recharging.

When the on/off switch is flicked, a flare of blue light appears as the current passes between the contact prongs. If the prongs are pressed against a target they deliver a 220-volt shock inflicting 190 Dpw. Chance of unconsciousness is rolled on the *Whole Body Damage* table on page 41 of the MPRB. Unconsciousness lasts 1d20 + 20 – Characters Con score. In hand-to-hand this can be used to club an opponent with a +2 modifier.

A larger version of this weapon is also available; effectively a cattle prod, with the contacts mounted on the end of a 1-metre baton. In hand-to-hand this gives a modifier of +4.

Crossbow

A standard 25kg pull crossbow design; usually carried by the rank and file Slavers.

E-factor: 14 Eff. Range: 40m Max. Range: 400m

And the Rest

The Slavers have access to a small number of full-auto weapons purchased from the southern Slaver towns, or stolen from captives.

Dramatis Personae

In the Ruins of Riverton Cast List

The Bad Guys:

The Children of the Night

'King' Kurtis

The leader of the Slavers, and a wannabe member of the *Rich Five*, Kurtis is a cold and manipulative profiteer. He has no regard for human life in any form; it is merely a commodity to be bought and sold, used and abused.

He is a muscular, charismatic giant of a man, with piercing pale blue eyes and shoulder length black hair. He habitually wears a long 'duster' style leather coat, and smokes cigars purchased from his visits to some of the more organised Slaver towns. He owns a gold watch on a chain, a trade mark of his fastidious obsession with schedules and time keeping; so woe betide anyone of his posse who turns up late to a raid briefing.

Age: 35	Str	Con	Dex	Move	Endu.	Acc.	Cha	Luck	Sp/Bp	H&M
	18	17	15	4	255	75%	17	13	406	2

Equipment:

Matched Pair of Nickel-plated Colt .45 Pistols worn in a double-shoulder holster under his jacket. E-factor: 8 Ammo: 7+1 in each plus 2 extra Clips.

Small knife concealed in his right boot. Damage: 11(+2)

Fritz 'the Fist' Fletcher

Kurtis' second in command, and the groups head *Enforcer*, Fritz is violence personified. He is loyal to Kurtis, and enjoys the benefits that the riches of the slaver lifestyle bestow upon him, but his first love is pain... He loves to hurt people. He has even less regard for life than Kurtis, thinking nothing of unprovoked murder, rape, and mayhem. But, his speciality is torture; raised in a Slaver town to the south, he has been torturing and killing since his early teens. A born fighter, he prefers a fistfight to a gunfight any day.

He stands 5'8" tall, with virtually no neck, a pit bull of solid muscle. His head is shaved and he seems to wear a permanent scowl.

Age: 33	Str	Con	Dex	Move	Endu.	Acc.	Cha	Luck	Sp/Bp	H&M
	19	19	17	4	323	70%	7	10	461	0

Equipment:

A Magnum .357 Revolver in a hip holster. E-factor: 10 Ammo: 12rds carried.

Large Bowie bladed knife with knuckle-duster hand guard. Damage: Blade 12(+3) / KD 11(+2)

Knuckle-duster (in Hand-to-hand he will fight with this on his left fist and use the knife with his right hand).

The Enforcers

The 'real' children of the night... The Enforcers are the Slavers Elite Raiders. Hand chosen from the stock forces by Kurtis and Fritz, they represent the nadir of human moral fibre. Vicious and well trained, they carry out most of the snatch-and-run raids that start this scenario. They play on the fears of the primitive cultures of the post-apoc world, dressing in black and moving silently through the night, snatching the most *valuable* men, women and children for eventual sale once they return to the Slaver towns of the south. In this scenario there are 10 of them.

Str	Con	Dex	Move	Endu.	Acc.	Cha	Luck	Sp/Bp	H&M
16	16	15	4	240	65%	10	10	356	5

Equipment:

Dart Guns, Slaver Shotguns, knives, crossbows, nets.

Additional Skills:

Move Silently 75% Hide 75%

Standard Slaver

The stock cannon fodder of the Slaver community. A mixed bag of opportunists, thugs and deviants. They all hale from the southern Slaver towns. There are 20 in this scenario.

Str	Con	Dex	Move	Endu.	Acc.	Cha	Luck	Sp/Bp	H&M
15	13	13	3	169	60	10	10	295	5

Equipment:

Dart Guns, Slaver Shotguns, knives, crossbows, nets.

The Good Guys:

The Slaves

During the course of their raids as they've moved north the Slavers have captured 30 people in addition to the inhabitants of Riverton that they snatch during the scenario. None are particularly relevant to this scenario.

They consist of 17 Men, 11 Women and 2 Children.

In addition the Riverton captives are:

Billy Cassidy (41), his sons John (21) and Peter (18) and daughter Jessica (15).

And

Patrick Hale (37), his wife Betty (33) and daughter Sadie (12).

And any others that it becomes necessary to add to their collection in the course of ad-libbing my way through the scenario...