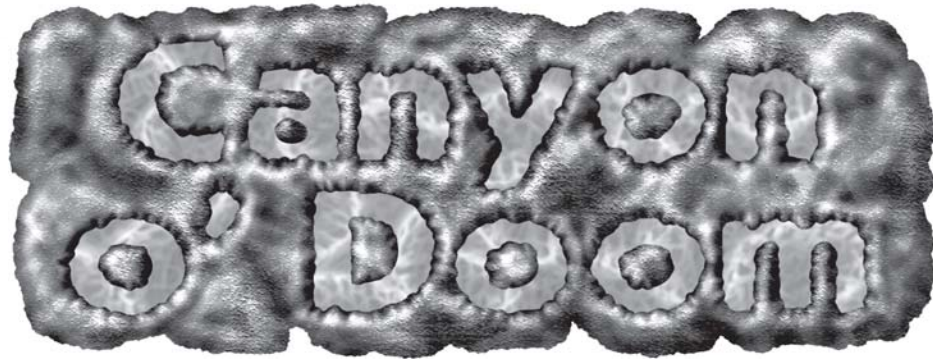


# Canyon o' Doom



HAL MANGOLD



BY HAL MANGOLD



# Canyon o' Doom: An Epic Tale o' Terror

**Written & Designed by:** Hal Mangold

**Editing & Layout:** Hal Mangold, Shane Hensley & Paul Duke

**Cover Art:** Tom Fowler

**Interior Art:** Jacob Rozen

**Maps:** Jeff Lahren

**Cover Design:** Hal Mangold & Zeke Sparkes

**Logos:** Charles Ryan, Ron Spencer & Zeke Sparkes

**Special Thanks to:** Shane, Michelle & Caden Hensley, Christy Hopler, Barry Doyle, John & Joyce Goff, the Listserv Rowdies, Jay Kyle, Jason Nichols, Audrey Anne Sukacz, Dave Seay, Ray Lau, Dave Wilson, Maureen Yates, & John "Z" Zinser

*Deadlands* created by Shane Lacy Hensley.

**Dedicated to:** Major John Wesley Powell and all the other explorers that showed us the wonders of our country.

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# TABLE O' CONTENTS

## Chapter One: How It All Begins.....5

The Story	
So Far .....	5
Major Players .....	11
The Setup .....	18
A Grand Announcement ..	20
Behind the Scenes .....	29

## Chapter Two: Canyon Bound!.....29

A Quiet Little Train Ride	29
Arrival .....	33

## Chapter Three: Living on the Edge.....45

Cliffside .....	45
Arriving in Cliffside .....	56
Time to Kill .....	57
The Last Day .....	60

## Chapter Four: The House of Stone & Light.....63

The Grand Canyon .....	63
The Expedition's Journey .....	72
Encounters .....	80

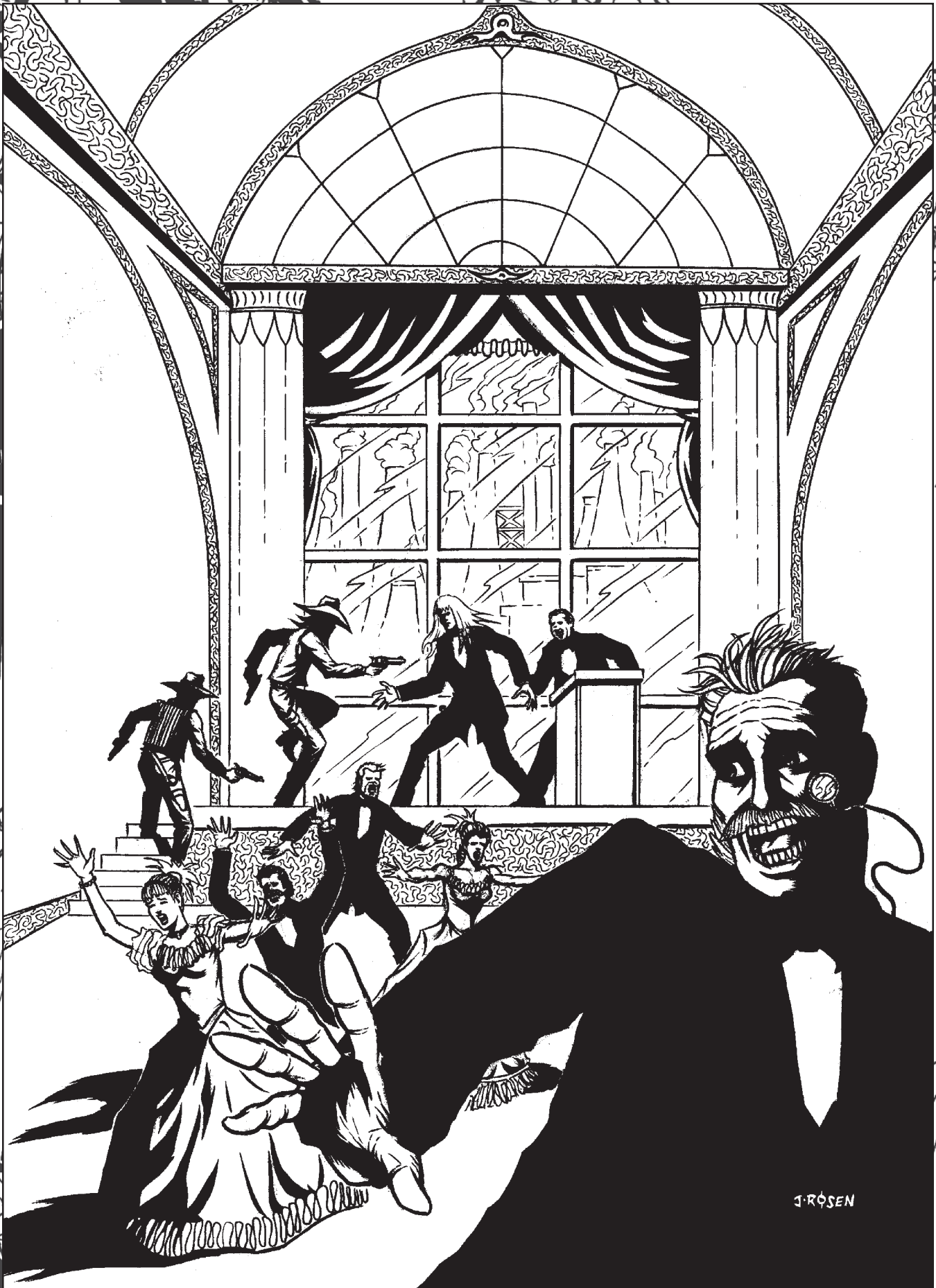
## Chapter Five: The Depths of the Earth.....85

The Caves Beneath .....	85
Locations .....	95

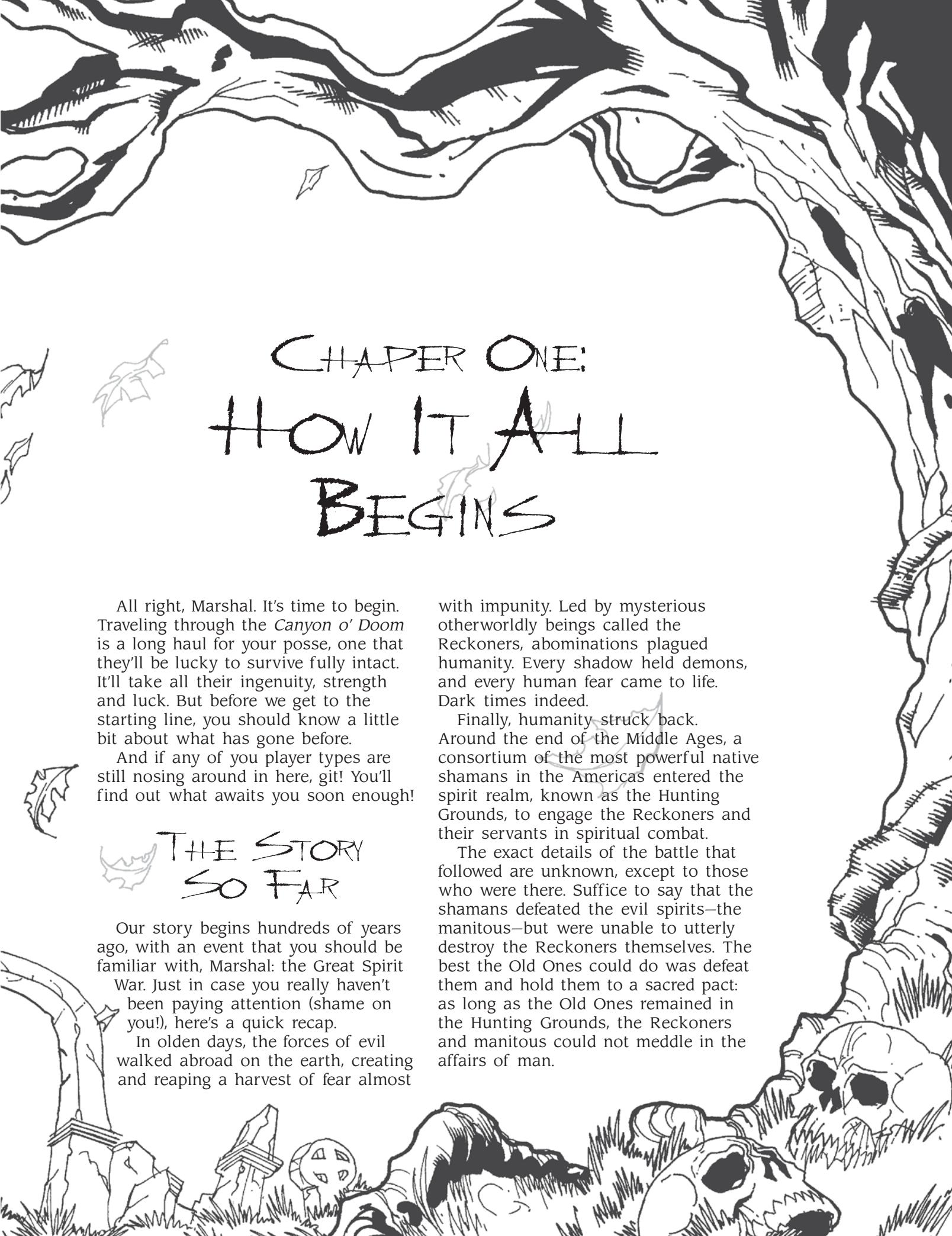
## Chapter Five: The Land Beneath.....109

The House of the Old One .....	109
Specific Locations .....	116
Aftermath .....	124





J. ROSEN



# CHAPTER ONE: HOW IT ALL BEGINS

All right, Marshal. It's time to begin. Traveling through the *Canyon o' Doom* is a long haul for your posse, one that they'll be lucky to survive fully intact. It'll take all their ingenuity, strength and luck. But before we get to the starting line, you should know a little bit about what has gone before.

And if any of you player types are still nosing around in here, git! You'll find out what awaits you soon enough!

## THE STORY SO FAR

Our story begins hundreds of years ago, with an event that you should be familiar with, Marshal: the Great Spirit War. Just in case you really haven't been paying attention (shame on you!), here's a quick recap.

In olden days, the forces of evil walked abroad on the earth, creating and reaping a harvest of fear almost

with impunity. Led by mysterious otherworldly beings called the Reckoners, abominations plagued humanity. Every shadow held demons, and every human fear came to life. Dark times indeed.

Finally, humanity struck back. Around the end of the Middle Ages, a consortium of the most powerful native shamans in the Americas entered the spirit realm, known as the Hunting Grounds, to engage the Reckoners and their servants in spiritual combat.

The exact details of the battle that followed are unknown, except to those who were there. Suffice to say that the shamans defeated the evil spirits—the manitous—but were unable to utterly destroy the Reckoners themselves. The best the Old Ones could do was defeat them and hold them to a sacred pact: as long as the Old Ones remained in the Hunting Grounds, the Reckoners and manitous could not meddle in the affairs of man.

The Old Ones were trapped—forever it seemed—with the malignant spirits they had defeated, but the horrors of our world abated and began to dwindle. The price the shamans paid was high, but they had won.

### SECRET WEAPONS

While it may seem almost unbelievable that a small group of human shamans could have battled the forces of the Reckoners to a standstill, it happened. You see, the nature spirits that the Old Ones communed with had told them what they were up against, and had taught them a secret ritual of power. The spirits told the shamans how to remove a bit of their souls from each of their bodies, anchoring them to the material world. Since the shamans would never be completely in the Hunting Grounds, they would be partially protected from the evil magic of the Reckoners. Of course, there was a catch.

They had to cut their own still-beating hearts out of their bodies.

To say that the medicine men were a bit taken aback is putting it mildly. None of the Old Ones had ever heard of such a ritual before. Scarring the body yes, mutilating it, perhaps. But completely removing a man's heart? Unheard of! But the spirits spoke clearly and, after a heated debate, the

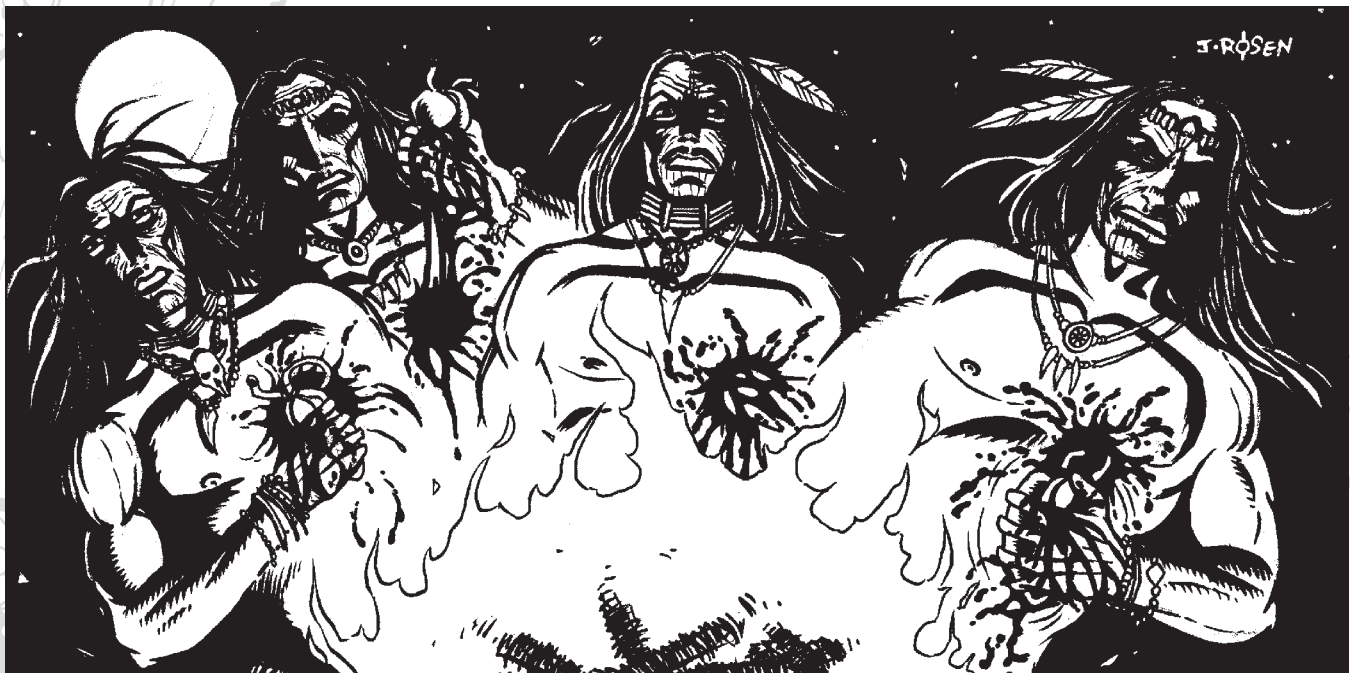
shamans all agreed that the spirits had led them this far. They had to trust them.

The ceremony took over two days to complete, and the pain that the Old Ones underwent was agonizing, as they cut each other's hearts from their bodies with sacred flint knives. The shaman's assistants and protectors looked on in horror, and were convinced that they were watching their spiritual leaders kill themselves, in front of their very eyes.

But the shamans' faith in the spirits was rewarded. The ritual worked.

### TAKE MY HEART, PLEASE

Each shaman's heart was removed from his body and placed in a specially prepared medicine bag. Each Old One entrusted his heart to one of the many warriors and apprentices who had accompanied them. These individuals were charged with the concealment and protection of the hearts, keeping the Old Ones' greatest secret. When the shamans crossed into the Hunting Grounds, their companions returned home to their tribes bearing their sacred trusts. Even if they were defeated, the Old Ones would not truly leave their people, and the link to the material world protected the shamans in the spirit world.



# RAVEN'S REVENGE

So, having defeated the forces of the Reckoners and bound them to a sacred pact, things settled down quite a bit back in the material world. Monsters passed into the mists of legend, and with the rise of reason and science, people gradually forgot the fears of their mothers and fathers.

Of course, it couldn't last forever.

The Old Ones never conceived that betrayal would come from their own people. On July 1, 1863 the vengeful Susquehana shaman known as Raven struck. Inspired by the Reckoners' whispered promises of vengeance against the white men who had killed everyone he knew and loved many years ago, Raven led his followers, called the Last Sons, through the same gate the Old Ones had used. One by one, they hunted and killed each of the Old Ones. Once the shamans were gone, the Reckoners were freed from their ancient bargain.

## SOLE SURVIVOR

But Raven's vengeance was not quite as complete as he thinks—there was a survivor of the massacre.

The Havasupai shaman Jordrava was not the strongest or bravest of the Old Ones, but he was perhaps the wiliest. As the other Old Ones fell to the Last Sons one by one, Jordrava realized what he had to do. He could not hope to defeat Raven and his compatriots, but if he could escape, the Old One's defeat would not be total.

Jordrava fled to the deepest reaches of the spirit plane, concealing himself as best he could. It took most of his power to hide from the hunters, but the wily shaman managed to pull it off. Then, concentrating on the one link he still had to the material world, his heart, Jordrava used his remaining spiritual strength to tear a hole between the Hunting Grounds and the material world. He passed through it and from the sight of the Last Sons.

With Jordrava's flight, there were no longer any Old Ones walking the Hunting Grounds. The pact was broken. On July 3, 1863, the Reckoners returned.

## CHAPTER ONE

9

### A NOT SO CLEAN GETAWAY

Jordrava's last desperate gambit was chancy at best, but it worked. He passed into the material world and was drawn to the piece of his soul contained in his heart like a moth to a flame.

So where did he end up? Well, Jordrava's assistant concealed his heart in the Havasupai's most secret of places: a massive cavern deep beneath the tribe's home in the Grand Canyon. The tunnels and caverns had been there far longer even than the Havasupai could remember. They were considered sacred by the Anasazi, precursors to the Indians who disappeared over a thousand years ago. The assistant created a talisman to lead future shamans through the dangerous caverns, in case Jordrava's heart ever had to be retrieved. This talisman has been passed down to each successive Havasupai shaman ever since.

Jordrava's escape from the Hunting Grounds brought him right into the cavern, close to the sacred shrine that held his heart. But the strain on the shaman was enormous, and the bright flame of his spirit was nearly extinguished by the perilous journey. Jordrava stumbled toward the sacred shrine that contained his mystically preserved heart, knowing that reuniting his fragmented soul would heal him—and collapsed in a heap, mere feet from the artifact.

There the last Old One has slept for the last 18 years, not alive, not dead, but caught in between.

### A WIDE OPEN DOOR

The Old One hasn't exactly waited alone, however. Jordrava's passage from the Hunting Grounds left a portal behind him, and in the years since 1863 other things have followed him through and made their home in the huge cavern beneath the earth. The House of the Old One, as the Havasupai call the now-mythical cavern, is a place of alien beauty—and danger.

And as for the rest of the ancient tunnels—well, they're no bed of roses either. With the return of the Reckoners, the entire area of the Grand Canyon has become decidedly less safe than it used to be, but the Havasupai's sacred caves have become quite the horror show. The place has even become home to a sizable colony of ghouls who have been feeding on the local area's dead for years.

Other than a few run-ins with the ghouls, these events haven't been noticed by the Havasupai—only the tribe's shaman even knows the actual location of the cave entrance—and they know a whole lot better than to journey down into the caves these days. Day-to-day life in the canyon is hazardous enough as it is.

## POWELL'S FOLLY

The Havasupai may know better than to go poking their nose down in the House of the Old One, but nosy Americans sure don't. Enter the famous Grand Canyon explorer Major John Wesley Powell, USA Ret. Already renowned for his 1869 and 1871 expeditions down the mighty Colorado river through the Grand Canyon, the one-armed Powell decided to mount yet another journey in Summer of 1873. It was a fateful choice.

Determined to find out as much as he could about the people of the Grand Canyon, both ancient and contemporary, Powell and his companions went sailing off down the Colorado in May of that year. Their boats were last sighted passing a small mining community called Cliffside, and they have never been heard from since.

Most people think that either the harsh terrain, unpredictable climate, the temperamental Colorado River and its rapids, or hostile natives took care of Major Powell. The truth is a bit more complex.

## THE 1873 EXPEDITION

Everything went smoothly for most of Powell's third expedition down the mighty Colorado. Travelling through Marble Canyon and into the Grand Canyon itself, Powell's group surveyed many of the ancient native ruins of the place, as well as talking with various bands of Navajo, Southern Paiutes, and Havasupai who called the canyon home.

The trip went very well, and John Wesley Powell decided to lead is expedition up Havasu Canyon, the home of the Havasupai. He reckoned that the Indians probably knew more about the Grand Canyon than anyone, and he wanted to see what he could learn by talking with them. Powell made contact with the Havasupai and spent about a week interviewing them.

Of special interest was the tribe's young shaman, Torak. The man was a mine of information on the Canyon, its ancient legends, and stories of the people who had come before the Havasupai. He got along very well with the white men. Unfortunately, Torak had a severe weakness for the whiskey that the expedition had brought with them. One night, roaring drunk, Torak told a story he should not have: he revealed the existence of the caverns to the white men, and told them that it held the Havasupai people's "greatest treasure" somewhere in its depths. Violating one of the greatest taboos passed down to him, Torak even showed them the Talisman of the Heart, the magical amulet used to lead one to the treasure.

While the stories of the Talisman's magical properties were lost on the skeptical explorers, the necklace was clearly valuable, and lent credence to the stories of the Havasupai treasure. Powell's companions, more than a little intrigued by thoughts of "Indian treasure" prodded the shaman for more information, and with a bit more whiskey in him, Torak let slip the location of the entrance to these caves: behind Havasu Falls.

The temptation was too much for the greediest of Powell's companions, a man named Lawrence Croft. Late that night he snuck back to the Havasupai camp and stole the Talisman while

Torak slept off the white men's whiskey. Croft returned to the explorer's camp and told them what he had done, and that he intended to enter the secret cave and find the hidden Havasupai treasure. He managed to appeal to the greedy side of Powell's men, and the group agreed to follow Croft's lead. They packed up and left that night for Havasu Falls.

What choice did Powell have? His chances of explaining what had actually happened to the angered Havasupai braves was almost nonexistent, and without his companions the one-armed explorer had little chance of making it out of the Grand Canyon alive, so along he went.

Torak immediately noticed that the Talisman was missing the next day, and when he was told that the white men had left during the night, he quickly put two and two together. Too embarrassed to explain his drunken behavior to his tribe, Torak followed the explorers himself.

He was too late. He found the expedition's equipment near the falls, and it was clear that they had already entered the caverns. Torak knew there was nothing he could do. He burned the expedition's discarded gear and waited a few days to see if they would return.

They didn't.

Torak returned to the tribe, telling them that the white men had disappeared. He has sworn off any sort of alcohol since, and has kept the secret of what really happened to Powell's expedition—as well as his shame at losing the tribes greatest treasure—to himself all these years.

## ESCAPE FROM BENEATH THE EARTH

Sure enough, Lawrence Croft, despite Powell's continual protests, had led the expedition behind Havasu Falls and down into the caverns below.

The band of explorers quickly discovered that the Talisman of the Heart did in fact act as a sort of lodestone; when dangled from it's rawhide thong, it would gently swing in the direction of—well, of the treasure that the shaman had spoken of,



obviously—though they still had no idea what it was. Led by Croft, the group of would-be tomb-raiders moved deeper and deeper into the caves, and Powell marvelled at the sights he beheld. Ancient paintings and carvings lined the wall, artifacts lay strewn across the floors of many chambers—it was an archaeological find of epic proportions!

Unfortunately, the explorers encountered a rather large snag. You see, Torak hadn't told the explorers about the "eaters of the dead" that now dwelt in the caverns. After all, they weren't part of the legend; they had only lived there for a few tens of years.

Powell and his companions walked right into a ghoulish colony that had set up house in the central section of the caverns. The ghouls spotted the explorers first and bushwhacked the small party. Powell's surprised and terrified men were slaughtered. Powell managed to snatch the Talisman from Croft's body and fled the only way that lay open. Deeper and deeper into the

darker reaches of the caves he wandered, finally reaching the massive cavern in which Jordrava's heart lay. For the first time in centuries, the House of the Old One had a human visitor.

It wasn't a pleasant visit. The bizarre things that he saw there were the straw that finally cracked Powell's sanity and he fled the way he came, through the caves above. The maddened explorer spent a few days stumbling around the caverns, desperately avoiding the ghouls. Finally, through sheer luck, he managed to find his way out.

When he finally came to his senses, Powell was on the floor of the Canyon. Unable to rely on help from the Havasupai who he and his men had betrayed, the battered explorer followed the Colorado River downstream in hopes of finding some friendly natives, trappers, miners—anyone to help him.

Here John Wesley Powell's incredible luck finally failed him. In a bizarre twist of fate, he had escaped the nightmare realm below only to die of exposure

and starvation on the floor of the very canyon that he had pioneered.

## A STRANGE DISCOVERY

No more was known of Powell until Spring of 1877. The spring rains were especially heavy, and drove the Colorado out of its banks, sweeping Powell's corpse and all he carried into the torrent. While the explorer's body was lost to the might of the Colorado, one thing did survive: a wooden box, tightly wrapped in oilcloth. It was found by a trapper who, puzzled by its contents, sold it to a curio dealer in Virginia City.

Totally by chance, it was purchased by an Englishman named Rutherford Ellington Dillenger, owner of a travelling museum of history and archaeology who happened to be passing through Virginia City. Picking it up on a whim, Dillenger was a bit surprised by what he found when he finally managed to jimmy the box open. Inside, protected from water damage by the oilcloth, lay the last possessions of John Wesley Powell, including the Talisman of the Heart, and a cryptic note detailing (in a rather deranged fashion) what had become of the expedition.

Dillenger lost no time in contacting the papers, Powell's family, and his friends at the Explorers Society. Evidence of Major John Wesley Powell's fate had been found!

## SEARCH PARTY

When Dillenger contacted the Explorers Society, one man stepped forward to find out exactly what happened to the Powell's 1873 expedition: Dr. Edgar Haskins, archaeologist, adventurer, and world traveler. Dr. Haskins has secured backing from the Explorer's Society, Powell's family Back East, Dillenger himself, and Smith & Robards, who have all agreed to provide him with state-of-the-art equipment. He intends to mount an expedition to find this "cathedral of stone" described in Powell's final letter. Haskins hopes that



by retracing the 1873 expedition's planned path into the Grand Canyon, he can find the amazing place that Powell referred to.

He has the money, he has the equipment, all he needs now are a few warm bodies to accompany him and his companion, a black woman named Sophie Miller.

Of course, Haskins has no real idea what he's getting into. If he knew what he was really looking for—as well as who he was racing against to find it—he might reconsider things.

## GRIMME TIDINGS

News of the discovery of Powell's belongings spread across the continent like wildfire. Papers from coast-to-coast ran with the story, and speculation on Powell's fate was, for a few short days, the talk of North America.

The discovery was noted with special interest by one being in particular: the Reverend Ezekiah Grimme. His dark masters had been sending him visions of something important to come. Grimme knew of the Hearts of the Old Ones, information he had gleaned from the capture and torture of an Indian shaman named Stalks-The-Night, the guardian of his tribe's Heart.

Grimme's visions from the Reckoners have told him that somehow the discovery of Powell's possessions, especially the Talisman of the Heart, is linked to one of the Hearts, and if Grimme could retrieve one and consume it, the power it would bring him would be considerable. Grimme has dispatched a team of his most trusted servants to locate the Heart, wherever it may be, and bring it to him.

## HERE & NOW

Haskins, with a little advice from the always canny Dillenger, has chosen Salt Lake City as the place to announce the expedition, and recruit the final members. Of course, Grimme's agents are on the move, and the announcement ceremony at the Salt Lake Grand Hotel in Junkyard may be a bit more exciting than even Haskins and Dillenger have counted on.

# CHAPTER ONE

13

## MAJOR PLAYERS

Well Marshal, now that you know about the events leading up to *Canyon o' Doom*, it's time to meet some of the main characters (other than the posse) in our little drama.

## THE EXPLORERS

While the posse will hopefully make up the bulk of the Haskins Expedition personnel, let's meet the leader, Dr. Edgar Haskins himself, and his bodyguard Sophie Miller.

### DR. EDGAR HASKINS,

Edgar Haskins was born in 1839, the only son of wealthy Boston shipping family. Edgar showed little interest in his father's business and turned instead to a life of academia, attending the University of Pennsylvania. His studies in archeology were interrupted by a two year tour in the US Army, but he returned to his alma mater in 1869 to finish up his doctoral degree.

His parents passed away in a tragic carriage accident that same year, leaving him the sole heir to the entire Haskins Shipping fortune. He had almost decided to give up his scholarly life and return to Boston to handle the family affairs when a friend of his offered to sponsor him for membership in the Explorer's Society. He accepted at once, finished his doctorate, and has never looked back. His travels since have taken him all over the world, from the Dark Continent to the wilds of the Russian Steppes. A trusted uncle sees to the company's affairs, and wires Edgar money whenever he needs it.

Edgar Haskins looks more like he should be teaching math than exploring ancient ruins and journeying to the ends of the earth. While decidedly not an amazing physical specimen, his iron will has seen him through those situations when his physical capabilities alone would have failed him.



There is only one thing that Haskins cares for more than the joy of discovery, and that is his constant companion—his bodyguard, he tells people—Sophie Miller. He loves her more than life itself, and would do anything for her. He's at pains to conceal this fact of course; Sophie is black, and even out on the range, Haskins knows that racial tensions can sometimes run high.

Haskins' travels have taken him—and for the last few years, Sophie—all over the globe. He has a dozen travel books to his credit, and expects the tracking of Powell's doomed expedition to be his greatest triumph yet.

The posse should find Dr. Haskins to be a friendly and likeable employer. He treats all of the members of the expedition as respected colleagues, and expects similar respect in return.

## PROFILE: DR. EDGAR HASKINS

**Corporeal:** D:4d6, N:3d8, Q:3d6, S:3d8, V:4d8

Climbin' 3d8, fightin': brawlin', whip 5d8, dodge 4d8, horse ridin' 3d8, shootin': rifle 7d6, sneak 4d8, swimmin' 3d8

**Mental:** C:3d8, K:3d10, M:4d8, Sm:5d10, Sp:2d12

Academia: archaeology 6d10, anthropology 4d10, occult 3d10, area knowledge: the Weird West 5d10, guts 5d12, language: sign language (Indian) 2d10, Spanish 4d10, French 2d10, Latin 3d10, leadership 5d8, search 3d8, streetwise 2d10, survival: desert 6d10

**Edges:** Dinero 4, friends in high places 4 (Explorers Society & various other prominent patrons Back East), nerves o' steel

**Hindrances:** Curious, enemy -2 (Texas Rangers & the Agency), heroic, impulsive

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 20

**Special Abilities:**

**Grit:** 2

**Favored By Fate:** Consider Haskins to have 1 chip of each type at the beginning of each fight. These can only be used to negate wounds.

**Gear:** When on the trail, Haskins usually carries a Sharp's Big .50 with 30 rounds of ammo. He also carries a Bowie knife (which he uses as a tool) and a whip.

**Description:** Haskins is a thin bookish-looking fellow of medium height, with watery blue eyes and wispy blond hair. Though frail looking of body, there is steel in his stare.

## SOPHIE MILLER

Sophie Miller is Edgar Haskins' constant companion, assistant, bodyguard and lover. Sophie and Edgar keep this aspect of their relationship pretty discrete—after all he is white and Sophie is black. Not everyone is so enlightened yet.

Sophie was born to free homesteaders in Kansas, and grew up to become a tough, no nonsense range gal. When border ruffians killed her

parents and brother back in '68, she hunted down each and every one of the bastards then fled out West, wanted as a murderess.

She met Edgar Haskins while working as a wagon train guard seven years ago. She was immediately engaged by Haskins's quick wit, easy charm, and the respect that he gave her. The two fell in love, and Sophie has travelled with him ever since, from South America to London to the Yukon and beyond.

Edgar has had a "civilizing" influence on Sophie (she occasionally wears a dress for him, for example), but at her heart, Sophie is still a rough and tumble cowgirl. Friendly and gregarious, she loves to drink and to fight, and can swear a blue streak that could make the roughest cowpuncher blush.

She's also as devoted to Edgar as he is to her. She'd give her life for him in a second. And this adventure being what it is, she may end up doing just that.

#### PROFILE: SOPHIE MILLER

**Corporeal:** D:3d8, N:3d10, Q:3d10, S:3d8, V:5d6

Climbin' 3d8, fightin': brawlin', knife 7d10, dodge 4d10, horse ridin' 3d10, shootin': pistol, shotgun 5d8, sneak 5d10, speed load: shotgun 4d8, swimmin' 3d10, teamster 6d10

**Mental:** C:4d8, K:2d6, M:2d12, Sm:2d8, Sp:4d8

Animal wranglin': bronco bustin' 6d12, area knowledge: the Disputed Lands 5d12, bluff 5d8, gamblin' 4d8, guts 5d8, language: sign language (Indian) 2d6, Spanish 3d6, overawe 3d12, search 5d8, streetwise 2d8, survival: desert 6d8

**Edges:** Light sleeper, tough as nails 5, two-fisted

**Hindrances:** Loyal, obligation -5 (protect Haskins), outlaw 3, stubborn

**Pace:** 10

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 24

**Special Abilities:**

**Grit:** 2

**Favored By Fate:** Consider Sophie to have 1 chip of each type at the beginning of each fight. These can only be used to keep her from taking damage.

## CHAPTER ONE

15

**Gear:** Sophie always carries at least one knife on her person somewhere, and when on the trail wears two large Bowie knives sheathed on her legs. She also packs a Winchester Lever-action Shotgun and a double action Colt Peacemaker, with 25 rounds for each.

**Description:** Sophie is a black woman of medium height, with pretty features, and piercing brown eyes. She keeps her hair cut close to her head and usually wears men's trail clothes.

## THE CANNIBALS

Reverend Grimme isn't known for doing things by halves. He's dead set on getting his hands on one of the Hearts of the Old Ones, and he's put together a team of his cultists strong enough—and intelligent enough—to do it.

Keep in mind that while the cultists do know what they are looking for, and know that the Talisman is important to it, they have no special knowledge about what obstacles lie ahead.

Travelling incognito as a simple group of missionaries from the Church of Lost Angels, Grimme hopes that his servants will bring him the object of his desire.

## FATHER EMMANUEL WILKES

The leader of Grimme's little expedition is Father Emmanuel Wilkes, one of the most ardent missionaries of the Church of Lost Angels. Even before Grimme threw down his Edict and stepped up proselytizing activities throughout the Weird West, Wilkes was walking the dusty trail, spreading the "Word of God" to the unwashed masses. His street-corner sermons are well known in towns like Tombstone, Cedar City, Yuma, Denver and even the Mormon stronghold of Salt Lake City.

While most perceive him to be a harmless but annoying crank, Wilkes is actually one of Grimme's most trusted agents. A member of the Inner Circle of

the Cult o' Lost Angels almost since the beginning, he has acted as Grimme's eyes and ear all over the Great Maze and the Weird West for many years.

Recently, the Reverend called Father Wilkes back to the City o' Lost Angels and charged him with a task that would strike a great blow against the unbelievers. Wilkes is charged with seizing the Talisman of the Heart from the Haskins Expedition, finding the hiding place of the Old One's heart deep in the Grand canyon, and bringing the heart back to Lost Angels. Wilkes knows that failure will not be tolerated.

Father Wilkes, like most of the Cult o' Lost Angels, is an insane cannibalistic fanatic totally loyal to Grimme's ever decree. However, his insanity has not hampered his keen intellect and devious mind one bit. This intelligence, along with the Black Magic powers granted him, make Wilkes a deadly opponent. He is never armed, relying on his magic and his followers to protect him in a fight.

#### PROFILE: EMMANUEL WILKES

**Corporeal:** D:3d10, N:3d6, Q:3d10, S:3d8, V:5d8

Climbin' 3d6, fightin': brawlin' 3d6, dodge 5d6, sneak 5d6, swimmin' 3d6, throwin': bolts o' doom 7d10

**Mental:** C:3d10, K:2d12, M:3d8, Sm:5d8, Sp:7d12

Area knowledge: the Great Maze, 5d12, bluff 5d8, guts 5d12, language: sign language (indian) 2d6, Spanish 3d6, search 5d8, streetwise 2d8, survival: desert 6d8

**Edges:** Arcane Background: Black Magic 3, friends in high places 4 (Church of Lost Angels), tough as nails 3

**Hindrances:** Loco -3 (cannibal psychopath), hankerin': human flesh (mild) -3

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 26

#### Special Abilities:

**Black Magic:** Animal mastery 4, bolts o' doom 5, cloak o' evil 5, forewarnin' 3

**Gear:** Five Bones of the Bloody ones (see below), a piece of the Altar Stone (see below), a bible.

**Description:** Wilkes is a thin wiry man with pale skin and short kinky red hair. He always dresses in the black frock coat and celluloid collar of a frontier preacher.

#### THE ALTAR FRAGMENT

The Cult o' Lost Angels used to be restricted to the City o' Lost Angels as far as using their magic went. Within its mystic pattern of streets, their dark



magic looked like the work of God Almighty, but out of town it's true evil is revealed.

Father Wilkes has thus been issued one of these most potent of weapons. Within about a one mile radius of the altar fragment, all of the cultist's magic (including bloody ones) take on a decidedly angelic cast. Bolts o' doom look like beams of heavenly light and bloody ones look like white-robed angelic servitors rather than the demonic creatures they truly are.

Keep in mind that this effect is voluntary. If Father Wilkes wants everyone to see what he and his followers truly look like, he can drop the illusion instantly.

### BROTHER CAIN

Father Wilkes' constant companion, servant, and bodyguard is the man-mountain known as Brother Cain. To all outside appearances Cain is just a man, albeit an absolutely huge one. He speaks very little, and tends toward monosyllables when he does break his silence.

There is far more to Brother Cain than meets the eye, however. You see, Brother Cain isn't quite human. He's one of the Fallen, demonic spirits from the Hunting Grounds that serve the Grimme. Cain is a particularly strong and versatile member of the species, and even has the ability to take on a human form. He serves as Wilkes chief enforcer and follows the Avenging Angel's orders without question.

Brother Cain enjoys his work, and take great pleasure in causing pain and suffering.

### PROFILE: BROTHER CAIN

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:3d10, Q:3d12, S:4d12+6, V:5d6

**Fightin':** brawlin' 8d10, dodge 4d10, sneak 5d10, swimmin' 3d10

**Mental:** C:2d4, K:1d4, M:2d12, Sm:2d8, Sp:4d8

**Overawe** 5d12, **search** 5d8, **streetwise** 2d8, **survival:** desert 6d8

**Pace:** 10/24 flying (in demonic form)

**Size:** 8/12 (in demonic form)

**Wind:** —

**Terror:** 11 (in demonic form)

## CHAPTER ONE

17

### Special Abilities:

**Armor:** 3

**Damage:** Claws (STR), Tail Lash (STR+1d4, DEF +1). Brother Cain can attack with both claws and tail on each of his actions. If the demon hits with his tail, he may elect to stun his opponent rather than doing lethal damage. The target must make an opposed *Nimbleness* check with Brother Cain. Success means he is merely knocked down and must spend an Action getting back to his feat. Failure mean that the poor slob is stunned. These abilities are only available to Brother Cain in his demonic form.

**Flight:** Pace 24, only in demonic form.

**Hunger:** Brother Cain must kill and eat a human at least once every three days, or he goes into a mindless frenzy until he does.

**Shapeshifting:** Brother Cain can alter his appearance to that of a remarkably ugly man. It takes him but a single action to revert to his native form (and provoke one Hell of a *guts* check). Incidentally, not even the power of the Altar Stone can mask Brother Cain's true appearance when he changes.

**Description:** In his human form, Brother Cain looks like a hulking Neanderthal of a man, with a massive brow overshadowing beady black eyes. His monstrous form looks very much like a classic demon, with horns, a long spiked tail, and huge bat-like wings.

### THE GUARDIAN ANGELS

In addition to the services of Cain, Reverend Grimme has also given Wilkes a posse of Guardian Angels to assist him in his "holy task".

Keep in mind that these particular guardian angels have been fully introduced to the inner mysteries of the Cult o' Lost Angels. They're fanatic cannibals who are more than willing to

die for the glory of their dark master. They're also a good bit more competent than the garden variety thug.

This posse of Angels consists of ten men and six women. They travel disguised as simple missionaries, and are normally armed only with pistols and knives (like any sensible traveller in the Weird West). However, when they are gunning for trouble, they arm themselves with the Winchester '76s concealed in their wagon.

### PROFILE: GUARDIAN ANGELS

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:2d8, S:2d8, Q:4d6, V:2d6

**Fightin':** brawlin', knife 4d8, shootin': pistol, rifle, shotgun 4d6, sneak 3d8

**Mental:** C:1d6, K:1d6, M:1d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d8

**Guts** 3d8, **overawe** 2d8, **persuasion** 2d6, **search** 2d8, **streetwise** 3d6

**Edges:** Law man 1 (Lost Angels only)

**Hindrances:** Self-righteous

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 14

**Gear:** See above.

**Description:** Guardian Angels come from all walks of life, and are usually easily recognized by their distinctive robes. However, these Angels are in disguise as Father Wilkes' entourage of religious missionaries.

### BONES O' THE BLOODY ONES

What posse of fanatical cannibals would be complete without a few of the Cult o' Lost Angels magical foot-soldiers, the horrific creatures known as bloody ones. Priests of the cult are sometimes granted enchanted bones taken from their victims. Grimme gifts them with a twisted miracle that summons forth a bloody zombie with putrefying organs, looking much as Grimme did during his rebirth.

A cultist (or anyone else with the bone in hand) need only toss the enchanted bone on the ground to

summon the horrid servants. The bloody one follows its summoner's orders to the letter—but only if the summoner is a flesh-eating member of Grimme's cannibal cult. If not, it turns on the summoner immediately, devouring him and then collapsing into a bloody and useless pile of bones.

Keep in mind that while within the radius of Father Wilkes' Altar Fragment, the bloody one's true nature is hidden. They look like white-robed angelic servitors as long as Wilkes wears the stone (and wills it to be so). Of course, heroes don't have to make Terror checks while this is in effect.

An hour after it is summoned, the shambling thing collapses into a pile of steaming gore. Bloody ones do not speak, though they do sometimes emit a slurpy laugh (hence the high *ridicule*).

### PROFILE: BLOODY ONES

**Corporeal:** D:3d6, N:3d10, S:3d8, Q:3d10, V:3d8

**Dodge** 2d10, **fightin':** brawlin' 4, **sneak** 4d10

**Mental:** C:4d8, K:1d4, M:2d8, Sm:2d8, Sp:3d6

**Overawe** 4d8, **ridicule** 4d8, **search** 4d8, **trackin'** 3d8 (by scent)

**Pace:** 10

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** —

**Terror:** 9

**Special Abilities:**

**Damage:** Claws (STR+1d6), bite (STR+1d6)

**Undead:** Focus—Head

**Description:** Bloody Ones look like corpses with their flesh gnawed off—which is exactly what happened.

### THE WILD CARD

There is another player in this little drama as well. The movements of Grimme's agents have not gone unnoticed. Members of the Spiritual Society, a group of Chinese Taoists dedicated to fighting the horrors of the Reckoning, are also on the trail. Ho Li Kwan is an accomplished martial artist and experienced agent of the Society. His holy missions have carried him all across the Weird West, so he was a

natural choice to follow the posse that Grimme dispatched from Lost Angels.

Ho has no real idea what the Angels are up to, but he knows that it can't be good. He has tangled with Father Wilkes before, and is aware that there is far more to Brother Cain than meets the eye—although he has no idea what.

For now, Ho just follows the Lost Angels and watches. He keeps out of sight as much as possible. Most of the time he plays the stereotypical Chinaman from American dime novels. While this act may seem a bit much, Ho Li has found that if he acts exactly how most folks expect a Chinese to act, they usually radically underestimate him.

Whether Ho Li Kwan plays a large part in *Canyon o' Doom* is a decision we leave for you to make, Marshal. At various points throughout the narrative, we'll offer you opportunities to work Ho Li Kwan into the adventure, but whether you take us up on them is your business. Ho can be a red herring, a savior, or perhaps even an enemy, all depending on how you want to play it. Just remember that the posse are the real heroes of this story, and we don't want the extras overshadowing them.

Ho Li Kwan is a martial artist, and you can find the special rules needed to fully use his powers in *The Great Maze* boxed set. If you don't have access to that spectacularly good supplement (plug, plug), up his *fightin'*, *bow* and *dodge* Aptitudes by two points each and ignore his special powers.

#### PROFILE: HO LI KWAN

**Corporeal:** D:3d10, N:4d12, Q:3d12, S:3d6, V:4d6

Bow 5d10, Climbin' 2d12, *fightin'*: Wing Chun kung fu 7d12, *dodge* 3d10, *sneak* 5d10, *quick draw*: sword 3d12, *swimmin'* 3d10, *sneak* 2d12,

**Mental:** C:2d10, K:1d8, M:2d6, Sm:2d6, Sp:4d12

Academia: occult 3d8, area knowledge: the Great Maze 2d8, guts 4d12, language: English 2d8, search 2d10

**Edges:** Enlightened, martial arts training, "the stare"

**Hindrances:** All thumbs, *ferner*, heroic, "my Kung fu is superior!" -2, oath -2 (destroy evil), "sifu! sifu!" -2

**Pace:** 12

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 18

**Special Abilities:**

**Grit:** 2

**Kung Fu:** Abundance of pecking birds 4, blood of gold 2, monkey goes to the mountain 2, ten foot punch 2, wind blows over the earth 2. **Starting Chi:** 32

**Gear:** Ho carries a Chinese sword (STR+2d6, and he uses his *fightin'*: *Wing Chun kung fu* to strike with it) rolled up in a bedroll, along with an unstrung bow and 20 arrows.

**Description:** Ho dresses like a Chinese rail worker, wearing simple clothes and the derogatorily named "coolie hat." His long black hair hangs in a long queue down his back,



## THE SETUP

Well, now that you know the skinny on what and who are involved in our little story, let's move on to the why, shall we?

## AN INCREDIBLE ANNOUNCEMENT!

Several weeks ago, Rutherford Ellington Dillenger, owner of the famous travelling museum, let it be known that he would be making a momentous announcement at the Salt Lake City Grand Hotel. His train pulled into the Denver Pacific depot some three days ago.

Dillenger's arrival and his impending announcement has added to Junkyard's freewheeling feel. Attracted by the man's reputation, as well as rumors of involvement of the Explorers Society and Smith & Robards, journalists from all over the continent, both North and South have made their way to this distant outpost of civilization to hear what the Englishman has to say. Even the *Lost Angels'* paper, the *End Times*, has sent a correspondent (secretly a spy for the Cult o' Lost Angels, of course).

If your heroes have worked together before and have been through the adventure "Abra-Cadabra, Arab Cadaver" in the *Hucksters & Hexes* sourcebook, they may be familiar with Mr. Dillenger. Unfortunately he is busy for the three day before the announcement. The heroes have to wait until after the announcement to see him.

## GETTING THE HEROES INVOLVED

All that's really required to get things started is the heroes' presence at the ceremony announcing the Explorer's Society expedition. They don't even really have to know each other yet, if you're just starting out a new campaign.

Why would the heroes want to attend something like this? Well, there's all sorts of reasons. One is just simple curiosity. The saloons of Junkyard are full of talk of Dillenger's arrival for a week ahead of the announcement date, and rampant barroom speculation about what he's announcing may be enough to draw the posse's attention.

For those more sedentary posses, a more direct reason to attend the press conference may be necessary. The Salt Lake Grand Hotel is hiring extra bodies for security work, and there are rumors floating around that whatever is being announced, there just might be some job opportunities for brave, able bodied men and women.

Of course, any muckrakers in the posse will certainly want to cover the story for whatever paper they string for. They wouldn't want to be the only reporter in the area NOT covering the event now, would they?

Additionally, anyone who actually happens to be a member of the Explorers Society actually receives, by special delivery, an invitation to the event.

## SECRET ORDERS

Agents and Texas Rangers have a special incentive to attend. A few days before the announcement, such heroes receive messages from their superiors instructing them to attend the announcement and attach themselves to the expedition in whatever capacity possible. They are to protect the expedition and insure its success using all means at their disposal, and they are not to reveal their identities to the Explorers involved in the expedition under any circumstances. They are also to ensure that no evidence of anything supernatural makes it to the press at the expedition's end.

No further clarifications or orders are given, but if the hero can actually talk to one of his superiors about the mission, she is assured that the rewards for completing this mission successfully will be commensurate with the risks. If you're feeling generous, you might hand a hero a few clues about what lies ahead of them. For instance, persistent rumors of a

City o' Ghouls have been filtering out of the area for years, and you might drop a hint about it to an inquisitive Agent or Ranger.

## THE CITY O' GLOOM

Here's a brief primer on the City o' Gloom, enough for you to set the scene for the opening of *Canyon o' Doom*. You don't need to know too much to get things going as the action quickly moves on from here, but if you really want to know a bit more about Salt Lake City, we recommend that you pick up the *City o' Gloom* boxed set. It fills in all the gaps left herein. Those of you who already have that fine product can skip on ahead a bit.

Incidentally, if starting in the City o' Gloom just doesn't fit in with your campaign, you can move the starting point to another place if necessary. It will take a bit of rearranging in the first two chapters, but it can be done.

Salt Lake City is the largest city in Deseret (that's Utah to you gentiles), and the spiritual and temporal power center of the Mormons, a religious movement led by the powerful and charismatic Brigham Young. It's also the city in which the (in)famous Dr. Darius Hellstromme makes his home, and the location of every mad scientist's best friend, the Smith & Robards company. Between the presence of Hellstromme Industries and Smith & Robards, Salt Lake City has become the most technologically advanced city on earth.

## CITY OF INDUSTRY

While the Mormons love all the economic prosperity that these two industrial giants have brought to their city, they're less enamored of its side effects. A veritable tidal wave of non-Mormons, or gentiles, have come to the Kingdom of God on Earth. To keep these filthy factories and general industrial Hell from overflowing into the nicer sections of town (where all the Mormons live), Brigham Young has cordoned off a section of the city for industrial development, and a de facto ghetto for the gentiles, as well. This ghetto has become one of the most crowded urban areas in North America

## THE TIME O' THE SEASON

*Canyon o' Doom* is set roughly in the middle of Summer of 1877. No specific date for the events in here are given, but there are many references to the heat, and travelling hazards that might not come up at other times of the year.

However, please don't feel hidebound by the set of circumstances provided in here. If you want your posse to face the perils of the Grand Canyon in the blistering cold of winter as opposed to the sweltering heat of summer, that's okay with us (you sadist). Of course things will be a bit different if you choose to do so. You'll probably want to tweak the encounters in the wilderness a bit to compensate. The notes on the Grand Canyon presented on page XX should give you a good guideline of what to hit your heroes with if you want a change of season.

The major events of the adventure, such as encounters with Grimme's men and all the underground exploration can occur no matter what time of year it is.

This section of town is known by most as Junkyard. While it is not illegal for gentiles to live outside of Junkyard, there is a tacit social discrimination practiced by the Mormons that keeps the majority of them living there. One of the most distinctive features of Junkyard is the "Steel Sky", a twisted latticework of pipes, ducts, and wires that blots out most of the light over large sections of Junkyard. This is the section of town in which our story begins, at the Salt Lake City Grand hotel.

The Mormons of Salt Lake City reside in much more comfortable conditions. Their section of town is much cleaner and less crowded, and non-Mormons are viewed with a bit of suspicion by those living there.

Lately, the more sensational elements of the press have begun to refer to Salt Lake City as "the City o' Gloom", due mostly to the near-constant cloud of soot that hangs over the place, spewed forth by the round-the-clock workings of the factories of Hellstromme Industries.

# A GRAND ANNOUNCEMENT

Dillenger's announcement (and thus the beginning of *Canyon o' Doom*) is scheduled for one o' clock in the afternoon, and is being held in the grand ballroom of the Salt Lake City Grand hotel, the nicest hotel to be found in Junkyard. That isn't necessarily saying much, but owner Jim Willis has been making an effort to make the hotel upscale, despite its less than desirable location.

The ballroom is about 20 yards long by 8 yards wide with two sets of double doors on the south and east walls, and a smaller single door located on the north wall behind the four-foot high stage hung with festive purple bunting. The western wall has three large gallery windows, discreetly barred, that look out onto the streets of Junkyard. For obvious reasons, the curtains are drawn most of the time.

Standing upon the stage are a wooden lectern, a row of four wooden chairs, and what looks to be a large box or crate, covered by a sheet of the same material that drapes the stage. This is actually the glass display case that holds Powell's salvaged possessions. A wooden plaque bearing the logo of the Explorer's Society hangs on the front of the lectern. To the right of the stage, a string quartet serenades the mostly unappreciative audience with a rendition of Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons".

The public is admitted to the grand ballroom starting at noon, and by 12:30 the place is a madhouse.

To say the press conference is well attended is an understatement. There are at least 250 people crammed into the room, mostly reporters, but quite a few curious onlookers and gawkers as well. Cameras flash, pencils scribble, and the din of all the voices in the room is deafening.

When your heroes arrive at the ballroom, casually ask them where they're going to sit. Don't make a big deal about it, but try to get a general idea where everyone is in the hall. It's going to be important in just a bit.

## STARTING THE SHOW

At one o' clock on the dot things get underway. The crowd quiets but cameras continue to flash as Dillenger and Haskins enter from the small door beside the stage. Dillenger walks to stand behind the lectern to the polite applause of the crowd, while Dr. Haskins stands next to the covered box.

Let any hero sitting in the front part of the room make a Fair (5) *Cognition* roll. If he makes it, he notices a black woman in a plain but elegant dress sitting in the front row. She seems to be watching the proceedings on stage intently—even more intently than the reporters in the room. A raise on the roll tells a hero that she's mostly keeping an eye on Dr. Haskins.

## DILLENGER'S SPEECH

Once the crowd has quieted down, Rutherford Edward Dillenger begins to speak. Go ahead and read the following speech to your players. Remember to ham it up, and slap on your worst upper-class British accent. Dillenger is a larger than life sort of character.

*"My friends, colleagues, and curious onlookers, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Rutherford Ellington Dillenger, proprietor and owner of Dillenger's Mobile Museum of Curiosities and Relics. You may have heard of my wonderful travelling museum, spreading knowledge and culture throughout the frontier wherever the train tracks permit me."*

He pauses here for a polite round of applause from the assembled crowd, then clears his throat and continues.

*"Thank you, thank you. But I am not here to promote my museum today, friends."*

*There cannot be a one among you who is not familiar with the name 'Major John Wesley Powell.' As you are no doubt aware, Major Powell's 1869 and 1871 expeditions down the Colorado River and into the Grand Canyon were the first to ever explore, map and document that natural wonder. And I am sure you are also aware of the tragic loss of his third and final expedition into the 'House of Stone and Light', as the local native peoples call it. The fate of Powell's valiant band of men was the subject of endless speculation back in 1873. It has been assumed, from then to now, that the expedition's tragic end was brought about by either the mercurial forces of nature that rule the Grand Canyon, or by hostile natives in the area. But such is not the case.*

*How do I know this you ask? Well, the more connected among you may have heard rumors in the press of late about the discovery of evidence of the lost expedition's fate. I am here today to tell you that those rumors are true! "*

At this point a great murmur races through the crowd. Dillenger looks satisfied with the effect his words have had, and continues.

*"You see my friends, three short months ago, a wooden box was brought to Virginia City for sale, the very box you see displayed next to me. The seller, a man who shall remain nameless, had recovered the box while plying the lower reaches of the mighty Colorado River, below the Grand Canyon.*

*Being the intelligent if rustic fellow that he was, this man recognized the fine workmanship of the box. He sold it to a curio dealer in Virginia City where I, with my keen eye for strange and wonderful objects, quickly picked it out as something important. But I had no idea of the momentousness of this discovery!*

*You see, my friends, that humble box contained the possessions and last known writings of—John Wesley Powell! "*

Once again, Dillenger pauses for dramatic effect as a murmur goes up among the crowd.

*"Yes, my friends, it is true! But it would be a mistake for me to say that we have truly divined the noble explorer's fate. His journal has been subjected to the extremes of nature, and only the final entry is readable. And yet it speaks, albeit in somewhat oblique terms, of an almost unbelievable archaeological find, located somewhere in the Grand Canyon!*

*Alas, with the destruction of the greatest part of Major Powell's journal, finding this amazing place—he describes it in most glowing terms in his final writings, I assure you—may seem an insurmountable task. Not so, I tell you my friends! You may be familiar with the association of explorers and adventurers known as the Explorer's Society. That noble organization, along with backing from myself, Major Powell's surviving family Back East, and generous contributions from the Smith & Robards company, has agreed to mount an expedition not just to discern the exact fate of Major John Wesley Powell, but to hopefully rediscover the incredible place that he claims to have seen!*

*This expedition, led by my companion on the stage, Dr. Edgar Haskins, member in good standing of the Explorer's society, shall follow the route through the Grand Canyon that Major Powell's 1873 expedition had planned to take, hopefully resulting in an archaeological find of the magnitude of the Cardiff Giant!"*

At this, with a dramatic flourish, Haskins whips the cover off of the glass display case, revealing Powell's possessions as well as the box that contained them.

#### UNVEILING

The crowd crane their collective necks, straining to see what is in the case, and another flurry of flashes from cameras go off. Unless a hero has got herself a seat up front, she may not have much luck discerning the case contents, but to anyone who can see, here they are: The left hand side of the case contains a battered and waterlogged book bound in leather, presumably a journal, a steel knife with a rusted and corroded blade, and a strange-looking necklace of obvious ancient origin.

The right hand side displays a gold pocket watch engraved with the initial JWP, a few pot shards, and a strange piece of dried plant material—some sort of fungus by the look of it.

The crowd "ooohhhs" and "ahhhs" for a few moments, and a few more photographers move to the front to get better pictures of the case's contents. Both Dillenger and Haskins look extremely pleased with the reaction. Dillenger steps back over to the podium and gets ready to resume speaking. He never gets the chance.

#### GATE CRASHERS!

While the crowd is gazing in wonder and curiosity at the objects in the glass case, a few distinctly unpleasant looking fellows slip in through all three doors to the room. Father Wilkes' hired thugs are making their move!

#### THE DIXON GANG

Just because Father Wilkes is a member of the Cult o' Lost Angels doesn't mean he's a good judge of character or competence. He's hired a local group of thugs to try and steal the necklace in the display case, which is, as you may have guessed if you're paying attention, the Talisman of the Heart. The thugs, led by a self-aggrandizing petty cattle rustler named Buford Dixon, style themselves the Dixon Gang, and they are definitely not the sharpest knives in the drawer.

Father Wilkes had intended that the Dixon Gang acquire the Talisman by stealthy means, but he hadn't counted on the ego of Buford Dixon. Dixon's out to make a name for himself, and he figured that a high profile daylight robbery is just the way to do it.

The Dixon Gang may seem like pushovers to you Marshal. Very perceptive. This fight isn't meant to really give the heroes much of a challenge. Buford is much better at talking about crime rather than actually committing one, and this combat really shouldn't take too much out of the heroes. It's mainly meant to get the action going and impress upon Edgar Haskins and Dillenger that your posse are folks experienced at handling trouble.

That said, if your heroes are sloppy, smack 'em around a little bit. We don't suffer fools gladly around here.



## PROFILE: BUFORD DIXON

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:2d8, S:2d8, Q:2d6, V:2d6

**Fightin':** brawl in', knife 3d8, shoot in': pistol, shotgun 4d6, sneak 2d8

**Mental:** C:1d6, K:1d6, M:1d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d8

**Animal wranglin':** bronco bustin' guts 3d8, persuasion 4d6, search 2d8, streetwise 3d6

**Edges:** Brawny

**Hindrances:** Big britches, outlaw 2

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 7

**Wind:** 14

**Gear:** A pump-action shotgun with 15 shells, a black Stetson and a black handkerchief.

**Description:** Buford would be an imposing man if it wasn't for the spare tire he carries around his middle. His graying hair and balding head are hidden under his Stetson, and he looks at the world out of a pudgy face with beady eyes.

## PROFILE: DIXON GANG MEMBER

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:2d8, S:2d8, Q:2d6, V:2d6

**Fightin':** brawl in', knife 2d8, shoot in': pistol, rifle, shotgun 3d6, sneak 2d8

**Mental:** C:1d6, K:1d6, M:1d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d8

**Animal wranglin':** bronco bustin', guts 3d8, persuasion 4d6, search 2d8, streetwise 3d6

**Edges:** None

**Hindrances:** Outlaw 1

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 14

**Gear:** Double-action Colt Peacemakers. Two of them carry Winchester 76s.

**Description:** An assortment of ugly scum, the worst Salt Lake City has to offer. The light of intelligence does not shine brightly in their eyes, which are the only feature easily visible above their black kerchiefs.

## THE CUNNING PLAN

As mentioned above, Buford is looking to make a name for the Dixon Gang, and he figures a daring daylight robbery is just the way to do it. With shouts of "Nobody move!" and "Keep your hoglegs

## CHAPTER ONE

25

in yer holsters," the Dixon gang, twelve strong, burst into the room. Five men enter through each of the double doors, and Buford Dixon himself, along with two more thugs, enter through the small door at the back of the stage. They quickly take control of the situation, and cover the room full of people pretty effectively with their firearms. Buford has ordered his men to use their guns only if they're fired upon first. They're to deal with troublemakers by buffaloing them with their pistol and rifle butts first. Emphasize to your players that these outlaws have your heroes dead to rights, and that they'd probably get off at least one free shot if anyone makes any sort of dramatic moves. Assume the outlaws have a cheat card ready if anyone gets funny.

While his men keep the crowd in check, Buford moves over to the display case. Haskins puts up a bit of a protest, but Dixon smashes him over the head with the butt of his shotgun. Haskins collapses to the stage in a heap, and Dixon moves on to smash the front of the display case and starts to scoop the contents into a satchel he has slung over his shoulder.

That's when things go wrong.

## BALLROOM BLITZ

Unfortunately for Buford Dixon (and fortunately for the heroes), crowds are capricious creatures. In the course of crowd control (perhaps even while buffaloing a posse member, if you're so inclined), one of Dixon's men loses his cool and fires his pistol into the air to put a scare in 'em. He succeeds—in spades!

The gunshot throws the room into pandemonium! A fair portion of the mass of frightened people overcome their paralysis and move like a human tidal wave toward the back of the ballroom! Start combat as normal at this point, Marshal. The Dixon gang has lost control of the situation and it's time for your heroes to make their move.

The rushing crowd presents a bit of a problem for both the good guys and the bad guys in the fight. 1d6 of the Dixon gang (excluding the member up front) are trampled in the initial rush of the crowd and are out of the combat. Any cowpokes seated toward the back of the ballroom also have to make Onerous (7) *Nimbleness* rolls to avoid getting trampled for 1d6 Wind and losing their first action in the mad rush for the exits.

Meanwhile, Buford looks on with dismay as his "perfect plan" falls apart around his ears. He spends the first round of combat gathering up the rest of Powell's items and then yells "Move 'em out, boys!" The rest of the gang (assuming any of them are still standing) comply, heading for the rear door that Buford entered through. It takes Buford and his companions up front two rounds to work their way to the exit, but the rest of the gang need four rounds to do the same thing. Any gang member except Buford surrenders if they take a heavy wound or greater. Buford gives up once he's taken a serious wound.

As soon as all Hell breaks loose, Sophie and Dillenger move to Haskins' side and quickly hustle him out of harm's way. If heroes actually need some help stopping the gang, Sophie returns in the fourth round of combat.

If by some amazing chance the heroes actually aren't able to foil Buford Dixon (God help them!), Sophie, after checking to make sure that Haskins is all right, chases Buford down in the back alleys of Junkyard. She returns about 5 minutes later with bruised knuckles, a torn dress, and the Talisman.

## AFTER THE FIGHT

By the time the fists or bullets stop flying, the room is empty except for a few folks knocked down by the scattering crowd, the broken glass display case, and an assortment of smashed wooden chairs. Once the gang has been subdued, the hotel personnel are more than happy to help secure any prisoners. The assorted reporters mill around the lobby and saloon of the place, making nuisances of themselves as the hotel staff make a vain effort to clean things up.

Dillenger reappears about five minutes later and assures everyone that "Dr. Haskins is fine, it was just a glancing blow. Unfortunately, gentlemen, we will be unable to proceed with the remainder of the presentation today. I believe tomorrow we can do some interviews and photographic opportunities for you." Over the protestations of the assembled reporters, he returns upstairs.

A few sheriff's deputies arrive by steam wagon from Salt Lake City proper about 20 minutes after everything is over (that's actually pretty good response time for Junkyard). They don't seem very interested in the details of what happened, and since there were more than 200 witnesses to the proceedings, any dead robbers are likely tagged as "justifiable homicide." Prisoners are spirited off to the City Jail.

Assuming the heroes manage to stop the Dixon Gang (a pretty safe assumption), they may want to interrogate any captured thugs. Unless it's Buford who's captured, you don't even



need to roll for this one. These petty crooks cave in like a house of cards. Unfortunately, they don't know anything.

Buford's a different story. His ego's big enough that he won't crack under casual pressure, but enough threats or fast-talking might get him to reveal who hired him and his gang to do the job. Buford describes the man who hired him as a small black-haired gentleman with blue eyes and a nervous twitch. The man offered him and his gang \$5,000 for the job, 25% up front. He didn't get the fellow's name, and was told that he'd be contacted after the job was done for further payment.

The man in question was one of Father Wilkes' Guardian Angels. Buford's description doesn't do anyone much good right now as the Lost Angels are keeping a low profile for the moment. Attempts to lay a trap for the man won't work either, as the reporter for the *End Times* informs Father Wilkes of the gangs lack of success immediately, prompting the Lost Angels to change their plans. However, the man's description might come in handy later, when the Lost Angels and the heroes cross paths again.

If the posse hang around to see this mess through to its conclusion, a bellhop from the hotel, still looking a bit shaken up, approaches the most civilized looking hero with a card on a silver platter. The card, lettered in neat cursive script, reads "Dr. Edgar Haskins desires the favor of your company to review a most interesting proposition. Room 312."

Even if the heroes take off, later that day they receive a special delivery message from Dr. Haskins, inviting them to visit him at the Salt Lake City Grand.

### HASKINS' OFFER

After a brief pause, the door to the room is opened by Sophie, who the heroes may recognize from the fracas in the ballroom. She looks grim, but gestures silently for the posse to enter.

Haskins' room is actually a suite, nicely appointed by Junkyard standards. Dr. Haskins is relaxing in an easy chair, a large goose-egg on his left temple. Sophie applies an ice pack to a rather large lump on the archaeologist's head,

## CHAPTER ONE

27

holding it there insistently until Haskins takes hold of it. Anyone who thinks about it may notice she seems a bit more tender toward Dr. Haskins than a normal servant might be.

*"Greetings, my friends. I'm Dr. Edgar Haskins. Please excuse me if I don't rise. My head is still spinning a bit from the blow that miscreant gave me. May I present my assistant and bodyguard Ms. Sophie Miller.*

*I'm guessing you're all quite curious about why I've called you here. Before I tell you, would you all mind introducing yourselves and telling me a little bit about you?"*

Assuming the posse do not reveal themselves to be mass murderers or the like, Dr. Haskins listens pleasantly, asking occasional appropriate questions. When he has satisfied himself that he's not about to hire the Union's most wanted to accompany him on his trip, he moves on to his proposition.

*"Well, let us proceed to the matter at hand. The way you dealt with those miscreants at our event today was most impressive. You know the journey I'm to embark on, and you know the kind of help I'll be needing. This little incident only reinforces my desire to surround myself with competent people. You all would seem to fit the bill nicely. I can offer substantial pay, a healthy share of the fame and fortune that's sure to accompany the discovery of what Powell found and, frankly, a chance to be part of a piece of history! That may not sound like much but, trust me, the papers will be paying handsomely for first hand accounts of our journey when we return. Can I count you all in?"*

Some heroes may want a few more details of what they're getting into. Haskins is more than happy to oblige.

*"Well, my plan is this. We intend to follow the 1873 Powell Expedition's exact planned path into the Grand Canyon. A train will ferry us and our equipment as far as Cedar City in southern Nevada. From there we shall travel overland by horse and wagon through the very southern tip of Utah and into Northern Arizona. The expedition's last verifiable position was on the Colorado River, as they passed a mining town called Cliffside located on the edge of the Marble Canyon. That shall be our starting point for, the actual assault on the canyon itself. There we shall meet up with a few guides that I've arranged for and, with the assistance of special equipment generously provided by Smith & Robards, we shall head down into the canyon itself! The planned time for the expedition is a little over a month, but I should mention that it could take longer."*

If pressed for more detailed information about the planned route and such, Haskins is reluctant to volunteer further information, "especially in light of the events that just occurred," he says, "I think it best to not say too much more."

### TALKING TERMS

The heroes, mercenary creatures that they are, will no doubt wish to know the economic particulars of Haskins's offer. The explorer offers the princely sum of \$50 a day, along with a one percent share of any treasure found, and full rights to publish their own accounts of the expedition in any way they see fit. Dr. Haskins can pay each hero \$250 up front as well.

While Haskins' offer should be enough to tempt just about anyone, there may be a few gougers who wish to talk him up. Have them make an opposed *persuasion* check with Haskins. Each raise gets that hero a \$5 raise in salary, up to a maximum of \$75 a day. If the heroes accept, read the following to them:

*"Wonderful! Glad to have you aboard. We leave in two days. We'll be travelling the first leg by Denver Pacific train, courtesy of Smith & Robards. I believe some reporters will be accompanying us as far as Cedar City."*

*The expedition will provide all the trail goods you need, food water and the like, as well as all the gear for the Grand Canyon trip as well. As for your own personal gear, you are welcome to bring whatever you are willing to carry. We can even transport any horses you might have on the train. You're expected to supply your own weapons of course, although the expedition will pay for your ammunition."*

Haskins goes on to explain that departure time is at two o' clock in the afternoon, two days from now. He takes down contact information for the posse, and shakes each of their hands, welcoming them aboard heartily.

If anyone thinks to ask, Haskins is also more than willing to let newly signed recruits examine Powell's possessions. See the sidebar of page 31 for more details about them.

### THINKING ABOUT IT

It's possible that some or all of your heroes may not be willing to jump right at Haskins' offer. If the posse seems a bit reluctant to make such a large decision immediately, Haskins nods his head understandingly.

*"I certainly see your position, but I must get everything prepared relatively soon. I can give you until tomorrow to think about it if you need a little time, but after that I shall have to find*

*others to fill the positions. Contact me here at the hotel when you have made your decision."*

Hopefully, your posse decides to accept Haskins' offer, Marshal. From here on out we'll go on that assumption if you don't mind.

## GETTING READY

How the heroes pass the next two days is largely up to them. Getting equipment in Salt Lake City is pretty easy, seeing as how they're in one of the biggest and most modern cities in the Weird West. Even equipment from Smith & Robards can be purchased here, right out of their showroom in Junkyard.

Some heroes may need to settle up a few things before going gallivanting off for a month or more. Now is the time to take care of that as well.

We advise you to gloss over those days pretty quickly, Marshal. We don't want to lose momentum, after all.

## DEPARTURE TIME

In addition to supplying the expedition with gear, Smith & Robards has also graciously agreed to provide transportation for the group as far as Cedar City, Nevada. The Denver Pacific ghost-rock train that runs down to Fort 51 passes straight through the little town, and from there the expedition can travel overland to the Grand Canyon.

The crowd at the station to see the expedition off is a good deal smaller than the one present at the expedition's ill-fated announcement. In addition to the expedition personnel, about 15 reporters and photographers are accompanying the train as far as Cedar City. The heroes' gear is loaded into one of the baggage cars, along with quite a few Smith & Robards crates.

When everything is loaded, the passengers climb on board. At 2 PM sharp, the eerie moan of the ghost-rock boiler fills the air and the train pulls out of the station. The Haskins Expedition to the Grand Canyon is officially underway!



## A FACE IN THE CROWD

Here's a final little paranoia inducer for you to throw at your posse. As the train is pulling out of the station, have any sobduster looking out the windows at the crowd in the station make a Hard (9) *Cognition* check. If he makes it, tell him he sees a suspicious looking fellow at the back of the platform, watching the train pulling out. Suddenly, the figure turns on his heel and melts into the crowd. If the posse interrogated Buford Dixon, tell them that the figure fits the description of the man who hired the Dixon Gang.

That should put some starch in their shorts, Marshal.

## BOUNTY

**Defeating the thugs:** 1 white chip each

**Interrogating Buford:** 1 red chip

**Accepting Haskins' offer:** 1 white chip each

**Bargaining up the pay:** 1 red chip each





## CHAPTER TWO: CANYON BOUND!

Now that the heroes have joined the Haskins Expedition, the real fun can begin. The posse is Grand Canyon bound!

### BEHIND THE SCENES

Father Wilkes and company don't really make an appearance in this part of the story, Marshal. That doesn't mean that they're idle, though. Far from it. Since the expedition's path is well known and publicized, the Lost Angels decide to head directly to Cliffside to await the heroes' arrival. Since they are unburdened by the equipment and supplies that the expedition needs, they can take the direct route from Salt Lake City. They'll arrive some days before Haskins and the heroes do.

Don't worry. We'll hear more of the Lost Angels in the next chapter.

### A QUIET LITTLE TRAIN RIDE

The train ride between Salt Lake City and Cedar City is a short one, one night. The heroes spend that time on board, resting, socializing, and getting ready for the journey ahead.

Well, it's *almost* that easy.

### THE TRAIN

Once the train pulls out of the Denver Pacific station in Salt Lake City, give the heroes a chance to look around the train and get their bearings. The train consists of 10 cars. They are, in order of linkage, the locomotive, a coal car, a dining car, a saloon car, two standard sleeper cars, the more luxurious sleeper car provided by Smith & Robards for the expedition members (that's the heroes), two baggage cars, a government

security car bound for Fort 51, and a caboose. The Haskins Expedition's gear and special equipment is stored in the second baggage car.

Traveling between the cars is relatively easy, the doors between each car being connected by an enclosed walkway.

## THE CREW

The Denver Pacific ghost-rock train is a marvel of modern technology, and as such, needs only a small crew to run it. The total DP personal on board consists of two train engineers, a cook, a conductor, two waiters, and a telegraph operator.

In addition to the DP personal, the train car bound for Fort 51 is guarded by six U.S. Soldiers, in case anyone gets any bright ideas about nosing around in there. Besides, the cargo is remarkably ordinary for Fort 51, just supplies and the mail run for the isolated facility. The soldiers keep mostly to their car, but can come to the aid of others on the train if trouble breaks out.

## THE PASSENGERS

About eight reporters from various publications Back East are on board the train, as well as ten other various passengers heading for Cedar City for various reasons. Populate the train with the types of passengers your group interacts best with, Marshal.

Most of the passengers are exactly what they seem. Only one has a secret. But what a secret it is.

## TO CATCH A THIEF

Father Wilkes and the Church of Lost Angels aren't the only ones with their eye on the Talisman of the Heart. The rather crudely made but historically priceless necklace has also attracted the attention of one of the most notorious cat burglars in North America, John Robey, known to law

enforcement officials world-wide merely as "The Cat."

The Cat has carefully cased this job, gaining all sorts of intelligence about when would be the best time to strike. He has decided that the train journey between Salt Lake & Cedar City offers an irresistible opportunity to acquire Edgar Haskins' little bauble for himself. To get closer to his target, Robey has disguised himself as Ralph Wiley, a reporter for the *Chicago Herald Tribune*, along to interview Edgar Haskins about his great undertaking. He intends to break into Haskins' room while he and Sophie sleep the night away, and retrieve the Talisman of the Heart right out from under their noses.

## JOHN ROBEY, THE CAT

They say that some people are just born criminals, and John Robey is a prime example of that. Growing up an orphan in the streets of London in the 1840s, he was stealing almost as soon as he could walk. As he grew older, his natural (some would say supernatural) agility and nimbleness served him in good stead, allowing him to move up from pickpocketing and petty theft to the more lucrative field of burglary.

Robey plied his trade all around Europe, and his new-found ill-gotten gains gave him a taste of the good life. When things started to get too hot for him about five years ago, Robey escaped to America. He's been travelling all over North America ever since.

A master of his chosen profession, Robey also has a natural talent for telling what is valuable and what isn't. He's a meticulous planner, and has yet to be caught by the authorities, whether in America or in Europe. To them, he is elusive as his namesake. The only reason they even know to connect a robbery to him is by his calling card—literally. Robey always leaves a calling card emblazoned with a picture of a black cat at the site of each of his robberies.

Robey's not a killer, but he has finely honed street-fighting skills. He prefers to run rather than fight, and does his best to escape any dangerous situation as quickly as possible.

## PROFILE: JOHN ROBEY

**Corporeal:** D:3d8, N:5d12, Q:3d10, S:3d6, V:4d6

Climbin' 7d12, fightin': brawlin' 6d12, sneak 8d12

**Mental:** C:2d10, K:2d8, M:4d8, Sm:3d10, Sp:2d6

Disguise 6d8, language: French 4d8 persuasion 3d10, streetwise 5d10, trade: burglary 7d8

**Edges:** Fleet-footed 5,

**Hindrances:** Outlaw -3, scrawny

**Pace:** 17

**Size:** 5

**Wind:** 12

**Gear:** A set of high quality lockpicks, a small crowbar, black clothing, and a few calling cards.

**Description:** Robey's a handsome fellow, with piercing brown eyes and short cut black hair. However, he's taught himself quite a bit about disguise over the years, so his appearances can vary wildly.

## A PLEASANT EVENING

The heroes may while away a pleasant evening in the dining and saloon cars. The drinks are excellent, the food terrific, and the company pleasant enough. At this point you should give your heroes a chance to get to know Dr. Haskins a bit better. Use this opportunity to introduce Dr. Haskins ("Call me Edgar," he says the first time someone addresses him as "Doctor") and Sophie to the party in a more personal capacity. The heroes are going to be on the trail with them for quite a while. Sophie remains quiet. She's only really comfortable out on the range.

Haskins is more than happy to talk about his past, the Explorer's Society, and any details of the expedition ahead. After dinner he's also willing to allow the heroes to examine Powell's possession in the privacy of his train cabin. See the sidebar on this page for details of the dead explorer's belongings.

## CURIOSITY

After a hearty and delicious dinner in the dining car, Haskins takes time to grant interviews to the few reporters on this leg of the trip, and this takes

## CHAPTER TWO

33

up the remainder of his evening. The heroes are free to socialize as they will, or turn in early if that's their choice.

This is the one place in which the Cat may betray himself. Like the other reporters on board, Robey (a.k.a. Wiley), takes some time to interview Haskins during the evening. Any hero nearby may find his inquiries about the

## POWELL'S POSSESSIONS

**The Journal:** Powell kept a journal while travelling down the river. Unfortunately, exposure to the river ruined this one. The pages are stuck together, and the ink has run. Only the final, rather deranged sounding entry has survived intact—but it was enough to send Haskins and the posse down into the Grand Canyon. For the full text of Powell's final ravings, see the **Props** section on page 126.

**The Knife:** The knife is an ordinary hunting knife, rusted and pitted with exposure to moisture in the river. There is nothing special about it.

**The Talisman of the Heart:** The Talisman was created by the Havasupai Old One Jordrava's apprentice for the express purpose of leading its bearer safely through the caves beneath Havasu Canyon to the heart of the Old One. It was in the possession of the Havasupai shaman Torak until Lawrence Croft stole it.

This necklace is a pretty unassuming but obviously ancient string of teeth and bones, held together by a thong made of some sort of plant fiber. Despite it's age, the thong remains nearly unbreakable. Haskins dates the thing at well over 500 years old—a pretty accurate guess.

If anyone has the means to check, the Talisman is definitely magical. However, it doesn't seem to do anything. This changes once the posse enters the caverns in Chapter Five, of course. If you just can't wait, flip over to page 86.

Talisman of the Heart just a bit intense and a tad bit suspicious. Give anyone overhearing their conversation a Hard (9) *scrutinize* check to see if they notice this.

Anyone who's alerted to Wiley/Robey's potential shadiness may have a chance to detect that the man is something other than he pretends.

## TRADING PLACES

Haskins finishes the interviews late, around midnight. Soon after, he knocks on the door of the cabin of a pair of the heroes (which one is up to you, Marshal) with a request. It seems that the cabin he was assigned is on the wrong side of the train. Haskins is sometimes a man of particular habits and eccentricities, and always prefers to ride the train to the left of the locomotive rather than the right. He inquires if it would be possible for he and his bodyguard (that's Sophie) to switch rooms with the heroes.

"It's a bit silly, I know" he says, "but it really would be awfully helpful if you could accommodate me."

Hopefully the hero or heroes in question shouldn't have any hesitation about helping out their new employer. His cabin is a mirror image of the one they were originally assigned, perhaps even a bit nicer.

Of course, Haskins switching rooms with some of the posse members is a development the Cat could not possibly know about. As a consequence, his robbery is going to be bit more complicated.

## CAT ON A HOT TRAIN ROOF

Around 3 A.M. Robey sneaks out of his berth in the sleeping car via the washroom window. He then crawls carefully along the roof of the speeding train, quietly jimmies the skylight window open, and slides silently through it into the heroes' cabin. He then takes a second to disable the lights, and begins to search the room.

If no one in the room wakes up, the Cat quickly realizes that something is awry when he is unable to locate the Talisman of the Heart in the room. No fool, Robey decides to cut his losses, taking whatever he can find of value and leaving the same way entered. His successful string of robberies is based on careful planning, and he's not about to risk his freedom by looking in the other cabins.

If the Cat escapes undetected, then the heroes arise the next morning to find that whatever easily portable valuables they kept in the room have been taken. The Cat's calling card (emblazoned with a simple drawing of a black cat) lies in an obvious place.

## STOP! THIEF!

It's quite possible that Robey will get away with his caper. The Cat is good—very good. However, a hero might be able to detect him, if she's lucky. Have each hero in the room make an opposed *Cognition* check with the Cat's *sneak* Aptitude as he searches. On a simple success, the character in question wakes up. Have anyone awake make *Quickness* rolls as normal and



start combat. Don't forget to apply the vision penalties for the darkened room if any actual fighting ensues.

If someone does wake up, Robey does his best to exit as quickly as possible. It takes him one round to exit back through the skylight, and another two to run back down the roofs of the sleeper cars and re-enter.

Climbing through the skylight requires a Hard (9) *climbin'* check, which Robey shouldn't have any trouble making. The heroes are another matter, of course. If he gets onto the roof at least a round ahead of the heroes, he's vanished by the time they clamber through the skylight. He lays low for a few minutes and then slips back into the sleeper car, reenters his berth, and pretends to be as surprised as anyone when an alarm is raised.

## ROOFTOP RUMBLE

It's possible that a fracas could break out on the roof of the train car, and hoo-boy is that dangerous! The train is travelling along at a speed of about 30 miles-per-hour, and anyone taking a spill of the roof—well, let's just say it's going to hurt.

Any non-movement related task attempted on the roof of the train, like *shootin'* or *fightin'* is at an automatic -4 penalty. Additionally, heroes on the roof must make a Hard (9) *Nimbleness* check each round to stay on their feet. If they fail, they have to drop to their hands and knees, and can't move at all. Success means a hero can move at move at one quarter her Pace, and with a raise the sure footed cowpoke can move at one half pace. Each of the train cars is 12 yards long, and about 4 yards wide.

Going bust up here is **very bad**, and we think you can guess why. A cowpoke going bust on the *Nimbleness* check loses his balance and topples off the edge of the train car. Give them one last Hard (9) *Nimbleness* roll to grab hold of the edge of the train car roof. If they miss, they fall off the edge of the roof, taking 5d6+20 damage. Apply this as falling damage.

We told you fighting on the train roof was dangerous.

## CHAPTER TWO

35

### THE CORNERED CAT

If it looks impossible for him to make it back into the sleeper car and resume his disguise, the Cat executes his emergency backup plan. He runs to the rear of the train, leaping onto the roof of the caboose, pulling a wire he has rigged up to the coupler holding the caboose on the back of the train. Disconnected from the train, the caboose quickly recedes back into the night. If he manages to detach the caboose, the Cat quickly climbs down and disappears.

If the heroes can catch the Cat, it can be pretty lucrative. There is an outstanding reward in Salt Lake City for the Cat's capture, \$250 dead or \$500 alive. Any person with the *law man* Edge should make an Onerous (7) *Knowledge* check to remember this.

### THE REST OF THE TRIP

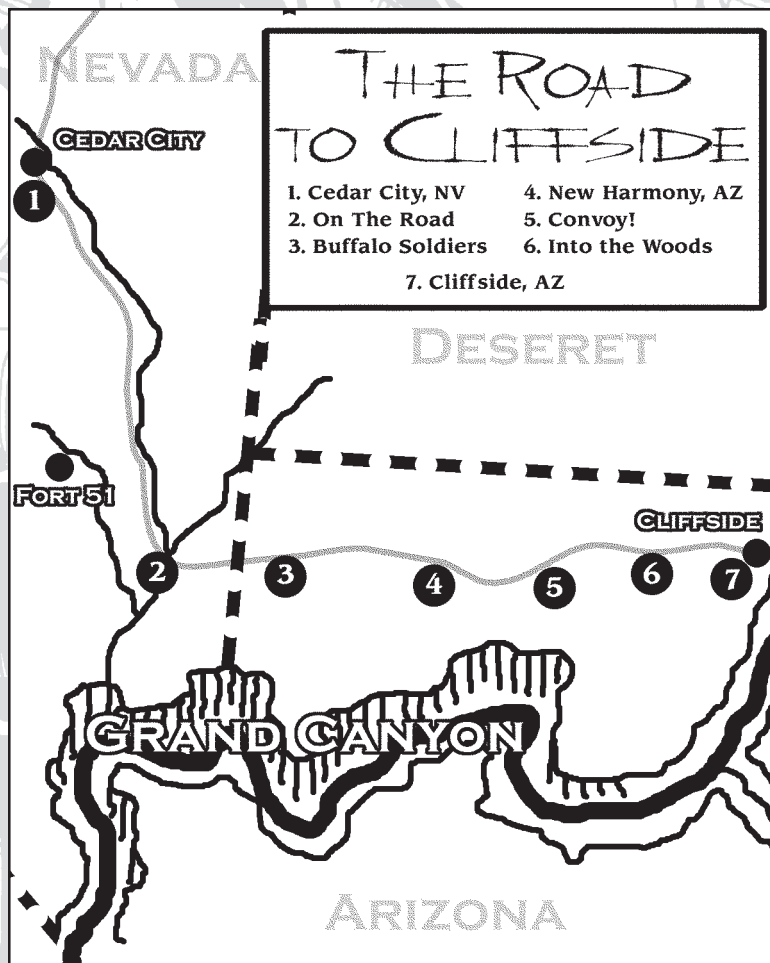
Whether the Cat is caught, killed, or gets away scott-free, the remaining few hours of the trip to Cedar City are uneventful. Haskins suggests that everyone go back to bed. "We've got a big day ahead of us tomorrow," he says.

## ARRIVAL

The train pulls into the small depot at Cedar City, Nevada the next morning, just after breakfast. Haskins leads everyone off the train, and Sophie starts to supervise the unloading of the equipment.

All civilian passengers clamber off the train, and are quickly replaced by Union Army or cavalry troops. The next leg of the Denver Pacific trains' trail takes it on to Fort 51.

"We're due to meet a set of barges I've hired in a little over an hour," says Haskins. "Could you all please give Sophie a hand? I'm going to go take



care a of a few last minute preparations." With that, the archaeologist strides out of the depot and into the streets of Cedar City, the reporters dogging his steps as he goes.

If the cat wasn't caught, someone may notice that "Ralph Wiley" never leaves the train. We won't see any more of The Cat in *Canyon o' Doom*, but let's let your posse wonder, shall we?

## BIG BOXES

As the heroes help Sophie unload all of the crates and boxes of supplies for the expedition, they may wonder just what the heck is in all of them. Over one third of the 2'x2' crates are stamped with the Smith & Robards emblem, and even Sophie denies knowing what are in them. These

boxes are nailed securely shut. If a hero gets the bright idea to take look inside and she can figure out some way to do it without being noticed, check out Chapter Four for the contents (page 75). Otherwise they'll just have to wait and see what's inside.

All the other boxes are easily opened and prove to contain various trail supplies, camping gear, climbing apparatus, and the like.

Haskins returns in an hour, just as the heroes and Sophie are unloading the last box. He has two horse-drawn wagons with him and he lends a hand to everyone in loading up the wagons. There's not much room left in them when all is said and done, but Haskins seems satisfied.

"Well, that's that," he says with a satisfied grin. "No use in wasting time, friends. We can rest once we're out on the water."

## THE ROUTE

Some folks might want to question Haskins about the route they intend to take. The archaeologist quite willingly pulls out a map and shows them.

The trip from Cedar City to the town of Cliffside should take about nine days. The first two days are spent travelling on the Meadow Valley Wash until it meets the Virgin River. From there, the group travels overland into Arizona through the Virgin and Black Rock mountains. Then it's east to the Kaibab Plateau, through the northern tip of the Kaibab Forest, and on to Cliffside.

See the map on this page for details of the trip, Marshal. This one is for your eyes only though, as it shows the locations of a few of the hazards along the way. There's a posse version of this map on page 127, in the **Props** section. Show your players that one.

## CEDAR CITY, NEVADA

Once the wagons are all loaded up, Haskins leads the expedition through the bustling streets of Cedar City, over toward the shallow excuse for a river that is the Meadow Valley Wash.

Cedar City is the largest town in southern Nevada, which isn't saying much. The Denver Pacific spur that runs through town on its way to Fort 51 is Cedar City's lifeline, and without it the town would likely dry up and blow away. As it is, the place gets along pretty well. As the closest town to Fort 51, Cedar City is a popular watering hole for soldiers on leave. Without the soldiers from Fort 51, the place could hardly support one saloon, much less the three it has.

Built on the banks of the Great Meadow Wash, Cedar City is also a useful place to ship items by barge down to the Virgin River, and from there into the Colorado River and on to parts south.

It's not really important to detail Cedar City too extensively, Marshal. The expedition spends at most an afternoon there. Just give your players the impression of a hot, dry, dusty town, bustling with activity and chock full of Union soldiers. (That should make any Texas Rangers or Confederate spies a mite bit nervous.)

## LOAD 'EM UP!

Sure enough, down by the shore of the wash are tethered five long barges. About ten men are loading crates onto them, securing them to the decks with ropes and covering them with tarpaulins. One of the barges has a fenced in area for the horses on it, and a few rude lean-to's are set up on the rear barge.

Loading all the equipment is pretty easy—the wagons roll right up on deck. It does take a few hours to secure everything though, so it's getting on towards sunset when everyone finally boards the barges

## THE BARGES

The barges are large flat rafts made of sturdy pine planks nailed to a wooden framework. Each framework is secured to three large metal pontoons. The end result is a flat deck that rides about two feet out of the water, more than sufficient for the slow-flowing Meadow Valley Wash.

The owner and captain of the barges is a large bear of a man named "Big"

## CHAPTER TWO

37

Bob Johansen. He's loud, smells terrible, and swears a blue streak, but runs a tight "ship". Johansen employs nine other men to help him navigate and man the barges.

## PICKING UP A SHADOW

One of Johansen's men is Ho Li Kwan, but don't call too much attention to him, Marshal. Ho keeps a very low profile while in town and manages to look totally ordinary, barring the fact that he's the only Asian within 250 miles of the place.

Ho has secured himself a job on the barges and drifts down the Wash with the posse as one of the barge crew. After the heroes have debarked at the confluence of the Virgin River, Ho sneaks off the barge and follows them the rest of the way to Cliffside.

Ho keeps a pretty big distance between himself and the expedition, content to let them get fairly far ahead during the day and making up the distance at night.

Detecting Ho is possible, but it takes an Incredible (11) *search* roll to do so, and even that just reveals that someone is on the expedition's trail. It takes another Incredible (11) *search* check to actually find the martial artist.

If by some chance he is detected, Ho reveals himself to the posse, but says only that he is along to "protect" them. From what he will not say.

If attacked, he flees, but resumes his pursuit of the posse as before.

## ROLLING ON THE RIVER

As the string of barges pulls away from Cedar City, the heroes pitch camp on a clear spot on one of the barges. After a meal of trail rations (better get used to 'em, pardner!) a quiet night under the stars lulls them to sleep.

The next two days are a study in tedium. The barges drift down the lazy

length of the Great Meadow Wash and there's not much to do but watch the shoreline flow by and relax.

Late in the second day of river travel, the confluence of the Virgin River and the Great Meadow Wash finally comes into view. While the heroes, Haskins, and Sophie repack the wagons, the barges float out into the Virgin river and the crew steer the line of barges (with a degree of difficulty) over to the eastern shore.

It takes only a few minutes to roll the reloaded wagons down a gangplank and on to shore. With a few handshakes and shouts of good-bye, the crew of the barges push off into the deep water with long poles and start to drift off to the south.

"Everyone ready for a nice walk?" Haskins jokes.

The overland trek begins.

## ON THE ROAD

The next seven days are spent riding along in the wagons (unless a cowpoke brought her favorite horse). Sophie drives the lead wagon, handling it expertly over the broken terrain. Hopefully one of the heroes can handle the second wagon. If not, Haskins volunteers to drive it. He does a remarkably bad job, of course, seeing as how he has to fake it.

## THE TERRAIN

The scenery over the next five days is pretty monotonous. The rough terrain of the Virgin and Black Rock mountains make for slow going, especially with two loaded wagons. Rocky outcrops and buttes dot the horizon, and the monotonous and dusty trail is broken only by the occasional muddy creek trickling through a valley and the scattered patches of scrub pine. Small rodents, snakes, scorpions, and circling birds of prey are the only company on the trail.

## IT'S NOT THE HUMIDITY

The summer weather holds up well for the entire trip—meaning it's hot. Uncomfortably hot. Temperatures during the day rise to a steady 90° and stay there. Until the expedition reaches the Kaibab forest on day seven of the trip, everyone in the posse has to make a Hard (9) *survival* check each day at noon to keep from losing 1d4 Wind. This Wind cannot be recovered until the cowpoke spends at least four hours in a cool, comfortable place. Around the campfire at night counts.

Going bust on the *survival* check means the hero's gotten heat stroke and is in a world of hurt. She has to immediately make a Hard (9) *Vigor* check. If she makes it, she loses 3d6 Wind. If she fails, she loses the Wind, her *Vigor* die type is reduced by one permanently, and she must make a second Hard (9) *Vigor* check. If she fails this one, she's dead unless someone makes an Incredible (11) *medicine* roll within 2d6 rounds.

## THE WAYS OF THE DESERT

You may think that all those heroes without the survival skill are up a creek here Marshal, but we have a way to help them out a little bit. Haskins knows a lot about surviving in hostile climates, and he volunteers a wealth of information on how to survive arid northern Arizona wilds.

After one day on the trail with him, any hero making an Onerous (7) *Smarts* check can automatically raise their *survival: desert* or *survival: mountain* Aptitude by one level if it is 2 or less. If a hero doesn't have the Aptitude, she gets one level in it.

## BUFFALO SOLDIERS

Nothing exciting really happens until the second day of overland travel, as the expedition threading their way through a narrow canyon.

Suddenly, the relative silence is broken by gunfire, and a horrific sounding screech. It seems to come from just up around the bend in the trail behind a rocky outcrop.

Unless the posse turns tail and runs like the wind, a dramatic sight greets their eyes as they round the curve in the trail. About 50 yards down the trail in front of them, ten U.S. soldiers are engaged in combat with a the largest devil bat that any hero has likely seen (time for a *guts* check!). The soldiers, all of whom are black, wear uniforms denoting them as members of the U.S. Cavalry—and the steam-powered jet packs that some of them still wear on their backs might give a clue as to who these guys are.

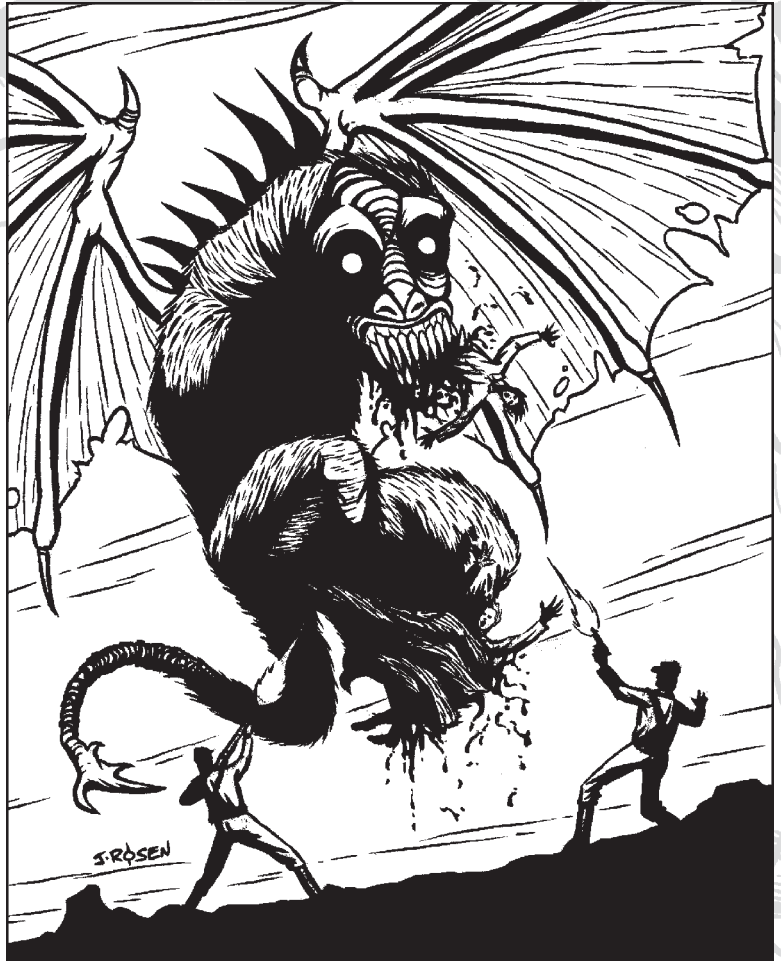
The absolutely huge devil bat looks like it has the troopers on the ropes. It's obvious a few of them were knocked out of the sky by the thing. A few troopers bring their rifles to bear, but none of them seem to actually hit the thing. Before the heroes can make a move, the bat flaps it's great wings, throwing up a huge cloud of dust. With another horrific screech, it wheels around in the air, heading off towards a huge butte.

If no one else takes the lead, Haskins leads the heroes quickly down the slope. As the soldiers pick themselves and their equipment up and bind their wounds, a man wearing sergeant's stripes on his sleeve strides over to the posse, hand extended in friendship. Read the following to your players.

*"Thanks for helping us drive that big bastard off! Sergeant Amos, U.S. Cavalry at your service!"*

He pauses for introductions then continues.

*"A pleasure to meet you. My men and I have been tracking that...that thing for almost two days now, and we finally caught up with it. We tried attacking it in the air, but it's a lot more maneuverable than we are. That seems to be it's home over there in that butte. You all look like you know one end of a rifle from the other. Do you think you could help us take that thing down? It's a threat to everything and everyone in the area!"*



Amos greets anyone who says yes with a ready grin and a slap on the back. Haskins volunteers to go to, as does Sophie.

*"Your country will thank you. Give my men and I a few minutes to assemble and we can head on over to that butte and kill us a big 'ol bat!"*

Both Amos and Haskins are understanding toward anyone not wishing to go. "I know it's not in your contract," the archaeologist says. "Just set up camp here and wait for us."

## THE FLYING BUFFALOES

Amos and his men were on a reconnaissance mission near the Arizona/Nevada border when he and his men first made contact with the monstrosity. Amos quickly assessed the danger that such a massive creature posed to anyone in the surrounding

countryside and decided (perhaps a bit impulsively) that he and his men were going to take it down.

Amos knows he's in for one Hell of a dressing down from his commanding officer when he returns to Fort 51, but he believes he's doing the right thing. However, no fool, he's quick to accept any offered help.

### PROFILE: SGT. AMOS

**Corporeal:** D:2d12, N:2d8, S:2d8, Q:4d6, V:2d6

Climbin' 2d10, fightin': brawlin' 4d6, flight: rocket pack 6d8, shootin': pistol, rifle 6d12, sneak 3d6

**Mental:** C:3d10, K:2d6, M:1d10, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d10

Guts 3d10, overawe 3d10, search 4d10, streetwise 3d6

**Edges:** Rank 2 (U.S. Cavalry)

**Hindrances:** Intolerance -3 (Confederates)

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 16

**Gear:** A Winchester '76 rifle with 30 rounds of ammunition and a steam-powered rocket pack.

**Description:** Amos is a rough but strong looking man, with close cropped hair and intense brown eyes.

### PROFILE: FLYING BUFFALOES

**Corporeal:** D:2d8, N:2d6, S:2d8, Q:4d6, V:2d6

Climbin' 2d10, fightin': brawlin' 4d6, flight: rocket pack 5d6, shootin': pistol, rifle 5d8, sneak 3d6

**Mental:** C:3d8, K:2d6, M:1d10, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d8

Guts 3d8, overawe 3d10, search 2d8, streetwise 3d6

**Edges:** Rank 1 (U.S. Cavalry)

**Hindrances:** Intolerance -3 (Confederates)

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 14

**Gear:** Winchester '76 rifles with 30 rounds of ammunition, and steam-powered rocket packs.

**Description:** While the Flying Buffaloes' appearances vary widely, they are all black.

### THE DEVIL BAT'S CAVE

The trek over to the bat's butte takes a little more than 30 minutes. Sergeant Amos makes friendly conversation along the way, and is fascinated by the expedition's stated goal.

"Me and my men, we stay away from the canyon for the most part," he says. "If you go down in there, ain't nobody gonna be able to help you."

The bat's cave is located about 10 yards up the sheer face of the butte, with a long but narrow ledge along the outside of it. See the map on the next page for exact details.

Climbing up to this lofty height might normally be impossible, but Amos orders one of his men to fly to the top of the butte and secure a rope there. An Onerous (7) *climbin'* roll is all that is needed to get a hero up on the ledge outside the cave. Once everyone is up on the ledge, Sergeant Amos orders the attack. Start combat as normal.

The bat is lightly wounded and doesn't even try to leave it's cave unless directly attacked. After that, it tries to batter it's way past its attackers and flee south toward the Grand Canyon. Needless to say, the bat fights to the death. It's in pain and cornered in its home. It tries to take as many humans down with it as it can.

### PROFILE: ENORMOUS DEVIL BAT

**Corporeal:** D:3d10, N:3d12, S:3d12+4, Q:6d12, V:8d12+4

Dodge 3d12, fightin': brawlin' 3d12, sneak 1d12 (5d12 from the air)

**Mental:** C:4d10, K:1d4, M:2d10, Sm:2d8, Sp:1d8

Overawe 2d10

**Pace:** 6 (ground)/24 (air)

**Size:** 16 (20' tall)

**Wind:** 24

**Terror:** 9

**Special Abilities:**

**Damage:** Claws (STR+1d6)

**Flying:** Pace 24

**Weakness:—Noise:** The devil bat "sees" by means of sonar. If its prey has the guts to stand stock-still among other obstacles (like rocks and such), the thing has to make an Onerous (7) *Cognition* roll to pick her out of the clutter. If the prey does this, however, her *fightin' brawlin'* Aptitude is not added to the devil bat's TN.

**Wing Buffet:** Due to the critter's huge size, it can take an action to flap its huge wings, generating quite a blast of wind. Have everyone make an opposed *Strength* Check with the bat. A failed roll means the hero is knocked down and must spend an action climbing back to his feet. If a cowpoke goes bust, he's been hit by a flying piece of debris and takes a light wound to a random location, along with 1d6 Wind

**Description:** Devil bats look like an obscene cross between a human being and a bat. This massive specimen definitely favors the bat side. If you have *Marshal Law*, then you have a good idea of what the posse are up against

## AFTER THE FIGHT

After the devil bat is (hopefully) dead, Amos and his men return to the expedition's camp and spend the night. They help bind the heroes' wounds if they have any, and stand watch for the night as well. The whole expedition can get a good night's sleep for the first time since they hit the trail.

In the morning, the Flying Buffaloes get their jet packs all fixed up and prepare to head back to Fort 51. Amos offers to take any messages the heroes have back to civilization, and also mention that he's going to make sure to mention the heroes in his report.

"I'll put in a good word for you all," he says as his men strap on their packs and prepare for takeoff. "Be careful on the trail, friends, and thanks again for your help!" With that, the Flying Buffaloes fire up their jet packs and take off into the air several seconds later in a great clouds of steam.

## CHAPTER TWO

41

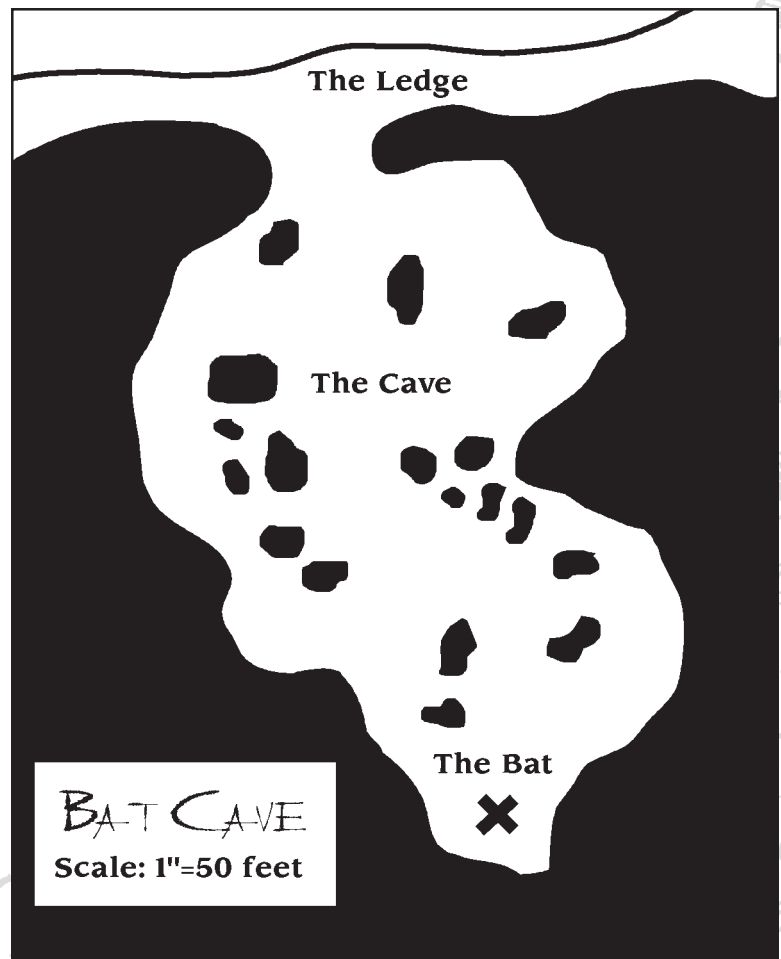
## NEW HARMONY, AZ

### Fear Level 4

After the incident with the bat, another quiet day and night on the trail passes. Then, in the middle of day four, the terrain gets a bit smoother and more fertile and a (very) small town comes into view.

The sign "New Harmony, Arizona" greets the expedition as they ride closer. The town is a collection of a mere 15 buildings, most of them houses. A small general store and a church also stand there, and a few more houses are visible on the horizon, obviously farms. The place is eerily quiet; even the normal sounds of the trail seem somehow muffled here.

The town is deserted. That much is evident by the doors swinging slowly in



the hot wind and the empty, haunted looking windows of the houses.

A quick check of any of the buildings gives a far stranger impression. It looks like the entire population of New Harmony, Arizona just got up and left en masse, dropping whatever they were doing at the time. Tables lie heaped with the rotting remains of what must have once been meals. Tools lie where they were dropped. The shelves of the general store are fully stocked, everything untouched.

The decaying corpses of a few horses lie in the stables, and it looks like they've been gnawed on by animals. The same goes for the few head of cattle penned up out at the outlying farms. The water in the town well is also brackish and foul-tasting, although not poisonous.

There are no tracks leading out of town, and no sign of any violence or fight.

### THE BODY IN THE CHURCH

There is one person left in New Harmony, but he's not exactly in a position to come out and greet anyone. Inside the church, a lone figure kneels in front of the altar, as if in prayer. When the heroes first see him, they may actually think he's still alive, but anyone approaching the figure is quickly disabused of that notion.

The man's body is dry and desiccated, almost mummified by the dry desert air. He's dressed like a frontier preacher and holds a Colt Frontier in his right hand. A note and a rosary are clutched in his left hand. Anyone looking can quickly find the self inflicted head wound that killed him.

Prying the gun, rosary, or note out of the hands of the corpse is a gruesome job, as the dry fingers of the hands snap off when the objects are removed. Have the cowpoke doing this make a Fair (5) *guts* check, and don't forget to

include modifiers for New Harmony's Fear level.

Additionally, anyone taking the items from his hands needs to make a Hard (9) *Spirit* check. If they fail, visions of the priests decaying face haunt their sleep for the next 2d6 nights, effectively giving them the *night terrors* Hindrance for that time.

### THE GUN, THE ROSARY & THE NOTE

The gun is an ordinary Colt Frontier revolver. There are five rounds left in the cylinder (and one in the preachers head).

The rosary is a finely made Catholic rosary made with semiprecious stones. It could be sold for about \$50 if someone really wants to hold on to it.

The note is written in a shaky hand in black ink. It reads:

*They're gone. All of them. God have mercy on their souls.*

*Only I am left. And I cannot last—but they will not take me.*

*God have mercy on a poor sinner like me.*

Holding on to any of these items is not a particularly good idea. Give anyone who keeps one of these items the *bad luck* Hindrance until she gets rid of it. Some things should be left where they lie.

Burying the priest, aside from being the right and proper thing to do, gets rid of this *bad luck*. The items can be taken without ill effect.

### SO WHAT HAPPENED?

Good question, and one we're not going to answer. New Harmony is not an encounter meant to be solved, or a threat to be overcome. It's more of a set piece, designed to creep your players out—an atmospheric place, if you will. The Weird West is never completely safe, and this little slice of strangeness should serve to remind the posse of that fact.

With this in mind, don't let your players sidetrack themselves too severely here. The howls of more



coyotes should get 'em moving if nothing else does.

What's that? You expect us to tell you everything, all the time, Marshal? Sorry, this is the Weird West after all. Not even we have all the answers.

## CONVOY!

The next two days on the trail are uneventful, a monotonous landscape of broken rock and scrub pines passing by without incident. The next sign of human life comes along near sundown on day six of the trip. It comes in the form of a large steamwagon accompanied by 20 rifle-armed cowboys.

The wagon is armored to the hilt, with thick iron plates all over the outside of it. The driver looks out of a small slit in the front of the thing, and seems to rely mostly on the men accompanying for directions on where to drive. The name "Larson Shipping" is emblazoned on the side of it.

A man with long blonde hair and a scraggly beard, presumably the leader, introduces himself as Kelsey Becker. All of the cowboys seem relaxed, but perceptive folks may notice they keep their hands near their weapons at all times.

Becker asks the heroes where they're heading. When Haskins tells him they're on the way to Cliffside,

Becker laughs. "Well, shoot," he says, that's just where we come from. We're cartin' ghost rock out to Fort 51 for Sweetrock. My men and I were just about to pitch camp fer the night anyway, Whaddya say we camp out together?"

If the heroes refuse Becker's offer, he laughs understandingly. "Well, I guess ya'll ain't as trusting as we are. Have a safe trip." The steamwagon fires up it's engine and the convoy moves on it's way.

## GATHER ROUND THE FIRE

If everyone agrees to share the fire for the night, the cowboys all dismount and break out their gear. The driver climbs down out his compartment and five of the men immediately take up guard posts around the thing, rifles at the ready. The men switch off all night, but there are never fewer than five men around the wagon.

After a hearty dinner, Becker sits around the fire with anyone willing and swaps trail stories. He answers any questions anyone has about the trail ahead and Cliffside, and is interested to hear about the expedition and it's goal.

If anyone brings up anything even remotely supernatural, Becker looks to make sure none of his men are

listening too closely, then tells the posse a strange story.

*"We wuz passin' through the Kaibab Forest two days ago when we wuz actually follered by a pack o' coyotes. Coyotes is usually cowardly critters, but these fellers didn't seem a mite bit scart a' us. Damndest thing I ever did see. They was all lined up single file on either side of us, pacin' us about 10 yards back in the treeline. It was a mite bit spooky.*

*They trailed us for near on three hours, 'til after sundown. Then they jest melted away into the trees."*

At this point, Becker leans in close to the fire, a strange look on his face. He lowers his voice as well.

*"The funniest thing of all was that I coulda sworn that the varmint's eyes was a glowin'! Not that sorta glow ya get when ya shine a light in a bobcat's eyes. It wasd a kinda reddish glow... almost like hot coals or sumthin'."*

Becker looks uncomfortable for a few moments then laughs. "Probably just my imagination anyway."

Whatever your heroes decide to make of Becker's story, the night passes quietly. The convoy and the expedition parts ways the next morning. "Watch yourself in the Kaibab," Becker says at parting. "Sumthin' odd's in there."

## INTO THE WOODS

On day seven of the trip, the barren mountains of Northern Arizona finally give way to some greenery. As the expedition enters the Kaibab plateau, the sheltering branches of the forest reach out to embrace them. Even the

trail-ready Sophie is glad to see it. "All this rock was drivin' me crazy," she says with a wry grin.

## THE KAIBAB FOREST

The Kaibab is one of the largest pine forests in North America, spanning much of Arizona. The posse is only passing through the northern tip of it on their journey.

Large, wild animals most commonly seen here are elk, mule deer, and antelope. Turkey and coyote are also fairly common. A sharp-eyed hero might even catch sight of a mountain lion, black bear, or bobcat. The trees of the place are alive with small animals. Squirrels, chipmunks, porcupines, small lizards, and rattlesnakes. The nights here are a lot less silent than in the rockier terrain of days past.

Within the forest, there are irregular areas entirely free of tree growth. These "parks" are found in canyon bottoms, dry south exposures, and ridge tops near the Kaibab's edges.

The trail through the woods is plain enough, but not traveled too often this time of year. The heroes are unlikely to meet anyone on the road until they get close to Cliffside.

## WATCHERS IN THE WOODS

We mentioned in the beginning of this chapter that the Lost Angels didn't make an appearance. Well, that's technically true, but Father Wilkes does make another attempt to get hold of the Talisman of the Heart. He just doesn't do it in person.

Using the black magic power *forwarnin'*, Father Wilkes has determined the general time and path that the expedition is going to take through the Kaibab Forest. While his information is not precise enough to lay an ambush in their path, he's hit upon another idea.

Using his *animal mastery* power, Wilkes has enthralled a pack of coyotes and sent them to search for the heroes. When they find them they are to attack and kill as many as they possibly can.

The coyotes find the expedition the first night Kaibab Forest. However, they don't attack that night. Anyone on

watch that night should make an Onerous (7) *Cognition* check to notice the strange reddish-orange eyes watching them from the darkness.

They follow the heroes all the rest of the next day, staying out of sight as much as possible. It takes a Hard (9) *Cognition* check to spot them pursuing the expedition in the underbrush of the Kaibab.

The next night, just after midnight, the coyotes attack.

### WHEN ANIMALS ATTACK!

There are 14 coyotes total. They surround the posse's camp, slowly attempting to sneak in as close as possible. Any sentries are attacked first.

Since they are under Wilkes' spell, the coyotes have a bit more courage than normal. It takes putting at least eight of the coyotes down to shake their resolve. After this happens, start giving each one still standing an Onerous (7) *Spirit* check each round. If a coyote makes it, it's fear gives it the strength to break free from Wilkes' spell. The critter flees into the Kaibab.

If the coyotes somehow kill the entire group, the pack leader has orders to search through the expedition's belongings and bring the Talisman of the Heart to Wilkes.

While under Wilkes' domination, the coyotes can be held at bay by the *protection* miracle.

### PROFILE: FERAL COYOTES

**Corporeal:** D:1d4, N:3d8, Q:2d8, S:3d6, V:4d8

**Fightin':** brawlin' 3d8, filchin' 2d4, sneak 2d8

**Mental:** C:1d4, K:2d6, M:2d6, Sm:2d6, Sp:2d6

**Overawe** 2d6

**Pace:** 12

**Size:** 4

**Wind:** 14

**Terror:** NA

#### Special Abilities:

**Damage:** Claw (STR), bite (STR+1d4)

**Description:** These beasts look like normal, if a bit emaciated, coyotes—but in the darkness, their eyes glow reddish orange, like hot coals..



### REACHING CLIFFSIDE

As the expedition finally draws near Marble Canyon, the trail widens and looks much more travelled.

Finally, on the afternoon of the ninth day after the Haskins Expedition set out from Cedar City, wooden walls of Cliffside loom up in front of the heroes, and the deep expanse of Marble Canyon drops away in front of them.

### BOUNTY

**Helping Sgt. Amos and his Men**

**fight the Devil Bat:** 1 red chip each

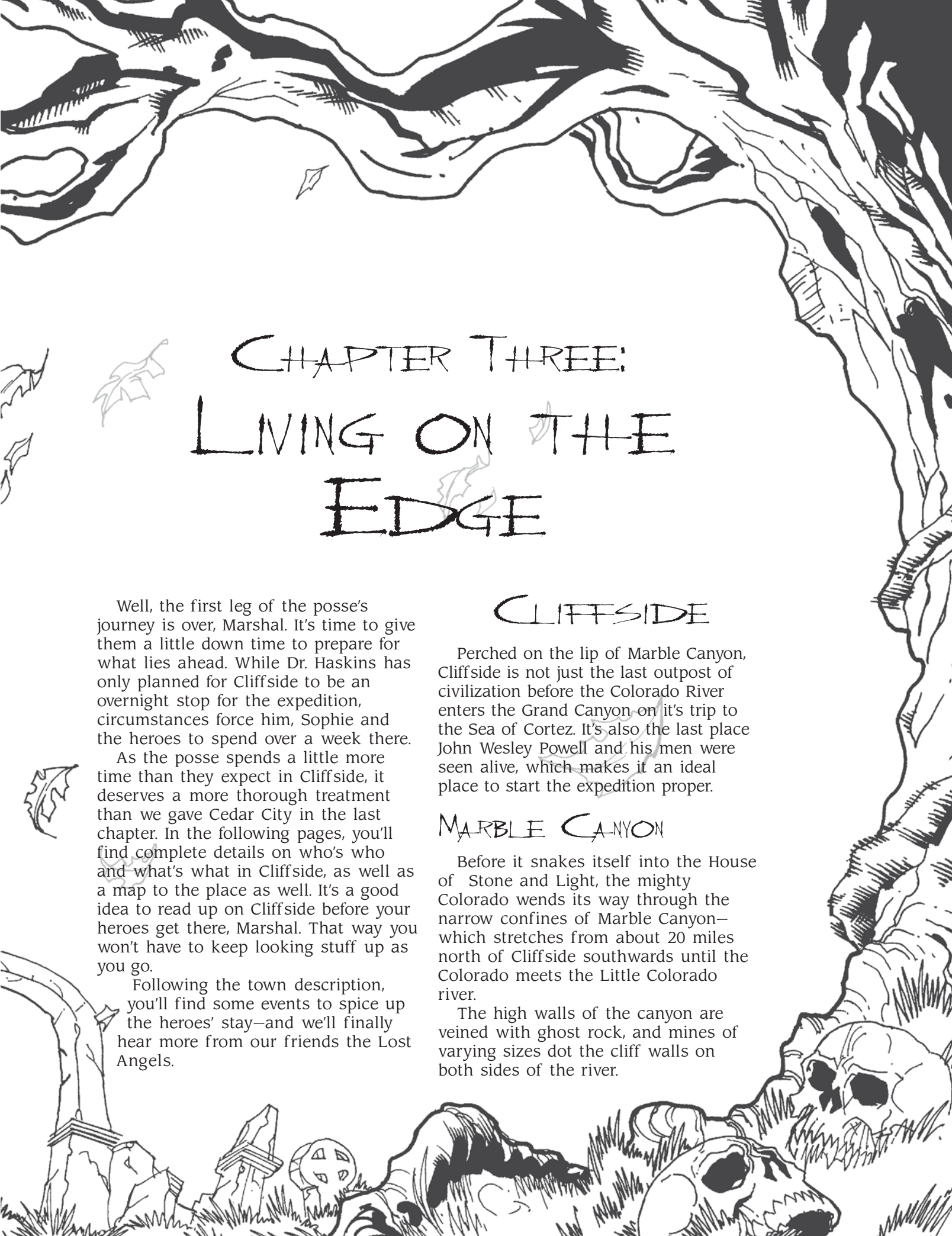
**Burying the New Harmony priest's body:** 1 white chip

**Killing The Coyotes:** 1 red chip each

**Spotting Ho Li Kwan :** 1 red chip

**Ally:** Sergeant Amos and his men aren't likely to forget the heroes if they helped kill the devil bat.





## CHAPTER THREE: LIVING ON THE EDGE

Well, the first leg of the posse's journey is over, Marshal. It's time to give them a little down time to prepare for what lies ahead. While Dr. Haskins has only planned for Cliffside to be an overnight stop for the expedition, circumstances force him, Sophie and the heroes to spend over a week there.

As the posse spends a little more time than they expect in Cliffside, it deserves a more thorough treatment than we gave Cedar City in the last chapter. In the following pages, you'll find complete details on who's who and what's what in Cliffside, as well as a map to the place as well. It's a good idea to read up on Cliffside before your heroes get there, Marshal. That way you won't have to keep looking stuff up as you go.

Following the town description, you'll find some events to spice up the heroes' stay—and we'll finally hear more from our friends the Lost Angels.

### CLIFFSIDE

Perched on the lip of Marble Canyon, Cliffside is not just the last outpost of civilization before the Colorado River enters the Grand Canyon on its trip to the Sea of Cortez. It's also the last place John Wesley Powell and his men were seen alive, which makes it an ideal place to start the expedition proper.

### MARBLE CANYON

Before it snakes itself into the House of Stone and Light, the mighty Colorado wends its way through the narrow confines of Marble Canyon—which stretches from about 20 miles north of Cliffside southwards until the Colorado meets the Little Colorado river.

The high walls of the canyon are veined with ghost rock, and mines of varying sizes dot the cliff walls on both sides of the river.

## CLIFFSIDE HISTORY

When Powell passed through here back in '73, Cliffside was little more than a bunch of miner's shacks and a few saloons. It has since grown to a sizable town, spurred in part by the arrival of the Pittsburgh-based Sweetrock Mining Company. Sweetrock agents first showed up about four years ago, buying up the claims of more than half of the local miners at prices that seemed ridiculous at the time. These days, many a miner looks back in regret at the piles of ghost rock being

pulled from a claim that was once theirs.

Once they had consolidated their ownership of the majority of the mines in the area, Sweetrock set up shop here, building a processing plant and expanding the mines deep into the cliff face below the town. A coldhearted bastard by the name of Bradley Whittaker was given control of the operation, although it was more a punishment to him than a reward.

These days, Cliffside is a company town in the truest sense of the word. If the Sweetrock Mining Company were to fold up the tents tomorrow, Cliffside would be nothing but a memory inside a month.

## CLIFF MINING

The primary reason for Cliffside's existence is ghost rock. As we mentioned, the cliffs all along Marble Canyon are veined with the stuff, and the miners have been pulling it out of there for more than eight years now. While it's not the richest set of deposits in the West, the ghost rock comes out of the mines in a steady enough flow to keep a town like Cliffside going.

Cliffside was built where the ghost rock deposits were most numerous. Sweetrock has constructed a wooden scaffold all along the edge of the cliff face. Massive lift-winches lower and raise miners and ghost rock down to the eight Sweetrock mines. The mines work from 6 a.m. every morning until 8 p.m. each night. Sweetrock would work them around the clock, but there aren't enough skilled workers available in town to keep the processing plant going that intensely.

Strangely, the further south one gets into the Grand Canyon proper, the fewer ghost rock deposits there are. By the time a traveler gets to the mouth of the Little Colorado, the sheer sides of the canyon are completely unblemished by the veins of black rock. No one, geologist or otherwise, has ever had a really good explanation for this. Most of the miners just thank their lucky stars that there's no reason for them to travel into the shadowy depths of the House of Stone and Light.



Most of the mining in and around Cliffside is controlled in some way by Sweetrock. Not only does Sweetrock operate the main mines in the cliff face below town, they also do most of the buying from the independent miners who work the cliffs to the north and south of Cliffside. After all, someone has to buy all that ghost rock the miners pull out of the cliffs. Independent assayers do visit every month, but they can only buy so much. Sweetrock is more than happy to purchase the remainder at a fraction of what the independents pay.

## THE POPULACE

About 500 people make their homes within Cliffside's walls, with another 500 living in canvas tents or in the surrounding countryside. Easily 70% of these people are cliff-miners

As you might guess, Cliffside is a less than family oriented town. Most of the inhabitants are men, either miners or people who work to provide goods and services for the miners. The few families who do live here are almost certainly looking for a way to get out.

You won't find very many women or children in town. Female companionship is a precious commodity in Cliffside, and bordellos in the south side of town see a lot of business. There is a huge turnover in the town's population since most miners find the work here exhausting. Sweetrock works their employees like slaves, but pays them well enough to make it worthwhile—usually. Still, most miners last at most a year before the stress gets to them and they take their money and blow town.

## THE TOWN ITSELF

Cliffside is constructed on the western edge of Marble Canyon, about 30 miles north of the Grand Canyon itself. To the west, north, and south of town lies the sprawling Kaibab Forest, while to the east Marble Canyon plummets 800 feet below to the mighty Colorado River.

Cliffside is surrounded by a 20-foot high wooden palisade, which is broken

## CHAPTER THREE

49

by two gates on the town's north and western walls.

The northern end of town is the most sedate and quiet section. Cliffside's three churches are located here, as well as the town's rather sprawling graveyard.

The middle section of Cliffside holds most of the legitimate businesses. A few hotels, nice rooming houses, stores and such make up the bulk of this area. A few private homes are here as well, mostly well-paid employees of Sweetrock Mining.

The south side of town is the seedier, and more populous, section. There are no less than ten rooming houses of various quality here, along with enough saloons and houses of ill repute to keep the rather rowdy miners happy. Quite a bit of gambling goes on down here as well, but the officials tend to look the other way. Fights down here are common, as are muggings, but Sweetrock looks on this rough and tumble section of town as a very important safety valve for their discontented employees, and generally leave affairs down here to run themselves.

## LAW & ORDER

Sweetrock has an even stronger hold here than in their other mining towns—including a little place you may have heard of called Gomorra. Sweetrock security guards make up the police force of the town and enforce pretty much whatever policies Bradley Whittaker sees fit. A mayor is elected every year, but it's strictly a figurehead position. He simply rubber stamps whatever Sweetrock wants done. The head of Sweetrock security also acts as the town marshal, although he usually delegates a few of his men to do the actual day-to-day policing.

There is very little crime in Cliffside considering the size of the population. The reason for that is simple: not very much is illegal. With the exception of



theft and murder, anything else is unlikely to get a man arrested, with one notable exception. Any offense against the Sweetrock mining company, including bad-mouthing the company in a public place, can get a body locked up right quick!

How can Sweetrock get away with this rather despotic behavior? Well, the reason is simple: most of the ghost-rock in town goes directly to the Union laboratories at Fort 51. The U.S. government is more than prepared to let Sweetrock have it's own little kingdom out here as long as the wagons of ghost rock keep arriving at Fort 51. A patrol of U.S. Army troops come through town about once a month, just to make sure everyone know's who's really in charge.

## RELATIONS WITH THE LOCALS

Frankly, there aren't any. Even though Cliffside is located smack in the middle of the territory of the Southern Paiutes, and the Navajo are just a short hop across Marble Canyon, Indian traders almost never visit Cliffside.

The main reason is they really aren't made to feel welcome while in town. Bradley Whittaker's stagecoach was attacked by a rogue band of Paiutes back when he first arrived in town. The vitriolic Whittaker has never trusted any of the native peoples since.

While Whittaker hasn't banned them from town, he's ordered his security forces to keep a close eye on any of the "filthy savages" who come into town. Indian heroes had better watch their step while in Cliffside.

## INTERESTING LOCATIONS

Here are a few of the more notable places the heroes may want to go during their week-long wait. Not every business in town is listed, but you can assume that if it's necessary to the functioning of a boomtown, Cliffside has it.

### 1. THE PALISADE

**Description:** In keeping with Sweetrock's tacitly hostile attitude toward the local indigenous peoples, they erected a 20-foot high wooden palisade around Cliffside three years ago. Some miners grumble that the wall was really built to keep profits in rather than hostile natives out.

Watchtowers flank the two town gates and stand all along the palisade. Each tower contains a Gatling gun with plenty of ammunition and is manned around the clock by two Sweetrock guards. It's an interesting fact that the gatling gun mounts can be shifted so that they cover the *inside* of Cliffside's walls as easily as the outside.

The gates are open from 5:30 a.m. until midnight. Nothing short of direct orders from the head of Sweetrock

security or Brad Whittaker himself can get the guards to open them.

The towers are connected to each other, the **Sweetrock Compound**, and the **Town Jail** by underground tunnels. There are no actual entrances to the towers from outside.

**Occupants:** Two guards from the Sweetrock mining company stand watch in each of these towers day and night. The guards change in eight hour shifts, at 10 a.m., 6 p.m. and 2 p.m. See **Sweetrock Mining Compound** for the guard's statistics.

## 2. SWEETROCK MINING COMPOUND

**Description:** As befitting the company that runs this town, Sweetrock Mining Post #117 encompasses more land than anything else within Cliffside's walls. The fenced in compound houses a two-story ghost-rock processing plant, complete with underground storage bunkers for the processed ghost rock, offices, barracks for the company's guards, the payroll office for the Sweetrock miners, and so on. The place is heavily guarded day and night, and the 10-foot wall that surrounds the place is topped with broken glass and barbed wire.

**Occupants:** 50 guards are housed in the barracks facilities, and there are another 40 employees in the compound during the day, working in both the offices and the processing plant. The plant also pumps up water from the Colorado River far below, both to cool its machinery and provide running water to the town. This has also come in handy the few times fire has broken out in town.

The man who runs the whole operation is Bradley Whittaker. Whittaker made a name for himself Back East as a tough businessman who could squeeze the last ounce of material out of whatever mine he was put in charge of. However, his draconian labor practices were the subject of more than one muckraker's expose', so Whittaker was shipped off to man this desolate and isolated post three years ago. True to form, Sweetrock's mines are producing like

## CHAPTER THREE

51

never before—and Whittaker is the most hated man in town.

Whittaker has been petitioning Sweetrock to build a special spur off the Denver Pacific to transport the products of the mines, but it's purely a pipe dream. If he's lucky, he might get a telegraph line installed.

For statistics for Bradley Whittaker, see **Whittaker House**, below.

### PROFILE: TYPICAL SWEETROCK GUARD

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:2d8, S:2d8, Q:4d6, V:2d6

Climbin' 2d8, fightin': brawlin', club 4d8, shootin': automatics, pistol, shotgun 4d6, sneak 3d8

**Mental:** C:1d6, K:1d6, M:1d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d8

Guts 3d8, overawe 2d8, persuasion 2d8, search 2d6, streetwise 3d6

**Edges:** Law man 1

**Hindrances:** Intolerance -1 (Indians)

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 14

**Gear:** Nightsticks and double-action Colt Peacemakers.

**Description:** A wide variety of thugs make up the Sweetrock guard, with one exception: none of them are Indians.

## 3. WHITTAKER'S WALK

**Description:** This wooden walkway spans about 600 feet of the cliff behind the Sweetrock compound. Three powerful winches lower miners down to the cliffside mines every morning and haul them back up at night. The walkway is built flush with the top of the cliff, with a six-foot railing spanning the entire length.

**Occupants:** Usually only Sweetrock security guards and miners are found along the walkway. Bradley Whittaker does make a habit of walking the length of the top level of the scaffold when he needs to think, and the whole

top area is now referred to as Whittaker's Walk by the townspeople. So far, no one has had the guts to try and push Whittaker off his perch, but hope springs eternal.

#### 4. MINER'S UNION HALL

**Description:** This large one-story wooden building located near the Sweetrock compound is a central gathering place for all the Sweetrock-employed miners. Inside the walls of this place, the miners can peacefully

discuss issues pertaining to working conditions, wages, benefits and the like.

Well, that's the theory anyway. Despite the name of this place, there is no "Miner's Union" as such. The Union Hall contains a few shabby snooker tables, some threadbare furniture, a fireplace, a few drafty rooms for the most destitute miners, and not much else. Most self-respecting miners would rather slum in one of Cliffside's numerous dives than darken the doorstep of this place.

**Occupants:** Usually four or five depressed miners can be found living or hanging around this building, but generally it's pretty empty.

#### 5. TOWN HALL

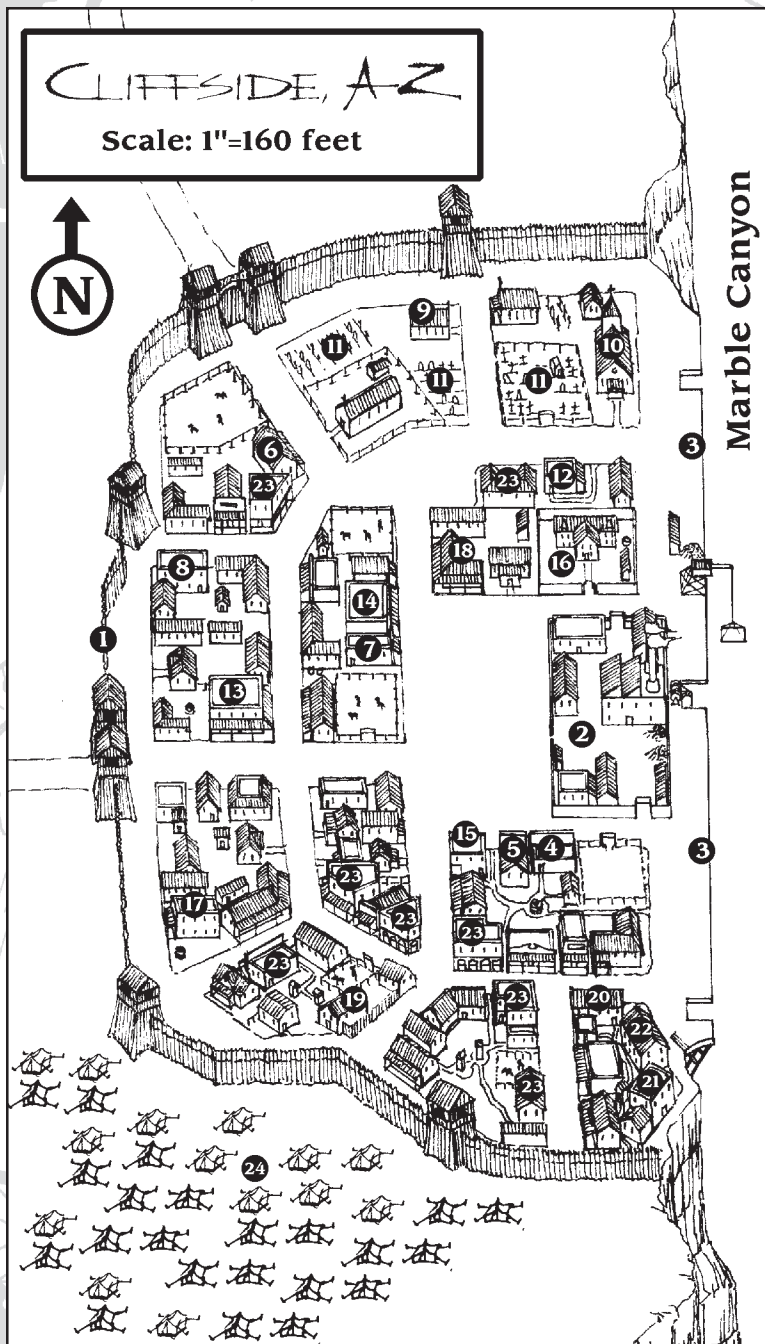
**Description:** One would hardly suppose that this one-story wooden building was the seat of government in town if it didn't say so right on the front of the place. The place is divided up into offices for the occupants and a few room for record storage.

**Occupants:** The current mayor, a former Sweetrock accountant named Harlin Lawson (45), has his office here, along with two handpicked assistants, his sons Ira (19) and Ephraim (22). As his job is entirely symbolic, Harlin spends most of his days "relaxing" in the saloon in the Standard Hotel, while his sons create meaningless mounds of paperwork to make the city government look legitimate.

#### 6. HAGER COACHLINES

**Description:** This low wooden building is the head office and depot for Hager Coachlines. The other transportation company in town, Larson Shipping, is almost exclusively devoted to shipping ghost rock for Sweetrock. Thus anyone who wants to ship anything, or get out of town, has to use Hager. The Coachlines run weekly trips north to the town of Lee's Ferry about 20 miles away, and on to a few Mormon settlements in southern Deseret.

**Occupants:** Henry Hager (53) runs this establishment along with his only daughter Ada (18). Ada's a pretty girl, but the loss of her mother to a drunken miner and a childhood spent in one of



the rougher places in the Weird West have taken their toll on her. She's totally loyal to her father, but if he were to pass away she'd be out of Cliffside on the next stage.

## CHAPTER THREE

53

### 7. CLIFFSIDE HERALD

**Description:** A boarded up and empty building. Looking through the dirty glass, one can just make out the shape of a dusty printing press in the far back of the building.

**Occupants:** No one. The *Cliffside Herald* shut down last year, due to economic pressure from Sweetrock

### 8. CLIFFSIDE BANK

**Description:** This stone building looks as strong as it is, with steel bars on its windows and armed guards inside day and night.

**Occupants:** The Cliffside bank isn't a bank in the traditional sense. It holds no investments, makes no loans, offers no letters of credit, nor does it provide any of the other services of a normal bank. Lawrence Parson's (32) fortress of a building offers one thing: security. For the fee of \$1 a month, Parsons guarantees that any miners hard-earned pay is kept safe and secure. Parsons employs eight well-trained and armed guard/tellers.

### 9. OUR LADY OF PEACE

**Description:** The smallest of the three churches in town, Our Lady of Peace is a simple one story structure. Father Ramsey, the parish priest, sleeps in a small room in the front of the church.

**Occupants:** Father Edward Ramsey (25) has come to this isolated outpost with one mission—save souls. The young priest's compassionate nature and intellectual style have largely fallen on deaf ears in Cliffside, but he has won a few converts. That, and quite a few of the soiled doves in the south end of town fancy him quite a bit. They severely test his vow of chastity at times.

Father Ramsey is also one of the blessed. He hasn't had much cause to use his God-given abilities here, but his

repeated *sanctification* of the town graveyards has kept the dead sleeping peacefully.

### PROFILE: FATHER RAMSEY

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:2d8, S:2d8, Q:4d6, V:2d6

Climbin' 1d8, sneak 3d8

**Mental:** C:1d6, K:3d6, M:1d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d10

Faith 4d12, guts 3d12, persuasion 2d6, search 2d8, streetwise 3d6

**Edges:** Arcane background: blessed

**Hindrances:** Self-righteous

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 16

### Special Abilities:

**Miracles:** Lay on hands, protection, sacrifice, sanctify

**Gear:** A rosary and two vials of holy water.

**Description:** Father Ramsey is a well-built handsome fellow, with brown hair and bright green eyes.

### 10. MARBLE CANYON BAPTIST CHURCH

**Description:** This impressive masonry church is the best attended and funded in town. It even sports a stained glass window donated by Bradley Whittaker (in a typical display of excess).

**Occupants:** William Norton (42) is the pastor of the Marble Canyon Baptist. An ex-miner himself, Norton is well known for the use of his experiences in the mines as fodder for his barn-burning sermons.

### 11. THE GRAVEYARDS

**Description:** Enough miners have died over the last few years to keep the undertaker pretty busy. The Cliffside Graveyard has spread beyond its original boundaries and is now scattered across two blocks in the

north end of town. Sweetrock has been considering a plan to move the whole kit-and-kaboodle outside the town wall (over the objections of the town's men-of-the-cloth).

**Occupants:** Dead people—and unlike many graveyards in the Weird West, those buried here tend to stay put.

Anyone buried in the Cliffside Graveyard draws one less card to come back harrowed.

## 12. MARBLE CANYON FUNERAL HOME

**Description:** The black curtains and the coffins on display in the front windows of this simple wooden building make it pretty clear that if you need someone buried, this is the place to go.

**Occupants:** Bertram Neil (36) is the town undertaker, though you'd never know it to look at him. He's a rotund jocular fellow, always ready with a joke or wisecrack when he's not on the job. He sobers up his demeanor quite a bit when dealing with a client, of course.

## 13. THE STANDARD HOTEL

**Description:** The best (and only) hotel in town, the two-story Standard has 15 rooms available for rent, as well as a small saloon/restaurant that genuinely does deliver some of the better, though definitely the priciest, food in town.

**Occupants:** Thomas Leonard (42) has been master of the hotel since it opened five years ago. He employs a maid, a cook, a bartender, and two desk clerks.

## 14. THE HAYMAKER THEATRE

**Description:** The Haymaker is a far more impressive theater than Cliffside probably needs. Its ornately decorated main hall can seat up to 200 people at a time.

**Occupants:** Henry Hodgkins (37) bought the Haymaker two years ago, and it has less than prospered for him. Hodgkins had visions of bringing some modicum of culture to Cliffside, but he quickly disabused himself of that notion. Burlesque shows are by far the most common attraction here.

## 15. BOWMAN'S GENERAL STORE

**Description:** This large two-story masonry building holds the only general store in town.

**Occupants:** Peter Bowman (38) and his wife Ethel (35). The Bowmans are mercenary folk, charging three times of normal cost for everything sold in their spacious and well stocked store.

## 16. WHITTAKER HOUSE

**Description:** Easily the largest residence in town, Bradley Whittaker's house is a two-story, six bedroom mansion. It's more a show piece for Whittaker than anything else, but it's hard to see much of it behind the ten-foot stone wall that surrounds the grounds. A sturdy iron gate breaks the wall in front.

**Occupants:** This is the home of Bradley Whittaker (48), Executive Director of Sweetrock Mining Post #117. Whittaker is unmarried and lives alone in his palatial mansion with only his butler Yeates (35), his cook Mrs. Helgerson (55), and his personal bodyguard Leland (26) for company. He is a bitter, angry, and greedy man who loves flashy and ostentatious displays of wealth. Whittaker knows that he is better than everyone else in town, and is not afraid to tell everyone within earshot. Only the rather generous pay that he lavishes on those employees he values (including the Sweetrock security guards), and the watchful eyes of Leland, who accompanies the man everywhere, have kept him from meeting an uncomfortable end.

## PROFILE: BRADLEY WHITTAKER

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:2d8, S:2d8, Q:4d6, V:2d6  
Climbin' 1d8, shootin': pistol 2d6, sneak 2d8

**Mental:** C:1d6, K:1d6, M:2d10, Sm:4d8, Sp:3d6

**Guts** 3d6, overawe 4d10, persuasion 2d10, search 2d8, trade: business leadership 6d6

**Edges:** Friends in high places 3 (Sweetrock)

**Hindrances:** Big britches

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 14

**Gear:** Whittaker usually carries a two-shot Derringer.

**Description:** Whittaker is a stocky man, with a hard look in his eye.

### PROFILE: LELAND

**Corporeal:** D:2d8, N:2d10, S:2d8, Q:4d6, V:2d10

**Climbin'** 3d8, **fightin':** brawlin', club 4d10, **shootin':** pistol 4d8, sneak 3d8

**Mental:** C:1d6, K:1d6, M:1d12, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d8

**Guts** 3d8, overawe 2d12, search 2d8, streetwise 3d6

**Edges:** Brawny

**Hindrances:** None

**Pace:** 10

**Size:** 7

**Wind:** 18

**Gear:** Nothing but his big, meaty fists.

**Description:** Leland is 250 pounds of bald, pasty white muscle. He's not too bright, but he is good at breaking things and taking orders.

## 17. TOWN JAIL

**Description:** Sweetrock has taken no chances when it comes to dealing with crime in Cliffside. The Town Jail is an imposing two-story edifice of stone and iron, meant to be as much a threatening reminder of who's in charge in town as much as it is a place for troublemakers to cool their heels. The building holds 15 cells, as well as quarters for a few of the security guards

**Occupants:** Luke Beamer (32) is the chief of Sweetrock Security and the town marshal for Cliffside. Beamer and his men are notorious for cracking down hard on any bad talk about the mining company.

As far as other rough behavior goes, Beamer lets most things go as long as no lead flies and no one ends up dead.



Look under the **Sweetrock Mining Compound** entry on page 49 for the Guard's statistics.

### PROFILE: LUKE BEAMER

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:2d10, S:2d8, Q:4d6, V:2d6

**Climbin'** 2d10, **fightin':** brawlin', club 5d10, **shootin':** automatics, pistol, shotgun 5d6, sneak 3d10

**Mental:** C:3d8, K:1d6, M:1d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d8

**Guts** 3d8, overawe 4d8, persuasion 2d8, search 2d8, streetwise 3d6

**Edges:** Law man 3

**Hindrances:** Intolerance -1 (Indians)

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 14

**Gear:** A nightstick and twin double action Colt Peacemakers.

**Description:** Beamer is a wiry man, with short, curly blond hair and a neatly trimmed beard. His watery blue eyes gaze out on the world with a cold stare.

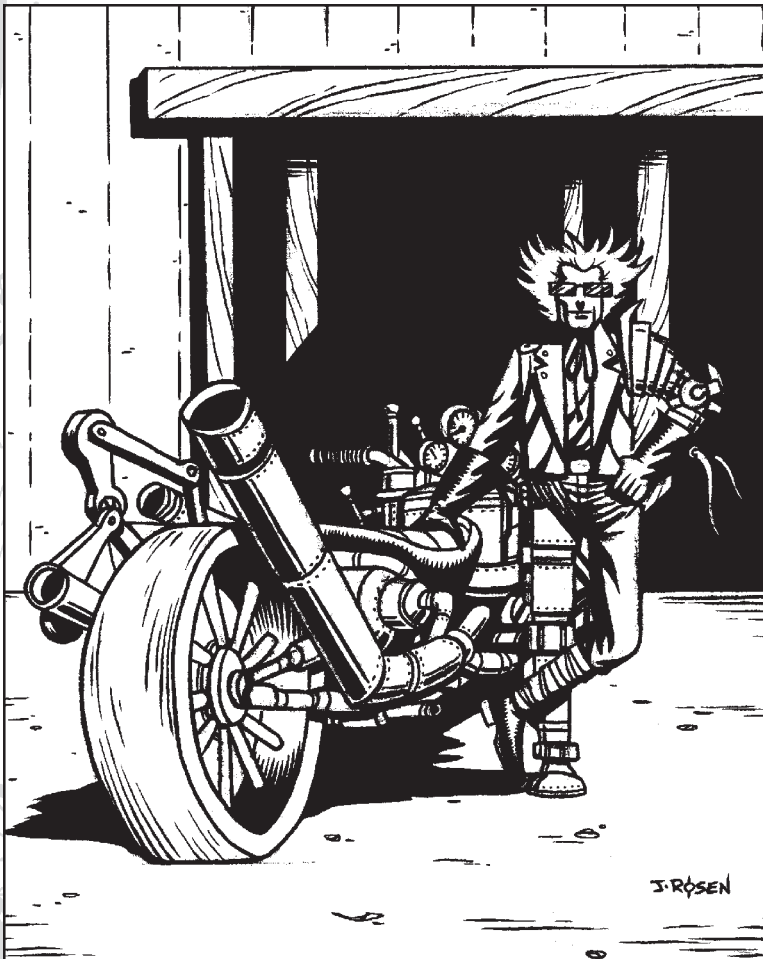
## 18. LARSON SHIPPING

**Description:** This unassuming single-story wooden depot building is actually the offices of the second most important company in Cliffside.

**Occupants:** Someone has to ship all the food and other goods out to this isolated post, and that someone is Jessup Larson (43), the cantankerous owner of Larson Shipping. Along with his five assistants and at least ten drivers, Larson keeps the ghost rock that Sweetrock digs out of the earth moving out of town.

Larson's close association with Sweetrock, along with his parsimonious ways, makes him the second most hated man in town. Not even he can take that title away from Bradley Whittaker.

Larson also has a healthy sideline going in arms smuggling. He's been supplying the Apaches down in southern Arizona with rifles and ammunition for over two years now. Whittaker would have his head if he ever found out.



## PROFILE: JESSUP LARSON

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:2d6, S:2d8, Q:4d6, V:2d6

Climbin' 1d6, fightin': brawlin' 3d6, shootin': shotgun 4d6, sneak 3d6

**Mental:** C:3d8, K:1d6, M:1d12, Sm:2d6, Sp:4d10

Guts 3d10, language: Indian sign 3d6, overawe 3d12, persuasion 3d12, search 2d8, streetwise 5d6

**Edges:** None

**Hindrances:** Greedy

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 14

**Gear:** Jessup keeps a loaded double-barrel shotgun under his desk.

**Description:** Larson looks as shiftless as he is, with tiny piercing eyes and long nervous hands. He smokes fast and talks faster.

## 19. RUTHGARDT PROPULSION LABORATORY

**Description:** It takes a sharp eye to pick out the words "And Fix-it Shop" stencilled hastily under the main sign.

**Occupants:** These two buildings connected by a fence are the home and laboratory of Adolphus Ruthgardt (37), tinkerer, mechanic, mad scientist, and speed freak.

Ruthgardt feels the need for speed in about the worst way possible. He makes a living maintaining most of Sweetrock's mining equipment, as well as the lifts along Whittaker's Walk, but every moment of his spare time is consumed with his passion for building, tweaking, and speeding around in his various collection of steamwagons and velocipedes.

Adolphus is also obsessed with jumping Marble Canyon. He's tried twice already, and all he has to show for it are two clockwork limbs. Luckily for Ruthgardt, Sweetrock needs him enough to cover his medical bills.

## PROFILE: ADOLPHUS RUTHGARDT

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:2d6, S:2d8, Q:4d6, V:2d6

Climbin' 1d6, fightin': brawlin' 3d6, shootin': shotgun 4d6, sneak 3d6

**Mental:** C:3d8, K:1d6, M:1d12, Sm:2d6, Sp:4d6

Guts 3d10, persuasion 3d12, science: engineering, search 2d8, tinkerin'

**Edges:** Arcane background: mad scientist, mechanically inclined

**Hindrances:** Loco -2 (speed freak)

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 12

**Special Abilities:**

**Clockwork Limbs:** Ruthgardt's limbs are simple replacements and don't grant him any additional strength. He does have 1 point of Armor on his left arm and right leg, however.

**Gear:** Ruthgardt owns a variety of steam wagons and velocipedes, all tweaked to within an inch of falling apart (Reliability 15).

**Description:** Everything about Ruthgardt's appearance screams "genius" and "nutjob" simultaneously. From his wild white hair to his creaking and clanking clockwork limbs, he is almost personification of mad science.

## 20. THE LANDSLIDE SALOON

**Description:** The Landslide Saloon has been operating since the first day miners set up their tents in the area. Jake Joseph, the proprietor, started out with nothing more than a rough lean-to and a couple of bottles of bourbon. These days he's built himself a medium-sized clapboard saloon that serves some of the better rotgut in town.

**Occupants:** Jake Joseph (40) still runs the joint, along with his brothers Josh and Louis. The Landslide is mostly the hangout of the independent miners in town. Anyone associated with Sweetrock is likely to receive at best an unfriendly welcome.

## 21. THE PRECIPICE

**Description:** This two-story building houses the roughest joint in town. The Precipice gets its name from the fact that it's built facing out over the southern end of Whittaker's Walk,

# CHAPTER THREE

57

looking out into the canyon. In addition to the common room downstairs, private rooms are available upstairs for a modest 50¢ an hour or \$2 a night.

**Occupants:** The clientele at the Precipice is a pretty rough crowd. They work hard all day in the mines and they play hard at night. Fights are common here, and because of the proximity of the Precipice to the edge of Marble Canyon, people are seldom asked to "take it outside."

## 22. THE MARBLE MAIDEN

**Description:** This two story wooden building is obviously one of the more prosperous establishments in town—the carved front doors and actual slate roof attest to that.

**Occupants:** Madame Helen (35) and her 25 "employees" do their best to keep the men-folk of Cliffside from going around the bend. Helen's girls are hardly uniformly beautiful, but they're clean and moderately cultured. The Maiden employs two bouncers, but they only rarely have to actually throw anybody out. Anyone harming Helen or her girls would have the majority of the male population of Cliffside to answer to.

## 23. ROOMING HOUSES

**Description:** These two-story wooden buildings provide the accommodations for the majority of the miners and workers for Sweetrock. Some of them actually offer individual rooms, while others are more dormitory-like.

**Occupants:** Miners make their homes in these cramped quarters. Many share quarters and even rotate bed occupancy to save as much money as possible. Rent only runs about \$10 a month, so these are ideal accommodations for them based on what they're paid.

## 24. CANVASTOWN

**Description:** Many of the independent miners, as well as some of the poorer Sweetrock ones, make their homes in these tents located outside Cliffside's walls..

**Occupants:** If you can't afford one a bed in one of the rooming houses in town (God help you!), Canvastown is where you'll likely end up. There is no law in Canvastown, except the kind you carry on your hip, but there is a spirit of camaraderie among the inhabitants. They all hate Sweetrock much more than they hate each other.

## 25. THE MINES

**Description:** Sweetrock's cliff mines are located in the rock face below town. Elevators from Whittaker's Walk lower miners down to a variety of platforms mounted into the cliff. The mines themselves are bored far back into the cliff face at this point, reaching as far back as 200 feet at some points. There is little or no ventilation in the mines. It's a wonder Rock Fever isn't more common here.

**Occupants:** From 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. the mines are crammed with miners. At all other times they are empty and silent.

## ARRIVING IN CLIFFSIDE

As the wagons roll into town, Haskins signals a halt in front of the Standard Hotel and bounds down from his seat, clearly glad to have this leg of the trip over with. "Wait here," he says and disappears inside the doors to the hotel. Sophie climbs down from her seat as well and starts unloading luggage from the wagons, with a meaningful look at the rest of the posse. Her familiar "strong, silent" behavior from Salt Lake City and Cedar City returns at this point.

Haskins emerges from the hotel a few moments later and tells everyone to grab their luggage and come on in. "Our rooms are waiting for us, just as I arranged." Sophie stays with the wagons, taking them and the expedition's equipment over to Edward's Livery for storage.

Once inside the hotel, a rather elderly bellhop leads the posse upstairs. The rooms are clean if a bit Spartan and cramped. The heroes are bunked two to a room, with Edgar and Sophie rooming together (but sleeping separately as they always do when in town).

As everyone gets settled in and relaxes, Edgar excuses himself. "I need to go catch up with our guides and make arrangements for our departure tomorrow. I'll see you all for dinner at 6 p.m."

## GETTING SETTLED

At this point your posse has a few hours to kill, Marshal. They may want to get the lay of the land in Cliffside, go get a drink in the Standard's small but busy saloon downstairs, or just relax after their arduous journey.

Dr. Haskins returns shortly before dinner time in a black mood. After a quiet but pleasant dinner in the Standard's dining room, he assembles the group in his suite and explains why.

*"Well, it looks like we won't be leaving tomorrow as I had planned. I've enquired all over town, and there is no sign of the men I retained to be our guides. I did find a friend of theirs who told me he expected them any day now, so hopefully this delay won't be significant.*

*In any case, I've retained these rooms for us for the next week at least. Engage yourselves however you choose for the next few days, but make sure you check in with me at least once a day. When, God willing, our guides do show up I want to be able to get underway almost immediately. Just try to stay out of trouble."*

After the trip from Cedar City, news of this delay may not exactly break the hearts of the heroes. However, this setback really gets under Haskins' skin, especially after the strange events of the trip from Cedar City. He spends much of the next week brooding, and even Sophie is unable to cheer him up.

## TIME TO KILL

The guides who Haskins is waiting for have been delayed by Indian raids to the north and won't arrive in town for a week. Since the expedition can't leave without them, the posse is going to have some time to kill.

While the week in town is by and large as restful as the heroes want to make it, we have a few ideas for you on how to keep things hopping. All of the following events (with the exception of the Lost Angels presence in town) are optional. If things are slowing down too much and you just want to get the heroes on down into the canyon, feel free to breeze past them and on to **The Last Day** on page 60.

Assuming your heroes don't manage to make their own fun for the week, here are some events to liven up their stay in Cliffside.

## ANGELS ON THE CORNER

For the first three days of the posse's stay in town, Father Wilkes and his Angels are there as well. They pitch camp outside in Canvastown and spend the day in the town square, preaching Hellfire and Damnation to anyone who cares to listen (and even those who don't). Their missionaries also wander the streets of town, passing out leaflets—and keeping an eye peeled for the posse.

Luke Beamer finally ejects them from town as a public nuisance. Father Wilkes and his cronies continue to preach (and spy) from Canvastown, and some of the Guardian Angels still wander into town from time to time. Once spotted they are quickly run off by Beamer or his deputies.



Remember that Lost Angel who was watching the expedition's train pull out way back in Salt Lake City? Well, if a hero spotted him back then, she may spot him among the ranks of Father Wilkes' missionaries now. Have her make an Onerous (7) *Cognition* check to make the connection. What she does about it is up to her, but attacking the Lost Angels outright really isn't an option. The majority of people in town may think that the Lost Angels are arrogant, self-righteous, and outright annoying, but that doesn't mean they'll stand by while someone attacks the "peaceful missionaries."

## CHATTIN' WITH THE LOCALS

Over the course of the week in town, posse members may pick up all sorts of wild talk about goings-on in the area. Off-duty miners have little to do but drink and gossip, so all kinds of stories spring to life in town.

## CLIFFSIDE RUMORS

d10

### Rumor Overheard

- 1 A body was found in Canvastown two days before the posse arrived. It looked like it had been torn apart by wild animals (True. Brother Cain got hungry.)
- 2 Jessup Larson makes a healthy amount of extra cash smuggling weapons to the Apache (True)
- 3 Mr. Whittaker at Sweetrock secretly pay \$50 a piece for any Paiute scalps brought to him. (False, Whittaker hates the Indians, but he offers no such reward)
- 4 Luke Beamer has a special room in the Town Jail that he uses to personally torture any miner caught stealing from Sweetrock. (False)
- 5 A few of "Chuckles" Ryan's men were spotted in town a little over a week ago, which means the Laughing Men must be nearby! (True)
- 6 The Havasupai are cannibals who make clothing out of the scalps of white men they catch in the canyon! (False)
- 7 The beetles that are such a nuisance in town are nothing compared to the ones found down in the reaches of the canyon. There are some there are big as people! (True)
- 8 A few of those missionaries from Lost Angels have been asking around about a group of folks that sound a lot like the heroes. (True)
- 9 A Chinaman entered town the day after the posse did. He's staying at one of the rooming houses in the south end of town. (True. This is Ho Li Kwan.)
- 10 A strange figure was seen prowling along Whittaker's Walk the same night that the first miner in Canvastown was found dead. It jumped right off the edge of the Walk and into Marble Canyon! (True. This was Brother Cain)

Roll on the **Cliffside Rumors** chart at left to see what kind of information (or misinformation) a hero can come up with—or insert your own wild stories.

### MINER DIFFICULTIES

It's quite possible that some of the heroes might end up in a tussle with some of the miners (Cliffside's saloons are pretty rough). In case they do, here are statistics for a typical miner.

### PROFILE: TYPICAL MINER

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:2d6, S:2d8, Q:4d6, V:2d6

Climbin' 3d8, fightin': brawlin' 4d6, shootin': pistol 2d6, sneak 3d8

**Mental:** C:1d6, K:1d6, M:1d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d6  
Gamblin' 2d6, guts 2d6, overawe 2d8, persuasion 2d8, search 2d6, streetwise 3d6

**Edges:** None

**Hindrances:** None

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 12

**Gear:** Most miners don't carry any weapons, but a few pack knives or pistols.

**Description:** A wide variety of men work the mines in the area. Their only common factor is the tired look in their eyes.

### MEET THE BEETLES

After the heroes have had a day or so to explore Cliffside, hit them with this encounter. Sometime in the afternoon is about right. They may not all be in the same place, but no matter where they are, they won't be able to miss it.

It all begins with a low droning buzz in the air. As soon as they notice it, all the locals start to hustle on inside, closing all the windows and doors even in the midday heat and urging any confused looking heroes to do the same. "Them beetles are a-comin'," is the only explanation given.

Within ten minutes of the beginning of the droning, a cloud of two-inch-long beetles descends on the town like a plague of locusts. These are sickle beetles.

Sickle beetles are not actually all that dangerous on a one-on-one basis. It's when they swarm that there are problems. As of late, Cliffside has been getting about one sickle beetle attack a month for the last six months. Residents have learned that as long as they stay inside for the hour or so that the beetles buzz around town, no harm will befall them. Even if they happen to be caught outside, the beetles are more a nuisance than a danger, unless the person attacked is old or sick.

Anyone outside when the beetles hit town is attacked by the little bastards every round until she gets inside. The beetles attack as a swarm. You only need to make a single attack for them. They have a *fightin' brawl* of 5d6. A success indicates that 1d6 of the beetles have slashed or attached themselves to the hero with the limbs that give them their name. Each raise the swarm gets on its attack adds another 1d6 beetles to the attack. This attack cannot be dodged.

The hero takes 1 point of Wind for each beetle that hits him, and takes an additional point each round as the critters dig in with their nasty front pincers.

A single hit from any weapon kills a sickle beetle, and if the attack was hand-to-hand, every raise kills another one.

Unbeknownst to the Cliffside residents (although some rumors do circulate), the sickle beetles that attack their town from time to time are the smallest and least harmful form of the bug. There are bigger ones down in the Grand Canyon (but we'll get to them soon enough).

Scientists with the appropriate Aptitude examining a sickle beetle quickly note that they fit into no known genus or species. In fact, there are some disturbing incongruities that lead anyone making a Fair (5) *science: biology* check to conclude that the beetles are like nothing ever seen on earth before.

## INHUMAN HUNGER

A day before the heroes arrive in town, a gruesome discovery is made in Canvastown. A miner is found torn apart and partially eaten, as if by some large animal. Luke Beamer is able to

hush the killing up. But then, on the morning of the third day the heroes are in Cliffside, a second corpse is found in exactly the same shape. Word of this second murder gets out quickly. It's the talk of the town. Under pressure from the frightened miners, Sweetrock security agrees to post a few men in Canvastown for the next few days to run off whatever "animal" is doing the killing.

If the heroes can somehow get a look at the miner's body (a Hard (9) *persuasion* task at best), they can quickly ascertain that if it was an animal that killed the miner, it was a mighty powerful one. The man's body has been almost broken in half and all the internal organs have been devoured. An Onerous (7) *science: biology* check



reveals that the claw and bite patterns conform to no known animal.

By the way, the body is an absolutely hideous sight. Seeing it requires an Onerous (7) guts check.

The miners were actually killed by Brother Cain, who needs to feed his demonic hunger for human flesh. No trace of any wild animal is ever going to be found. Brother Cain kills again on day six of the heroes' visit.

## THE LAST DAY

Finally, six days after the posse arrived in town, three rough-looking, ugly, smelly men walk into the lobby of the Standard Hotel and ask to see Dr. Haskins. When Haskins appears, the leader of the three introduces himself as "Dakota" Jack Edmunds, and his brothers Bob and Lyle. "We're yer guides," the man says with a gap-toothed smile.

Although he has a harsh word or two for Dakota Jack and his brothers,

Haskins is clearly ecstatic that the guides have arrived. With this final hurdle overcome, the Explorer's Society expedition is finally ready to embark!

After making arrangements to depart tomorrow afternoon, the three brother head off to one of the rooming houses in the south part of town. Haskins suggests a celebration dinner. "It's the last feed we'll get cooked for us for at least three weeks, my friends," the pleased archaeologist says.

Everyone lingers over dinner, and it's nearly 10 P.M. by the time desert is served and cigars are lighted. Haskins and Sophie decide to go for a stroll along Whittaker's Walk, inviting any who wish to accompany them. "After all," he says, "After tomorrow, we'll only be seeing the splendor of the canyon from the bottom of it."

## ANGELS' AMBUSH

And what a fateful walk this is, Marshal. After watching for almost a week, the Lost Angels have figured out that Haskins wears the Talisman these days. He's spent most of his time in the Standard Hotel—too public a place to strike. His evening walk gives Wilkes' men the opportunity they need.

Haskins and Sophie's stroll starts at the southern end of Whittaker's Walk. The Lost Angels strike when the two reach the northern end of it, up around the churches and graveyards.

If no one accompanies the pair, a bruised and battered Sophie returns to the hotel 30 minutes later, carrying an unconscious Haskins. Surprised by the Lost Angels, they were knocked unconscious and the Talisman is gone.

## THE ANGELS

This is an important combat, Marshal, as it decides whether Father Wilkes will be chasing the posse for the remainder of the adventure, or whether they are chasing him. Wilkes' men have orders not to pull any punches, but their main mission is to get the Talisman. Killing people is a close second.

There are three Guardian Angels, plus one for every posse member. They are armed only with pistols and clubs.



If the fight seems to be going against them, two of the cultist use their Bones of the Bloody Ones.

Brother Cain watches the proceedings from a rooftop nearby in his demonic form. If one of the Guardian Angels gets the Talisman away from Haskins and holds onto it for one entire round, Brother Cain swoops down from the rooftop on his leathery wings and picks up the Angel, carrying him right off the edge of Whittaker's Walk and into the night. The other Angels immediately retreat if this happens.

Keep in mind that because of the altar stone that Father Wilkes carries (and rest assured he is lurking nearby), the bloody ones don't look like the horrific demons from Hell that they are. Check out Chapter One for full details on this phenomenon. However, Brother Cain's demonic nature can't be concealed, and anyone getting a glimpse of him if he makes an appearance has to make a *Terror* check as normal.

There's a fairly good chance that the heroes are going to lose the Talisman of the Heart here. The Lost Angels are pretty tough, and they know the price of failing Father Wilkes. If they get hold of the thing, the Lost Angels head out into the canyon that night, and have a lead on the heroes for the rest of the adventure.

Either way, Haskins mentions that leaving the next day is even more imperative now. Someone else is on the trail of Powell's "cathedral of stone." If the heroes want to get there first, they're going to have to move fast.

### DEALING IN THE WILD CARD

If you want to make sure the bad guys don't get the Talisman, this is another good place for Ho Li Kwan to make a move. Ho can put a couple of arrows in a Guardian Angel at a crucial moment, or even take a direct hand if the posse really needs the help. If at all possible, Ho doesn't stick around to answer questions after the fight. He just melts back into the darkness, and continues his vigil.

Alternately, you can use this as an opportunity for Ho Li to join up with

## CHAPTER THREE

63

the group. Perhaps he mentions that "sinister forces" (he won't say more than that) are arrayed against the expedition, and he wishes to help protect against them. If the posse accepts his offer of help, he sets out with them in the morning. If not, he melts back into the darkness.

### FINAL PREPARATIONS

Now that the guides have finally shown their gap-toothed faces in town, Haskins gathers the heroes together the night before departure. He reminds them to make any final equipment purchases the next morning. It's their last chance, he reminds them!

This part is important, Marshal. Get each of the players to write down exactly what equipment their heroes are carrying with them down into the canyon. Once they leave Cliffside, there are no places to resupply, so if they don't get something now they're not going to have a chance to get it later.

Check over these lists carefully, and feel free to impose some movement penalties on those lugging around everything but the kitchen sink.

### HEADIN' OUT

With that final step, the next day around noon, the expedition, which includes Sophie, Haskins, the three guides, plus the heroes, sets out south to take the Nankoweap Trail down to the Grand Canyon, and thenceforth into the unknown!

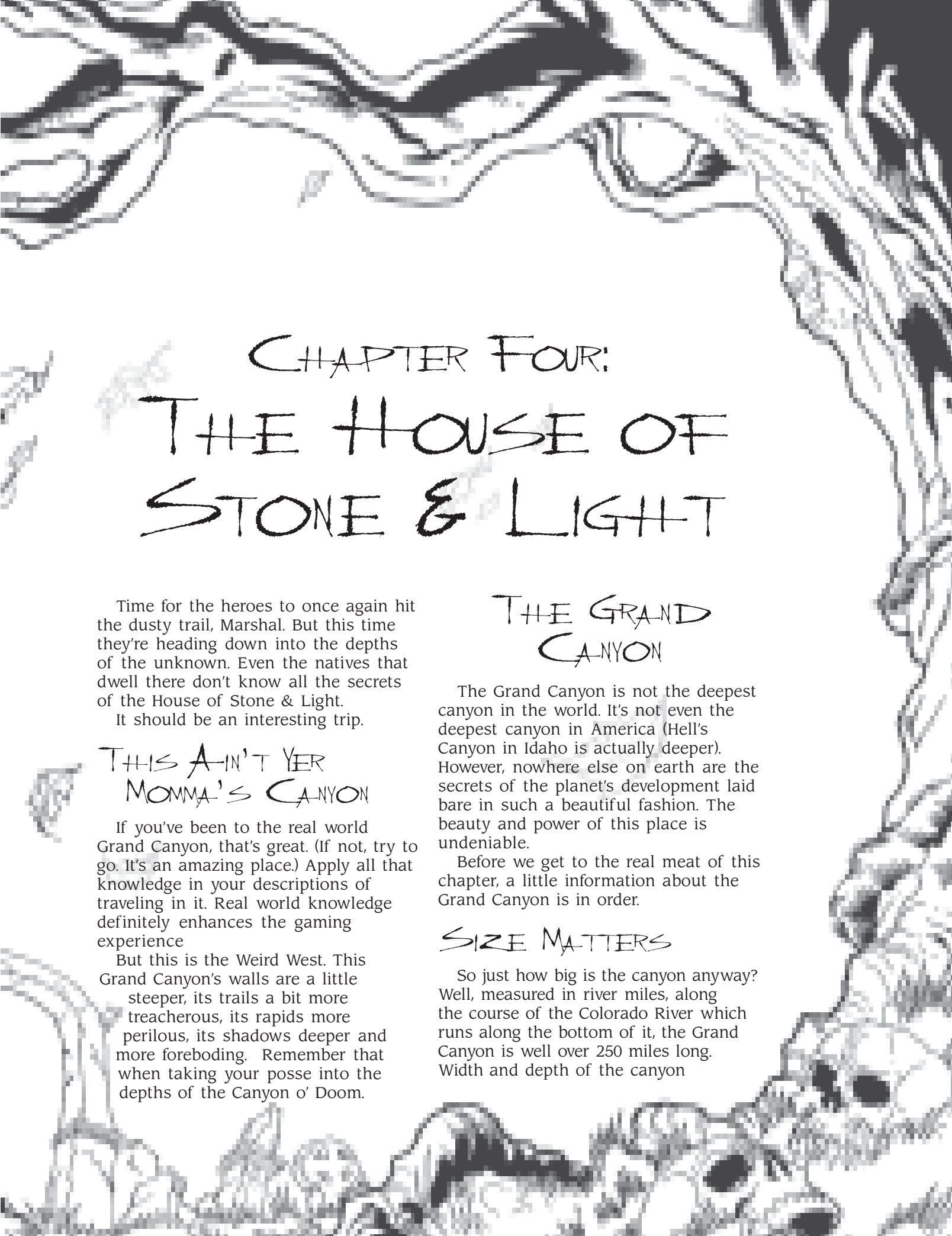
### BOUNTY

**Getting to examine the murdered miner's body:** 1 red chip to the examining hero.

**Keeping hold of the Talisman:** 1 Blue chip for all.

**Driving off or killing the Guardian Angels, but losing the Talisman:** 1 red chip to all.





## CHAPTER FOUR: THE HOUSE OF STONE & LIGHT

Time for the heroes to once again hit the dusty trail, Marshal. But this time they're heading down into the depths of the unknown. Even the natives that dwell there don't know all the secrets of the House of Stone & Light.

It should be an interesting trip.

### THIS AIN'T YER MOMMA'S CANYON

If you've been to the real world Grand Canyon, that's great. (If not, try to go. It's an amazing place.) Apply all that knowledge in your descriptions of traveling in it. Real world knowledge definitely enhances the gaming experience

But this is the Weird West. This Grand Canyon's walls are a little steeper, its trails a bit more treacherous, its rapids more perilous, its shadows deeper and more foreboding. Remember that when taking your posse into the depths of the Canyon o' Doom.

### THE GRAND CANYON

The Grand Canyon is not the deepest canyon in the world. It's not even the deepest canyon in America (Hell's Canyon in Idaho is actually deeper). However, nowhere else on earth are the secrets of the planet's development laid bare in such a beautiful fashion. The beauty and power of this place is undeniable.

Before we get to the real meat of this chapter, a little information about the Grand Canyon is in order.

### SIZE MATTERS

So just how big is the canyon anyway? Well, measured in river miles, along the course of the Colorado River which runs along the bottom of it, the Grand Canyon is well over 250 miles long. Width and depth of the canyon



vary from place to place. On the South Rim it's a vertical mile (about 5,000') from rim to river in some places. At its deepest, it is 6,000 vertical feet from rim to river. The north rim of the Grand Canyon rises about 1,200 feet higher than the south rim. The highest points on the rim are about 9,000 feet above sea level. The width of the canyon

varies widely—from as little as four miles to as much as 18 miles in places.

So how big is the Grand Canyon? Real big.

## THE COLORADO RIVER

The Grand Canyon wouldn't be so grand if it wasn't for another amazing natural feature: the Colorado River. The Grand Canyon is one of the most spectacular examples of erosion in the world, with the river as one of the major contributors.

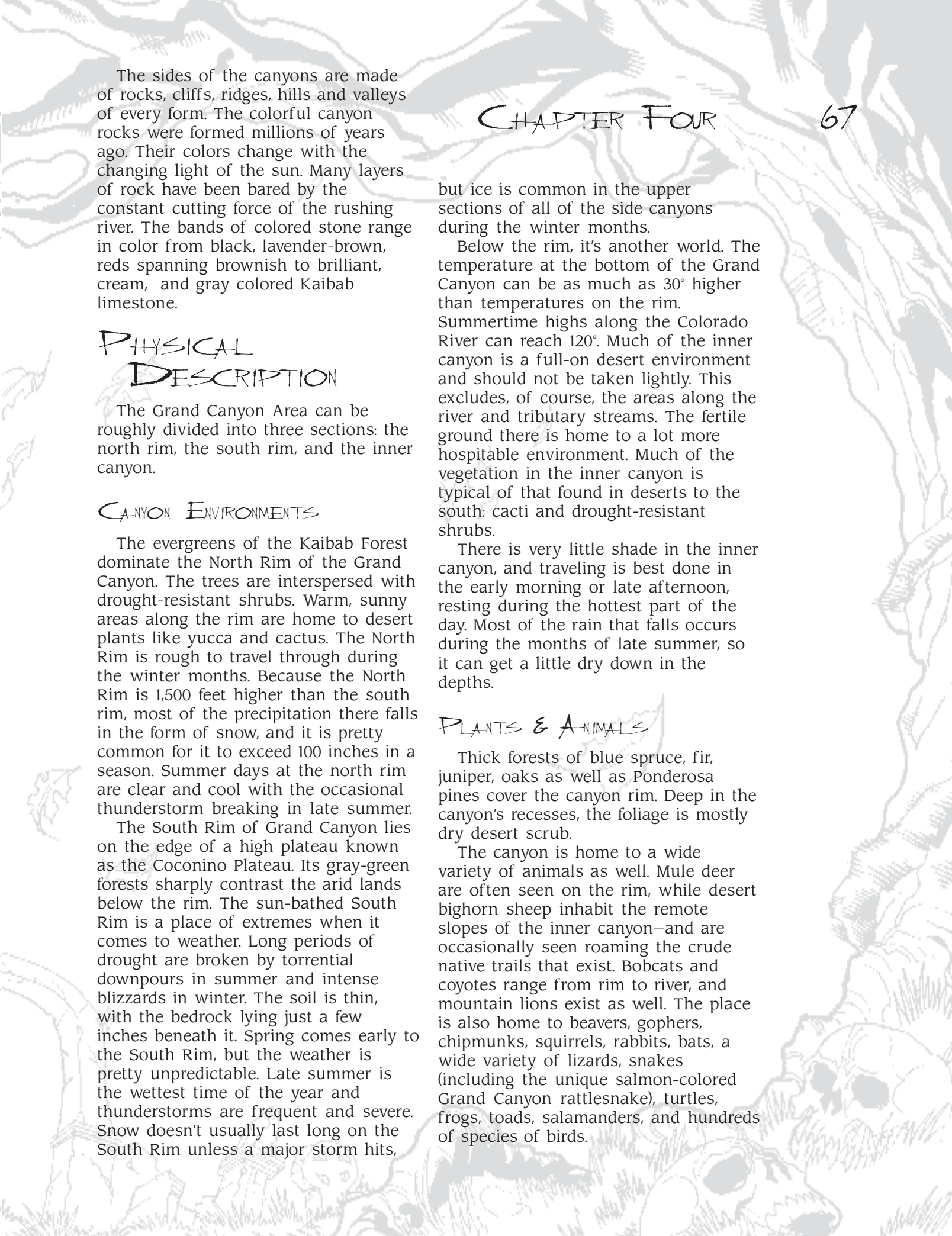
The Colorado River rushes along at the bottom of the canyons about 1,800 feet above sea level. The river is much longer than the canyon, of course. It runs almost 1,450 miles from the Rocky Mountains of Colorado to the Gulf of California in Mexico. In fact, the Grand Canyon is only one of many beautiful canyons which the river has carved. Others include Cataract Canyon and Glen Canyon, both located to the north of the Grand.

As it flows, the Colorado is fed by many streams and creeks that have formed their own canyons linked to the Grand Canyon. Narrow beaches lie along its length, formed from sand ground from the rock faces over the centuries. The water of the river is surprisingly warm, often approaching 80°. Actually, when you consider that the temperature often reaches well over 100° down on the canyon floor, it's not surprising that the water is that warm.

The Colorado is not a peaceful river as it flows through the stony walls. Apart from the flash floods that heavy summer rainfall brings, there are many treacherous rapids scattered up and down its length. More on them in a bit.

## GEOLOGY ON PARADE

Geologically, the Grand Canyon is of incredible significance. The thick sequences of ancient rocks that are preserved and exposed in the walls of the canyon record much of the early geologic history of the North American continent. When the scientists from Back East finally manage to get out here, they'll find a treasure trove of information just waiting for them in the walls of the magnificent locale.



The sides of the canyons are made of rocks, cliffs, ridges, hills and valleys of every form. The colorful canyon rocks were formed millions of years ago. Their colors change with the changing light of the sun. Many layers of rock have been bared by the constant cutting force of the rushing river. The bands of colored stone range in color from black, lavender-brown, reds spanning brownish to brilliant, cream, and gray colored Kaibab limestone.

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Grand Canyon Area can be roughly divided into three sections: the north rim, the south rim, and the inner canyon.

## CANYON ENVIRONMENTS

The evergreens of the Kaibab Forest dominate the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. The trees are interspersed with drought-resistant shrubs. Warm, sunny areas along the rim are home to desert plants like yucca and cactus. The North Rim is rough to travel through during the winter months. Because the North Rim is 1,500 feet higher than the south rim, most of the precipitation there falls in the form of snow, and it is pretty common for it to exceed 100 inches in a season. Summer days at the north rim are clear and cool with the occasional thunderstorm breaking in late summer.

The South Rim of Grand Canyon lies on the edge of a high plateau known as the Coconino Plateau. Its gray-green forests sharply contrast the arid lands below the rim. The sun-bathed South Rim is a place of extremes when it comes to weather. Long periods of drought are broken by torrential downpours in summer and intense blizzards in winter. The soil is thin, with the bedrock lying just a few inches beneath it. Spring comes early to the South Rim, but the weather is pretty unpredictable. Late summer is the wettest time of the year and thunderstorms are frequent and severe. Snow doesn't usually last long on the South Rim unless a major storm hits,

## CHAPTER FOUR

67

but ice is common in the upper sections of all of the side canyons during the winter months.

Below the rim, it's another world. The temperature at the bottom of the Grand Canyon can be as much as 30° higher than temperatures on the rim. Summertime highs along the Colorado River can reach 120°. Much of the inner canyon is a full-on desert environment and should not be taken lightly. This excludes, of course, the areas along the river and tributary streams. The fertile ground there is home to a lot more hospitable environment. Much of the vegetation in the inner canyon is typical of that found in deserts to the south: cacti and drought-resistant shrubs.

There is very little shade in the inner canyon, and traveling is best done in the early morning or late afternoon, resting during the hottest part of the day. Most of the rain that falls occurs during the months of late summer, so it can get a little dry down in the depths.

## PLANTS & ANIMALS

Thick forests of blue spruce, fir, juniper, oaks as well as Ponderosa pines cover the canyon rim. Deep in the canyon's recesses, the foliage is mostly dry desert scrub.

The canyon is home to a wide variety of animals as well. Mule deer are often seen on the rim, while desert bighorn sheep inhabit the remote slopes of the inner canyon—and are occasionally seen roaming the crude native trails that exist. Bobcats and coyotes range from rim to river, and mountain lions exist as well. The place is also home to beavers, gophers, chipmunks, squirrels, rabbits, bats, a wide variety of lizards, snakes (including the unique salmon-colored Grand Canyon rattlesnake), turtles, frogs, toads, salamanders, and hundreds of species of birds.

## INHABITANTS

Now that you know a bit about the natural forces and features that make up the Grand Canyon, let's move into the sentient residents of it's depths.

### HUMAN HISTORY

Humans have been a part of the Grand Canyon region for at least 4,000 years. The oldest evidence of their presence is tiny split twig figurines, animal figures a few inches in height, made primarily from twigs of willow or cottonwood and found in caves below the rim. Not much is known about the people who left these little trinkets behind—they predate even the Anasazi.

The Anasazi were the next people to inhabit the canyon. Their record in the Grand Canyon region spans the years from 200 B.C. to the middle 1100s, when the Anasazi abandoned their Grand Canyon home

Scattered throughout the canyon are remnants of the Anasazi. Small caves hold pots and other trinkets. The ruins of ancient dwellings can sometimes be picked out from the broken landscape, along with pot shards and discarded stone tools.

### MODERN EXPLORERS

While the natives have been here for thousands of years, the first European visit was a lot more recent. The first foreign explorer to view the Grand Canyon was Captain Garcia Lopez de Cardenas in 1540. Cardenas was sent north from Mexico by Francisco Vasquez de Coronado in search of the fabled Seven Cities of Cibola (Gold). Cardenas and his party spent three days on the south rim of the canyon trying to get down to the river, until depleted supplies forced them to give up.

The north rim was not visited by Europeans until 236 years after the south rim. In 1776 a Spanish missionary named Father Escalante became the

first European to visit the north rim. It was some three centuries before the Europeans would return to the Grand Canyon, when in 1869 Major John Wesley Powell became the first person to explore the entire length of the canyon. Powell mounted a second expedition in 1871, and a third one in 1873. (You already know the fate of the 1873 expedition, Marshal.)

### NATIVE PEOPLES

Statistics for typical Indian warriors can be found on page 69.

**The Navajo:** The Navajo people make up one of the largest tribes in the Weird West. The Navajo live throughout the region to the east of the canyon where they hunt and farm.

For more information on the Navajo, see the *Ghost Dancers* sourcebook.

**The Southern Paiutes:** The Southern Paiute Indians occupy land north of the Colorado River in what is known as the Arizona Strip and traditionally used the canyon for hundreds of years. The Southern Paiutes hunt throughout the Grand Canyon and the Kaibab Forest.

Like the Paiute tribe of Utah in the north, the Southern Paiutes are deeply committed to the Old Ways movement. For more information on the Old Ways movement and the Ghost Dance, see the *Ghost Dancers* sourcebook.

**The Havasupai:** The other tribes may come into the Grand Canyon to gather food or other resources, but only the Havasupai people actually make their homes down in the depths of the House of Stone and Light. The life-style of the Havasupai has remained almost completely unchanged since the Havasu Creek area was originally settled by their ancestors in the 1300s. Their name, Havasupai, means "People of the blue-green water" which describes the color of Havasu Creek.

The Havasupai's knowledge of the inner canyon is quite extensive. It has to be for them to eke out a comfortable existence there. They live mostly by farming corn and squash, and hunting the mule deer that populate both rims of the canyon. They tan the hides of the deer into buckskin, which is the tribe's primary trade good.

The Havasupai honor their ancestors and the spirits, but their isolation has kept the Old Ways movement from catching on here. Plus, guns are just too darn useful to the hunters of the tribe.

The tribe is smaller than many—the harsh environment keeps a lid on population growth. The tribe has two semi-permanent settlements at Indian Garden (a farming village, obviously), and the village of Supai, located about 10 miles up Havasu Creek from the Colorado River.

### THE LAUGHING MEN

Just mentioning the name “Laughing Men” is enough to strike dread into the hearts of Indians and whites from Texas to Colorado. His band of outlaws sweep into a town, looting and pillaging, and laughing their heads off the entire time.

This vicious group of cutthroats used to work for the Black River railroad, but went independent when Mina Devlin took over the organization. It seems they didn’t appreciate the favoritism Mina showed to another all-female rail gang, the Wichita Witches.

The leader of the Laughing Men is “Chuckles” Ryan, a bloodthirsty villain wanted in every state and territory in North America. Ryan is a cautious planner with a raspy, constant laugh and an abiding passion for cheap cigars.

The bandit maintains fairly peaceful if not friendly relations with the natives in the canyon, and has even been known to hand members of his gang attacking natives to the tribe for punishment. This isn’t because Ryan particularly likes or respects the Indians, but hiding in the Grand Canyon is the only thing that’s kept him from the gallows this long. The bandit leader is not about to make enemies in the one place on earth that he’s currently safe from justice.

The Laughing Men number over 200 dark-hearted souls. During the events of *Canyon o’ Doom*, the gang is relocating its secret camp to Bright Angel Canyon. If the heroes get “lucky”, they might just get to meet the illustrious bandit personally.

Statistics for a typical member of the gang can be found on page 70.

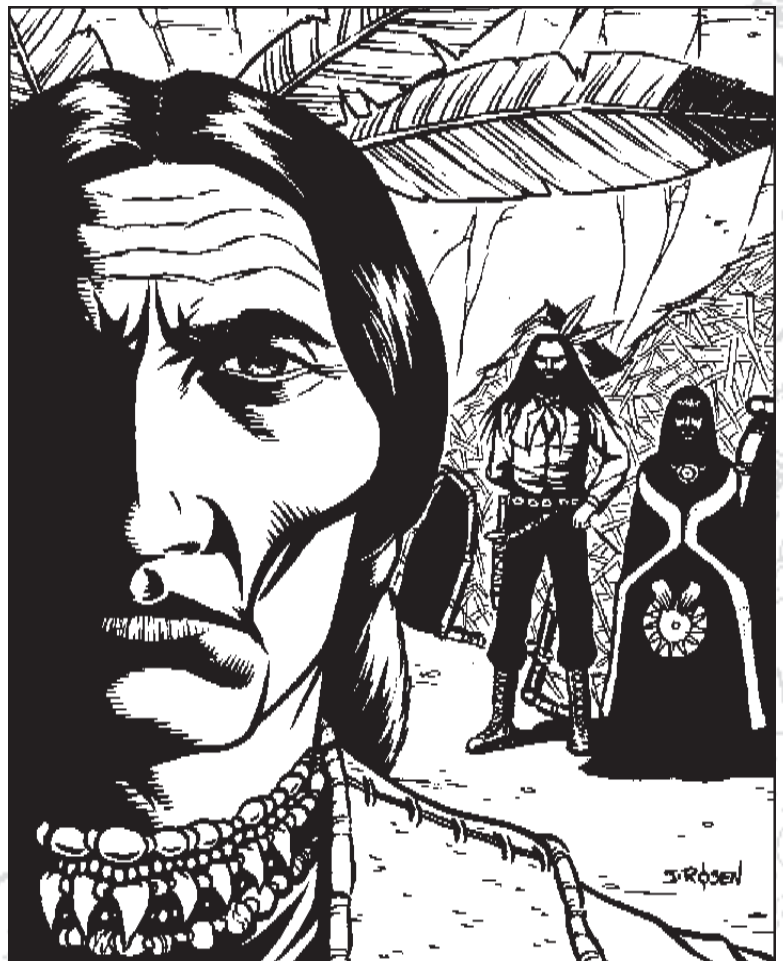
## CHAPTER FOUR

69

### RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Check for a random encounter once per day that the expedition is in the Grand Canyon. If you don’t like the result you roll, feel free to pick the encounter rather than determining it randomly. You can even insert your own encounters. Don’t overdo it, however. The Grand Canyon is already a pretty dangerous place.

The results listed on the table on the next page and the encounter descriptions that follow just list what (or who) the encounter consists of, not in what form it comes. An encounter with the Laughing Men may consist of a few shots fired from across the mighty Colorado, or a stealthy robbery in the night. Use your judgement.



# CANYON ENCOUNTERS

d20 Roll	Encounter
1-3	No Encounter
6-9	Animals
10-11	Indians: Select tribe and roll 1d6+2 for number
12-13	Laughing Men: Roll 1d6+2 for number.
14	Canyon Crawler
15-16	Sickle Beetles
17-18	Scythe Beetles
19	Ghoul Hunting Party
20	Marshal's Choice

## ANIMALS

If this result comes up, the heroes have a brush with one of the more dangerous (or at least troublesome) members of Mother Nature's menagerie. Whether it's a stubborn herd of desert bighorn sheep blocking a portage route or a scorpion in someone's bedroll, go with whatever you think is likely to get the biggest rise out of your posse.

Coyotes, mountain lions, and bobcats are all potential threats, as are smaller canyon residents like scorpions and spiders. Presented below are profiles for two critters indigenous to the Grand Canyon

**Desert Bighorn Sheep:** Desert bighorn sheep are docile but stubborn creatures, and can be pretty belligerent if ill-treated. The bony part of their head can deliver one heck of a wallop.

## PROFILE: DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP

**Corporeal:** D:1d4, N:2d10, Q:2d10, S:5d8, V:3d10  
**Fightin':** brawlin' 2d10  
**Mental:** C:1d4, K:1d4, M:1d4, Sm:1d4, Sp:1d4  
**Pace:** 22  
**Size:** 6  
**Wind:** -

**Terror:** 0

## Special Abilities:

**Damage:** Hooves (STR+1d4), head butt (STR+1d10 brawling damage)

**Description:** The desert bighorns are adapted to their arid environments, with short light coats and lean bodies.

**Grand Canyon Rattlesnake:** The main things that distinguish the Grand Canyon rattlesnake are its pinkish hue and its relatively good temper. The Grand Canyon rattler is far less likely to strike needlessly than its brothers elsewhere. The poison in its fangs is just as potent when it does bite, however.

## PROFILE: GRAND CANYON RATTLESNAKES

**Corporeal:** D:1d4, N:1d6, Q:2d10, S:1d4, V:2d8

**Fightin':** brawlin' 4d6

**Mental:** C:2d10, K:1d4, M:1d8, Sm:1d4, Sp:1d4

**Overawe** 2d8

**Pace:** 22

**Size:** 2

**Wind:** -

**Terror:** 3

## Special Abilities:

**Camouflage:** The Grand Canyon rattlesnake's skin is uniquely suited for blending in with its surroundings. Any attacks against the snake in a rock environment are at a -2.

**Damage:** Bite (STR+poison)

**Poison:** Hard (9) TN. Success means the affected location is paralyzed for 1d6 days. Failure results in death in 1d6 hours. A Hard (9) *medicine* check removes the poison as long as it happens before the last hour.

**Description:** The salmon-colored skin of the Grand Canyon rattlesnake makes it unique among its species. Other than that, it looks like any other rattlesnake.

## INDIANS

This result indicates a brush with some of the canyon's indigenous peoples. Roving bands of Indian braves generally consist of 1d6+2 members. All

the natives are on foot. Horses don't do too well on the rocky trails of the canyon

What tribe the natives belong to largely depends on where the encounter happens. Along the eastern edge of the canyon, Navajos are the most likely tribe to encounter. Along the North Rim, the Southern Paiutes are more common. The central depths of the canyon and all along Havasu creek is the domain of the Havasupai.

How the natives react is completely dependant on how the posse reacts to them. Generally, the natives are fairly bold. After all, this is their home.

If you're feeling really wacky, you could even throw in a band of Apaches. Small bands sometimes travel north through the canyon to buy arms from Jessup Larson in Cliffside. Tramping around in other tribes' territory with a crate of Winchester rifles make the Apaches as nervous as long-tailed cats in a rocking chair factory, though. If confronted, they open fire immediately, making a hasty escape as quickly as possible.

#### PROFILE:

##### TYPICAL INDIAN BRAVE

**Corporeal:** D:3d8, N:2d10, Q:4d6, S:3d8, V:3d8

Bow 3d8, climbin' 1d10, dodge 2d10, fightin': war club 3d10, horse ridin' 2d10, shootin': rifle 3d8 (omit if the warrior follows the Old Ways), sneak 4d10

**Mental:** C:2d6, K:2d6, M:2d8, Sm:3d6, Sp:2d8

Area knowledge: Grand Canyon 4d6, faith 2d8, guts 3d8, overawe 2d8, survival: desert 4d6

**Edges:** Fleet-footed 2

**Hindrances:** Stubborn -2

**Pace:** 10

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 16

**Gear:** A war club (treat as a large club), bow, 20 arrows, and a Ballard '72 rifle (unless an Old Ways follower). Apaches are armed with Winchester '76s.

**Description:** The description above can be used to represent any of the native peoples of the Grand Canyon.



#### LAUGHING MEN

Normally, encountering the Laughing Men away from their camp is a pretty rare experience. After all, they are no more immune to the dangers of the canyon than other folks (although they do have numbers on their side). Unfortunately, the heroes have come into the canyon during the semi-monthly relocation of the bandit's camp. "Chuckles" Ryan has stepped up the patrols in the area to make sure nothing goes wrong.

On the up side, this result doesn't mean the heroes have met up with the whole gang. (That comes later.) Instead, the posse has a brush with one of the small patrols the Laughing Men send out. This consists of 1d6+2 men armed with a variety of weapons.

While the bandits may decide to mess with a sufficiently unimposing posse, they are far more likely to just observe, and then report back to "Chuckles" Ryan.

**PROFILE:**  
**TYPICAL LAUGHING MAN**

**Corporeal:** D:2d8, N:3d6, S:2d8, Q:2d8, V:3d6

Climbin' 1d6, fightin': knife 3d6, sneak 3d6, dodge 2d6, horse ridin' 4d6, shootin': pistol, rifle, shotgun 3d8

**Mental:** C:2d6, K:1d6, M:3d6, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d6

Area knowledge: Grand Canyon 3d6, bluff 1d6, demolition 2d6, gamblin' 3d6, guts 3d6, overawe 2d6, scroungin' 3d6, search 3d6, streetwise 3d6, survival: desert 4d6

**Edges:** None

**Hindrances:** Bloodthirsty -2

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 12

**Gear:** An assortment of weapons, with knives and Derringers up their sleeves.

**Description:** The laughing men are an assortment of hard-looking thugs and ruffians.

**CANYON CRAWLERS**

Now, you just know that any place with as many sheer walls and shadowed rocky crags is going to have its share of wallcrawlers, right Marshal? Actually, the House of Stone and Light has its very own regional variation known as the canyon crawler.

Use the statistics for the standard wallcrawler for these beasties, but canyon crawlers differ from their cousins in two important ways. First of all, their rocky hide gives them 2 levels of Armor. Secondly, they have a chameleon-like ability to vary the color of their skin to match whatever rock surface they are crawling on. In practical terms, this gives them a +4 to their Quickness checks for initiative in the first round of combat.

**SICKLE BEETLES**

If the heroes thought they had seen the last of these critters back in Cliffside, they'll be pretty disappointed the first time they hear the low droning sound that accompanies these flying pains-in-the-neck.

Use the rules presented on page 58 for determining any damage these nasty pests cause. The best thing to do is just find some cover (like an overturned boat or something similar) and just wait them out. As before, the swarm disperses after about 1 hour.

Of course if the swarm descends while the heroes are still on the river, things could get ugly...

**SCYTHE BEETLES**

We're pretty sure the heroes hated the sickle beetles, so their bigger, badder cousins should really throw them for a loop. Scythe beetle look just like their smaller relations, but weigh in at a much more impressive size. These bugs are meat-eaters, just like their little cousins. While they normally tend to hunt mule deer, they've lately acquired a taste for human flesh.

The first warning the heroes may have that these things are coming is a low drone similar to the one made by the swarms of smaller sickle beetles. Only this drone gets louder...and louder...and louder. By the time the



beetles actually flit into view, the sound is damn distracting.

Being bugs, scythe beetles are pretty stupid. Hiding from them is remarkably easy; even a blanket draped over the body is often enough to pass for a rather uninteresting rock in a scythe beetles eyes. In game terms, the beetles are at a -4 penalty to any *search* checks they have to make.

If an attack does happen, there is one beetle per posse member, and they attack until killed. They're just too dumb to know when to quit.

### PROFILE: SCYTHE BEETLES

**Corporeal:** D:1d4, N:5d12+2, Q:4d6, S:3d12, V:3d10  
Climbin' 5d12+2, fightin': brawlin' 5d12+2  
**Mental:** C:2d4, K:1d4, M:2d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d4  
Search 5d4  
**Pace:** 30 (flying)  
**Size:** 5  
**Wind:** 14  
**Terror:** 7  
**Special Abilities:**

**Armor:** 1

**Damage:** Pincer-legs (STR+1d6)

**Damage Resistance:** Bullets do half damage to scythe beetles due to their squishy innards. Shotguns do normal damage.

**Aerial Charge:** If a scythe beetle gets a raise on a pincer-leg attack, it can try to yank its opponent off balance. The target needs to make an opposed *Strength* check with the beetle, and the beetle gets a +4 to its roll due to momentum. If the hero wins, she takes damage as normal. If she loses, she takes half damage, but is dragged 1d6 yards in the direction of the beetles choice. The beetles aren't geniuses, but they have learned to pull stunts like dragging people over cliff edges and such.

**Description:** Scythe beetles look like giant sized versions of sickle beetles.

### GHOUL HUNTING PARTY

The colony of ghouls that lives in the Grand Canyon have moved beyond simple grave robbing—they actually hunt people! The ghouls always attack

## CHAPTER FOUR

73

in the dead of night, attempting to sneak up and overwhelm any sentries first, then descending on any sleeping companions. The corpses of those they kill are carried back to the City o; Ghouls, located beneath Havasu Canyon. (See page 85 in the next chapter for more details).

Ghoul hunting parties consist of 2d6 individuals. If more than half of them are killed or incapacitated, the rest flee.

### PROFILE: GHOUL

**Corporeal:** D:2d8, N:3d10, Q:3d8, S:3d8, V:2d10  
Fightin': brawlin' 4d10  
**Mental:** C:2d8, K:1d4, M:2d4, S:3d6, Sp:2d4  
**Pace:** 10  
**Size:** 6  
**Wind:** 14  
**Terror:** 9  
**Special Abilities:**

**Damage:** Claws (STR+1d8), bite (STR+1d6+poison)

**Night Vision:** Ghouls can see in complete darkness. Their eyes always have a faint red glow about them.

**Poison:** Anyone bitten by a ghou and taking at least 1 Wind must make a Hard (9) *Vigor* roll. If the roll is failed, the victim is stunned until he makes an Onerous (7) *Vigor* roll. This stun is in addition to any caused by real wounds.

**Stench:** Ghouls stink to high Heaven, making them very easy to track. Anyone within 20 feet of one of these creatures must make a Fair (5) *Vigor* roll to avoid losing his lunch and losing 1d6 actions. This roll must only be made once per encounter.

**Weakness-Bright Light:** Ghouls cannot tolerate bright light. All actions taken by a ghou exposed to light brighter than a torch or lantern suffer a -4 penalty. Torches only count as dim light, but the ghouls are still at -2.

**Description:** Ghouls are cowardly, twisted humanoids with feral features, surrounded by the odor of decay. They are not undead, but sure look like it.

### MARSHAL'S CHOICE

The high Fear Level and the presence of intermittent gates like the one at the Sipapu (see page 76) make it possible for almost any thing to crop up here, Marshal. Go to town

## THE EXPEDITION'S JOURNEY

The Haskins Expedition should now consist of Professor Haskins, Sophie, the heroes, the three guides, and possibly Ho Li Kwan if he talked his way in (or just flat out reveled who he was).

If Ho Li hasn't attached himself to the posse, he is trailing them as best he can from the canyon's edge. He uses his *Monkey Goes to the Mountain* ch'i power to keep pace with the expedition, who he watches through a spyglass. Given this, he can appear anywhere you need him, if at all.

### THE MAP

On pages 78-79 of this book is a two-page map of the eastern half of the Grand Canyon in all it's glory. Most of the major landmarks and such are numbered, and you can find the descriptions of them starting on page 76 as part of the journey "legs".

There is also a small player's version of the map in the **Props** section at the back of this book. It doesn't have the locations numbered on it, but it does have the planned track of John Wesley Powell's 1873 Expedition marked on it, as well as a few well known landmarks.

## NEW FACES

"Dakota" Jack Edmunds, and his brothers Bob and Lyle are the guides Haskins has employed to lead the heroes into the canyon. They are experience trailmen who know the area very well. They are also boisterous, hard-drinking ruffians—but once they are bought, they stay bought.

### PROFILE: THE GUIDES

**Corporeal:** D:2d8, N:3d6, S:2d8, Q:2d8, V:3d6

Climbin' 1d6, drivin: boat 6d6, fightin': knife 3d6, sneak 3d6, dodge 2d6, horse ridin' 4d6, shootin': pistol, rifle, shotgun 3d8, swimmin' 4d6

**Mental:** C:2d6, K:1d6, M:3d6, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d6

Area knowledge: Grand Canyon 6d6, bluff 1d6, demolition 2d6, gamblin' 3d6, guts 3d6, overawe 2d6, scroungin' 3d6, search 3d6, streetwise 3d6, survival: desert 4d6

**Edges:** Sense o' direction

**Hindrances:** Hankerin': whiskey -2

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 12

**Gear:** All three of the guides are armed with Remington '71 rifles and carry large hunting knives

**Description:** It's easy to tell the Edmunds boys are brothers. All three are burly men with similar bushy brown beards.

## TIMING THE TRIP

Now we get down to the actual journey itself.

The trip from Nankoweap Rapids where the expedition puts in the water to the foot of Havasu Canyon is just over 100 miles. That doesn't sound like much of a distance, but consider the territory that is being traveled through. The river is treacherous and the rapids dangerous.

Starting on page 76 you'll find the trip divided up into seven "legs". Each of these legs is roughly 20 miles, with the exception of Leg 1. Travelling Powell's route takes roughly seven days, assuming a twelve hour traveling day with no real stops anywhere.

That probably won't happen. Haskins is an archaeologist after all, and there are some great sights to see along the way. In any case, keep track of time spent exploring, and reduce the distance traveled proportionally.

If the posse still has the Talisman of the Heart, Haskins is pretty loose about sticking exclusively to Powell's path. Side trips may be in order, and these are noted under the various "legs" of the journey.

If the Talisman of the Heart was lost back in Cliffside, then Haskins is a bit more goal-oriented, and talking him out of dawdling too long is a lot easier. Ho Li Kwan also urges swift movement if he is with the posse.

## THE WEATHER

Another thing that could slow the expedition down a bit is the weather. Late summer is a time of baking heat and sudden downpours in the Grand Canyon. Both the heat or "precipitant humidity" (rain) can be deadly to the unprepared traveler.

Roll on the Canyon Weather table below each day to determine the climatic hazards the heroes have to face.

### CANYON WEATHER

d10 Roll	Weather
1-6	Clear and Hot
7-9	Rainy
10	Downpour!

#### CLEAR AND HOT...

Even the nice days in the Grand Canyon are tough. The normal weather conditions of the canyon floor can be brutal, with temperatures during the day rising to over 100°, sometimes higher.

This should bring back memories of the first leg of the expedition's journey. As during that trek, a Hard (9) *survival* check is necessary each day at noon to keep a hero from losing 1d4 Wind. See page 36 for full details on recovering this Wind, and the consequences of going bust.



#### RAINY

The heat of the day might just be broken by a little bit of rain. This is kind of a double-edged sword. The rain cools things down to a rather more tolerable temperature (usually around 80°) negating the need for the heat-based survival rolls.

However, the rain makes traveling a bit more time-consuming and hazardous. Add +2 to the Rating of all rapids (which you will learn more about on the next page) that the expedition encounters for that day and the next. Subtract 1d8 miles from the total mileage for the day.

#### DOWNPOUR!

When she's not busy burning you, Mother nature can dump a heck of a lot of water in a short time.

A downpour has the same effects of a rainy day, but it raises the rating of all rapids by +4 for that day and +2 for the next, and costs the expedition 1d12 miles.



## WHITE WATER

Some of the most fearsome and dangerous natural obstacles along the Colorado River are the rapids (or runs) that are scattered up and down its length. Not all of the rapids on the Colorado are noted on the map—only the most dangerous ones are marked. There are many more minor cataracts and patches of rough water, but it's not really worth having to make skill checks for negotiating them all. It would tend to bog things down a bit.

There are several methods of negotiating the rapids. The first way to get around a rapid is to simply portage (carry) the boats around it. No skill checks are required to negotiate the rapids in this case—it's by far the safest

method. However, it is also quite time-consuming. Subtract 1d10 miles from the daily total traveled for each rapid that the expedition portages around.

The second method is called lining, in which the boats are guided through the run by controlling them with ropes from shore. Lining is also time consuming, and subtracts 1d6 miles from the progress for the day.

The quickest and most dangerous, method of getting through them is, of course, to shoot them (the rapids, that is). The traditional method of early expedition like Powell's was to hit the rapids backwards, believe it or not. The oarsmen in the boat would row for all they were worth, while the tillerman in the back of the boat desperately tried to avoid the worst of whatever lay ahead. Not a very efficient (or safe) method.

Fortunately, the guides that Haskins has hired are a bit more enlightened, and have hit on the method of hitting the rapids prow first, so the tillerman can actually see where he's going. All the other people in the boat paddle for all they're worth.

This is certainly a better way of hitting the rapids, but still not necessarily a safe one. With that in mind, here are a few rules for dealing with running the numerous rapids that the posse's going to encounter on their way down the mighty Colorado.

## HOLD ON TIGHT!

Each of the rapids marked on the map on pages 78-79 has a rating listed under its description in the journey legs. This number is the TN for all checks concerning the run.

Whenever the heroes hit a rapid and decide to shoot it, use the following procedure to see if anything untoward happens. Make a secret roll using the guide's *drivin: boat* Aptitude, with the rating of the rapid as the TN. Have all the heroes that happen to be in a boat and able to row make a *Strength* check using the same TN. Any hero that makes the *Strength* check adds +2 to the guide's final total. Those who don't subtract -1 from the final total.

If the final total of the guide's *drivin: boat* check and any bonuses or penalties from the other folks in the

boat is greater than the rapid rating, everything is okay. The boat sails through unharmed. If the roll is equal to the rating, have everyone in the boat make a Fair (5) *Nimbleness* check. Any failing it get dumped in the river. If the final total is less than the rapid rating, then everyone in the boat has to make a Hard (9) *Nimbleness* check or they're going for a swim.

Swimming in a rapid is not really advisable. It takes three successive *swimmin'* checks to get a body safely out of the rapid, and the TN for this check is, once again, the rapid's rating.

## SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

Smith & Robards has equipped the expedition with some experimental life preserving vests, contained in the large crates the posse has been hauling all the way from Nevada

Each vest consists of a large U-shaped piece of rubber tubing about nine inches in diameter, sealed up at each end and firmly riveted to a canvas harness. This harness is worn like a normal suit vest, secured to the body with straps and buckles in the front. The vest has a small box about four inches long attached to the left breasts, with a thick ripcord with a wooden handle attached. When the ripcord is pulled, a ghost-steel cylinder filled with compressed air is triggered, inflating the vest almost instantly. That's the theory, anyway. The overly complex inflation mechanism gives the vests a Reliability of 18.

An inflated vest gives the wearer +6 to any *swimmin'* checks. And halves all drowning damage. Inflating the vest takes a single action, and automatic as long as the hero is conscious.

Smith & Robards has provided the expedition with ten vests and enough air cartridges for each vest to function twice. That should cover most posses.

Haskins' doesn't break out the vests until the expedition actually gets down to the shores of the Colorado. Then he opens up the crates and distributes them to everyone (the guides decline—"We kin swim jest fine thank ya."). The heroes may be less than encouraged when they notice the word "prototype" discreetly engraved on the metal boxes on the vests.

## MAJUNCTION TABLE

**Minor Malfunction:** The valves on the jacket are faulty, and do not work.

**Major Malfunction:** The vest inflates partially, encumbering the wearer but providing no additional buoyance. Add +2 to the TN from all *swimmin'* checks until the vest is removed.

**Catastrophe:** The malfunctioning valves of the life jacket actually suck water **into** the vest. The weighed-down victim is at -6 to all *swimmin'* checks until the vest is removed. Taking off the bloated vest requires an Onerous (7) *Strength* check.

## ONWARD AND DOWNWARD!

As mentioned before, we've divided the expedition's journey up into "legs" to make them a little easier to keep track of. Listed below are brief descriptions of some of the wonders the posse can see during each part of the journey, along with ratings for each leg's rapids and notes on any special locations.

## GETTING STARTED

"Dakota" Jack and his two brothers lead the expedition from the relatively civilized confines of Cliffside out into the wilderness. They usher everyone down the nearby Nankoweap trail in to the canyon of the same name, and eventually on to the banks of the Colorado River. The weather is good and everyone is in a good mood as the group travels. It takes about two days to get down to the river. The guides have their boats concealed there in the underbrush next to the river at the base of the Nankoweap trail.

The expedition reaches the river about mid-day, but Haskins has the posse set up camp rather than immediately taking to the water. The heroes spend the rest of the day relaxing, taking in the scenery and preparing to hit the river the next day. Haskins, assisted by Sophie, takes some time to clamber up to some of the Anasazi caves that dot cliffs nearby. The night passes uneventfully.

## LEG 1

Dakota Jack rouses everyone early the next morning, the boats are already in the water ready to go. Haskins and Sophie break out the Smith & Robards life vests described back on page 75, load up the boats, and push off into the (mostly) unknown!

The first day spent traveling on the river is still technically within Marble Canyon—the Grand Canyon doesn't officially begin until after the Little Colorado river joins its big brother. The wall of stone known as the Desert Facade rises a dramatic 3,000 feet up to the Painted Desert on the east, while the western view is dominated by first the massive Nankoweap Mesa, and then by a variety of minor canyons formed by streams joining the river. The river is moderately calm, with only the Kwagunt Rapids a notable obstacle.

Finally the mouth of the Little Colorado River comes into view, and Haskins tells Dakota Jack to find a place to land. This is as far as the expedition goes today.

**2. Kwagunt Rapids:** Rating 5.

**3. Mouth of the Little Colorado:** (*Fear Level 4*) The little Colorado meets its big brother here. The pale bluish color of the Little Colorado comes from an abundance of minerals in the water.

The Little Colorado River is also the home of a place sacred to the Hopi Indians. Even though they no longer make their home in the Grand Canyon, the Hopi believe that everyone and everything in the world entered through a portal located at the juncture of the Little Colorado and Colorado rivers. This portal is called the Sipapu in Hopi legend.

The Hopi legends have it partially right. The Sipapu is a gate to the Hunting Grounds that opens up every new moon. It's not exactly easy to spot—it manifests as a particularly dark shadow under a rocky ledge. Stepping into the shadow takes a body straight to the Hunting Grounds.

## LEG 2

The second leg of the journey carries the expedition south from the mouth of the Little Colorado, passing the promontory known as Cape Solitude early in the morning. Steep cliffs called the Palisades of the Desert tower to the east, with more small creeks and canyons joining the Colorado from both east and west. The river flows first in a southwest direction then curves around to the west. The river is a good deal rougher than on the first leg, as the four significant rapids listed below attest to.

Towering rock formations eroded out of the rock by eons of exposure to the elements tower over the posse all day. The impressive Horseshoe Mesa lies to the south, and huge hunks of rock like Wotan's Throne and the Solomon Temple dominating the north shore.

**4. Lava Canyon Rapids:** Rating 5.

**5. Tanner Canyon Rapids:** Rating 7.

**6. Unkar Creek Rapids:** Rating 9.

**7. Unkar Creek:** Unkar Creek is a drainage that comes down from the north rim. A sandy delta has formed where it joins with the Colorado River.

Powell's past canyon expeditions found significant evidence of an Anasazi presence here, and Haskins gets the guides to pull ashore. The archaeologist spends a couple of hours here looking around, taking notes and making sketches. He insists on working alone, which leads to a run-in with the main body of the Laughing Men. See **Who's Laughing Now?** on page 80 for more information.

**8. Grapevine Rapids:** Rating 5.

## LEG 3

The third leg of the canyon journey carries the posse into the claustrophobic confines of Granite Gorge. The expedition passes the mouth of Bright Angel Canyon early in the day, following the river west. The Egyptologically named Temple of Isis and the Towers of Ra and Set loom to the north, with the even more massive Shiva Temple formation some miles behind them. Once again, the river is relatively calm. Only the Crystal Rapids encountered late in the day are a serious obstacle.

**9. Bright Angel Canyon:** Bright Angel Canyon is the largest tributary canyon of the Grand Canyon, running some 11 miles from the north rim to the Colorado River. It was given its name by Powell during his first trip through the Grand Canyon in 1869. It is said that he chose the name Bright Angel to counter a name given to another creek further up the Colorado, the Dirty Devil.

**10. Granite Gorge:** The narrow confines of Granite Gorge run for nearly 60 miles, from right before Bright Angel Canyon to Kanab Canyon. Here the walls of the canyon rise 1,000 feet vertically, and then a further 2,000-3,000 to the rim of the canyon. Despite the fact that the sun only shines directly down in the middle of the day, the heat on the canyon floor is still stifling.

**11. Crystal Rapids:** Rating 7.

#### LEG 4

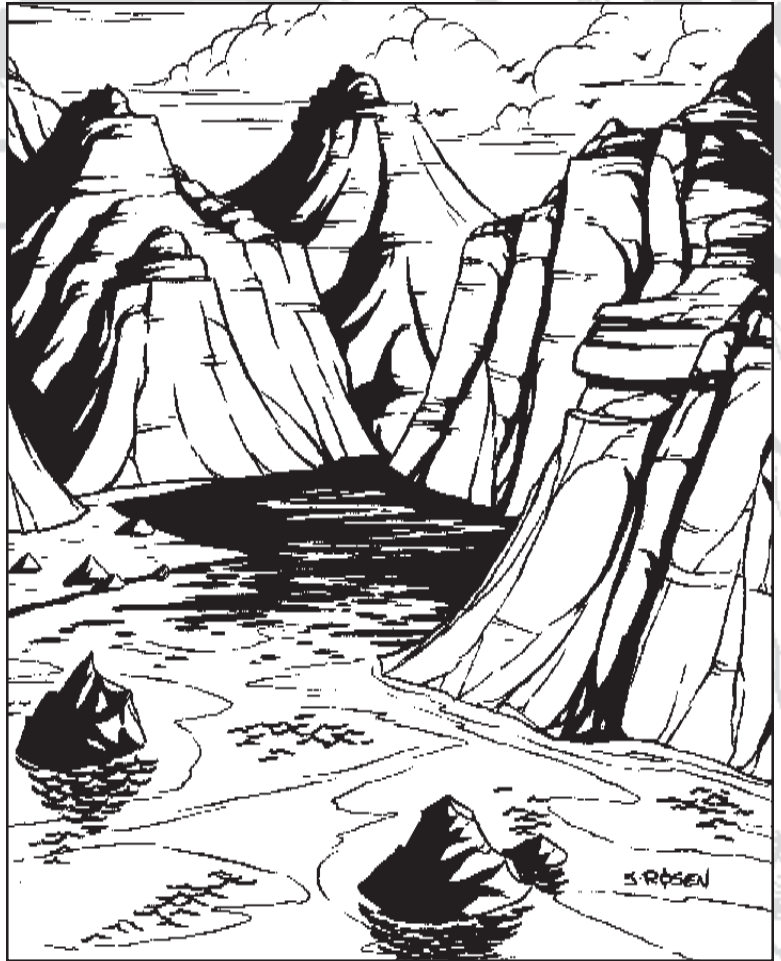
The fourth day of travel finds the posse's boats heading even further north and west, still in the shadow of Granite Gorge. The river makes a huge U around a plateau that Dakota Jack identifies as Marcos Terrace, then heads northwest again, passing the mouth of Blacktail Canyon and moving through a fairly straight section of river called Conquistador Aisle. The lofty heights of the huge Powell Plateau (named for the explorer, of course) dominate the northern view, and later in the day the Forester Canyon gapes to the south.

Haskins persuades the guides to make camp at the mouth of Fossil Bay. Once again, Haskins (despite anyone's protestations) insists on exploring the canyon. After the run-in with the Laughing Men back near Unkar Creek, he does not object to an armed escort. He spends a few (thankfully uneventful) hours exploring the place, even chipping out a few souvenirs of his visit.

**12. Serpentine Rapids:** Rating 7.

**13. Waltheberg Rapids:** Rating 5.

**14. Fossil Bay:** Numerous fossils, most of which are the remains of ancient sea creatures, can be found in the rock layers that comprise the Grand Canyon. Fossil Bay is a particularly rich source of these. All strata of the rocks are studded with an array of preserved ancient sea life.



#### LEG 5

Day five of the trip starts with a brisk trip through the Fossil rapids, then on into the Middle Granite Gorge. The river here actually runs in a northeastern direction, and the walls of the canyon loosen considerably—for the early part of the day at least. The posse is still deep, deep down in the Grand Canyon, but the place starts to take on the semblance of an amphitheater rather than a cathedral. The Great Thumb Mesa rises to the west, while the eastern shore of the rock wall is broken by more creeks and canyons.

Finally, the Colorado swings around and starts heading west again—the walls closing in. A corridor of rock known as Granite Narrows takes the boats past Deer Creek Falls, where Haskins calls for a halt and sets up camp.

**15. Fossil Rapids:** Rating 5.

**16. Middle Granite Gorge:** The walls of the Middle Granite Gorge hem in this relatively straight and calm stretch of

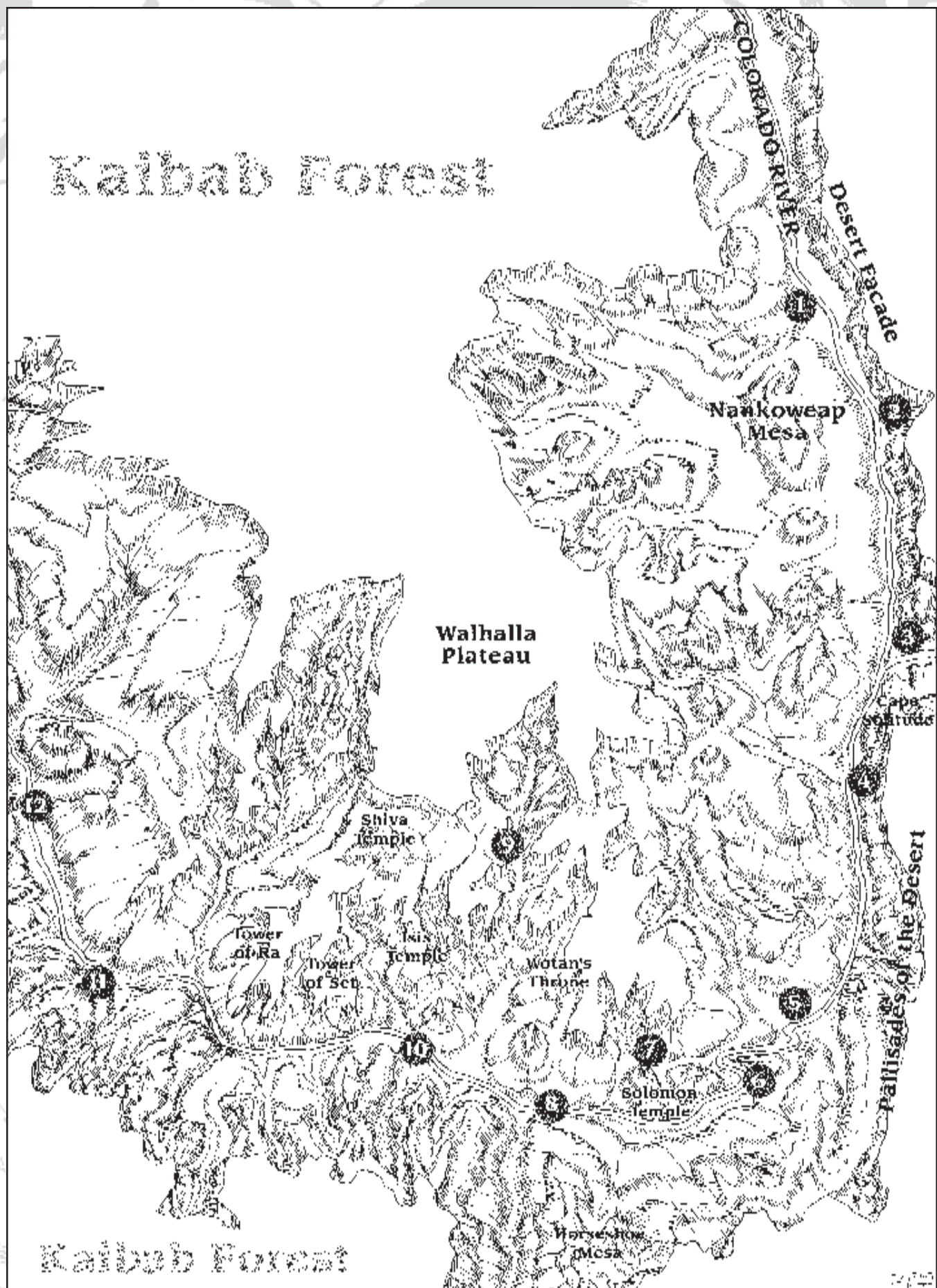
# THE GRAND CANYON

- |                                 |                          |                        |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Nankoweap Trailhead          | 9. Bright Angel Canyon   | 17. Bedrock Rapids     |
| 2. Kwagunt Rapids               | 10. Granite Gorge        | 18. Granite Narrows    |
| 3. Mouth of the Little Colorado | 11. Crystal Rapids       | 19. Deer Creek Falls   |
| 4. Lava Canyon Rapids           | 12. Serpentine Rapids    | 20. Kanab Rapids       |
| 5. Tanner Canyon Rapids         | 13. Waltheberg Rapids    | 21. Matkataniba Canyon |
| 6. Dukat Creek Rapids           | 14. Fossil Bay           | 22. Upset Rapids       |
| 7. Unkar Creek                  | 15. Fossil Rapids        | 23. Havasu Canyon      |
| 8. Grapevine Rapids             | 16. Middle Granite Gorge | 24. Havasu Falls       |



**Scale:**  
1 inch=4 miles

# Kaibab Forest



the river. The western shore rises sharply almost 3,000 feet up to the Big Thumb Mesa, while the eastern side is more open, rising the same distance, but over a distance of a few miles rather than a mere few thousand feet.

**17. Bedrock Rapids:** Rating 7.

**18. Granite Narrows:** This section of the canyon really lives up to its name, with 2,000 foot walls pressing in close to the river's edge here. The claustrophobic effect of the canyon is at its most pronounced here since Marble Canyon.

**19. Deer Creek Falls:** Deer Creek, the primary drainage of the northern rim of the Grand Canyon in this section, tumbles down into the Colorado River at this point.

## LEG SIX

We're nearing the end of the above-ground portion of things here, Marshal. The morning after the ambush at Deer Creek, Haskins is subdued but determined.

The Colorado continues westward for a few more miles past Fishtail Canyon and the massive Kanab Canyon to the north, then curves to the south. The Kanab and Upset Rapids present significant obstacles, as the river twists and turns its way southwest. Large canyons yawn to the north and south all day, but only Matkataniba Canyon really presents any sort of threat (see below).

Haskins finally calls for the expedition to make camp at the mouth of Havasu Canyon. "Next stop, the village of Supai," exclaims as everyone beds down for the night.

**20. Kanab Rapids:** Rating 7.

**21. Matkataniba Canyon:** (*Fear Level 4*) Matkataniba Canyon is the home of the hive of those Scythe Beetles we told you about earlier. There are 15 of the nasty critters living up in here, along with a positive swarm of sickle beetles. If things have been too dull so far, feel free to pester or attack your posse with a horde of angry bugs.

**22. Upset Rapids:** Rating 9.

## LEG SEVEN

This is the final leg of the trip, and takes the expedition southeast along Havasu Creek. See **Up Havasu Canyon** on page 82 to see how the trip goes.

Try not to make this seem like the end of the trail, Marshal. As far as the heroes know, this is just another part of the trip.

**23. Havasu Canyon:** (*Fear Level 1*).

**24. Havasu Falls:** (*Fear Level 2*) This 120 foot high tumult of water conceals the ultimate goal of the posse.

## ENCOUNTERS

Not all the hazards in the Grand Canyon are of a random nature. Here's the lowdown on a few set encounters to trouble your posse with.

### WHO'S LAUGHING NOW?

This encounter takes place on the sandy delta surrounding Unkar Creek. As mentioned under **Leg 2** back on page 76, Haskins take a few hours to go exploring for Anasazi artifacts and such in the delta area. The guides stay with the boats. Haskins insists on conducting his research alone—the solitude helps him think, he says.

Haskins heads west out of sight across the delta—and doesn't return. After over five hours of anxious waiting, Sophie finally declares that she is going looking for him—with or without help. If she goes off by herself, she also fails to return. Hopefully (if they haven't already) the heroes should go looking for them. And that's when the fun really begins.

Even in the dimming light of the summer evening deep below the canyon rim, the trail isn't hard to pick up. A Fair (5) *trackin'* check or a Hard (9) *Cognition* check picks up his trail as it wends through the soft earth of the delta. After about two hours of tracking, the posse finally stumble upon Haskins. It's getting very dark indeed as they find the man on his hands and knees in the mud, carefully digging out what look to be fragments of painted pottery. A small pile of the shards rest next to him.

The doctor is rather embarrassed about having worried everyone. "I found the most amazing set of pottery fragments here, and just had to get a few samples," he says sheepishly. "I must have lost track of time."

As the heroes help Haskins gather up his finds, a voice rings out of the darkness.

*Well boys. Looky what we got here—visitors! Thanks fer gracin' our humble home with yer presence. Now if you'll drop yer hoglegs, why don't we have a nice little chat?*

As the heroes look around for the sources of the voice, around 75 heavily armed outlaws step out of the darkness, and the posse is suddenly bathed in the light of several flickering lanterns that the desperadoes uncover.

The expedition have just had the misfortune to meet one of the Grand Canyon's most dangerous groups of people: The Laughing Men, led by none other than the man who spoke—"Chuckles" Ryan himself!

Ryan's men quickly surround the heroes, as the bloodthirsty outlaw walks down to stand in front of them. Marshal, make sure you emphasize just how outnumbered the expedition is. There are easily five Laughing Men for every posse member, they're all heavily armed, and more than willing to fill the heroes full of lead with the slightest order from Ryan. Explain this to your players—thoroughly. As tough as the heroes might be, they are totally outnumbered here.

If someone doesn't get this and just begs to have their head handed to them, warn them. Wound them if you have to. Make sure they get the point that all that messing with the Laughing Men is going to get them is a pine box.

Once the heroes have assessed the situation and decided how suicidal they are feeling, Chuckles looks them up and down and speaks again.

*Y'all must be that group of fool explorers one o' my boys heard about back in Cliffside. Well now, my boys and I don't like bein' seen, y'understand. Those who do*



*see us gotta pay fer the privilege. I figger we got two choices. First we can jest kill ya. Or you could lead us back to yer boats and give us all your supplies and we'll let ya go! Whaddya say, boys? Sound fair to you?*

The Laughing Men all shout their approval of Ryan's plan. The bandit leader glares at the posse obviously waiting for a reply, cigar glowing in the darkness.

If the answer is no (which it probably will be), Ryan doesn't respond too well.

*To good fer my brand o' generosity, eh? Well, you may be big shots out thar in the real world, but you ain't squat to ol' "Chuckles" Ryan! We don't like fancy people down here, do we, boys? I think it's time to have some fun with our visitors...*

A rumble of assent comes from the assembled bandits, and the air is filled with the sounds of pistols and rifles being cocked, and knives being draw.

Let's be frank here, Marshal. This is a no win situation. Whether the posse think they're about to lose everything they own or suffer a potentially fatal beatdown from the Laughing Men, things look pretty bleak.

Until the ghouls show up, that is. The ghouls have been stalking the Laughing Men for months, taking a few stray outlaws here and there. But they've also been studying them, learning their habits and weaknesses. The hungry flesh-eaters recently decided that hitting the Laughing Men while they were on the move would be the most effective method to take a bunch of them down, and fatten the ghouls larder.

The ghouls attack from every side, catching the Laughing Men totally off guard. The entire camp dissolves into a chaotic lantern-lit battlezone within a few seconds, with ghouls ripping into outlaws and outlaws blasting away at ghouls. The actual number of ghouls isn't important. Let's just say there are enough to give the Laughing Men a run for their money. Have everyone roll a *guts* check as the ghouls attack. The TN is only Fair (5) due to the darkness. The ghouls *could* just be ragged men in the flickering light...

Savvy heroes should take this opportunity to head for the hills. While it takes no checks to get out of camp without being noticed, 1d6 ghouls do have to be hacked through on the way. If you want to spice things up a bit, you could set a few Laughing Men or ghouls (or both) in pursuit of the posse. The trip

back to the boats takes 20 minutes at a full-blown run. Haskin's leads the hasty retreat back to riverside where the guides and the boats are waiting. The gunfire has put them on alert, and they have the boats all ready to go as everyone arrives. The expedition quickly pushes off into the night-shrouded waters of the Colorado.

## UP HAVASU CANYON

This leg of the journey (actually the final part above ground), takes the heroes up into the narrow-walled Havasu Canyon, home of the Havasupai tribe of Indians. Powell had stated his intent to contact the Havasupai on his final expedition, so Haskins quite naturally has a jaunt to Supai village planned.

On the morning of Leg 7 of the expedition's journey, Haskins has the posse conceal the boats at the mouth of the canyon and Dakota Jack leads the way on in. The trail up into the canyon follows the shore of Havasu Creek closely, but the broken and twisted ground makes the going quite slow. The blue-green waters of Havasu creek (from which the Havasupai tribe gets its name) sparkle brilliantly, and as the heroes move up the canyon the territory gets a bit more green. After about three hours and a similar amount of miles, the canyon finally widens and patches of grass and stubby trees become common. The heat remains brutal, however.

"Supai's 'bout four more mile ahead," declares Dakota Jack when the posse takes a break to cool off. "That's whar them Havasupai live." Two miles and another hour later the canyon really widens out, and the sound of a waterfall can be heard up ahead. As the heroes round the bend of the canyon, Havasu Falls comes into view.

The water streams down in two jets from 120 feet up the cliff face, hitting the pool below it and throwing up a mist the feels wonderfully cool in the midday heat. The rock face the waterfall tumbles down is strangely twisted and distorted, and imaginative viewers easily find odd faces and shapes in the crags and outcrops.

The heroes appreciation of the waterfall's beauty is interrupted as they

notice a group of Indians, Havasupai presumably, standing by the edge of the blue-green waters watching the posse impassively.

"We'd best be cautious here," Haskins whispers as Dakota Jack leads the heroes slowly toward assembled group. There are 15 warriors accompanying an older man who looks to be a shaman or medicine man.

The two groups stop to regard each other about ten feet apart. Unless one of the posse take the initiative, Haskins steps out and starts to use Indian sign language. The older man smiles and starts to speak in halting but intelligible English.

*"There is no need. I speak your tongue. I am Torak. I have been waiting for you. Seven days ago I had a vision of your arrival. The spirits spoke to me and said that you were to be trusted and helped. I do not know why, but they are the messengers of the Great Spirit, and do not lie.*

*You wish to see what the man you call Powell found. What you seek lies deep beneath the earth, in a place we call the House of the Old One.*

*In the morning, I shall show you the entrance to the caves. But now is the time for food and rest. Will you share our fire?*

The presence of the 15 armed braves should keep the posse from making any rash decisions. Use the stats for the Typical Indian Brave (non-Old Ways) on page 69 if trouble does break out.

If the heroes accept Torak's offer (and Haskins is inclined to), they spend a pleasant evening relaxing and feasting on the Havasupai's corn, squash and venison.

Next morning, Torak's braves uncover a rough log raft just big enough for four people. A Havasupai brave poles Haskins, Torak and one other hero out to see the sacred cave. The brave poles the raft around the twin jets of water dropping down from the cliff above, and at Torak's direction, moves the raft right up against the rock face behind it. Sure enough, there is a small opening, barely big enough for a man to crawl through.

## CHAPTER FOUR

85

Haskins now makes a fateful decision. After returning to shore, he announces "Tomorrow, we are headed down below. We shall rest tonight, and enter the caves at dawn."

Haskins then sends Dakota Jack and his brothers back to the boats to retrieve any supplies that they will need for the caving endeavor of the next day.

That night Haskins shows the Talisman of the Heart to Torak, who is quite obviously shocked to be confronted with his long-missing relic. This prompts the shaman to tell the story of what finally happened to Powell's expedition, at least as far as he knows. (If you need to refresh your memory, flip back to **The Story So Far** on page 8.) He also explains that the Talisman can be used to find one's way through the dark caverns. Haskins scoffs a bit at this, but Torak just smiles. "You shall see," he says cryptically. Surprisingly, even after he reveals the Talisman belongs to him, Torak does not request it back. "The spirits have given it to you," he says if asked about this. "I need it no longer."

The next morning, Haskins gets everyone up early. Dakota Jack and his brothers defer from accompanying the posse behind the waterfall. "We wuz hired to guide ya, not go down in no damp dark caves. We'll wait fer ya up here," the grizzled guide says with a grin.

The brave on the raft ferries everyone and all their equipment across to the small cave entrance soon after breakfast. After everyone has clambered up into the small cave, Haskins smiles a wide grin, and holding up his lantern, leads the way down the lone tunnel into the darkness.

### BOUNTY

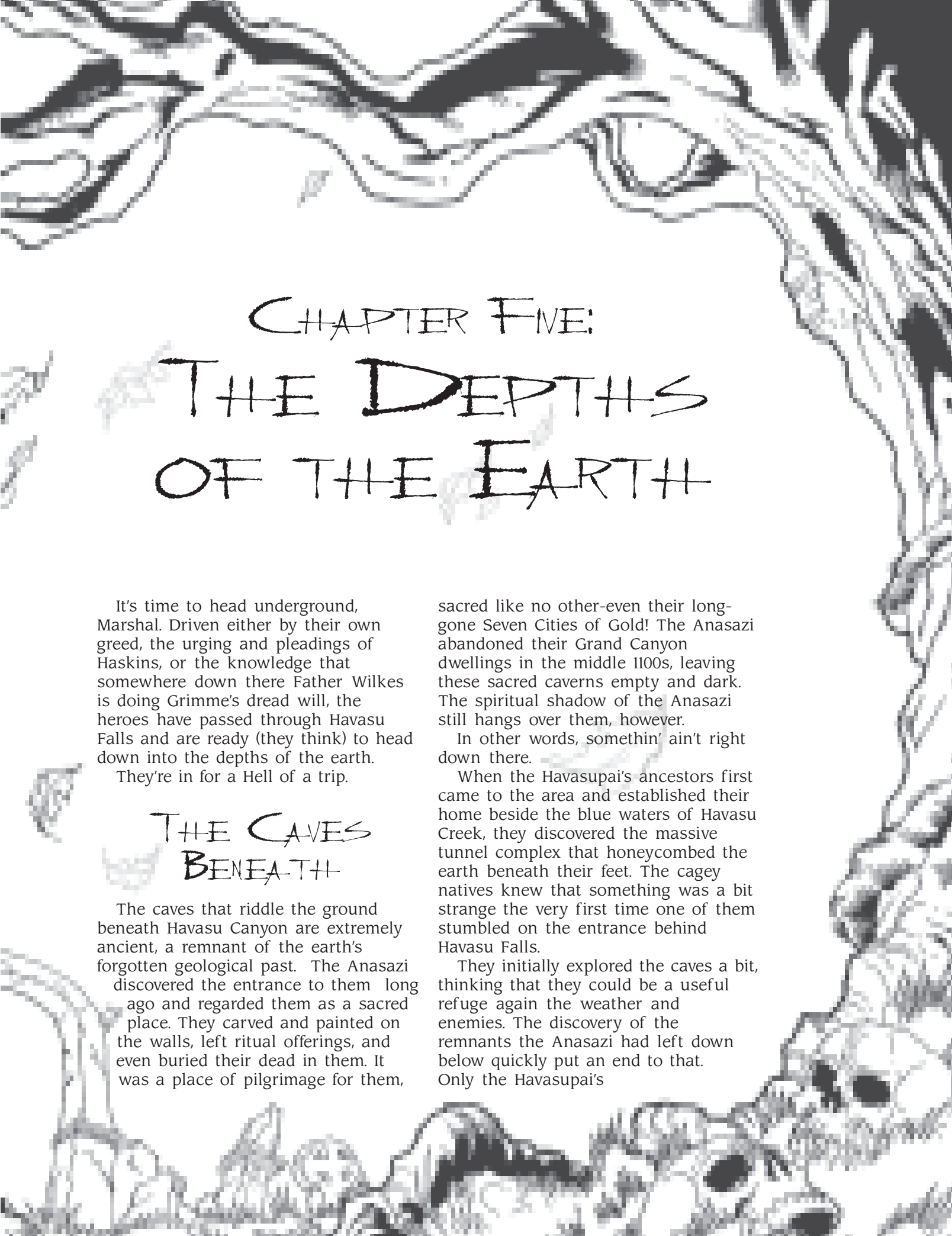
#### Each random encounter

**successfully dealt with:** 1 white chip for all.

**Surviving the encounter with the Laughing Men:** 1 red chip for all.



J. ROSEN



## CHAPTER FIVE: THE DEPTHS OF THE EARTH

It's time to head underground, Marshal. Driven either by their own greed, the urging and pleadings of Haskins, or the knowledge that somewhere down there Father Wilkes is doing Grimme's dread will, the heroes have passed through Havasu Falls and are ready (they think) to head down into the depths of the earth.

They're in for a Hell of a trip.

### THE CAVES BENEATH

The caves that riddle the ground beneath Havasu Canyon are extremely ancient, a remnant of the earth's forgotten geological past. The Anasazi discovered the entrance to them long ago and regarded them as a sacred place. They carved and painted on the walls, left ritual offerings, and even buried their dead in them. It was a place of pilgrimage for them,

sacred like no other—even their long-gone Seven Cities of Gold! The Anasazi abandoned their Grand Canyon dwellings in the middle 1100s, leaving these sacred caverns empty and dark. The spiritual shadow of the Anasazi still hangs over them, however.

In other words, somethin' ain't right down there.

When the Havasupai's ancestors first came to the area and established their home beside the blue waters of Havasu Creek, they discovered the massive tunnel complex that honeycombed the earth beneath their feet. The cagey natives knew that something was a bit strange the very first time one of them stumbled on the entrance behind Havasu Falls.

They initially explored the caves a bit, thinking that they could be a useful refuge against the weather and enemies. The discovery of the remnants the Anasazi had left down below quickly put an end to that. Only the Havasupai's

mightiest spiritual leader, Jordrava, along with his apprentice (who you read about back in Chapter One) ever dared to explore the depths of the place.

Think the heroes are up to the challenge?

## WHAT IT'S LIKE DOWN THERE

On to the nuts and bolts of this little spelunking expedition (that's a tinhorn word for going down in a cave, in case you were wondering). The caverns have a few strange characteristics that make traveling through them a bit problematic.

## WHICH WAY DID WE GO?

The first thing your poor heroes may notice once they descend below is that it's nearly impossible to have any sense of time or direction while in the caverns. Clocks run alternately faster, then slower, then backwards, then stop all together. Compasses spin fitfully, pointing in first one direction, then the other. It's a disconcerting effect. Keep in mind that this can have drastic consequences on any mad science gadgets that rely on precise knowledge of time or direction for their effects (lower their Malfunction Number by -6).

This effect is not just a physical effect, either. The *sense o' direction* Edge is actually a liability in the caverns-any hero with it is at a -2 to all *Cognition* checks while in the caves, due to the distraction. Even magical effects to determine time and direction don't work. You can see why the Havasupai shamans were only willing to come down here with the aid of the Talisman of the Heart! Anyone down here without it is going to get disoriented and lost pretty easily.

All of this doesn't mean that a character can't tell which direction he came from-he can tell that he definitely

just came from "that way." He just can't say for sure whether "that way" is north, south, east or west.

## MAGIC? YOU'RE SOAKING IN IT!

Arcane practitioners find that things are little different down in the caves as well. The Anasazi's arcane monkeying around left the caverns just a bit closer to the Hunting Grounds than normal, and anyone who's sensitive to those sorts of forces can feel a slight electric quality to the air.

A shaman's ritual target numbers are all at -2 down here, as it is easier to commune with the spirits. As for any hucksters in the posse, they draw one free extra card whenever casting a hex. However, they also have to add +2 to any rolls on the Backlash Table. Blessed heroes, martial artists and voodooists are unaffected.

## DO YOU FEEL A BREEZE?

Even far below the earth, the air in the caverns is fairly clear and breathable. While calling it "fresh" air would be charitable (not to mention flat out wrong around the City o' Ghouls), it's breathable, and clean enough to keep a torch or a lantern burning brightly. The posse may even occasionally feel a slight breeze blowing across their faces. It's nothing consistent, but it's definitely enough to be odd. (Mention it from time to time, just to mess with your player's heads.)

This is the one strange effect that there is a totally natural cause for, Marshal. Some of the crevasses and small tunnels (most much too small for anyone to travel through, by the way) reach the surface. The seasonal winds of the canyon keep a reasonably fresh flow of air going through the caverns

## SOUND & VISION

If the heroes have lanterns (which they do, assuming the expedition hasn't lost all its equipment), impose a -2 penalty to all of their vision-based *Cognition* checks. Torchlight imposes a -4 penalty, and total darkness results in a -8 penalty. Better leave a light on!

Fighting in the dark can be pretty difficult as well. Apply all the vision modifiers as above, and subtract and additional -2 from anyone holding on to a light sources during a fight.

You'd expect the rock walls and chambers of the caverns to be a perfect echo chamber, but it's not true. Sound down below is strangely muffled. Even loud noises like gunfire or explosions don't seem to carry more than a couple of caves or so away.

This makes stealthy movement a bit easier. Give all *sneak* checks a +2 bonus. This goes for the bad guys too, Marshal. Also, all sound based Cognition checks are at a -2, although this is not cumulative with the *sneak* bonus.

## FEAR AND LOATHING IN THE CITY O' GHOULS

Let's talk briefly here about the most numerous inhabitants of the caverns: ghouls.

Between the attacks on the Laughing Men and the Havasupai's talk of the "eaters of the dead" (see the previous chapter), the heroes may be expecting to meet a few ghouls down below. There are far more than a few.

The ghoule colony in the caves beneath the canyon has been in existence for over 100 years, and consists of almost 150 ghouls. Many of these ghouls are quite old by ghoulish standards, tougher and smarter (but fortunately for the Havasupai, not much braver). It's only in the last few years that they've managed to become something more than a disorganized collective of cowering, backstabbing necrophages.

Since 1873 or so, the ghouls' activities have gotten a lot more organized. Rather than randomly raiding grave sites and grabbing the occasional sick or wounded native, the ghouls work in groups, carefully raiding grave sites and burial grounds, and even hunting humans. They seem to have developed a special taste for the Laughing Men, but are not adverse to taking any lone native found in the depths of the canyon. The ghouls even let well-raided gravesites lie "fallow" for a time so no one gets too wise to their presence.



All this is due to the influence of the current ghoule "king." Under his leadership, the ghouls of the Grand Canyon are becoming a force to be reckoned with.

The practical effect of this is that the ghouls encountered in the caves display a good deal more common sense than the average corpse eater. Remember that when your heroes meet the ghouls.

More detailed information about the City o' Ghouls and its mysterious leader can be found on page 96.



## GETTING AROUND UNDERGROUND

Okay, so the heroes are disoriented, in the dark, can barely hear anything. Sounds like a tough row to hoe, eh? They do have some assistance, assuming the heroes have kept hold of the Talisman of the Heart.

If the heroes made friendly contact with Torak in the last chapter, then they know about the secret of the Talisman and how to use it. Alternately, someone in the posse may have felt the strange pull of the Talisman. Down below, that feeling continues, and the Talisman can assist the posse in finding their way through the cavern. Anyone (including Haskins and Sophie

can take one minute and make an Onerous (7) *Spirit* check. Shamans may add +2 to these rolls. With a simple success the holder gets an impression of the correct direction to go to get to the Heart of the Old one, up until the next intersection with another cavern or tunnel. Each raise on the *Spirit* check gives the holder an additional "segment" of directions.

*Example: Dr. Haskins is standing in the Rock Garden (location 2). He holds the Talisman of the Heart and relaxes, getting a 13 on his Spirit check. He gets the distinct feeling that to get to what he is seeking, he must take the north passage out of the chamber. Since he got a raise on the roll, he also knows that from there he must take the north passage out of the next chamber he comes to.*

Botching the *Spirit* check gives a hero a completely incorrect direction in which to go. The Talisman does not lend the holder any special information about any obstacles in the path that it gives. It's just a magical compass, nothing more. That's all.

## TRACKING THE ANGELS

If, on the other hand, Father Wilkes has successfully snatched the Talisman, either back in Cliffside or down in the Canyon, getting around down below is tough. To keep your heroes from wandering forever and a day, you might want to have Haskins suggest tracking the Lost Angels through the caves. (Or they might think of it themselves. Players sometimes do that.)

Tracking the Angels through the caverns is not all that difficult—they're not exactly taking pains to cover their tracks. A cowpoke needs to make a Hard (9) *trackin'* check to pick up the Angels path. Once the trail has been found, following it is easy. If the posse has to flee away from the Angel's path for some reason, it only takes a Fair (5) *trackin'* check to reacquire the trail.

The Lost Angels' path through the caves is marked on the map on page 96.

## PHYSICAL STRUCTURE

Okay, so now that we've established that the Havasupai's sacred caverns are a profoundly weird and bad place, it's time to get to the meat and potatoes descriptions of just what's down here.

### EMPTY CAVES

These are just what they sound like: caves devoid of anything interesting.

Unless something wanders into them, that is. Roll a d6 whenever the posse starts getting near one of these. On a 6, the cave isn't as empty as it looks. Roll on the Random Encounter table on page 92 and apply the results.

Empty caves are marked with an E on the map on page 96.

### ANASAZI CAVES

All of the chambers marked with an A on the map on page 96 are caves that the Anasazi found some sort of use for. The walls of these chambers are often painted and carved with strange pictographs showing all kinds of scenes of everyday life, strange incomprehensible myths and legend and the like. Haskins oohs and ahhs profusely about these caves, and make copious notes on the drawings on the walls.

Anasazi artifacts can also be found by anyone who wishes to poke around in the loose rocks and debris on these cave floors. An hours worth of searching and a Fair (5) *search* roll turns up pot shards and clay trinkets worth 1d6x\$20 in a big city like Salt Lake City or Denver.

As with empty caves, there's a chance that something might wander into here—and the mystic energy of the cave tends to concentrate here, making it even more probable. Check for random encounters as noted above—with one modification. If the heroes have taken the time to search the room for artifacts, then either a 5 or a 6 on the d6 roll merits a Random Encounter.

Anasazi caves are marked with an A on the map on page 96.

## CHAPTER FIVE

91

### DEAD ENDS/ TUNNELS BELOW

Pretty self explanatory, eh? Whether it's a natural dead end or just a tunnel totally blocked in by a rockfall, this is the end of the line for this particular tunnel. The heroes will have to go back to the last chamber that they were in and choose another path.

Alternately, if you really want to take your heroes WAY down below, feel free to clear one of these blocked passages. Of course, not even we're sure what's down there...

### THE TUNNELS

The tunnels that connect the scattered caverns of the Havasupai's cave complex are generally about 15 feet in height, with sections vaulting up to almost 30 feet high. The floors of them are uneven, but not so much that movement is impossible. Most tunnels show signs of the ancient Anasazi who used to pilgrimage here; sections of the floor are worn smooth, as if by the passing of thousands of feet.

Almost all of the tunnels slope down from south to north, but the angle is seldom sharper than about 20°.

You don't need to check for random encounters in tunnels, although some encounters rolled for caves may occur in or spill over into them.

### TRAPS

The Anasazi left behind more than some pot shards, trinkets, and a Hell of a lot of spiritual pollution when they abandoned these caves. This was one of their most sacred spots, after all. They weren't about to let any upstart lesser peoples who followed after them just slip in and defile the place.

To cut down on the unwanted visitors, the ancient natives left behind a few surprises. We're talking about traps, Marshal. Sure, they're ancient at this point, but the Anasazi were no

slouches in the durability department. The traps are solid and simply constructed, and have stood the test of time well. They're just waiting for a cowpoke or two to come wandering by and get nailed.

Unless noted otherwise, all of the traps listed below can be detected ahead of time by simply being careful. A Hard (9) *search* check in any area locates the triggering mechanism to a trap, and allows it to be avoided with a fair (5) *Nimbleness* check on the part of everyone passing by it. Don't forget about vision penalties when making those rolls, of course.

### PIT TRAPS

This is the most simple of traps: a big 'ol hole in the ground. There are two types of pit traps found in the caverns, namely covered and uncovered ones.

Uncovered pits are about 15' across, and usually about 30' deep. Anyone falling in takes normal falling damage. Unless a hero is walking through the

caverns with a blindfold on, it's unlikely she'll take a header into one of the uncovered pits.

Roll a d6 when the trap is sprung. On a 1-4, anyone caught in the trap just has a 10' drop to contend with. Anyone falling in to the pit should make a Fair (5) *Nimbleness* check to land upright. If the cowpoke makes it, calculate the falling damage normally (it shouldn't be much). If he fails the roll, he's hit the hard stone floor of the pit wrong, and takes double normal falling damage.

On a 5 or 6 things are a bit uglier, and stone spikes line the bottom of the pit. Use the process above to determine the falling damage with this additional affect: those making the *Nimbleness* check take 1d6 damage to three random locations. Those failing take 1d10 damage to three random locations. Ouch!

On the map on page 96, pit traps are marked with a CPT for covered ones and UPT for uncovered ones .

### SPIKE TRAPS

This is definitely the most sophisticated trap found down in the caverns, and there are thankfully very few of them.

This trap's mechanical workings make them somewhat easier to detect than others. Have everyone in the vicinity when the trap is sprung make an Onerous (7) *Cognition* check to hear the clicking of the trap as it releases. Anyone who makes it is able to throw themselves to the floor, out of the way, etc. Those failing it are hit by 1d6 stone spikes that come shooting out of concealed holes in the wall.

Roll a hit location for each of the spikes. Each one does 2d6 damage. Once tripped, this trap is harmless.

Spike traps are marked with an SPT on the map on page 96.

### DEADFALLS

This is probably the most deadly sort of trap, as well as the most inconvenient. Not only can it flatten a hero into a pancake, but it can block the path the posse intends to take-or even separate the heroes from each other.



When the trap is triggered, the ceiling of the tunnel in a roughly 10' x 10' area come crashing down. Anyone in the area has to make an Onerous (7) *Quickness* check to get out of the way in time. Heroes succeeding are a little bruised but basically unharmed. Those that fail are pummeled by falling rock, and take 5d10 damage treat this as massive damage. Going bust here results in instant death as the hero is utterly crushed by several tons of rock. End of story. Harrowed get one more Hard (9) *Nimbleness* roll to try and throw their bodies clear enough from the rockfall that their head isn't crushed. If they succeed, roll 10d12 damage to each location except the head. Hey, they don't call it a *deadfall* for nothing.

Deadfall traps are marked with a DT on the map on page 96.

## WANDERING ENCOUNTERS

The creatures and beings that dwell deep beneath the earth here don't just sit in their caverns waiting for a posse to show up and fill them full of lead, Marshal. They get bored, they get lost, they explore—in other words, they move around. And since the posse are tramping around in the caverns and tunnels, there's a fair to middling chance they're going to run into one of these roving creatures.

Under **Physical Structure** on page 89 we told you when to check for random encounters. All you need to do if one comes up is roll a d20 on the table on the next page. You'll note that not every indication of an encounter actually results in them. That's okay, though. Lots of die rolling will make those players of yours nice and nervous.

We've consciously not dictated the circumstances of each encounter so you can tailor them to however your posse is tracking the caverns. Heroes intent on simply rampaging through the caverns may find creatures waiting for them in the empty caves, while more cautious types find themselves being followed and watched from the shadows. Tailor the encounters to fit your group's playing style.

## CHAPTER FIVE

93

You don't need to check for random encounters in any of the specific locations unless the posse decides to hang out there for an unusually long time. It's your call then, Marshal.

### GHOULS!

Since the ghouls are the primary residents of the caverns, it's only natural that the heroes might run into a couple of them wandering around the caves. An individual ghoul's first instinct when encountering anyone is to run. If the ghoul escapes, he alerts the other ghouls back in the City. The ghouls king sends out search parties to search for the heroes. If this happens, treat any encounter result on the table as "Ghoul Hunting Party" until the heroes are beyond the City o' Ghouls.

No ghouls are encountered past the **Boneyard** (see page 102). There is another cavern "resident" (see location 7) that keeps them out of that section of the caves. Treat this as a "No Encounter" result if it's rolled in a section of the caverns beyond there.

Statistics for the ghouls can be found back on page 71, in Chapter Four.

### GHOUL HUNTING PARTY

Not all ghouls go wandering around the caverns by their lonesome. If this result comes up, the heroes have lucked into an encounter with a ghoul hunting party looking for fresh (or rotten) meat.

There are 1d6+1 ghouls in the party, and if attacked, they fight back. However, one of their number flees at the first opportunity to alert the rest of the ghouls in the City, with effects as listed above. If the alarm has already been given, then more 1d6 more ghouls come from nearby two rounds later. Another 1d6 arriving each round afterward.

The one saving grace for the heroes is that the king of these particular ghouls has given orders that anyone

## WANDERING ENCOUNTERS

d20 Roll	Encounter
1-5	No Encounter
6-9	Ghoul
10-11	<b>Ghoul Hunting Party:</b> Roll 1d6 for number of ghouls
12-13	<b>Walkin' Dead:</b> Roll 1d3 for number.
14	<b>Veteren Walkin Dead:</b> Roll 1d3 for number
15	<b>Anasazi Ghost</b>
16-17	<b>Fungus Patch:</b> Roll 1d4 1: Heat Fungus, 2: Slime Fungus, 3: Glue Fungus, 4: Spore Fungus
18-19	<b>Henry Lattimore</b>
19-20	<b>Morlock Hunting Party</b>

found in the caves be taken alive and brought to him for interrogation. Thus, the ghouls fight to subdue rather than kill. For details on their tactics, see **Be Very, Very Quiet...** on page 99.

As above, if this encounter is rolled past the Boneyard, treat it as "No Encounter"

### WALKIN' DEAD

Yep, there are zombies down here. The ghouls don't always finish their meals, and occasionally 1d3 of the "leftovers" decide to get up and take a walk. Use the standard walkin' dead stats for them.

### VETERAN WALKIN' DEAD

Most of the walkin' corpses staggering around the caverns are of the "normal" variety, but since the ghouls have started hunting, a few of them qualify as veteran walkin' dead. Most of them are unarmed, but roll a d6 for each of them anyway. On a 5 or a 6, the deader has somehow managed to get a hold of a double-action pistol of your choice. Like their cousins

above, veteran walkin' dead down here usually appear in groups of 1d3.

### FUNGUS PATCH

A few spores from some of the fungi that grow below in the House of the Old One (which you can read about in the next chapter) occasionally waft up through the air into the upper levels of the caverns where they quickly take hold and spread. These patches seldom last long, but they can be a Hell of a nuisance during their short lives.

Roll a d10 for each patch of fungus encountered. That's how many yards of tunnel the patch covers.

**Heat Fungus:** This reddish brown mold grows in very large patches, often filling entire caves or passageways. Roll 3d20 to see how many yards the fungus patch covers. While the stuff's lichen-like texture makes it easy to move over, heroes who aren't quick on their feet may find themselves getting a hotfoot.

This fungus has developed a handy defense to keep itself from being stepped on. Whenever anything disturbs the fungus (by, say moving over it) it starts to heat up, rapidly reaching a distinctly uncomfortable temperature.

The fungus starts heating up the same round anyone first sets foot on it. Anyone doing so can feel the stuff start warming up under his feet. The second round the heat does 2d4 damage to anyone standing on it. The next round the damage goes to 2d6, then to 2d8 on the next round, and so on, up to a maximum of 2d12 damage.

Heavy footwear like cowboy boots and the like act as 1 point of Armor versus this heat damage. The fungus cools down at the rate of 1 damage step per round after no one is stepping on it anymore. The fungus is immune to fire and heat damage, by the way

**Slime Fungus:** This odorless and colorless fungal form grows close to the floor, making it especially hard to spot. The only warning the posse may have about this foul stuff is a light shining off of its glistening surface. Spotting the stuff takes a Hard (9) *Cognition* check (at the appropriate penalties for bad lighting).

Every round that a hero moves through slime fungus, she must make

an Onerous (7) *Nimbleness* check to keep from slipping and falling. Additionally, the slime fungus is corrosive to human skin. Anyone falling takes a light wound to each hand (arm) unless she is specifically wearing gloves or other protective clothing. Barefoot folks take this damage to the feet every round as well.

**Glue Fungus:** This strange fungal growth has a spongy texture like a bed of moss. It's bluish green in color, and grows on the floor of caverns and tunnels. Roll 2d10 to see how many yards a particular patch stretches.

The problem with glue fungus doesn't come from moving through it, but from stopping in it. A cowpoke standing still for even a single round is rooted to the spot as millions of tiny tendrils burrow into whatever footwear she has on. If she's barefoot for some reason, the tendrils burrow straight into her feet, causing her 1d6 Wind and Hell of a lot of pain.

A hero wanting to tear himself loose from the stuff must contend with the glue fungus' effective *Strength* of 3d12. An opposed *Strength* check breaks a hero free, but barefoot fools take 2d6 damage to each leg as the tendrils tear free.

**Spore Fungus:** Spore fungus appears as a carpet of yellowish or greenish fluffy mold all over the floors and walls of an area. Patches are usually 1d10 yards in length.

Spore fungus is easy to spot, but hard to avoid. Strangely, the best method to move through it is to move fast, not slow. Running through the fungus at top speed usually gets a hero through it safely. Basically, as long as a hero doesn't take more than a round to move through the patch, it remains inert.

However, if a person is still in contact with the fungus at the end of a round, the pulsing bed of mold belches forth a cloud of toxic spores, filling 1d10 yards in each direction of the tunnel or chamber that it occupies.

Everyone caught in the cloud has to make a Hard (9) *Vigor* check. If he makes it, he's managed to hold his breath until he gets free of the cloud. If a hero misses the check, she inhales a lungful of the alien spores. Roll a number of d4s equal to the difference

## CHAPTER FIVE

95

between what she rolled on the *Vigor* check and the TN. She takes that much Wind damage.

Going bust on the *Vigor* check results in a really **big** lungful of the spores, enough to cause long lasting damage. In addition to taking Wind, the hero loses one *Vigor* level permanently.

### ANASAZI GHOSTS

The dead don't exactly rest easily down in these caves. The restless spirits of a few of the long-vanished Anasazi still walk the tunnels, desperately searching for an end to their torment.

Anasazi ghosts initially manifest in one of the Anasazi caves described on page 89. If the result is rolled in a non-Anasazi cave, then the ghost manifests in the nearest one and starts moving in on the heroes.

The ghosts appear as translucent forms, barely recognizable as man-shaped. A bluish glow comes from them, and the air temperature drops by a good ten degrees when they manifest. Strange, disturbing shapes and images flicker across the ghost's form, and a hideous low keening sound seems to come from all around when one appears.

Although Anasazi ghosts have no material form at all, and are unable to physically affect the real world in any way, they do have a Terror score of 9. *Guts* checks for everyone!

After they manifest and scare the bejeezus out of people, they generally just fade away-unless a hero goes bust on the Terror check. If this happens, the ghost forces itself into the person's body and possesses them!

This works almost exactly as if the hero were Harrowed. The host has a number of Dominion points equal to their *Spirit*. Have the Anasazi ghost and the host make an opposed *Spirit* check (the ghost has a *Spirit* of 4d10). The winner gets the majority of the Dominion points, and each raise gives him another one.

From there on out, treat the ghost inside the person exactly like you would a Harrowed's manitou. However, while a manitou tries to wreak as much havoc as possible when it is in control, Anasazi spirits are consumed with a hatred for the Indians that have come after them, usurping the lands that used to be theirs. When in the drivers seat, Indians are always the favored targets of their wrath. While this could manifest as simply as savagely attacking fellow posse members that are Indian, the ghosts are possessed of a cruel intelligence, and are capable of hatching elaborate schemes to wreak as much havoc on as many as Indians as possible.

If the spirit ever gains total Dominion over the hero, then the Anasazi intelligence takes full control of the character and she becomes an extra under your control, Marshal.

The spirit can be driven from the poor cowpoke's body by a blessed's *exorcism* miracle.

## MORLOCK SCOUT PARTY

The morlocks are a race of otherworldly critters that live down below in the House of the Old One. While they usually tend to stick down below, an occasional group ventures "upstairs" to make sure the ghouls aren't making any moves to come below.

This encounter only happens after the posse has passed through the City o' Ghouls. The Morlocks never travel further up in the caves than that, as the ghouls find the little fellows to be tasty and delicious, if a bit too well organized to make a meal of en masse.

Should your heroes actually manage to get in a fight with the little fellows, you'll find statistics for the morlocks on page 113 in the next chapter.

When on the upper levels of the caverns, morlocks tend to be pretty skittish. If they feel in any way threatened, they skitter back into the darkness, disappearing quickly.

## HENRY LATTIMORE

Henry Lattimore was a member of the Laughing Men until the ghouls got hold of him. He was taken and killed by a ghoulish hunting party about two weeks ago, and has been aging in their larder ever since.

Fortunately for Henry he was an ornery cuss, and keeping him dead proved a bit more difficult than making him that way in the first place. Unfortunately for Henry, he lost big time in the struggle for Dominion, and his manitou is firmly in the driver's seat.

While the manitou first tries to ingratiate itself with the party and join them, it can't resist betraying them for long. If the heroes accept Lattimore, he betrays them at the very first opportunity, with no regard for his own safety (i.e., deliberately making noise when trying to sneak through the City o' Ghouls, or trying to push a hero into the Crevasse).

If attacked, Lattimore flees if he can. But he follows the posse as discreetly as possible, and attacks at the next best opportunity.

If the posse somehow manages to help Henry take back control of his body, the results aren't much better.



Even in life Lattimore was a low-down double-dealing swine. The only difference is that he's also a coward. He deserts the posse at the earliest possible opportunity.

## CHAPTER FIVE

97

### PROFILE: HENRY LATTIMORE

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:3d6, S:5d12+4, Q:4d6, V:2d6

Climbin' 2d6, fightin': brawlin', club 5d6, shootin': pistol, rifle 4d6, sneak 3d8

**Mental:** C:1d6, K:1d6, M:1d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:3d8

Guts 3d8, overawe 2d8, persuasion 2d8, search 2d6, streetwise 3d6

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 14

#### **Special Abilities:**

**Harrowed:** Dominion: Harrowed 0, Manitou 8, Powers: claws 1, supernatural trait (Strength),

**Description:** Lattimore's freshly dead, and his manitou done his best to fix his carcass up so it's presentable. His death wound was a disemboweling slash across his gut, which is poorly concealed by his tattered shirt.

## LOCATIONS

Now that we've talked about some of the things you might find wandering around in the tunnels, let's talk about locations of a more permanent nature. Not every cavern down below is full of dust and broken pots, Marshal.

These locations are marked on the map on the next page. Here is the low down on each of them.

### LOCATION 1: THE ENTRANCE

After clambering through the rather small cave entrance behind Havasu Falls, the posse has a bit of a hike until they hit the first chamber of any consequence. That's the Entrance Chamber.

This place is still used as a place of ritual chamber for the Havasupai's Shaman. Torak and the elders of the tribe come here to meditate on the history of the Havasupai (and Torak comes here to torment himself with

the way he failed his tribe). Only two tunnels connect to the room. One is the tunnel down from Havasu Falls, and the other leads to the north, sloping down into the deeper reaches of the caves.

Along with some scattered fetishes and a few broken clay pipes, there is a pile of 15 pine-tar torches near the entrance to the room. Each of these torches burns for about 1 hour.

The walls of this chamber are covered with paintings, and despite their obvious age, they look remarkably well-preserved. The illustrations are of various myths and legends of the Havasupai people, including a description of how the Havasupai first came to find the caves.

The ancestor spirits of the Havasupai keep watch over this cavern, protecting it from malevolent energy. The entire room is the equivalent of *sanctified* ground, as the blessed miracle.

Additionally, the Havasupai's ancestors make life difficult for any Harrowed hanging out in here too long. Every minute the posse hangs out here, a Harrowed hero needs to make a Hard (9) *Spirit* check. If he fails, the spirits of the Havasupai's ancestors dogpile on the manitou within him, doing 1d6 Wind. If a Harrowed is Winded by these attacks, he must immediately make a Dominion check.

This room is as far as Havasupai tribesmen have descended into the caves in several hundred years. As far as they're concerned (with the exception of Torak, of course), the only thing that lies further on down into the earth is an early grave.

### LOCATION 2: THE ROCK GARDEN

Sometimes beauty lies in the most unexpected places. So it is with this cavern. Water dripping down from above has caused the growth of all sorts of amazing rock formations in this room.

**KEY**

E-Empty Cave  
A-Anasazi Cave  
CPT-Covered Pit Trap  
UPT-Uncovered Pit Trap  
SPT-Spike Trap  
DT-Deadfall Trap  
DE/TB-Dead End/  
Tunnel Below

Location 9:  
The Tunnel  
Below

Down to the House of the Old One

Location 8:  
The Bat Cave

Location 7:  
Tomb of the  
Elder One

Location 6:  
The Boneyard

Location 5:  
The City  
o' Ghouls

Location 3:  
The Crevasse

Location 4:  
The Black  
Pool

Location 2:  
The Rock  
Garden

Location 1:  
The Entrance

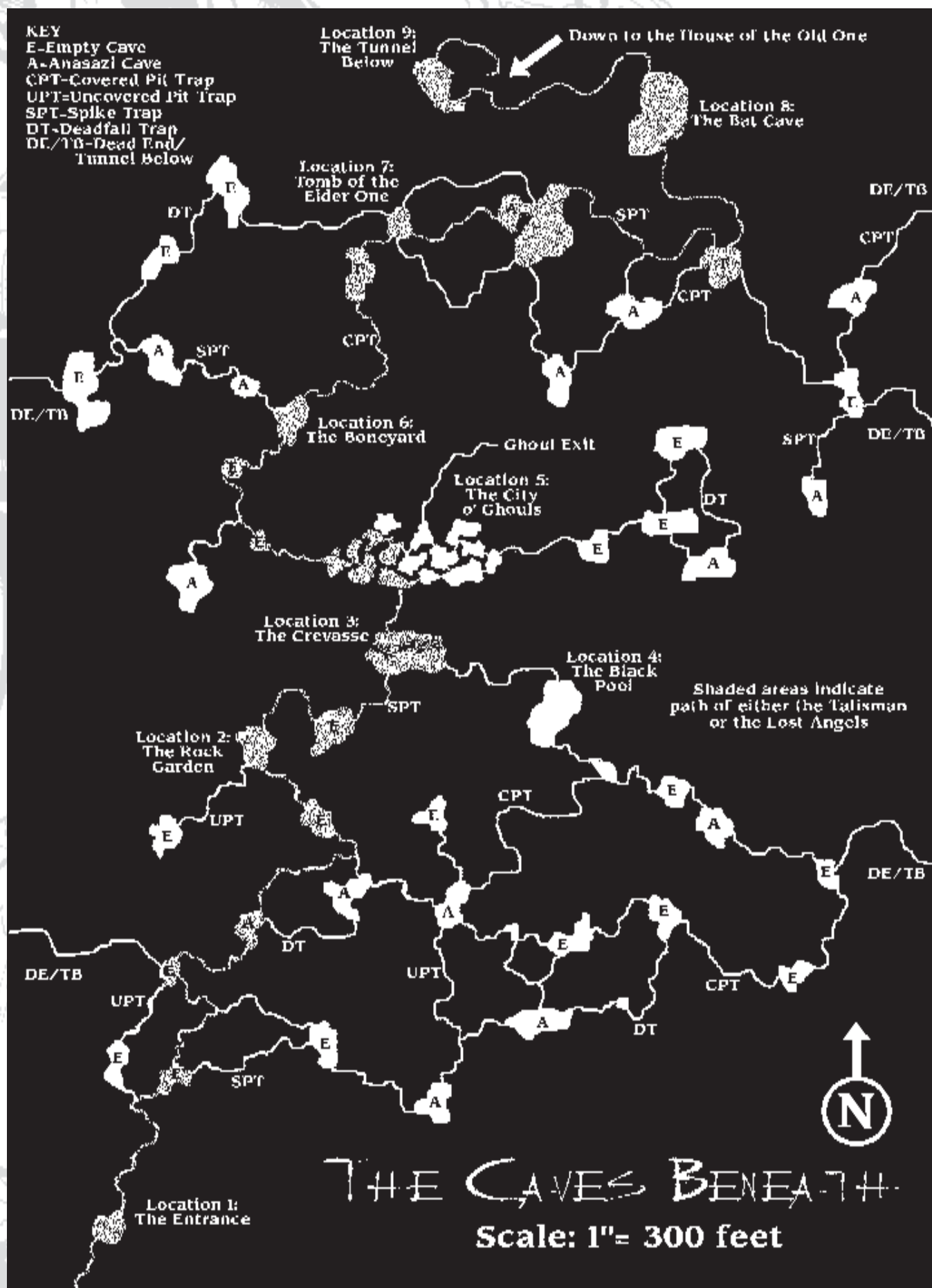
Ghoul Exit

Shaded areas indicate  
path of either the Talisman  
or the Lost Angels



# THE CAVES BENEATH

Scale: 1"= 300 feet



Stalactites and stalagmites stud the ceiling and the floor. Torchlight reflects off of veins of crystal in the walls, and colorful rock formations formed by millennia of dripping water are evident everywhere. These are places of a geologist's dream.

The south and western tunnels that enter the cave are easy enough to spot, but the northern tunnel mouth is harder to find. It's hidden behind a set of rather impressive stalagmites and requires an Onerous (7) *Cognition* check to locate.

### LOCATION 3: THE CREVASSE

This cave consists of two broad rock shelves divided by a wide black gash in the earth. On the opposite side of the caves from which the heroes enter, another tunnel heads off into the darkness.

The crevasse is easily 10 feet across and it's impossible to tell how deep. A bit of a breeze blows up from the blackness below, and there is a strange smell of corruption in the air. It's not a smell of rotting flesh or anything like that—it's more like the smell of a swamp right after it's rained. Looking down into the abyss, a hero making an Incredible (11) *Cognition* check may just catch a glimpse of a faint blue-green glow.

If the posse wants to get across the crevasse, it's up to them to figure out how. Running and jumping across the thing requires an Hard (9) *Nimbleness* check. If the hero misses it, give her another Hard (9) *Nimbleness* check to just catch the edge of the opposite side. If she misses that one, she gets no second chances. She falls screaming into the darkness.

This might seem a pretty brutal price to pay for just missing a dice roll, but it is possible to survive the resulting fall. The abyss may seem to go on forever, but in fact the crevasse just happens to be right above an underground lake in the House of the Old One (see page 116 in the next chapter). The damage for the fall is a hefty 10d6+50, or 5d6+25 if he makes a Fair (5) *swimmin'* check.

If a hero does do a swan dive into the "bottomless abyss" of the crevasse

## CHAPTER FIVE

99

and survives, take his player aside and explain to him that he is going to be out of the action for a while. Tell him to act as if his hero has in fact bought the farm. You'll let him know when he's back in the game.

By the way, this cave is close enough to the City o' Ghouls that the screams of anyone taking a header into the crevasse draws a group of 1d6 ghouls a few minutes later. If they spot anyone in the cave, one of them heads back to the City while the others attack. Gunfire also draws their attention.

### LOCATION 4: THE BLACK POOL

A sluggish underground stream feeds the pool of water that fills the center of this cavern. The water is quiet and still, like a flat black mirror shinning in the torchlight. A few large rocks are scattered across the surface of the pool, close enough to jump from one to another. In the northern ends of the cavern another tunnel leads off into darkness.

Alternately, the posse can try to cross the pool by leaping from rock to rock. There are a couple of tough jumps for a hero to make towards the center of the pool if he wants to cross this way. It take two Onerous (7) and one Hard (9) *Nimbleness* check to make it. Missing any of these checks dumps the clumsy cowpoke into the black water.

This risk of drowning is pretty light, however. The water is shallow, never reaching a depth of more than four feet. Wading all the way across the pool is not all that difficult.

Except for the huge, carnivorous fish that live in the water. Originally the fish in here were pretty normal (for blind cave fish). But the escalating Fear Level of the caves has changed them over the past years, twisting them into nightmarish parodies of their original forms.



These monstrosities devour any errant fish that wash down through the underground stream, as well as anything else stumbling into the pool. The odd walkin' dead occasionally blunders in here, and the ghoulish king has used this room as a way to execute a few of his "subjects" that gave him a problem.

Spotting the fish is tough. It takes an Incredible (II) *Cognition* check to notice them slipping through the black water. Additionally, you should only let a player roll if she specifically states that her hero is looking for anything in the water.

There are five of the fish living in the pool. Their sensitivity to vibration alerts them as soon as anyone either enters the water or leaps onto one of the rocks. The fish don't attack until their prey reaches the central area of the pool. The fish first try to disable their targets with a spine rake to the legs, chomp on in with their massive teeth, then drag their prey under. Once they've attacked, the fish follow the target until it's completely out of the water.

Attacking the fish while still in the water is tough; all attacks are at a -4 penalty, and melee attacks only do 1/2 damage.

#### PROFILE: BLIND CAVE FISH

**Corporeal:** D:2d8, N:3d10, Q:4d12, S:4d12+2, V:4d10

**Fightin':** brawlin' 4d10

**Mental:** C:2d8, K:1d4, M:2d4, S:3d6, Sp:2d4

**Pace:** 16 (swimming)

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 14

**Terror:** 7

#### Special Abilities:

**Damage:** Bite (STR+1d4), spine rake (STR; if this attack hits, it hits the target's legs)

**Drag:** If a cave fish manages to get a bite attack in on a hero and actually does a wound, the fish can try to drag her under. Make an opposed *Strength* test between the fish and the hero. If the fish wins, the hero is pulled under and begins drowning. Use the standard drowning rules.

**Blind:** Years of breeding below ground have rendered the cave fish completely blind. They compensate with incredible sensitivity to movements in the water. The fish are completely immune to any magical effects that require the target to see the caster.

**Description:** Cave fish look like large albino trout or bass, but with elongated teeth and sharp spines along their back. Their skin is pale and translucent, and their eyes are filmy and unseeing. The fish's Terror score comes as much from the fact that they look disgusting as it does from their freakish size.

## LOCATION 5: THE CITY O' GHOULS

At the center of this level of the cave complex lies the a series of connected caves that the ghouls down here call home. Once the main center of the Anasazi's worship and reverence, the place is now a city of the dead.

The heroes probably smell the City before they see it. All the rotting flesh stored in the Larder-coupled with the ghouls very own stink, makes for a memorable odor.

Most of the caves are used for sleeping, eating and doing whatever kind of socializing ghouls do. Two of the caves here have a special purpose.

**A. The Larder:** Under the current ghouls king's leadership, the Grand Canyon ghouls have moved beyond merely raiding graveyards. They've moved up to hunting live prey. Of course, the ghouls like to let that fresh meat age for a while. Once a corpse is nice and bloated and ripe, it's chow time! You can imagine the stench wafting out from here.

**B. The King's Chamber:** This chamber is the "throne room" of the ghouls colony's king, but the closest thing to a throne in it is a roughly seat-like pile of stone on a raised area at one end. It's just as cluttered, smelly, and disgusting as every other room in the complex; what distinguishes it from the others is that there is only one resident within. Check out more details under **Hail to the King, Baby** below.

**C. The Exit:** Yes, there is an exit! It's pretty unlikely the heroes are going to even see it, much less have a chance to use it. The cave it's in is the most heavily lived-in one, with about 35 ghouls making their homes here.

## CHAPTER FIVE

101

If they somehow do manage to get to this exit, remember that these are ghouls tunnels that it leads to. The going is tough at best, and damn near impossible at worst. And there's always the chance of meeting some ghouls down in the tunnels. Fighting them in their own tunnels isn't the best idea in the world...

### CITIZEN GHOU

About 150 ghouls make their home here in total. Usually a quarter of them are off on foraging (or, more likely, hunting) trips these days. Still, that leaves over 100 ghouls in the cave complex. They spend most of that time sleeping and eating, and occasionally socializing in whatever ways ghouls socialize. (We don't really want to know).

Anyway, the exact number of ghouls in the place isn't important. All that's important to know is that there are more than the heroes can possibly hope to handle on their own. Once again, statistic for the ghouls can be found back on page 71.

### BE VERY, VERY QUIET...

Getting through here is tough, Marshal. We make no bones about it. Sneaking through the caverns undetected takes three Hard (9) *sneak* checks from everyone involved. If even a single person fails the roll, a curious ghouls comes to investigate. The heroes may want to hide. That's possible, especially in a room like the larder (dead bodies make good cover). Have everyone make an opposed *sneak* with the ghouls' *Cognition*. If the ghouls detects even a single person, it lets out an ear-piercing screech that draws 2d6 other ghouls the next round, and 2d6 each round thereafter.

The ghouls immediately attack, but oddly fight to subdue the expedition rather than kill them. The ghouls bite, but do not claw, and they do brawlin'

damage rather than lethal damage. Multiple ghouls attack each posse member, bearing them to the ground and immobilizing them if possible. Each ghouls goes for a limb, and since it pretty much wraps itself around it, the hero has to make an opposed *Strength* check with the ghouls at -6. Once all four of a hero's limbs are immobilized, she is down and out of the combat as all of the ghouls bite her and inject their paralytic poison.

Fleeing is difficult, although possible. Dodging past all the ghouls takes a opposed *Nimbleness* check. Of course, if a hero flees deeper into the City o' Ghouls, he won't really improve his situation any.

Any captured posse members are dragged before the ghouls king for an interview—and tasting (see **Hail to the King, Baby**, below).

### HIS ROYAL GHOULISHNESS

The king of this particular ghouls colony has a name that should be familiar to you if you remember how this whole shebang got started. It's Lawrence Croft, John Wesley Powell's greedy companion, who stole the Talisman of the Heart from Torak back in 1873 and led Powell's men to their doom down below.

Unlike the rest of the expedition, Croft wasn't killed by the ghouls—just very badly wounded. Dumped in the cave that has now become the larder, Croft's stubborn will to live kept him going, even though he was too badly wounded to escape. To survive, Croft ate the only food that presented itself: the flesh of his dead comrades.

Slowly, over a period of days, Croft healed up, his body reknitting itself far faster than he thought possible. But something was different. Croft's cannibalism had changed him, mutated him into something far less than human. He became a ghouls.

Croft's intelligence (and craftiness) allowed him to seize control of the

ghouls pack. Through a combination of good leadership and abject brutality, Lawrence Croft became king of the ghouls colony.

Under Croft's leadership, the ghouls are thriving like never before. He's organized then a bit, reduced infighting (by simply killing any ghouls engaging in it), and brought a semblance of unity to the usually disorganized grave-robbers. Croft has even gotten his "subjects" to start preying on the living, hunting instead of just scavenging. The Laughing Men are his favorite targets, but the local natives have become fair game as well.

Croft's position among the ghouls is pretty secure and they follow his orders without question. He's much smarter and tougher than any one of them, and he's easily slaughtered the few who have challenged him for dominance. The man has paid a high price for his greed, but he's tried to make the best of his situation. When you get right down to it, Croft figures that it's better to reign in Hell...

The one thing that Croft really does feel bad about is what became of the expedition. He knows that his greed led them to their destruction, and regrets his actions (in his own ghoulish way). Because of this, the heroes can potentially talk their way out of being added to the ghouls larder. He just might be willing to deal with the posse if he knows they're connection to Powell.

### PROFILE: LAWRENCE CROFT, THE GHOUL KING

**Corporeal:** D:2d8, N:3d10, Q:3d10, S:3d10, V:2d10

**Fightin':** brawlin' 6d10

**Mental:** C:2d8, K:2d6, M:2d8, S:2d8, Sp:2d6

**Overawe** 4d8, **persuasion** 3d8

**Pace:** 10

**Size:** 7 (Ghouls Kings eat better!)

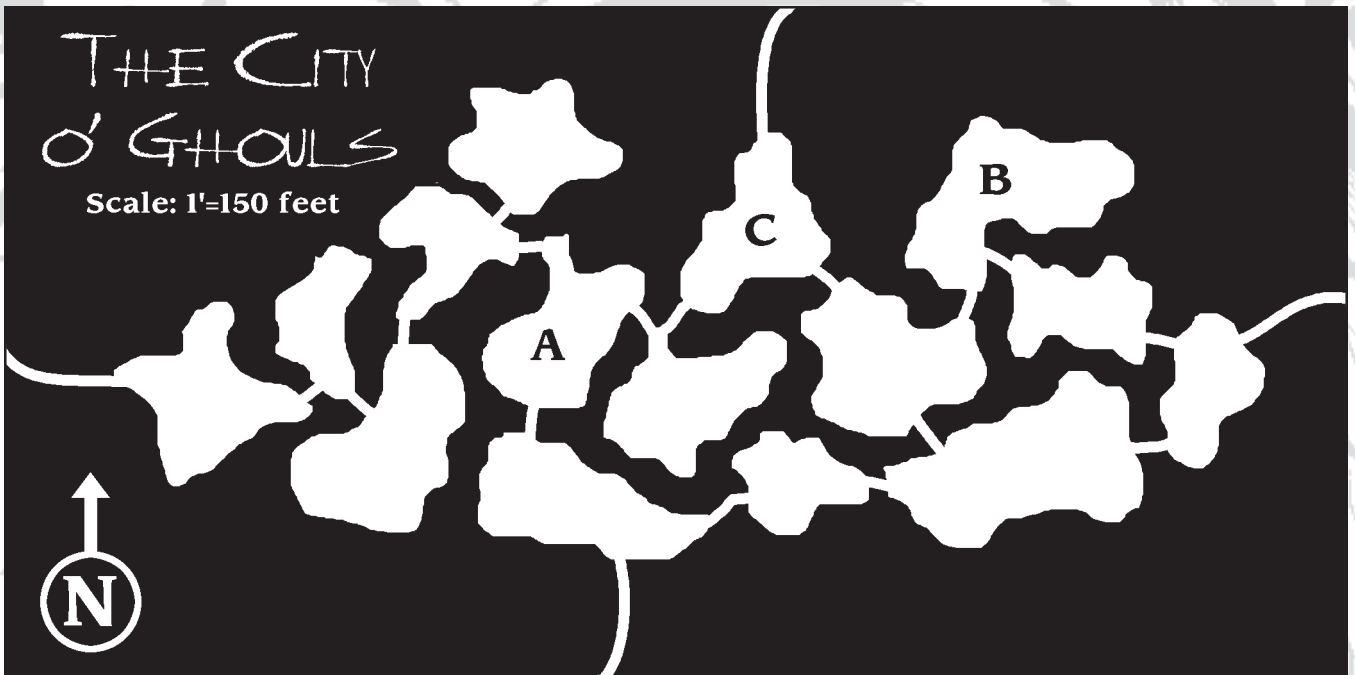
**Wind:** 16

**Terror:** 9

**Special Abilities:**

**Ghouls Abilities:** As a normal ghouls.

**Description:** Croft looks like a ghouls, except he's grown enormously fat and even more loathsome looking.



### HAIL TO THE KING, BABY

Any heroes taken down by the ghouls are eventually (after being kicked around a bit) dragged into the ghoulish king's throne room. While the audience goes on, each hero's arms are held by ghouls with the claws lightly digging into their skin. All the ghouls have to do is squeeze and the hero has to resist the effects of the ghoulish poison.

The ghoulish king, Lawrence Croft, rests his bulky form on a rough "throne" made from a pile of stones. His eyes glow faintly in the darkness. The bloated ghoulish hisses softly and makes a cutting gesture in the air with a single filthy claw. The assembled ghouls laugh (at least that's what it sounds like) and the heroes are each manhandled to the floor, pinned down. An especially emaciated ghoulish with nauseatingly long claws moves over to each hero and quickly (but painfully) flays a chunk of flesh out of one of the meatier parts of their bodies. This does no actual damage, but emphasize how much it hurts.

The ghoulish then arranges the pieces of flesh quite neatly on a battered silver platter. The platter is then presented to the ghoulish king, who proceeds to sample the flesh of each of the heroes with great gusto. Everyone watching this spectacle needs to make a Fair (5) *guts* check

After the king has finished savoring the chunks of the heroes' meat, he licks his fingers clean and finally addresses them in a nasal, hissing voice:

*"Well, I must say, all of you each possess rare succulence to your flesh. I haven't had the pleasure of such a delicacy in such a long time. Most of what my subjects here bring me to eat is so stringy and rangy. So, heh, welcome to my little kingdom. I was once known as Croft, but names aren't very important down here. I know it's impolite to play with my food, but my friends here aren't big on talking. Perhaps you would like to tell me why you've invaded my home- and why I shouldn't have you killed and eaten right now."*

Folding his long-nailed hands across his bloated belly and smiling a sharp-toothed grin, Croft looks on expectantly at the posse, waiting for an explanation.

The best thing the heroes can possibly do here is mention Powell, the expedition, or anything associated with it. Haskins or Sophie (if they are still alive) can do this if telling the truth doesn't seem like a good idea to the heroes.

As mentioned on page 99, Croft's guilt over leading his friends to their deaths is the one thing that still links him in any way to his humanity. If the posse show him the Talisman of the Heart, Croft's red eyes glow a bit brighter, and he actually looks a bit shocked. After considering for a moment, he speaks again.

*So, someone escaped. Good. I wish I could have followed. You see, I led them all to their deaths. My greed did that. I heard the stories of the redskin's "greatest treasure," and when that redskin shaman showed me that pretty necklace—the one you have right there, as a matter of fact—I stole it and talked the others into following me below. I led them down here, and they were slaughtered in the dark by these critters here.*

*I wish I had died too—but I was too damn stubborn. It would have been better to die in the light of the sun then end up where—and what—I am now.*

*My friends here told me that one of us ran further into the caverns. I always figured that the—well, that something deeper in the caverns had taken care of them. John must have found a way out somewhere below.*

The bloated ghoul that once was Lawrence Croft pauses again. The only sound in the cave is the sound of everyone's breathing, and the occasional hiss of a ghoul. Finally, Croft looks up, his eyes glowing a bit brighter.

*"I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to let you go.*

*Learning that not all of us died down here in the dark is worth that much. Maybe you can find the same way out that they did.*

*Tell them that I am sorry.*

*This is a one time only proposition. If I see you here again, rest assured that you will be food, not friends.*

*Toss them in the boneyard."*

This last order is directed at the ghouls, who immediately drag the heroes from the throne room, manhandle them through the ghoul's caves, and down the down the tunnel to the Boneyard. The ghouls shove them each roughly off the drop and into the cave. See the location 6, the Boneyard, for more details.

If anyone asks him if he would lead them out of the caves, Croft laughs out loud, a distinctly unpleasant sound.

*Of course not. If you find your own way out, that's fine. But I'm not going to reveal any of our secrets to the likes of you. Take what I've given you. It's all you're going to get.*

Croft also doesn't give any clues about what lies in the caves beyond the City. This is mostly because he doesn't know. His subjects have made references to something they call "the shambling death" that lives beyond the Boneyard, and the ghouls absolutely refuse to go down there. Croft figures

## BONEYARD TREASURE

d20	Roll Item Found
1	<b>Nothing:</b> Bad luck, pardner.
4-5	<b>Money:</b> 1d10x\$5 worth of currency. Roll a d6 to determine which country it comes from. 1-3: USA, 4-5: CSA, 6: Mexico.
6-7	<b>Weapons:</b> A weapon in usable shape. Roll a d6 to determine what kind. Firearms have 1d3 rounds still in them. 1: hand weapon (tomahawk, knife, etc.) 2-3: pistol 4-5 rifle 6: shotgun.
8-11	<b>Equipment:</b> A piece of useful equipment, such as rope or torches.
12-13	<b>Explosives:</b> 1d3 sticks of dynamite.
14-15	<b>Jewelry:</b> Watches, rings and such worth 1d6x\$50.
16-17	<b>Gold!:</b> Gold coins or nuggets worth 1d6x\$100.
18-19	<b>Ghost Rock:</b> 1d6 pounds of ghost rock
20	<b>Minor Relic:</b> Pick one relic of your choice, Marshal.

anything scary enough to keep the ghouls away is something he has no desire to meet.

Mouthing off to the ghouls king is not a really good idea. If your posse is *really* belligerent and succeed in truly ticking Croft off, you are fully within your right to slaughter the lot of them, Marshal. Stupidity always has a price in the Weird West. Alternately, a bloody-great fight could result if you think your posse can handle it.

But, if you're feeling merciful, check out **Father Wilkes Plays Through** below for a way to keep them alive.

### FATHER WILKES PLAYS THROUGH

You hadn't forgotten about the Lost Angels, had you Marshal? We sure hope not.

If the Lost Angels are ahead of the posse, then getting through here is a lot easier. Father Wilkes and friends, led by Brother Cain in his demonic form, plow straight on through the City o' Ghouls. In this case, the posse may hear the City o' Ghouls even before they smell it, as a cacophony of howls and barks echo through the cave passages.

Their attack throws the whole colony into complete disarray as the frightened and frenzied ghouls turn on their own wounded and dead. The place is in a complete panic, and stays that way for several hours. During this time, the TN for the three *sneak* checks is lowered to a much more reasonable Fair (5), and failure only draws 1d6 ghoul's attention. The ghoul's morale is a lot lower as well. Assuming the posse whups up on the attacking ghouls, none of their compatriots assist them. However, the frightened ghouls fight to kill rather than to subdue in this case. Additionally, if the heroes flee, the ghouls won't pursue them at all.

It's also possible that the Lost Angels may save the heroes' bacon if they've less than impressed Croft. If the heroes seriously bone the meeting with the ghoul king, the Angel's attack on the ghouls can provide enough of a distraction to let the heroes flee deeper into the caverns.

## CHAPTER FIVE

105

### LOCATION 6: THE BONEYARD

While the ghouls don't mind having rotting bodies in close proximity to their homes, they don't seem to feel the same way about bones. All of the human remains lying around the City o' Ghouls were a constant reminder to Croft of the horrible fate that he led his friends to. So, once he had assumed control of the colony, he had his minions cart all the offending bones—along with any items of clothing, weapons, and other objects that ghouls have no use for—down to this cave. The practice continues to this day, and the cave is getting pretty full.

The tunnel down to this cave terminates in a 20 foot drop down.



Anyone falling down this drop (or tossed down it by the ghouls) takes 2d6+5 damage, as they land on a bed of sharp bones.

Surprisingly, there is nothing malevolent in this room, other than the piles and piles of bones. It's a terrifying and disgusting sight (requiring a Fair (5) *guts* check, by the way), but nothing more.

Anyone wishing to root through the bones might just find some interesting items. After all, the ghouls down here have been stealing and eating the local's dead for well over a hundred years. Have the searcher make an Onerous (9) *search* check. If he gets a success, roll on the table on the previous page. Add +2 to the roll for every raise he gets on the check.

This is as far north in the caves that any of the ghouls go. Any further, and they're afraid they might run into "the shambling death" (which you'll learn more about in a little bit).

## LOCATION 7: TOMB OF THE ELDER ONE

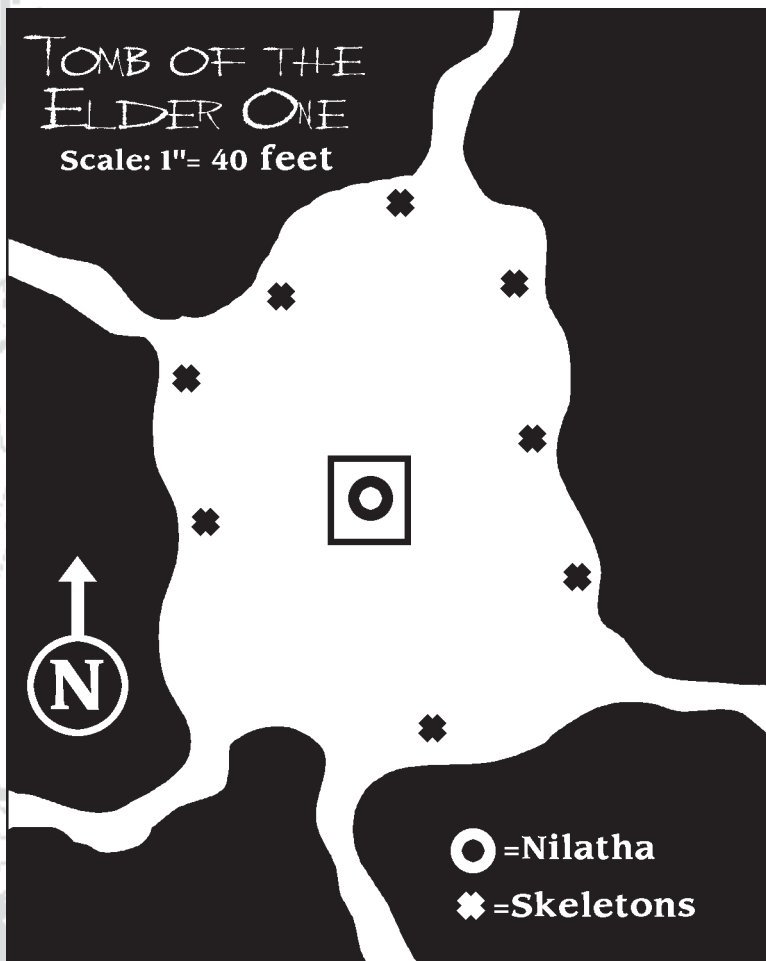
There are a couple of different routes that the posse can take once they leave the Boneyard, but they all eventually lead through this cave. This one shows the hand of man more than any other place underground. The walls are painted almost as heavily as those in the Entrance (location 1), but the paint is far more ancient. The paintings are also seemingly more ornamental, swirling patterns of color. These actually represent the swirling currents of spiritual energy that move through the caverns.

Several small alcoves have been carved into the walls in here, and they are filled with a variety of ancient artifacts. Perfectly preserved pots, small twig figures like those found in the Grand Canyon, stone figurines, and even a few small pieces of crudely worked gold jewelry all lie in the alcoves. Sitting on a rude dais in the center of the room is a body, shrivelled and dry looking, sitting cross-legged. The figure is seemingly mummified, dressed only in a tattered loincloth. More crudely worked jewelry encircles its throat, wrists, and fingers. Whoever the man was, he was someone important. There are a few piles of human remains scattered around the room as well. Some look as ancient as the mummy, while others look disturbingly fresh.

The locations of all of these are marked on the map at left.

### LOOK, BUT DON'T TOUCH

If the posse moves through the room without disturbing anything (very unlikely if Dr. Haskins is along), nothing happens. But anyone so much as *touching* any of the obviously valuable items in here is in big trouble. The owner is still around, you see, and he is none too pleasant. Remember "the shambling death" the ghouls are afraid of? The moment someone touches something, they get to meet him. A yellowish fire blazes to life in the eyes



of the mummified corpse, and it rises creakingly to its feet. And to add insult to injury, the eight piles of bones start to knit themselves back together, animating into eight skeletons at the beginning of the second round of combat. Terror checks for everybody! The mummy and his skeletons attack immediately.

As you'll see in a minute, the mummy and his cronies are pretty tough, and can come as a rude surprise to an already battered posse. The best way to deal with them is probably to use the heel-toe express to get out of his sight as quickly as possible. The mummy has a short attention span, and won't pursue anyone farther than two chambers away from his tomb cavern—unless someone has taken something from the tomb. In that case, he follow until either he is destroyed or the his purloined possession is dropped.

Any hero who has been possessed by an Anasazi ghost is ignored by the abomination unless he is the one stealing the mummy's artifacts.

### NILATHA THE ELDER

When the Anasazi left the Grand Canyon area and abandoned the caverns almost a thousand years ago, one man stayed behind. Nilatha was a holy man of Anasazi, the one with the deepest and most profound connection with the caverns. He believed that as long as he stayed in them, he was immortal. When the Anasazi picked up and left, Nilatha refused to go. He stayed behind, creating his own tomb by hand, arranging everything just so. Sure enough, Nilatha was right. He didn't die, but he's not truly alive in a traditional sense anymore. There's not really much left of Nilatha's intellect rattling around in his shrivelled skull (almost a thousand years down in a cave can do that to a body). He operates on an almost instinctive level, just wanting him and his possessions to be left alone.

The Talisman of the Heart can be used to keep the mummy at bay, but it only works for the person actually holding or wearing the necklace. Anyone else is fair game for the mummy's tender embrace.

## CHAPTER FIVE

107

If the heroes actually manage to put this mummy down for good, there are well over \$20,000 worth of artifacts and jewelry in his cave. Additionally, Nilatha's killers get the grudging gratitude of the ghouls (a bit of a mixed blessing, to be sure).

### PROFILE: NILATHA

**Corporeal:** D:2d8, N:3d10, Q:3d10, S:6d12, V:4d12

Climbin' 3d10, fightin' brawlin' 8d10, sneak 6d10

**Mental:** C:2d8, K:2d6, M:2d8, S:2d8, Sp:4d10

Overawe 7d8

**Pace:** 10

**Size:** 7

**Wind:** -

**Terror:** 9

#### Special Abilities:

**Armor:** 3

**Damage:** Claw (STR+1d6), Grasp (STR+soul suckin')

**Soul Suckin':** If Nilatha manages to get a successful grasp attack on a hero, he begins drinking that hero's life force. Each action that Nilatha keeps hold of a cowpoke, he drains 1d6 Wind from her. She can take no actions but try to break free from Nilatha's bony grasp—an opposed *Strength* check. If she goes to negative her total Wind, she is irrevocably dead and can't even return Harrowed. Wind lost to Nilatha's *soul suckin'* attack returns at the rate of one point per hour. Each 5 points of Wind that Nilatha drains heals the mummy 1 wound level in all locations. Nilatha can use his other powers and attack even if he is suckin' someone's soul, but all his actions are at a -2 penalty.

**Shriveled Body:** Damaging Nilatha with gunfire is very difficult. Single shot weapons add do only one quarter damage to the mummies shrivelled and dry body.

**Trackin':** Nilatha is irrevocably bound to the items he died with, and can track them over any distance. The one thing that can get him to leave his cavern home is if something of his is stolen and he is not put down for good. The mummy stops at nothing to return His possessions, tracking the thief to the ends of the earth if necessary.

**Undead:** Focus: heart

**Unholy Host:** Nilatha can animate a number of skeletons equal to his *Spirit* level. It takes a single to turn to animate a skeleton in this manner, but the mummy does have to take an action to do so.

**Vulnerability:** Nilatha takes double damage from fire-based attacks, but he is not himself flammable. For instance, a swung torch does double normal club damage.

**Coup:** A harrowed drinking Nilatha's essence gets one level of the *soul eater* Harrowed power. If he already has the power, he may raise it by one level.

**Description:** Nilatha looks like a dry, desiccated human body, his skin shriveled and clinging to his bones and sinew. His fingers have hardened into sharp claws, and a yellowish fire burns in his eyes. The mummy is clothed in the tattered remains of a loincloth.

## THE SKELETONS

There are eight skeletons in the mummy's tomb chamber. Nilatha animates them the first round of combat.

If the heroes somehow lead the mummy to the Boneyard, things can get pretty hairy. The mummy can animate up to ten skeletons at once, and there are more than enough bones in the Boneyard for him to replace any that are killed with fresh ones at the beginning of the next round.

## PROFILE: SKELETONS

**Corporeal:** D:2d8, N:3d8, Q:3d8, S:6d8, V:4d6

Climbin' 2d8, fightin': brawlin' 4d8, sneak 6d10

**Mental:** C:2d8, K:2d6, M:2d8, S:2d8, Sp:2d4

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** -

**Terror:** 7

**Special Abilities:**

**Armor:** 1

**Damage:** Claws (STR+1d8)

**Skeletal Bodies:** Damaging skeletons with gunfire is very difficult. Single shot weapons add do only one quarter damage to the mummies shrivelled and dry body. Shotguns do half damage.

**Undead:** Focus: head

**Description:** Strip all the flesh of a human body and these guys are what you get.

## LOCATION 8: THE BAT CAVE

Well Marshal, once again the posse's going to smell this cavern a long while before they actually see it. Heck, after the smell of the City o' Ghouls, this place may seem like a perfumery by comparison.

This cave is the daytime resting place of a huge colony of bats. While the little rodents spend their nights flying around outdoors keeping the local insect population in check (except for the scythe beetles, of course), they spend the daylight hours in this cave. Here they sleep, breed and-well, let's just say they create that wonderful substance that's creating the odor-bat guano.

And they've had years to produce a whole trainload of bat guano in this cave. The stuff is thigh-high in most places (deeper in others. Yuk!), and moving through it is like moving through very smelly mud. Have everyone crossing the chamber make a *Nimbleness* check with a Fair (5) TN. The time it takes to cross the chamber is 10 minutes-1 minute for every success and raise on the *Nimbleness* check.

The smell in here is more than putrid—it can be downright lethal if the posse takes too long making it through the place. All the guano on the floor (and the vapors escaping from within it), produces a noxious cloud of vapor that can suffocate. Only the ventilation mentioned at the beginning of this chapter keeps this place from turning into a total gas chamber.

Even so, everyone in the chamber loses 1 Wind for every minute they're near or in the guano. Anyone running out of Wind collapses, and has to be helped along by another person. Anyone going negative their maximum Wind asphyxiates. This Wind returns at the rate of 1 Wind per minute once a cowpoke gets into fresher air.

If she thinks to, a hero can hold her breath for a number of minutes equal to her *Vigor* die type divided by 5.

## **D**ISTURBING THE BATS

OOoo. Bad idea. If the group isn't having enough problems slogging around up to their thighs in bat guano along with trying not to suffocate, they REALLY don't want to disturb the cave residents.

Roll a d6 when the posse first enters the bat cave. Odd, it's night and the bats are out. Even, it's daytime and the little buggers are home. Avoiding disturbing the bats raises the TN of the *Nimbleness* check to Onerous (7), and blowing it wakes all of the flying rats up.

The bats are a mite bit cranky (and scared) if they're aroused. They explode into the air, swirling around the heroes in a screeching, flapping mass. The battering of a couple of thousand bats does 1 Wind per round to each person caught in them in addition to the Wind caused by the toxic air. This Wind is recovered as normal.

## **L**OCATION 9: **T**HE TUNNEL BELOW

Patches of blue-green glowing fungus bathe this small cave in a dim light. The only exit from the room other than the one the posse entered through is a hole in all opposite the entrance. A slight breeze and an odor of corruption



filter up from the tunnel mouth—the same smell that came from the crevasse back in location 3.

If the heroes still have the Talisman of the Heart, it is definitely pulling down into this tunnel.

The tunnel slopes down at a gentle 20° angle and makes a wide spiral as it goes down. The greenish glowing fungus gets more and more common as the tunnel gets deeper. Anyone making a Hard (9) *Cognition* can tell that the tunnel drops down about 300 feet over its entire length.

Once your posse gets to this point, you'll want to head on into the next chapter, Marshal. If they thought the upper caverns were weird, just wait until they see what's below.

## **B**OUNTY

**Surviving this section of the caves:**

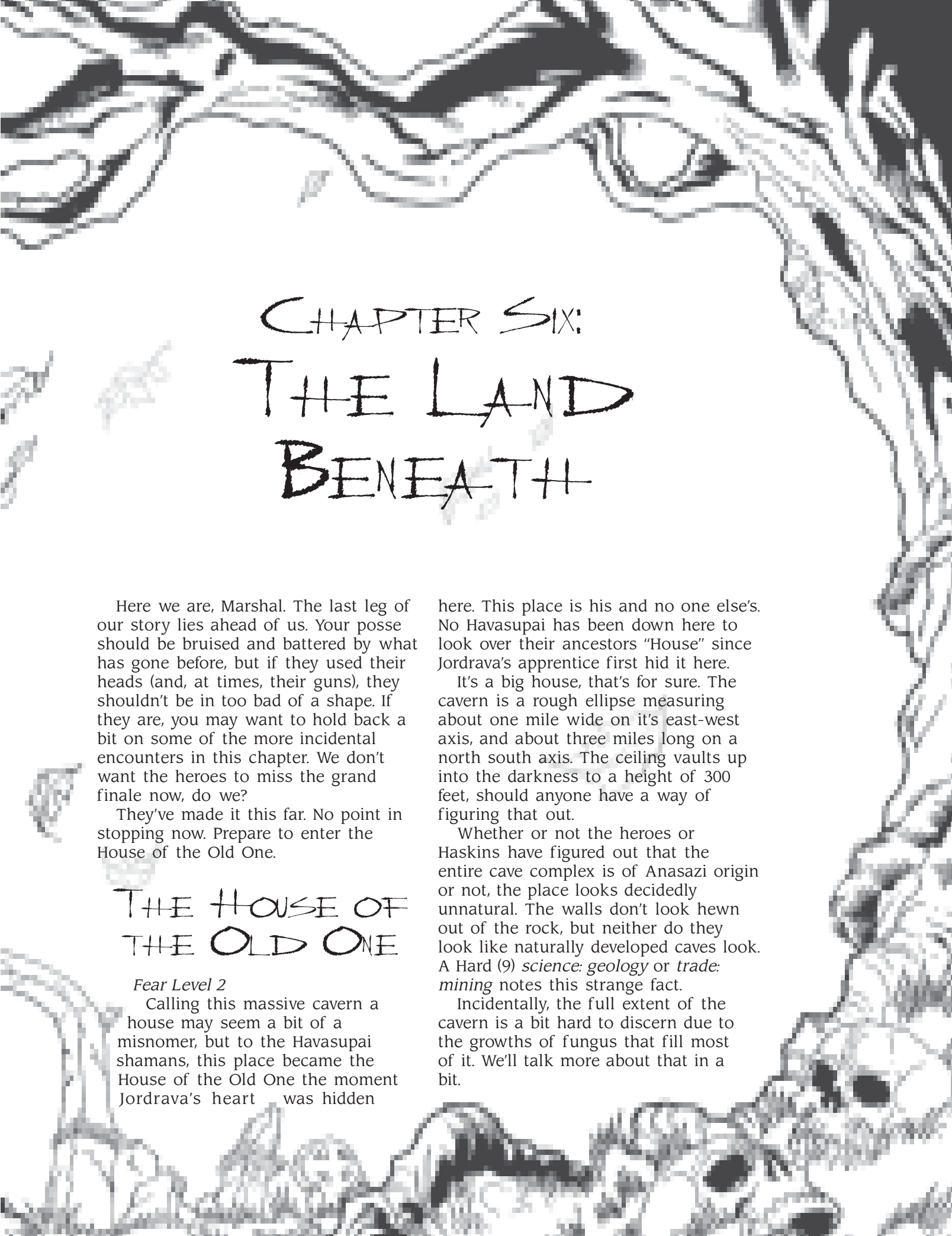
1 red chip for all.

**Sneaking past the ghouls:** 1 red chip for all.

**Killing Nilatha:** 1 blue chip for all.



IRQSEN



## CHAPTER SIX: THE LAND BENEATH

Here we are, Marshal. The last leg of our story lies ahead of us. Your posse should be bruised and battered by what has gone before, but if they used their heads (and, at times, their guns), they shouldn't be in too bad of a shape. If they are, you may want to hold back a bit on some of the more incidental encounters in this chapter. We don't want the heroes to miss the grand finale now, do we?

They've made it this far. No point in stopping now. Prepare to enter the House of the Old One.

### THE HOUSE OF THE OLD ONE

#### *Fear Level 2*

Calling this massive cavern a house may seem a bit of a misnomer, but to the Havasupai shamans, this place became the House of the Old One the moment Jordrava's heart was hidden

here. This place is his and no one else's. No Havasupai has been down here to look over their ancestors "House" since Jordrava's apprentice first hid it here.

It's a big house, that's for sure. The cavern is a rough ellipse measuring about one mile wide on its east-west axis, and about three miles long on a north south axis. The ceiling vaults up into the darkness to a height of 300 feet, should anyone have a way of figuring that out.

Whether or not the heroes or Haskins have figured out that the entire cave complex is of Anasazi origin or not, the place looks decidedly unnatural. The walls don't look hewn out of the rock, but neither do they look like naturally developed caves look. A Hard (9) *science: geology* or *trade: mining* notes this strange fact.

Incidentally, the full extent of the cavern is a bit hard to discern due to the growths of fungus that fill most of it. We'll talk more about that in a bit.

## RULES OF THE HOUSE

Most of the strange effects common to the caves (see page 86 in the last chapter) are still in effect here. In fact the open gate to the Hunting Grounds makes a few of them even more pronounced.

A shaman's ritual target numbers are all at a -4 down here, and hucksters draw two free extra cards whenever casting a hex. They have to take these extra cards. They also add +4 to any

rolls on the Backlash Table. As in the upper caves, blessed, martial artists and voodooists are unaffected.

Also, the open gate makes the entire cavern a quasi-piece of the Hunting Grounds. While the physical laws of the material world still apply, spirits, like nature spirits and manitous, have an actual physical form here—which means they can be killed. This is especially weird since you can't normally kill a manitou, even in the Hunting Grounds! This state applies to guardian spirits as well. The posse may be pretty surprised when a shaman's elk guardian spirit saunters up to them out of the fungal undergrowth!

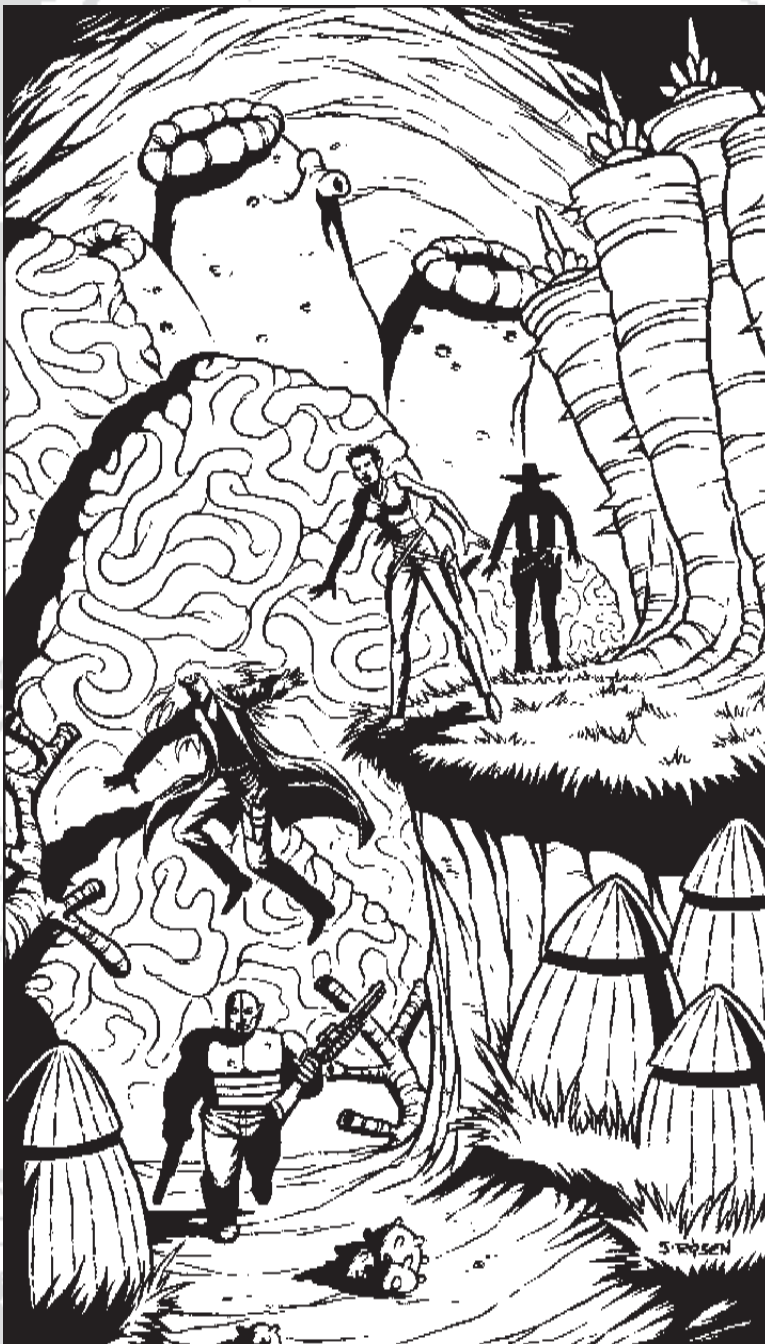
Bad news for Harrowed here, though. The manitous squirming around inside their bodies get to add +2 to any Dominion checks while down here.

On the upside, the phosphorescent fungus that seems to grow on every bare spot of rock in the caverns negates any vision penalties. After a few minutes in the blue-green light, everyone can see normally.

You may note that the Fear Level in here is pretty low, all things considered. In fact, it's actually lower than the caves above. This is due simply to the presence of the Heart of the Old One. Its beneficial aura is the only thing that keeps this place from becoming a total nightmare realm. In fact, if the Hearts weren't here, the creatures coming through the gate would be even worse.

## THE FUNGUS FOREST

Remember way back in the introduction we mentioned that the still-open gate to the Hunting Ground had some strange effects? Well, the first and most obvious one is the veritable jungle of alien fungus that grows in the cavern. The variety is bewildering. Strange pale treelike tubers grow next to greenish puffballs. Carpets of pink, purple and red molds cling to the floor. Wet, brown shelf fungi grow on the tubers, and slimy orange and yellow molds ooze down vertical surfaces. Threadlike fungus hangs from the "branches" of the tubers like Spanish moss.



We'll describe a few specific types of fungus in a bit, but they all have a few uniting characteristics. First of all, they don't burn. At all. All the growths in the cavern are completely immune to fire.

Second of all, they all smell bad. Not horrifically so, not enough to cause a physical reaction, but enough to notice.

Third, all of them grow quickly on any dead organic surface. They won't grow on anything alive, and they don't actually damage anything they grow on, but the heroes are going to be scraping tubers, slime molds and shelf fungi off of their clothing every few minutes.

Fourth and finally, they all respond to outside stimuli. If you hit them, they recoil. If you stroke or pet them, they lean into it. And, most creepily of all, if you cut them, they moan. Not only do they moan, but the moan ripples outward through the entire forest like waves from a pebble dropped in a pond.

The overall effect is a bit disquieting. When they get their first good taste of the whole thing, give the posse a Fair (5) *guts* check just to keep 'em on their toes.

And how exactly are the heroes supposed to see it, you ask? Good question. The entire cavern is filled with a greenish-blue light emanating from one of the most common fungi in the cavern, a carpet mold that seems to be able to grow on just about anything—including the posse's equipment, if you're feeling particularly vindictive. It's harmless, but don't tell them that.

Above all else, it's almost entirely quiet. No breeze blows, no birds sing—nothing.

## SIGNS OF LIFE

There are paths wending their way through the mass, and astute heroes might make the obvious connection: without creatures or people or something making them, paths aren't natural. Something lives down here. The trails through the undergrowth seem well trodden, and these are marked on the map on page 96. Travelers on these trails move at 2/3 normal Pace. One has to keep a constant eye out for slick patches of mold or treacherous footing buried under the carpet of fungus.

If the heroes want to take things off the beaten track, the going is a lot tougher. Pushing through the fungal undergrowth is not an easy task, and those hacking their way through have to deal with the near constant eerie moaning of the fungus forest. Cowpokes might also be disturbed to note that any paths they carve through the forest grow over in a matter of a few minutes.

## RESIDENT FUNGUS

Significant patches of any of these are noted on the map on page 96.

**Healing Fungus:** This black, slimy, tuberous fungus grows about six inches high, and is usually hidden from view by the surrounding growths. The best way to find it is by its smell. As putrid as most of the things in here are, healing fungus stands head and shoulders above the rest.

It tastes even worse, but it's definitely worth choking down, as the stuff has amazing healing properties. The morlocks (who you'll read all about in a few pages) know all about this stuff and always keep a supply on hand.

Swallowing a "dose" of the nasty stuff (which is about a handful of it) takes a Fair (5) *Vigor* check. Assuming a hero manages to eat it, she can immediately make a healing check for each wound on her body. Multiple doses do work, but the TN for the *Vigor* check to eat it goes up by +4 for each additional dose consumed in a 24-hour period. The stuff is REALLY revolting.

Strangely, healing fungus tastes great to Harrowed, but it has no beneficial effect on them.

**Burst Fungus:** These squat, bloated orange tubers, seem to actually pulsate. When touched by any creature, the burst fungus immediately starts to pulsate even more rapidly. A mere five seconds (one round) later, the fungus pops, spewing its acidic juices and spores in a 1-yard radius around it. If these things grew individually this



would be no big deal. No such luck. Ten to fifteen plants grow in patches around 10 yards across. When one plant goes, it causes a chain reaction across the whole patch.

Anyone walking through a burst fungus patch needs to make a Fair (5) *Nimbleness* check to avoid setting off the fungus. Of course, blundering straight through the patch automatically sets them off.

Anyone caught in the burst radius takes 2d6 damage from the plant's bilious liquids. The spores in the fungi's juices try to take root in anything they land on as well, so she also takes 1 Wind per hour until the affected locations are washed off with some sort of liquid. This Wind can only be recovered after the location is cleansed.

## ALIEN INSECTS

Otherworldly insect life is all over the place in the fungus forest, scuttling around on the ground and flitting about in the air. Imagine a normal healthy forest full of woodland creatures. Now make all those creatures creepy alien bugs and you get the idea.

Most of the critters are harmless, content to munch on fungus and go about their little buggy lives. However, there are a few bigger specimens that are more likely to mess with passers-by. Statistics for three different types of threatening insects are provided in the **Wandering Encounters** section below, but feel free to stick more of them in if it doesn't bug you.

## THE MORLOCKS

Aside from the fungus and the bugs, there's one more group of residents we should mention. For lack of a better name, we'll refer to them as morlocks.

The morlocks are sexless beings, and are in fact a kind of sentient fungus themselves. They reproduce by "sporing" once a year or so. They seem to have individual personalities, but work with a coordination that borders on the unearthly. They don't have a leader or any sort of hierarchy in what passes for morlock "society."

There is no morlock culture, per se. In fact, when it comes to the higher aspects of civilized behavior and decorum, the morlocks are about as sharp as a sack of wet mice—but cunning, and have an encyclopedic knowledge of their environment. They know which fungi are safe to eat, which ones will kill you dead, and which ones will heal you back up. They're incredibly curious critters, and are hard to spook or scare. Even the most threatening of behavior usually just gets a blank stare and stream of jabbering. Direct attacks send them scattering into the fungus jungle. Only if cornered do they fight.

If someone actually figures out a way to communicate with them in anything other than sign language and charades, she'll find them to be poor conversationalists. They mostly just want to talk about fungus and bugs.

To get an idea of how the morlocks interact with the heroes, picture them as a group of chimpanzees with a mass-mind and slightly enhanced tool making abilities. They're friendly as all get out, and are more than willing to share their fungal food with the posse. They also root through anything left within their reach, and may abscond with especially shiny objects.

Of course, if Father Wilkes is ahead of the heroes, the morlocks welcome the posse a bit differently. Check out **The Morlock Village** on page XX for more information on that.

### PROFILE: TYPICAL MORLOCK

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:2d12, Q:3d12, S:3d4, V:2d10

Climbin' 2d12, fightin': brawlin', spear 3d12, sneak 2d12

**Mental:** C:2d6, K:1d4, M:3d8, Sm:2d8, Sp:3d6

Academia: fungus 6d4, guts 3d6, overawe 2d8

**Pace:** 12

**Size:** 4

**Wind:** 16

**Terror:** 3

#### **Special Abilities:**

**Armor:** 1

**Damage:** Teeth (STR), spears (STR+1d4)

**Description:** Morlocks look like hairless orangutans with no noses and large saucer-like eyes. Their mouths are almost invisible slits, filled with a bony ridge on the top and bottom of their jaws rather than teeth. They wear no clothes and carry primitive weapons made of a woody, dried fungus. They're cute, in a savage kind of way.

## DOWN IN A HOLE

Heroes who fell into the Crevasse in the last chapter end up plopping straight into the **Underground Lake** (see page 116).

Assuming the hero survives the fall intact, you may want to take a little bit of time with that hero's player and let him explore the House of the Old One on their own a little. You probably don't want to do this during your normal play session. Set aside some time outside of

## WANDERING ENCOUNTERS

d20 Roll	Encounter
1-5	No Encounter
5-6	Fungal dead
7-9	Leaper pack
10-11	Ambush bug
12	Behemoth
13-15	Morlocks
16-18	Lesser manitous
19-20	Snake Cloud

normal game time if you want to go this route. The hero can meet back up with the rest of the posse when they make it down below.

Alternately, you can knock the hero unconscious if you don't want to go to the trouble. In that case, he's found by the morlocks and taken to their village. (See page 118)

## WANDERING ENCOUNTERS

Over the years, many different things have entered the House of the Old One from the Hunting Grounds. They're not all malevolent, but they're not all that nice either.

Roll on the **Wandering Encounter** table above for every 15 minutes the heroes spend down below—or you can just pick the encounters you like and hit your heroes with them.

### FUNGAL DEAD

Over the years, a few of the walkin' dead from the upper caverns have made their way down below, and spores of some of the fungus have glommed right onto their unliving carcasses. This really doesn't alter the walkin' dead too much, but it sure does make 'em look more scary.

Use the normal walkin' dead statistics for these disgusting mobile fungus farms, but reduce their Pace to 4, jack their Terror up to 11, and give them 2 points of light armor, reflecting the cushioning that the fungus growth gives them. They appear in groups of 1d3.

## LEAPERS

Leapers look something like a cat-sized cross between a flea and grasshopper with nasty little pincers and vicious mandibles. They travel by leaping through the fungus forest.

These are the smallest of the "threat insects" that have set up housekeeping in the House of the Old One. Although they feed primarily on the fungus, the little bastards are jumpy as Hell (excuse the expression), and ferociously attack anything they perceive as a threat.

Leapers travel in packs of 2d6, and fight until killed. They're just too damn stupid to flee.

### PROFILE: LEAPER

**Corporeal:** D:2d4, N:3d10, Q:3d10, S:3d6, V:3d6

**Fightin':** brawlin' 2d10

**Mental:** C:1d4, K:1d4, M:2d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d4

**Pace:** 16 (leaping)

**Size:** 2

**Wind:** 9

**Terror:** 5

#### **Special Abilities:**

**Damage:** Pincers (STR), mandibles (STR+1d4)

**Description:** See above.

## AMBUSH BUG

Next up on the dangerous bug roster is the ambush bug. Clocking in at the size of a large dog, the ambush bug combines the worst aspects of a cockroach and a termite. Vicious predators, they feed on the smaller bugs, morlocks and the occasional fungal dead. They're more than happy to add the posse to their menu.

Ambush bugs are solitary hunters, stalking their prey and then ambushing it from the fungal undergrowth. They're so good at it in fact that all heroes are at a -2 penalty to their *Quickness* check in the first round of combat with an ambush bug.

## PROFILE: AMBUSH BUG

**Corporeal:** D:2d4, N:3d8, Q:3d8, S:3d10, V:3d8

**Fightin':** brawlin' 5d8, sneak 7d8

**Mental:** C:1d4, K:1d4, M:2d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d4

**Overawe** 3d8

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 5

**Wind:** 12

**Terror:** 7

#### **Special Abilities:**

**Armor:** 2

**Damage:** Pincers (STR), mandibles (STR+1d6)

**Description:** See above

## BEHEMOTH

These are the big daddies, the kings of the fungal jungle. Built like tanks, they resemble nothing more than giant pill bugs, with overlapping armored plates like armadillos. Fortunately, as with their smaller cousins, they're dumb as a box of rocks. They also aren't very aggressive unless they're messed with. Behemoths are grazers, feeding on fungus of all types. When they do get mad, better run for cover!

Only five of these suckers have slipped through the gate from the Hunting Grounds (and it was a tight squeeze for them).

### PROFILE: BEHEMOTH

**Corporeal:** D:2d4, N:3d4, Q:3d4, S:5d12+6, V:5d12

**Fightin':** brawlin' 5d4

**Mental:** C:1d4, K:1d4, M:2d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d4

**Overawe** 5d8

**Pace:** 4

**Size:** 12

**Wind:** 16

**Terror:** 9

#### **Special Abilities:**

**Armor:** 4

**Damage:** Mandibles (STR+1d6)

**Description:** See above.

## THE MORLOCKS

The only sentient inhabitants of the caverns, the morlocks, can often be encountered in the fungus forest.

They're usually foraging for edible fungi.

If the Lost Angels are ahead of the heroes at this point, treat this as a "No Encounter" result if it's rolled. Father Wilkes has had a little talk with the morlocks, and they're waiting for the posse, not wandering around the forest.

See page 113 for more information and full statistics for these little critters.

## LESSER MANITOUS

Oversized arthropods and fungus aren't the only things that have wandered through the gate from the Hunting Grounds. Those pesky manitous have found the doorway as well. Normal ones tend to skedaddle out into the Weird West proper pretty quickly, but the snivelling little spiritual entities known as lesser manitous stick a little closer to the gate. They band together into "legions," using superior numbers to bolster their pathetic little egos enough to attack larger prey.

Usually, the manitous would be immune to physical attacks. But as we mentioned earlier, the House of the Old One is a sort of "Hunting Grounds lite." The manitous can be harmed like normal material creatures here. They still swirl around in the air like spirits are wont to do, but guns, knives, flamethrowers all can hurt them.

Lesser manitous attack anyone they encounter immediately, and appear in groups of 2d10. If half of them are slain, the rest disperse.

## PROFILE: LESSER MANITOUS

**Corporeal:** D:2d8, N:3d6, Q:5d10, S:1d6, V:2d6

**Flightin:** brawlin': 2d6, sneak 4d6

**Mental:** C:2d6, K:1d6, M:2d6, Sm:1d4, Sp:1d6

Guts 1d6, overawe 2d6, ridicule 1d4

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 3

**Wind:** -

**Terror:** 5

### Special Abilities:

**Damage:** Claws (STR), teeth (STR)

**Swarm Attack:** Instead of figuring each of the legion's attacks, roll once for every five manitous. Each point by which the swarm beats



the attack's target number is another successful attack, up to the total number of lesser manitous involved. Roll one location for every three successful hits.

**Description:** These lesser manitous look like scraps of wispy cloth flitting through the air—but wisps of cloth don't have nasty claws and teeth.

## SNAKE CLOUD

The malevolent creatures know as snake clouds usually reside deep in the depths of the Hunting Grounds, gnawing at the roots of the Tree of Life. One of these abominations has made its way through the gate into here, though. It lurks in the fungus forest, occasionally enveloping and draining a morlock. The fiend spends most of its time sleeping, however.

If the posse dispatches this monster, rolling it again on the **Random Encounter** table results in no encounter.

## PROFILE: SNAKE CLOUD

**Corporeal:** D:2d6, N:3d10, Q:2d10, S:2d6, V:2d6

**Fightin':** brawlin' 3d10

**Mental:** C:1d6, K:1d4, M:1d8, Sm:1d4, Sp:3d10  
Overawe 2d8

**Pace:** 10 (flying)

**Size:** 4

**Wind:** -

**Terror:** 5

### Special Abilities:

**Immunity:** To normal weapons and attacks. Magical attacks and weapons harm them normally.

**Poison:** The snake cloud tries to wrap itself around the victim. The spirit makes a *fightin': brawlin'* roll opposed with the target's *dodge*. With a success, the snake cloud has enveloped the victim. The victim can try to break out of the snake cloud on its next action with an opposed *Strength* roll. Once it envelops a target, the snake cloud begins to rot away at the victim's very soul. On each of the snake cloud's actions that the victim remains enveloped, the spirit and the victim make opposed *Spirit* rolls. If the spirit beats the victim with at least one raise, the victim's *Spirit* die type is reduced by -1 step. The attack is repeated once each turn that the victim remains enveloped. If the victim's *Spirit* die type drops below d4, she dies and her soul is consumed by the snake cloud. If the victim survives, her *Spirit* die type returns to normal at the rate of 1 level per day.

**Vulnerability:** Wind. Snake clouds are instantly dispersed with a gust of wind. It takes the spirit a full 24 hours to regain its form.

**Description:** At first glance snake clouds look like actual snakes. However, their bodies are actually made up of a poisonous fog, and their skin shifts and flows.

## SPECIFIC LOCATIONS

Now that you know a bit about the general layout of the cave and some of its inhabitants, let's move on to specific places.

### LOCATION 1: THE ENTRANCE

The tunnel down from the upper levels of the caverns enters the House of the Old One here. The luminescent blue-green fungus has spread up the interior of the tunnel for about 30 yards, so the posse's eyes should be accustomed to the dim light by the time they reach the tunnel mouth. The ground for 10 yards around the cave mouth is fairly clear, with only a thick layer of dense lichen on the ground. The towering mass of the fungus forest looms ahead in the blue-green light, and the ceiling of the cave vaults up above.

Give everyone a few minutes to get their bearings here, Marshal. Describe the fungus forest to them—the way it looks and smells, the strange creatures moving about in the underbrush and flitting in the dimly-lit air above. Try to give them a good sense of how alien it all seems.

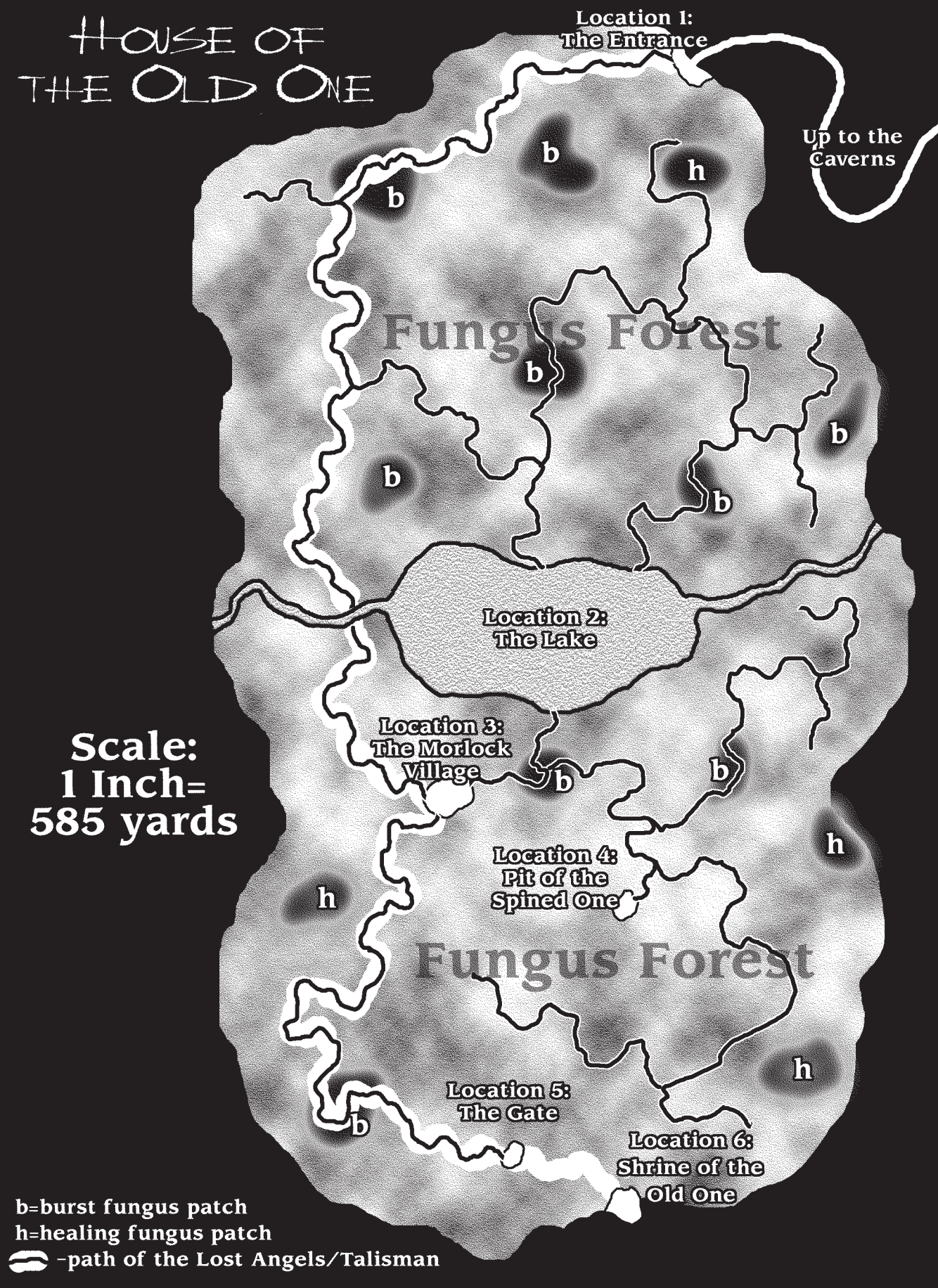
If the Lost Angels haven't got the Talisman of the Heart, then its pull leads off into the forest. If the Lost Angels have the Talisman, it's a simple matter to find their tracks in the soft ground. A *trackin'* check isn't even necessary to follow the trail. The path that either the Talisman or the Lost Angel's tracks lead to is marked on the map on page 96.

### LOCATION 2: THE LAKE

Located near the center of the huge cavern, this crystal clear body of water is fed by the same underground springs that provide water for the black pool in the caves above. Fungus grows right up to the edge of the lake.

# HOUSE OF THE OLD ONE

**Scale:**  
1 Inch=  
585 yards



b=burst fungus patch  
h=healing fungus patch  
— -path of the Lost Angels/Talisman

After the black pool that they encountered in the upper tunnels, the heroes may be a bit wary of this large body of water. Surprisingly, the fungus down here filters the water to an almost crystal clarity, and various species of luminescent algae make the thing positively glow when viewed from a distance. The water is clean and drinkable, but does taste a bit of the minerals that leech into it from the rocks in the cave.

The lake is about almost 1/2 mile across, and 1/4 mile in width. It really doesn't get very deep, only about 20 feet at the deepest, and the glowing algae makes it possible to see the bottom the whole way across. Nothing lives in the lake save the algae.

In other words, the lake is totally safe in every way. That's a rarity down here.

### LOCATION 3: MORLOCK VILLAGE

The morlocks have made themselves at home smack dab in the middle of the fungus forest, clearing out an area about 30 yards in diameter. The clearing is filled by 28 primitive huts surrounding a central meeting area. The huts are made of woven fungus fibers, and look something like ground-based versions of African weaver bird nests. It's possible for a person to fit inside one, but it's a tight fit.

How the heroes are received by the morlocks depends on how they approach the place. If the posse charge into the village guns blazing, the morlocks quickly scatter into the forest leaving the place deserted. On the other hand, if the heroes approach the morlocks in an open and friendly manner, they are welcomed with curious chattering and offers of edible fungus.

If friendly contact is made and any of the heroes are obviously wounded, the morlocks offer up their supply of healing fungus (see page 111). They have

more than enough of the stuff for the entire posse, depending on how much the heroes can (or are willing to) choke down.

Heroes that fell down the crevasse and were found by the morlocks are fed enough of the healing fungus while unconscious to reduce their overall wounds by two levels in all locations. Have them wake up in one of the cramped huts shortly before the other heroes arrive.

The heroes can even take time out for a rest here in the village if they like. The morlocks can provide them with mats of cushy (if a bit moist) fungus to sleep on. Basically, you can use the morlock village as a place to give the heroes a bit of a breather, Marshal. Patch 'em back up before we get to the final confrontation.

### FATHERLY ADVICE

If Father Wilkes and his cronies have gotten here ahead of the heroes, their reception is a bit different. Wilkes, through no small bit of effort and some rather ridiculous pantomiming, has told the morlocks to expect the posse, and has filled their heads with the ideas that the heroes are actually cannibals here to kill and eat the Morlocks.

The morlocks, not being the brightest critters in the world, have swallowed the story lock stock and barrel, and intend to incapacitate and then kill the "horrible cannibals" that they were warned about. The little guys greet the heroes as friends as above, but the fungal food served to them at dinner is drugged. Anyone consuming it has to make a Hard (9) *Vigor* check. Failing the check renders the hero unconscious. Even succeeding still does the hero 1d6 wind, and stuns them as if they had a severe wound. The morlocks then descend on the still-conscious hero and club them down.

If all the heroes go down, the morlocks truss them up and drag them off to the **Pit of the Spined One**. See that location for more details. If the heroes manage to fight the morlocks off, the little beasts scatter into the forest and won't bother the heroes again.

## LOCATION 4: PIT OF THE SPINED ONE

Sunken into the cavern floor, this ten-foot deep pit has steep sloping sides, covered with thick spongy fungal growth. A few fungus "shrubs" grow on the walls of the pit.

The pit is home to the baddest bug in the House of the Old One, a monstrosity the morlocks refer to as "the spined one." Sort of an alien version of an ant lion, the spined one seldom leaves his massive burrow, emerging maybe once a month to rampage around the cavern, eat his fill and then return to his burrow to sleep.

The massive critter does NOT appreciate being awakened, and viciously attacks anything disturbing it.

### PROFILE: THE SPINED ONE

**Corporeal:** D:2d4, N:3d4, Q:3d4,  
S:5d12+6, V:5d12

**Fightin':** brawl in' 6d4

**Mental:** C:1d4, K:1d4, M:2d8, Sm:2d6, Sp:1d4  
Overawe 4d8

**Pace:** 4

**Size:** 12

**Wind:** 30

**Terror:** 9

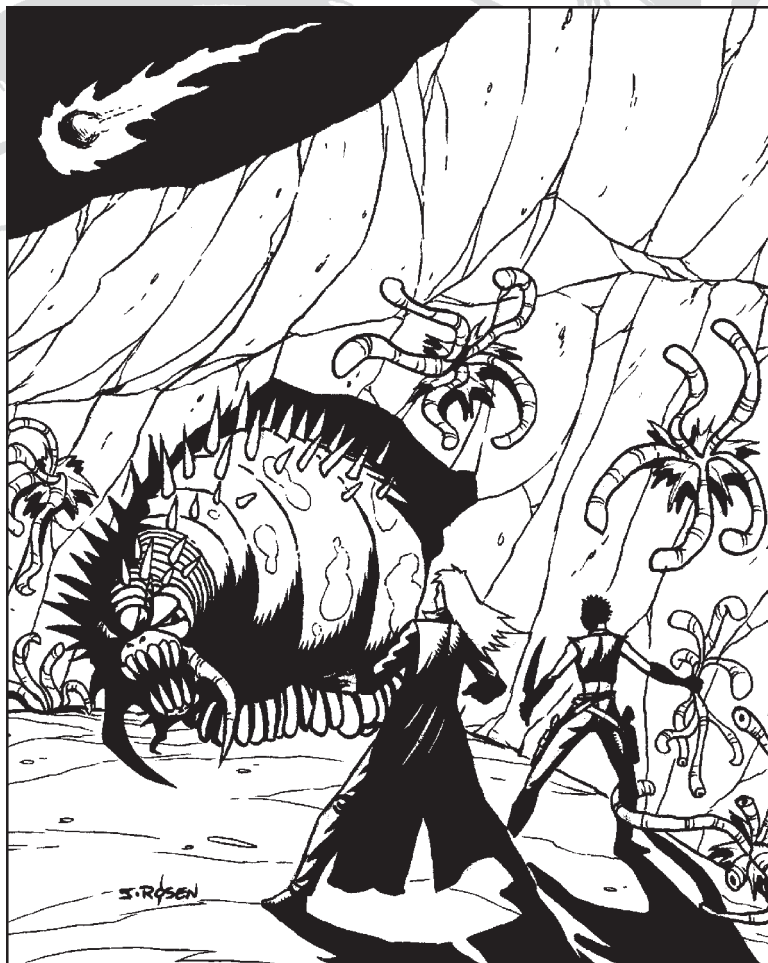
#### **Special Abilities:**

**Armor:** 3. The spined one has a very thick carapace.

**Damage:** Mandibles (STR+1d10)

**Beguiling Stare:** At the beginning of each round a hero fighting the spined one is in sight of the thing's eyes, she must make a Fair (5) *Spirit* check. Failure means that the alien stare of the creature has captivated her and she can do nothing other than start in fascination until she breaks the spell. She can try to make to the *Spirit* check each action to free herself from the spell. Heroes can try not to look at the creature's eyes while fighting it, but doing so gives a -2 penalty to all attack rolls.

**Description:** The spined one looks sort of like a giant grub, with savage looking mandibles and bony spikes all down it's back.



### TERROR OF THE SPINED ONE!

If the heroes get drugged by the morlocks while in their village, they're going to meet the Spined One up close and personal. The heroes awaken an hour or so later, roughly trussed up with bonds of dried fungus.

Breaking the fungus bonds takes an Onerous (7) *Strength* check and a single action. Freeing someone else is easier, requiring only a Fair (5) *Strength* check.

Climbing up out of the spined one's pit is probably going to be high on the heroes' agenda. The sloped and slippery sides of the pit make this pretty difficult. It takes a Hard (9) *climbin'* check to make it up out of the reach of the spined one's slashing pincers. Folks who clamber out can help others, reducing the TN on their *climbin'* check to Onerous (7). However, an assisted hero who goes bust on her *climbin'* roll drags her helper back down into the pit.

Incidentally, the morlocks look on the entire time, jeering and chattering at the heroes. If anyone actually makes it up

out of the pit (something no morlock has ever done), the little beasts immediately surround the escapee, cheering and dancing around them in a rather comical display of joy and reverence. If the spined one is killed, the morlocks go completely nuts, treating the posse like conquering heroes. If the posse is willing, the morlocks drag the heroes back to their village, where they can heal up and be honored.

Of course, if the morlocks are attacked, they scatter and won't bother the heroes again.

## LOCATION 5: THE GATE

When Jordrava punched his way through from the Hunting Grounds 18 years ago, he "left the door open," if you will excuse the expression. Ever since he escaped the wrath of the Last Sons, the gate has been hanging open, allowing all sorts of nastiness to pass through into the real world. Everything in the House of the Old One—insects, fungus, morlocks and all—are here because of this gate.

The gate itself is a glowing tear in the air, an actual rip in the fabric of reality. One strange visual effect: the gate looks exactly the same no matter what angle it's viewed from. Walking around it while looking at it can give a body a powerful headache as the brain tries to interpret this physical impossibility. The slight smell of ozone is detectable nearby and the glowing portal gives off a faint electrical crackling sound. The ground in a three-yard radius around the gate is clear; no fungus grows there.

Passing through the gate transports a body straight into the Hunting Grounds. There isn't nearly enough space here to go into what could possibly happen there, so refer to the *Ghost Dancers* sourcebook if your heroes decide to take a walk on the wild side. For now, use it as a bridge to wherever you want. We'll be doing a book on this place soon.

## LOCATION 6: SHRINE OF THE OLD ONE

### *Fear Level 2*

Well, here it is—the final object of the heroes' search—whether they realize it or not. The Havasupai's "greatest treasure" is indeed kept in this place, but the form that treasure takes is nothing that any of the expedition could have possibly imagined.

The shrine was built as the resting place for a Heart of the Old Ones. Built in a large "alcove" in the south wall of the House, the shrine goes back into the rock wall about 20 feet in a rough half-circle. No fungus grows in the shrine and none of the insects ever wander into this area. The morlocks consider the place taboo, and won't go near it under any circumstances. Without the usual luminescent fungus to provide light, it's much darker back in here than in the rest of the House.

The walls of the shrine are covered with paintings and pictograms similar to those found in the Entrance Chamber behind Havasu Falls (see page 95). These pictograms tell the story of the events leading up to the Great Spirit War, including the shaman's heart removal ritual. Pretty gruesome stuff. It doesn't tell anything about what happened in the Hunting Grounds of course.

The centerpiece of the shrine is a low stone altar built in the center of the alcove, about ten feet from the back wall. A small leather medicine bag lies on the altar. The Talisman of the Heart pulls straight to it. If anyone opens the bag, it contains a few smooth river stones, some earth from the surface, a few feathers that crumble to powder as soon as they are touched, and a dried and shriveled piece of meat. A Hard (9) *Cognition* check or a Fair (5) *medicine* roll can identify it as a dried human heart.

Right next to the altar is the Old One himself. Jordrava lies where he collapsed 18 years ago, sprawled out on the floor. His right arm is extended, its fingertips just brushing the bottom of the altar. It doesn't take a rocket

scientist to figure out that he was reaching for the bag on the altar when he went down. If none of the heroes draw that conclusion, a Fair (5) *Cognition* check (or a casual remark from Sophie or Haskins) lets that be known.

To all appearances, Jordrava is dead. He is not breathing and has no pulse. However, his body is still warm to the touch, showing no signs of decay at all. It's as if he just died there a few minutes before the heroes got there.

The shaman was in his prime when he journeyed with the other Old One's to the hunting Grounds. The shaman is lean but powerfully built, his long black hair streaked with grey. The only mark on the body is a livid scar right under the sternum. This is where the Old One cut his own heart from his body.

### ANGELS IN THE LEAD

If the heroes lost hold of the Talisman of the Heart, either in Cliffside or in the canyon, then the scene that greets their eyes is a bit different.

Wilkes and his cronies have been in the House of the Old One for at least a couple of hours (or days, if that seems more dramatically appropriate), but they've got a problem. The Heart's power is anathema to creatures of evil (see **Jordrava's Heart** on the next

## CHAPTER SIX

123

page) as the cannibal preacher has been finding out the hard way.

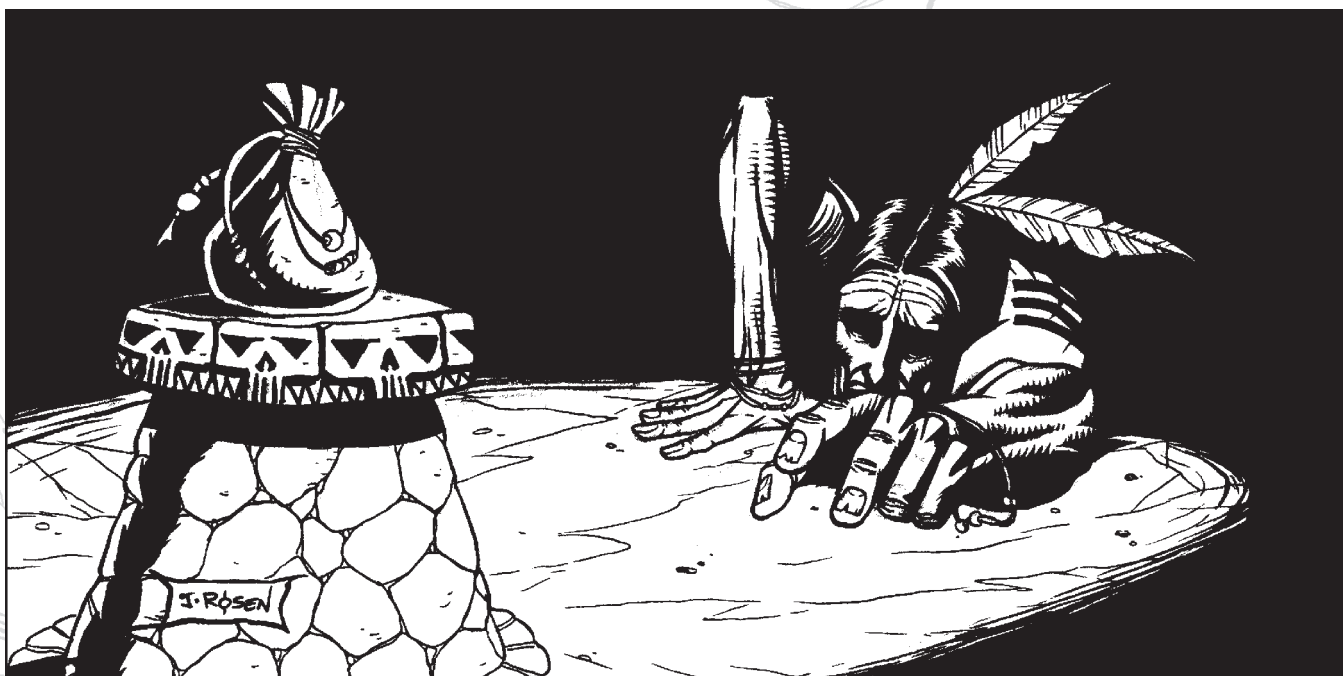
The Lost Angels have been trying to get hold of Jordrava's Heart, but haven't had much luck. Father Wilkes himself even tried to pick up the heart and is nursing a burned hand for his trouble (although this doesn't actually inhibit him).

Evidence of Father Wilkes' presence is pretty obvious; two of his followers lie dead on the ground by the altar holding the medicine bag. They are both quite obviously dead, their bodies charred rather nicely. The smell of smoke is still fresh in the air. Additionally, anyone making an Onerous (7) *trackin'* check can tell that a large group of humans (or at least biped wearing shoes) have been here in the last few hours.

The Angels are lurking in the fungus forest nearby> Give the heroes a few minutes to look around before they strike.

### WAKING THE SLEEPER

Anyone bringing the shaman's heart within about one foot of his body may be a bit surprised when the dried hunk



of meat actually starts beating! Anyone observing this needs to make an Onerous (7) *guts* check.

If the slowly beating heart is placed against Jordrava's chest where it would normally be, it is sucked from his hand into the torso of the comatose shaman. With a wracking cough the shaman's body begins to breathe, sucking in great lungfuls of air—but his eyes remain closed.

Immediately after the heart is absorbed into him, the air is filled with the sounds of chanting, as if hundreds of voices were raised in song. It's a beautiful and haunting sound, unpleasant to evil souls—including Harrowed and those possessed by the Anasazi ghosts from the upper caverns. Such heroes are at a -2 penalty to ALL actions while the chanting continues.

Hucksters lose the bonus cards they have probably gotten used to in the caverns, and have to take a -2 penalty to all *hexslingin'* rolls. Manitous and evil spirits don't like the song either.

## JORDRAVA'S HEART

If someone is so impolite as to keep the heart instead of awakening Jordrava with it, they'll find that it is an artifact of great power. But as always, power has its price.

**Power:** Anyone carrying the heart is incredibly resistant to malevolent magic. The TNs for any harmful magical effect directed against the bearer is raised by +6. Helpful magic works as normal. The bearer is also able to speak any Native American language at an Aptitude level of 1, and all *persuasion* and *overawe* checks against Indians are at a +4.

**Taint:** Jordrava's heart is pretty dangerous to abominations—including Harrowed. Such creatures take 6d12 damage every round they touch it.

There's a downside for a living owner as well. Jordrava's spirit haunts the possessor every night, tormenting the cowpoke's dreams until the heart is reunited with his body. This is the equivalent of the *night terrors* Hindrance, but the TN is raised to Hard (9), and if failed, she lose her two lowest chips instead of just one.

Shamans can tell that the song is one of power, but can't exactly make out the words. Whatever it is, they can feel their connections to the Hunting Ground strengthening. Give shamans a +2 to any rolls they make during the next few minutes as their souls are strengthened by the chorus of their ancestors.

They'll need it for this next part anyway, Marshal.

## THE FINAL CONFRONTATION

Regardless of who got here first and what happens while the heroes look around the shrine—perhaps even they have already reunited the Old One with his heart—the final confrontation starts out pretty much the same. It all comes down to everyone's favorite activity: a big ol' knock-down, drag-out fight.

Give the posse a few minutes to investigate the shrine, taking in the sights. Then, at a dramatically appropriate moment, a voice calls out from behind them:

*"Well, well, it looks like the guests finally arrived to the party. I tried to warn you all off earlier, but you just wouldn't take the hint. You could have just given up and gone home, but you had to keep causing me trouble.*

*But I'll tell you the truth—I'm glad you're here. I just hate having to clean up loose ends. And you know what? Me and the boys haven't had a good meal in days..."*

Wilkes licks his chops and throws down all five of his Bones of the Bloody Ones to the ground. (It doesn't matter if he used some of them earlier, by the way. A quick stop in the Boneyard in the caves up above was all he needed to replace the ones he used. Hey, it's one of the perks of being part of Grimme's inner circle.) The mad preacher follows his gloating speech up with a deranged stare and a shouted command to his followers: "Kill them! Kill them all!" The bloody ones begin to take form, the cultists bring their weapons to bear, and the fun begins!

Now that all the posturing is said and done, it's time to get down to the business of beating ass.

Fortunately for the heroes, the Lost Angels haven't exactly escaped this whole ordeal unscathed. The heroes have to face the six Guardian Angels left out of Wilkes' original posse of 16, Brother Cain and Father Wilkes himself.

Brother Cain uses his first action to change into his demonic form, and attacks with a savage glee, howling all the while. This may be the first time that anyone has gotten a clear look at Brother Cain's true nature, so don't forget those Terror checks!

Pull out all the stops here, Marshal. This is the big one, the fight it's all been leading up to. Wilkes and his followers are desperate enough to fight to the last man. They know that if they return to Grimme with a story of failure, they're on the menu at the next Cult of Lost Angels' barbecue. Don't hold back. These guys have literally nothing to lose.

### WAKEY, WAKEY...

The best and smartest way to deal with the final confrontation with the Lost Angels (especially if things are going badly) is to wake the Old One up. The shaman is easily powerful enough to dispatch Father Wilkes and Brother Cain; he is one of the Old Ones after all. However, he doesn't just pop his eyes open after 18 years hovering on the brink of death and start thrashing bad-guy butt for the posse. It takes the Old One a couple of rounds to shake almost two decades of cobwebs out of his head and get an idea of what's going on.

If you really want to randomize things, you can roll some dice here. The Old One fully wakes up in 1d6+2 rounds. Nice and simple.

We think the Jordrava's awakening works much better as a dramatic tool. If the heroes are handing the Lost Angel's their heads, keep the Old One snoozing until the end of the fight.

Of course, after all they've been through, there's a pretty good chance the posse's going to get smacked around pretty severely. The Lost Angels aren't pushovers by any means. In this

case, the Old One should probably wake up a little earlier, either distracting the Lost Angels at a critical moment, or truly saving the posse's bacon if necessary. Try to avoid having the Old One do the heroes' work for them, though.

If the Old One does wake up during the combat, he takes down one of the Lost Angels per round. He simply gestures at them and a swirling mass of nature spirits surrounds the target. With a scream and a strange ripping sound the target vanishes. Jordrava starts with the least powerful Lost Angel and works his way up the roster.

Regardless of whether he actually awakens during the fight, awakening the Old One is a good idea. The Lost Angels are at -2 penalty to anything that they do, due to the distracting nature of the mystic chanting that accompanies Jordrava's struggle back to consciousness.

### AFTER THE FIGHT

If the Old One hasn't been awakened, now is the time to do it. It's possible that the heroes might be unwilling to do the deed, in which case either Haskins or Sophie can take a hand. One way or another, Jordrava should be up and running at the end of things.

As soon as either the fight is over or he wakes up afterward, Jordrava takes a few minutes to just look around, assessing the situation and shaking 18 years worth of cobwebs out of his head.

Once he gets his bearings the Old One's actions are quite dramatic. Turning to face the heroes, he raises his hands above his head. A blinding burst of light flares from his body. When the heroes' vision clears from the dazzling light, they may be surprised to find themselves standing in the small cave behind Havasu Falls!

Lowering his arms, the Old One speaks. His words come out in his native Havasupai, but the heroes can somehow understand him anyway.

*"I am Jordrava. I do not recognize you. Your clothes are strange, you do not look like my people. And yet I can see the fire in your hearts. You have awakened me, and I thank you.*

*Much has changed since I have walked this world. I can feel the corruption that has entered it. An ancient bargain has been broken. I have much to learn, and much to do. But I shall never forget you.*

*May the Great Spirit guide your path."*

With that final word and a broad smile, the Old One crouches down, his form melting and changing into that of a large eagle. The bird hops to the entrance to the cave and leaps out, bursting through the waterfall and out into the sky above. With a ringing cry, the eagle circles around the home of his people, then wheels and soars off into the distance.

## AFTERMATH

Well, there the heroes are, standing behind Havasu Falls, battered and bloody most likely. They may not even be quite aware of what they have done, but they should at least have the impression that they have done well.

It's time to go home.

## NATIVE FRIENDS

Assuming the sleeper has awakened, the Havasupai greet the heroes with open arms when they return to the surface. Torak received a powerful vision of Jordrava's awakening, and thanks the posse profusely. He proclaims them eternal friends of the Havasupai. "You shall always be welcome by the blue green waters," he says with a grateful smile. The tribe also lets the heroes keep any artifacts they found below.

If the posse needs time to rest before returning to civilization, the Havasupai provide them with food and shelter for as long as they need it. They also offer to guide the heroes out of the canyon, an offer that Haskins (assuming he's still alive) gladly accepts.

## BACK TO CIVILIZATION

With the Havasupai leading the way, the heroes' journey out of the Grand Canyon takes about a week. The natives lead the posse up a previously unknown trail in Kanab Canyon, ending up back in the Kaibab Forest.

From there, Haskins recommends returning to Cliffside and taking the stagecoach from there north to Lee's Ferry and on up to Salt Lake. Unencumbered by heavy equipment, the returning expedition can afford to take the short route this time.

## A CAREFULLY CRAFTED LIE

"No one's going to believe a word of this, you realize," Haskins mentions on the road home.

Anyone who thinks about the situation realizes he's right. Over the trip home, Haskins (with input from the heroes) comes up with the "official" version of what happened in the canyon. The story probably ends up something like this: Powell's entire expedition was wiped out when they picked a fight—quite unjustly—with the Havasupai. Powell escaped, but died of exposure on the floor of the Grand Canyon. And that last entry in his journal? Simply heat-induced ravings, nothing more.

## PAYDAY!

Once the expedition returns to Salt Lake City, Haskins does in fact pay up, including any bonuses negotiated along the way. That should be enough cash to keep the heroes happy for quite a while.

Any artifacts found along the way can be disposed of here in Salt Lake City as well—at 50% of their actual value. To get full value for the items, a trip Back East is in order.

## FAME...OF A SORT

When the heroes return to Salt Lake City, the press wastes no time getting their story. Within a week of their return, Junkyard is once again awash in reporters, all jockeying for the expedition's story.

If the heroes are, willing to go along with the expeditions story, they can cash in to the tune of about \$500 a piece by giving interviews. Even without all the supernatural elements, it's still a pretty amazing tale.

If anyone decides to break ranks and tell the truth about what happened in the Grand Canyon, he gets a different reception. They are ridiculed by the legitimate press, and only rags like the *Tombstone Epitaph* are interested in their story. Such publications can pony up about \$10 for the story, no more.

Of course, Texas Rangers and Agents are debriefed for the full version of what happened down in the Grand Canyon. What actions they take remains to be seen.

## SOLE SURVIVORS

It's completely possible the heroes are the only survivors of the expedition. That's pretty unfortunate if it happens.

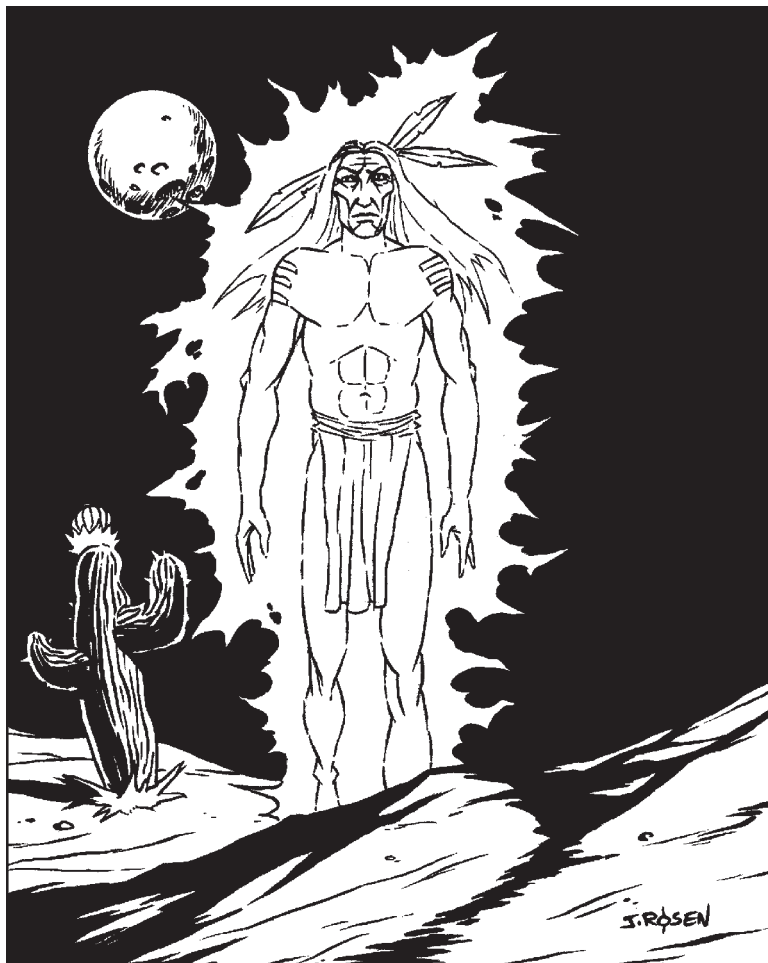
If Haskins and Sophie are both killed in the canyon, the heroes still get paid by the Explorer's Society—but only whatever was agreed to at the beginning of *Canyon o' Doom*. No bonuses.

Additionally, the press only yields \$150 a piece instead of the amount listed above. A successful expedition makes a much better story. They still get the point of *renown*, though.

## FRIENDS & ENEMIES

Aside from money and plunder, the posse walk out the other end of Canyon o' Doom with some new friends—and a powerful enemy.

The Explorers Society is grateful for the heroes' participation in the expedition, although this gratitude may be less if Haskins and Sophie don't return. The Havasupai are steady allies now as well. Haskins and Sophie themselves can be good people to know. It's even possible that the heroes have



gained the respect of the Laughing Men (a dubious honor, to be sure).

A certain cannibal cult leader is sure to be none too happy with the heroes, of course. Considering that Grimme's missionaries are becoming a more common sight across the Weird West, the heroes may want to watch their backs. Whether Reverend Grimme decides to take any direct action against the posse we leave up to you, Marshal...

## BOUNTY

**Surviving the entire adventure:** 2 points of Grit

**Killing Wilkes:** 1 blue chip for all

**Killing Brother Cain:** 1 red chip for the player putting him down.

**Killing Guardian Angels:** 1 white chip for each Angel put down.

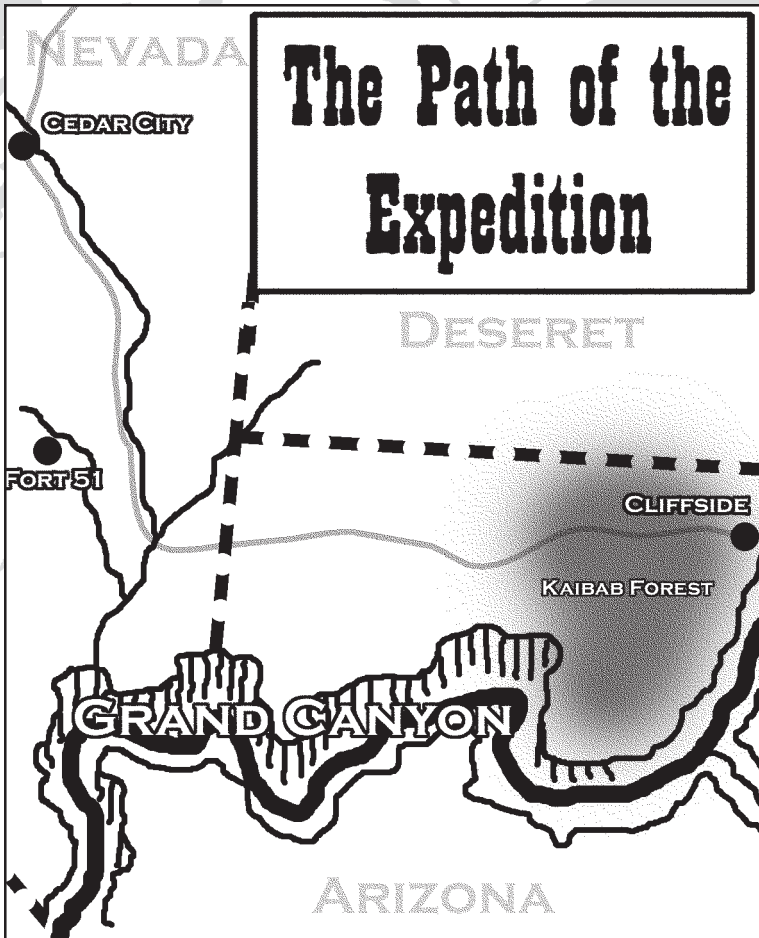
**Reviving Jordrava the Old One:** 1 Legend Chip

**Renown:** Regardless of which story they tell, the heroes pick up 1 level of the *renown* Edge as part of the Expedition.

I'm the last one left. All the others  
died down there in the dark. I wish  
to Heaven above that I hadn't followed  
Geoff - greedy, grasping Geoff. But then I  
would have never seen the wonders  
that lie far below! Surely they are  
the greatest treasures the Grand  
Canyon holds! The cathedral of  
stone - all the bones - the ancient  
sleepers.

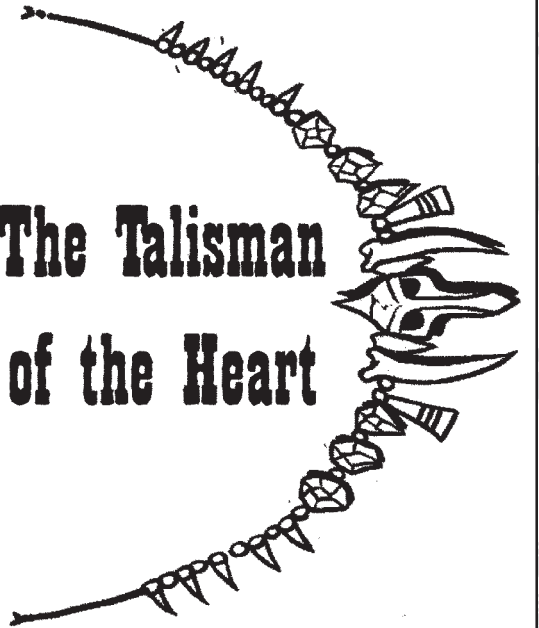
But who would believe me? All  
I have carried away is the very  
item that started it all.

I fear I shall not make it much  
further. It's so hot.

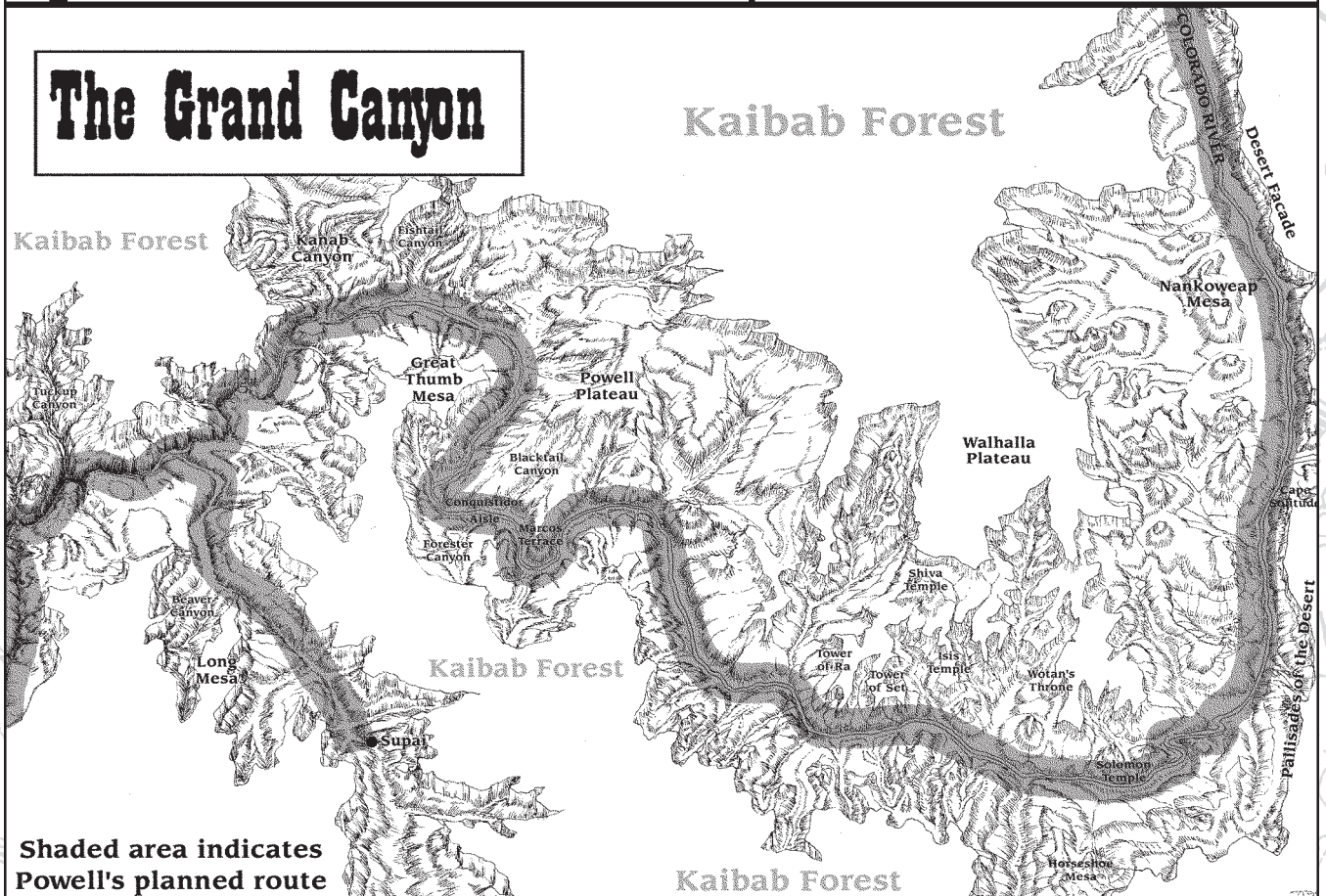


**PROPS**

**The Talisman  
of the Heart**



## The Grand Canyon



GUESS  
WHO'S  
BACK...

AND THIS TIME HE  
BROUGHT FRIENDS!  
AS IF THERE WEREN'T  
ENOUGH MONSTERS LURKING  
INTHE SHADOWS, WE'VE  
RUSTLED UP A WHOLE  
PASSEL OF NEW  
ABOMINATIONS TO THROW  
UP AGAINST YOUR HEROES!  
GET THE REAL LOW-DOWN  
ON VAMPIRES, WEREWOLVES,  
WALKIN' DEAD AND AN  
UNHOLY HOST OF OTHERS IN  
128 PAGES OF PURE WEIRD  
WESTERN TERROR!



# RASCALS, VARMINTS & CRITTERS II

WINTER 2000



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