

# Something About A Sword



## HELL ON EARTH

Hunt, Jamieson & Meyer





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First Printing





## The Mission



Marshal: 2





## Chapter One: The Mission



Howdy, Marshal. As you may have guessed from the cover, this Wasted West adventure has to do with a sword. Of course, this is not any old, rusted hunk o' metal, mind you, but a powerful relic with a long history. This pig-sticker's so special it's even got a name—Evanor. In the right hands it can be a great help in turning the tide against the Reckoners. In the wrong hands, well, it's actually just another pointed stick. But the bad guys would love to make sure no goody-two-shoes hero-types get their mitts on it.

For now, just sit back, relax, and we'll fill you in on all that's happened before your posse arrives on the scene. You nosy player types had best clear our before we count to three. 1...2...Okay, let's go.

### The Story So Far

Evanor's story begins long ago, during the Crusades. That's right—this is a real honest-to-God Templar's sword. As in the kind carried in the Holy Land and wielded by the original Knights Templars. (See *The Last Crusaders*, or better yet, a *real* history book if you want to know more about the Crusades.)

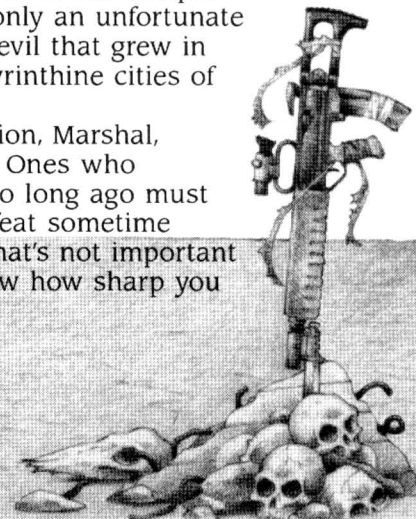
The Crusades themselves may not have been all that holy—the Christian knights who invaded the Middle East were of dubious intent, and perpetrated many horrible deeds their own chroniclers cannot deny.

But we don't care about all that. Leave the heavy stuff to the theologians. What we care about happened after the First Crusade, when the Knights Templar were formed. These "monks" were, by and large, genuinely devoted to protecting European pilgrims who wanted to visit the Holy Lands traveled by Jesus Christ. Later, at least in the world of *Deadlands*, the knights also found themselves in a role similar to that played by the Agency and the Texas Rangers in pre-war America. They were monster hunters.

Few knew this, of course, because the Knights did a good job of smacking evil around like a red-headed stepchild when they weren't wasting their energy on so-called Saracens. Like their modern-day counterparts, the Knights kept most of this secret so as not to cause panic and doubt in the masses. It also would not help relations between Arabs and Europeans, and most of the Grand Masters of the Temple knew this war was not only an unfortunate situation, it also fed the evil that grew in the arid deserts and labyrinthine cities of the region.

If you're paying attention, Marshal, we're telling you the Old Ones who banished the manitous so long ago must have accomplished this feat sometime *after* the Middle Ages. That's not important to this story, but we know how sharp your guys are.

**Marshal: 3**







# The Mission

## Hey, What About the Sword?

Oh, right. Evanor. Back to that.

At some point in the "real" crusade against evil, when the Knights were truly as pious and holy as they claimed, a few of their most dedicated brothers imbued their weapons with their spirits, creating very powerful magical relics. Of course, this kind of thing didn't happen often, and it usually involved the ultimate sacrifice of the wielder.

One such sword was called Evanor by its owner. This noble knight, Sir Gregory Barnes, died fighting a scourge of demons that erupted from hidden culverts during the infamous "Siege of Jerusalem." His sacrifice, which saved hundreds of Arabs and misguided European attackers as well, filled Evanor with holy might and made it a weapon to be feared throughout the history of humanity's then-secret war against the Reckoners.

When the Old Ones trapped the manitous and locked out the Reckoners during the Great Spirit War, the sword became more or less dormant. In 1863 however, when the Reckoning began, Evanor surged back to life, ready to strike at the dark forces that returned to the world. It would be a few years before someone picked up the relic and realized its powers, however.

## Dillenger

A European with too much time and money on his hands decided to come to the "colonies" and teach us "Yanks" some culture. This fellow's name was Rutherford Ellington Dillenger. He set up a small museum on a railroad car and traveled the West showing off his many prize possessions. One of these treasures, was, of course, Evanor. (Those of you who play *Deadlands: the Weird West* may remember Dellinger from the adventure "Abra Cadabra, Arab Cadaver," in *Hucksters & Hexes*.)

Evanor had many adventures after that, ending up in the hands of some of America's greatest heroes through the years. But those stories are for another day. For now we are only concerned with the relic's last owner, Eliot Ritter.

## Eliot Ritter

Before the War, Eliot Ritter was a happily married family man, with three children and a marketing/sales consultant job for a datacomm firm, Sweetwater Technologies.

Sweetwater had numerous clients across the USA and CSA, and Eliot's work frequently took him away from his home in Jarrett, Wyoming. When he was present, he was active in the community, even serving at one time as Master of his district Masonic lodge.

Remarkably, Eliot, his town, and even his immediate family survived the bombings. In the lawless chaos that followed, the former salesman joined Jarret's militia and was assigned a Northern Alliance assault rifle. He served well for several years, but then tragedy struck. A rogue mutant band hit the town and penetrated its defenses. The humans won, but in the resulting firefight, a massive fire broke out, swept through the town, and killed scores of civilians. Eliot's family was among the dead.

## That Which Does Not Kill Me...

Eliot simply walked out of town the next day, taking only his rifle and a few weeks worth of milrats. No one expected him to return, and most thought he'd be dead within the month. Imagine their surprise when Eliot Ritter returned just over a year later wearing the bright tabard of a Templar. In his hand was one of the many swords Grand Master Simon Mercer had scavenged and bestowed upon his new wasteland warriors—Evanor.

## Like a Moth to a Flame

Eliot used Jarret as his base of operations and maintained a small home in the town's former church. As with most Templars though, Eliot roamed the region, sharing his protection and healing touch with many survivor settlements in the area.

During his wanderings, Eliot happened to venture near the town of Rock Springs. He discovered something sinister there—and that secret drew him like a moth to a flame. The danger in Rock Springs was not an immediate threat, but it was one that was growing daily. Eliot investigate and observed the strange events there for several more months before he was ready to strike.

## Enter the Doombringer

A Doombringer named Malias was rallying mutants in the area when he also happened upon Rock Springs and the strange secret there. He had little affinity with the strange creatures that dwelled there, but given time, he felt he could bring the bizarre community into his community of doom.



# The Mission

## Rock Springs

So what is Rock Springs' insidious secret? Hang on to your hat, Marshal. This is a weird one.

Before the war, a company named Apfeltech made robots here. Their speciality was integrating advanced artificial intelligence into their machines. Though they had not yet revealed this to the public, Apfeltech had actually successfully merged cloned human brains with machinery.

Yup. They were just asking for trouble. Post-Reckoning, the biorobotic survivors were quickly inhabited by manitous and turned to evil. They have been gathering forces, building new robots, and improving their offensive capabilities by scavenging metal and weapons from Rock Springs—a process that has taken over a decade. Now they have almost exhausted the little town and are about to march on the surrounding communities.

### Oops! Wrong Evil!

Eliot Ritter had carefully watched these creatures for some months, and knew there was a centralized control unit somewhere in the old Apfeltech base. He had returned to Rock Springs to destroy the "master" when he ran smack into Malias.

Malias the Doombringer had a mutie army ready to go in and "negotiate" with the Rock Springs master. Whether he captured the technology by guile, an alliance, or brute force was of little consequence to him.

As Malias' troops and Ritter clashed, the bases "combots" were attracted to the action and joined the fight, wiping out most of the mutants and mortally wounding Eliot.

Malias was killed, but being a Doombringer, returned to unlife a few days later. Now the angry radiation priest is rebuilding his mutant hordes so that he can return and put the Rock Springs biotechnology to work for the Cult o' Doom.

### Nobody Touches My Sword!

By this time, Eliot was well aware he'd hit the "sword lottery" with Evanor. He feared it ever falling into the wrong hands (unaware the sword would not function for those of evil intent), and shortly before his trip to Rock Springs, took a very special precaution against it. The Templar paid a visit to a junker he trusted named Burke. He had the techno-wizard construct a case for

the sword that both shielded it from arcane detection and destroyed it if the case was not opened with the proper key. He had two keys made. One he left with Burke, the other he took with him. His key was rigged to self-destruct if it did not sense his life-presence.

After the battle with Malias and the robots, Ritter crawled into a basement, locked his sword in its case, and died. The key self-destructed and Evanor was secured.

### Has Anybody Seen My Templar?

The locals all know and love Eliot. They also know he often must wander on some mission or another and can disappear for weeks at a time. But everyone also knows there's a Doombringer in the area lately, and they're starting to get worried. Few knew of Eliot's discovery in Rock Springs. They know only that this Doombringer appeared a short time after their favorite world-saver disappeared.

Hopefully, the heroes want to find out what happened to Eliot and save him if possible. If not, they're bound to want that incredible sword everyone claims he carried...





# The Mission

## How To Use This Adventure

Hey Marshal. We realize some of you are new to the way we publish our adventures, and some can always use a refresher. Because we love ya', we thought we'd give you a quick refresher on how things are supposed to work.

**The Story So Far** is the backstory that sets up the events in the adventure. In *Something About a Sword*, a lost Templar and his magical sword, as well as the actions of a Doombringer and a new terror growing in the ruins of Rock Springs, provide the trouble the posse is about to find themselves mixed up in.

**The Setup** tells you how to get the posse involved in the tale. The promise of a major goody—Eliot Ritter's sword—should be enough for most characters. Real heroes might join in to keep Malias the Doombringer from getting his glowing, undead mitts on it.

**Chapters** are the major scenes and locations that make up this epic drama of the Wasted West. In this adventure, each chapter features a separate town or ruin and the events that happen when the heroes go there.

**Bounty** awards are listed at the end of each chapter. Chip awards should be given to each character who participate in a particular event. Other awards, such as contacts made, loot, and so on, should be awarded as you see fit to those characters who deserve 'em.

## The Setup

Now that you know what's going on, it's time to get your heroes on board for the fun. There are two basic ways you can get your posse hooked into this adventure.

### Scouting Party

While the posse is in the Wyoming area, they come across a recon/hunting party headed by Old Arnold, the leader of the Jarret militia (see below). He's a rough-looking sort, wearing a mix of camos and dripping with bandoleers full of shotgun shells, knives, and even a grenade. The rest of his group (3 men) are carrying assault rifles. They're all dressed for stealth and armed for a fighting retreat should they encounter something they can't handle. Interestingly, Arnold is carrying a Geiger counter as well. He thinks it might help him locate the mutants.

Once approached and everyone's weapons are eventually lowered, Arnold tells the group that there are mutants, maybe even a bad Doomsayer in the area (he doesn't know the difference between Doomsayers and Doombringers), and the militia is attempting to scout them out.

If the posse is cordial, Arnold also asks if they've seen a Templar named Eliot about. Read the following when you're ready:

*You sure? He's about 6 feet tall, short dark hair, carries a magic sword. Yup. I said magic. Calls it Evanor. Thing can cut through a rattler with one swipe. Aw geez, I'd sure hate to think what might happen if that Doomsayer got his hands on it. Well, if you ain't seen him...*

The bit about the sword should catch most hero's interest. If they ask for more details, Arnold tells them he should get moving now, but if they want to meet him and some others back in Jarret, he'd be happy to accomodate.

### To Jarret

Jarret is just a few miles down the road. The posse should have little trouble getting there.

Along the way, however, they do find signs of the mutants' presence. A lone traveler has been slain and robbed. His skin is charred and popped—a sure sign of the *atomic blast* miracle used by Doomsayers. The corpse clicks like a kitchen timer if someone uses a Geiger counter on him. The traveler isn't known by the people of Jarret.



# The Mission

## Jarrett

### *Fear Level 3*

Once the posse gets to Jarrett, they find that it's not an unusual town—it's no different than a hundred other places that survived the bombs. However, it is the first step on the trail of the relic they seek. Nobody's likely to be sneaking in, as a high barbed-wire fence surrounds Jarrett, and its town guard is alert and suspicious. In fact, the community is fairly insular, and doesn't see many strangers. That's one of the reasons Eliot settled here.

If it's daylight, the Marshal can use the following description as the posse approaches:

*A weathered sign near the guardhouse says "Welcome to Jarrett, Wyoming" with several population numbers scratched out. The current figure is 130.*

*A high fence made out of barbed wire protects the town. There is a gate with a makeshift guardhouse on the main road leading into it. As you come closer, dogs bark, and several gun barrels appear on the gate. You can hear the sounds of weapons being cocked.*

*A voice shouts, "Who's there? Identify yourselves or taste lead!"*

If you used the setup we gave you, the voice belongs to a generic militia member. If not, this is where the heroes meet Old Arnold, the leader of the town guard. Arnold enjoys giving people the third degree when he's working the gate, so the heroes had better be on their toes.

### Getting In

Once the posse identifies itself, the gate guard wants to know why the heroes have come to Jarrett. Have the posse members talk with the guard a bit. After he's satisfied, the guard opens the gate and lets the posse in. He then tells the posse to wait at the guardhouse while he gets Mayor Reese.

If things don't go well, or someone in the posse gets the guard riled up—which isn't all that difficult—he starts shooting. His first round is a warning shot that sails harmlessly overhead. Other posse members can make Onerous (7) *persuasion* rolls to calm the guard down. If these rolls are successful, he still lets the posse in, but demands to know which member of the posse backtalked him.

## Old Arnold (or Militia Member)

Arnold, as well as most of the other gate guards, are known for giving newcomers a hard time. It doesn't do to let just anyone in. Still, when times are tough, the militia members are a fairly competent bunch.

There are usually three on gate duty at any given time. The stats below are for Arnold. For other militiamen, use the same stats minus the *brave* and *tough as nails* Edges.

**Corporeal:** D:2d6 N:2d6 Q:1d6 S:2d8 V:3d8  
Climbin' 3d6, dodge 3d6, fightin' 3d6, shootin' rifle 3d6

**Mental:** C:2d6 K:3d8 M:1d10 Sm:2d6 Sp:3d8  
Area Knowledge 3d8, guts 3d8, leadership 2d10, scrutinize 3d6

**Edges:** Brave 2, tough as nails 1

**Hindrances:** Obligation: Jarrett -3, stubborn -2

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 18

**Gear:** NA assault rifle, 2 bandoleers of ammo (strapped across the chest), hunting knife, leather jacket, and pants.

## Da Mayor

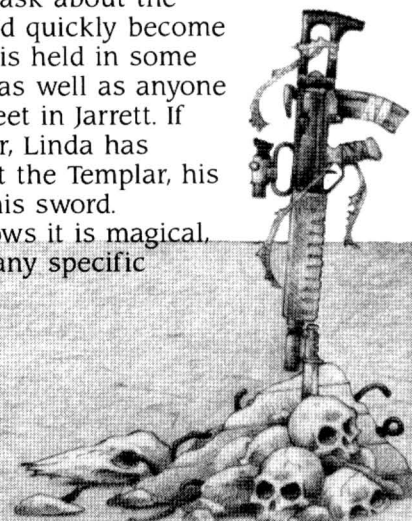
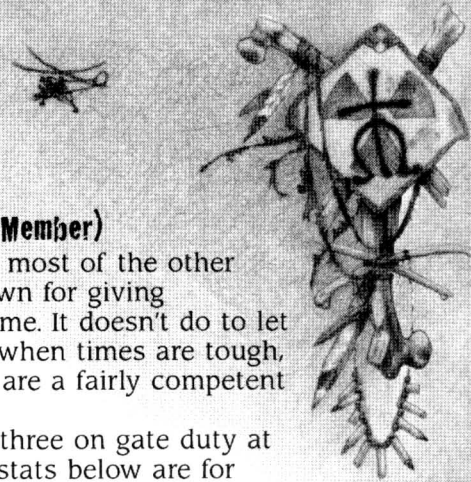
Assuming no one starts World War Four with the militia, the gate guard comes back a short while later with a tall, red-headed woman wearing a cowboy hat and chewing on a twig like nobody's business. This is Mayor Reese, or Linda as she likes to be known. Linda has been mayor for over a year now, and has tried her best to keep things together here in Jarrett.

After asking a few questions, Linda offers to show the posse around Jarrett. She is suspicious at first, but if the posse represents itself well, she may be convinced to provide information. In particular, if there is a Templar in the posse, she mentions the name of the town's former protector, Eliot Ritter.

If the posse members ask about the missing Templar, it should quickly become obvious that Eliot Ritter is held in some reverence by the mayor—as well as anyone else the posse should meet in Jarrett. If the posse encourages her, Linda has several tales to tell about the Templar, his exploits, and of course, his sword.

Everyone in the area knows it is magical, but Eliot never revealed any specific powers.

**Marshal: 7**





# The Mission



If the party wants more information, Mayor Reese mentions that a few of Eliot Ritter's closest companions still live in Jarrett, including an ex-gunfighter that Eliot rescued in the wilderness.

If the members of the posse don't tell the mayor anything about their business in Jarrett, she figures the heroes are just another bunch of glory hunters resting up before their next shootout. She points out the main features of the town: the Oasis Bar, Henderson's General Store, the junkyard, and the church. She makes sure the posse knows Jarrett is a quiet town, and that anybody who starts trouble will be on the road out of town before the sun goes down.

Afterward, she bids everyone a good day and heads back to her office.

Assuming the heroes do mention Eliot, Linda is quick to ask them for help in finding him. She's afraid of what may happen with the Cult o' Doom about and is anxious for the town's defender to return.

If the heroes seem competent but unwilling to find Eliot out of the goodness of their heart, Mayor Reese offers to hire the heroes to find its missing guardian. Failing that, she'll take their help in wiping out the

mutants, but she'd really rather have Eliot back. (How's that for an insult?) The offer isn't much, maybe \$500 in trade goods and ammo for the whole group, but Reese hints that the heroes would likely wind up with Eliot's sword as well. The heroes are also welcome to the town's hospitality for the duration of the search.

## Exploring the Town

The posse is now free to move about the town on its own, and the heroes may make their way to any of the spots detailed in the next section.

The people of Jarret are wary to strangers at first, but if the posse acts friendly, they open up quickly. Even if the party doesn't initiate the topic, Eliot Ritter comes up fast and often. The people of Jarret are full of incredible tales revolving around this stoic hero and his mighty sword. A cruel Marshal can have a little fun here, especially if there's a Templar in the posse. A little professional jealousy never hurt anyone.

Most everyone is aware the Cult o' Doom is about, and they're more than a little worried about it, especially with "their hero" missing for nearly a month now. They respect Mayor Reese and Old Arnold, but don't think the militia is any match for a Doomsayer and his army of mutants.

## Jarret Locations

Jarrett, Wyoming was never much of a town, even before the bombs came down. People were leaving because the only major employer, a clay processing plant, had closed up and moved on. But because Jarrett wasn't that important, the town didn't get hit with the bombs of the Last War. The townsfolk decided to stay and make the best of it. That means the buildings here are in a little better shape than most places, but those that aren't being used may have sat empty and neglected for more than twenty years.

The town holds important clues the posse needs to find before they head off into the wastes. Use the descriptions below to help you point them in the right direction.

### The Oasis Bar

The bar is located near the center of town, on the ground floor of what was once a hotel. When the posse enters, the first thing they see is a big sign that says "LEAVE ALL WEAPONS AT THE DOOR". Inside, there's a large bar with many tables set up around the room. Behind the bar is Mel, the owner and barkeep for the Oasis. He's a



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tall, friendly man. He's somewhat wary of strangers, but despite this he tries to make them comfortable.

Mel makes several kinds of local hooch: Cinzing, Strawkill, and the strongest, Tutti-frutti Kablewy. Each of these is pure grain alcohol mixed with various fruit juices. It costs \$2 a shot and \$50 a bottle if the posse wants to buy some of his concoctions.

Drinking with Mel is the best way to talk to him. He often samples his own wares, particularly if the sun is descending over the yardarm. If a member of the posse makes a Fair (5) *persuasion* roll, Mel provides some additional information about the Templar.

Mel says that when the Templar defeated some evil, he'd come back to the Oasis and tell everyone the tale in his calm, almost surreal voice. His stories were plain, sincere, and downright good for business. And the next day, everyone present positively radiated hope.

Mel also says that Eliot traveled a lot, but usually stayed in Jarrett for a day or two out of every week or so. It isn't like him to go missing for an entire month.

Since the heroes are strangers, Mel is quick to point out that he rents rooms in the hotel above. He has three rooms that he can rent to the

posse for as long as they are in Jarrett. Room rates are \$25 a day with grub, \$15 without. If the group presses Mayor Reese, she agrees to cover their tab for a "few days." That means she'll cover the tab as long as it seems the heroes are genuinely doing their job.

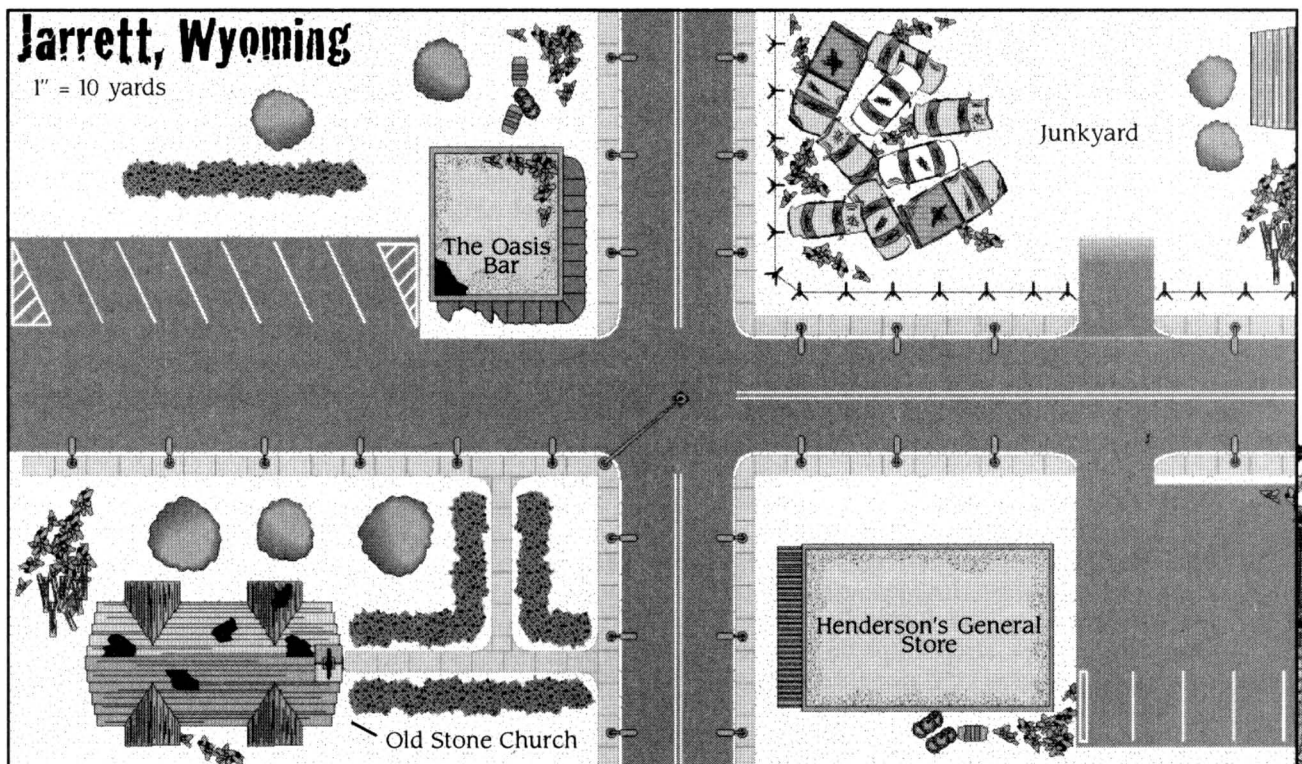
## One-Eyed Jack Calhoun

One-Eyed Jack was "just passin' through" Jarrett a few years ago, but he had a chance to sample the hooch at the Oasis Bar and he hasn't left since. This is where the party is most likely to meet him as well.

Still, there aren't too many who answer the call to defend Jarrett quicker than Jack. Despite having lost an eye, he's as sure a shot as there is in Jarrett, and he always puts himself in the thick of things whenever there's a fight.

His view of Eliot was based strictly on the respect of one warrior for another—he doesn't hold much with the faith angle. Eliot told him there was something strange going on nearby, and he had been studying it for a few weeks. Then he left Jarrett and hasn't been back since.

A quick character might notice that the timeline doesn't match up. The Doombringer wasn't noticed until just about a month ago.





# The Mission

## Henderson's General Store

Henderson's is really not much of a store—Jarrett doesn't see enough travellers to make a real store worthwhile, but its proprietor, Rick Henderson, does his best for the folks in the town. He makes what profit he can selling and trading items with prospectors and people who go into the wastes.

Henderson's is the only place in Jarrett for the posse to get new supplies and equipment.

While Rick doesn't have much fancy stuff, he does keep a stock of food (mostly scavenged milrats), clothes, survival gear, and some types of fuel. He doesn't sell weapons. Those he trades for go into the town's arsenal. Marshals should feel free to tailor what Rick has in stock to make things interesting.

Rick can do some armor repair, and given time, can even make bullets. His prices are high (the prices from *Hell on Earth* should be upped by 25% or more), but he's the only game in town, and he doesn't like to haggle much. Fortunately, the quality of his goods makes trading with him worth it.

If asked about Eliot, Rick says the following:

*He was a good man. Do anything for us. And I reckon we'd have done—I mean 'will do'—anything for him.*

Embarassed at admitting his fear of Eliot's death, Rick quickly changes the subject and points to an odd mix of electronic parts in a bucket behind his counter.

*He, uh, brought these in about two months ago. Some kinda electronics parts or somethin'. I guess Willy didn't have any use for 'em. I don't either, but I didn't want to tell Eliot that. 'Sides, he's brought me plenty of stuff over the years that I made good trades off of. So I gave 'em \$100 credit for it. Figures. He told me to spend the credit whenever folks came in who couldn't afford what they needed.*

If the heroes want these components, they cost \$400. An Incredible (11) *science, tinkerin'* or related roll reveals that they are some sort of prewar experimental electronics never seen before, but little else.

Rick drops one other important clue as well. He says "I don't know why Eliot brought those parts to me. I guess Willy didn't want 'em." If asked, Rick says that Willy is the "junkman across the street."

## Junkyard

In the northeast corner of the "downtown" area sits a fenced-in junkyard full of rusted cars and thousands of ruined appliances. The "owner" is known only as Willy. He's not a junker, but he is fairly handy with electronics. He sells components to junkers at the standard rate, and buys them for half that.

Willy also has a few vehicles he's fixed up for sale. Allow your posse to buy any normal vehicle (motorcycle, car, pickup) you feel fits your campaign. Willy can also do repairs and modifications should your road warriors' own rigs be a little worse for wear.

Willy is another of Eliot's admirers, but knows little else about where he might have gone. The only clue he has is revealed if a character asks about the parts the Templar sold to Rick Henderson. When that occurs, Willy offers the following:

*Yeah, Eliot brought those doflojits to me first, but they didn't do me no good. They're nothing I've ever seen before. Batteries I can use. Some kinda high-tech electronics chips don't do me squat.*

If asked about Burke, Willy adds the following:

*Hmm. There was a fella named Burke who used to come around a few years back. I think he was from some hoighty-toighty place Back East. Best I can remember, he scavenged some o' my salvage for electronics. Real high-tech stuff. I didn't have no use for it. Kinda like what Eliot brought around recently. I ain't seen him in a few years though. Figured the monsters got 'im.*

## Willy

**Corporeal:** D:2d8, N:2d6, S:2d6, Q:2d8, V:3d8  
Climbin' 4d6, dodge 3d6, fightin': brawlin', knife 4d6, shootin': shotgun 4d8

**Mental:** C:2d10 K:2d6, M:2d6, Sm:2d8, Sp:3d6  
Area knowledge 3d6, guts 2d6, search 3d10, scroungin' 6d8, tinkerin' 6d8

**Edges:** Light sleeper 1

**Hindrances:** Big 'un -1

**Pace:** 4

**Size:** 7

**Wind:** 14

**Gear:** Double-barrel shotgun, 12 rounds of 12 gauge quail loads (4d4 damage), big knife, assorted hand tools.

**Marshal:** 10



# The Mission

## The Old Stone Church

The church in Jarrett stands at the south end, visible from everywhere in town. Somewhat the worse for wear, it's windows have been smashed and the grand wood doors have been stripped from their hinges. Still, even in its state of disrepair there is still a quiet and tranquil feeling in the air as the posse enters.

This was Eliot's home, and it literally feels like a sacred place. In truth, the belief and admiration of the locals has made it sacred ground. See the **Hallowed Ground** section below for details.

Eliot truly did live a simple life. He has an old but relatively clean mattress in one corner, a few old couch pillows, a kerosene lamp, several scavenged books on the Crusades, and, curiously, two books on electronics. One of the books is a high-school textbook, the other is an advanced electronics text that might have come from a graduate college course. An Onerous (7) *search* roll reveals Eliot dog-eared the latter to a section on electro-magnetic pulses and their devastating effects on electronics. (He had hoped to find a way to create an EMP besides a nuclear explosion, but had no luck.)

Have each player make a Fair (5) *search* roll as they poke around the place. Whoever makes it finds a pre-War highway map laying in a corner amid some rubble. Eliot used this map a few years back to navigate the area around Jarret, but hasn't needed it in a long time. The map is stamped with the legend "Last Chance Gas N Go," a mile marker, and the Lincoln Highway logo. The map itself has the Last Chance marked clearly upon it—it's about 30 miles from Jarret. Near the Last Chance, in pen, is written a single word: Burke. If the posse hasn't spoken with Rick Henderson at the General Store, they may not know that this is the name of Eliot's junker friend. It's the only clue they have in any case, though, so they should likely start packing up and following the map.

## Hallowed Ground

The extreme faith the people of Jarret have for Eliot Ritter has made the entire church sacred ground. Evil supernatural beings, including Harrowed, must make an Incredible (11) *Spirit* roll every round (every 5 seconds if not in combat) spent inside the church. If the roll is failed, the being's flesh begins to burn and he takes the difference in Wind. On the plus side, "good" characters may add +2 to their *faith* rolls for their *faith* in hours after visiting this shrine.



## On The Trail

When the group has gathered all the pertinent clues, it's time to move on. This is your chance to make the heroes care a little about the people of Jarret. Assuming they haven't been total jerks, many of the townsfolk gather at the gate to see them off and wish them luck. The posse isn't Eliot Ritter, but they seem heroes just the same.

## Bounty

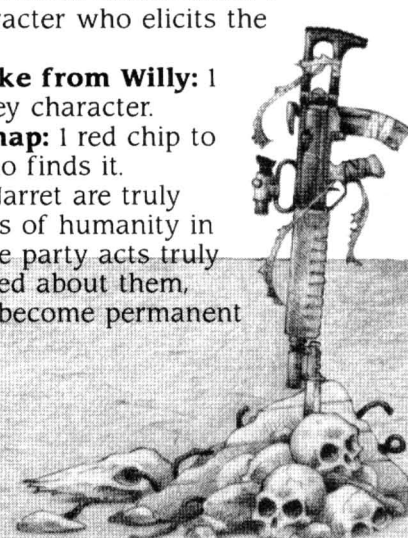
**Reassuring the people of Jarret and not acting like total jerks:** 1 white chip each.

**Learning who Burke is from Henderson:** 1 white chip to the character who elicits the response.

**Finding out about Burke from Willy:** 1 white chip to the nosy character.

**Finding the highway map:** 1 red chip to the posse member who finds it.

**Friends:** The people of Jarret are truly one of the bright spots of humanity in the Wasted West. If the party acts truly altruistic and concerned about them, Jarret and its citizens become permanent allies.



# Last Chance







## Chapter Two: Last Chance



The posse heads out of Jarrett traveling southwest, in search of the gas station depicted on the map found among Ritter's belongings. As they approach, the posse finds the station is actually the center of a tiny settlement occupied by a group of bikers—though not, as it turns out, your typical biker gang. Unless the posse comes in guns blazing, there's a good chance they are invited to share the hospitality of the inhabitants.

The bikers are a mostly friendly lot who can provide the posse with assistance (in the form of information, supplies, or even transportation) to aid them in their quest. However, the bikers are also expecting trouble of their own, in the form of the twisted minions of Malias. If the posse agrees to help the locals out, or simply stays in Last Chance too long, they wind up smack dab in the middle of a nasty firefight.

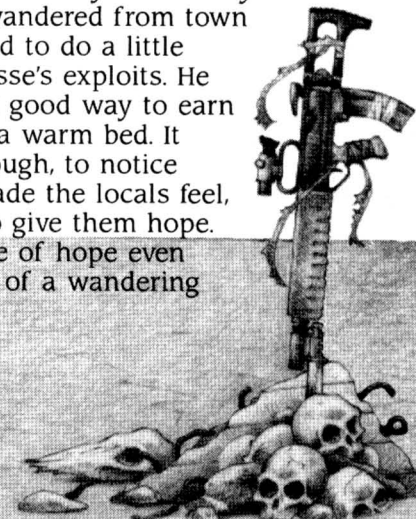
### Easy Riders

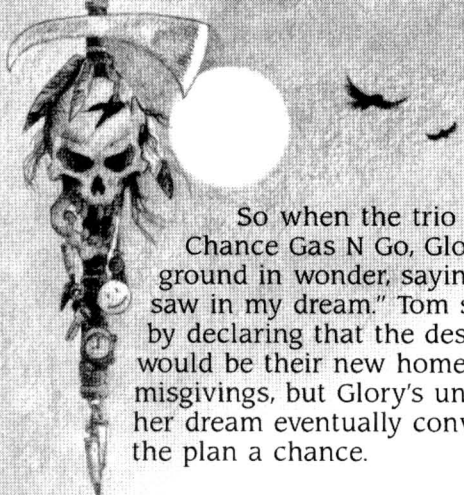
Back in 2089, Tom Weir and Myra Crosby were part of a posse of cycle-riding adventurers. They had just struck it semi-rich after recovering a small cache of ghost rock from the ruined workshop of a junker incinerated by his own arcane device. The two were joyriding through Wyoming with their share of the profits when fate crossed their path in the form of a hitchhiker, a rather matronly, gray-haired woman named Glory Dupre.

Over the next few nights of campfire conversation, Glory revealed that she was a former scientist who had quit her profession cold after Hellstromme Industries invented the city-buster bomb in 2063. Ever since, she searched to find another means of unlocking the creative powers of her mind. In the years before the Last War, she traveled abroad and studied ancient Eastern religions. When the ghost rock bombs started dropping, she simply despaired for a time, then accepted humanity's doom as the inevitable consequence of its folly.

Then one night Glory had a dream, an inspiration clearer than she had ever experienced before. A new hope could only be built from the power of a shared vision. Unlike the mad scientists who toiled alone, she would create a haven that would welcome all comers, and together they would gain the strength to fight the Reckoners and reclaim the Earth.

Tom found himself profoundly affected by Glory's dream. As he'd wandered from town to town, Tom had learned to do a little tale-telling about his posse's exploits. He started because it was a good way to earn himself a hot meal and a warm bed. It didn't take him long, though, to notice how good the stories made the locals feel, and how they seemed to give them hope. Tom liked being a source of hope even more than living the life of a wandering adventurer.





## Last Chance

So when the trio pulled into the Last Chance Gas N Go, Glory leapt to the ground in wonder, saying "This is the place I saw in my dream." Tom shocked both women by declaring that the deserted rest station would be their new home. Myra had some misgivings, but Glory's unshakable belief in her dream eventually convinced Myra to give the plan a chance.

### The Last Chance Commune

While Myra and Glory cleaned up the Last Chance, Tom hit the road to call on contacts from his adventuring days. He told his biking buddies that they now had a spot to call home, to repair their hogs and tend their wounds. He found a couple of road warriors he'd helped out in the past and convinced them to add Last Chance to their routes. He told anyone who was interested that they were welcome to find their own destiny by joining the community.

Over the intervening five years, Last Chance has grown into a small settlement. It has a permanent population of about forty men and women, and another 25-30 road warriors and adventurers treat it as a base of operations. In addition to the gas station (which sells home-brewed alcohol) and garage, the commune has added another lucrative source of commerce—a small, but relatively elaborate laboratory that manufactures toothpaste from natural ingredients grown on-site.

It has also followed through on Glory's vision of a free community of ideas. Though Tom and Glory remain its leaders, no one in Last Chance has a title, and all important decisions are reached through public debate. At the moment, the debate is focused on the question of how to defend themselves against the forces of the Doombringer that have been encountered nearby.

### The Doombringer

About a month ago, stories began to circulate that a Doombringer had moved in west of Last Chance, somewhere in the vicinity of Rock Springs. For the first few months he and his army of mutants and Doomsayers seemed content to control that area, which was inhabited by a handful of human survivors. Then Eliot Ritter passed through Last Chance and heard about the Doombringer. He said he was headed out toward Rock Springs anyway, and he'd take care of this menace while he was there.

Since that time, Eliot has disappeared but the Doombringer has not. In fact, the Doombringer's patrols have come ever closer to the commune's lands, roaming the nearby wilderness and waylaying parties of travelers on the nearby roads (like the one the party likely discovered in Chapter One).

Malias' true intent is to prove the ferocity of the mutant hordes so that other mutants will flock to his side. Now that the Templar is dead, he believes a new horde can help him capture the Rock Springs master and learn its secrets for the Cult o' Doom. At the very least, the horde might distract the robots while he slips into the Apfeltech complex.

All the people at the Last Chance know is that the area is crawling with muties lately—the violent sort. An assault on Last Chance itself seems inevitable. That's true, for Malias believes destroying this well-known norm bastion will attract scores of new mutant followers to his side.

### Getting There is Half the Fun

The posse can approach Last Chance either by the direct route of following the Lincoln Highway that runs between Jarrett and Last Chance, or they can cut cross-country. Each approach offers a different possibility of encounters, as detailed below.

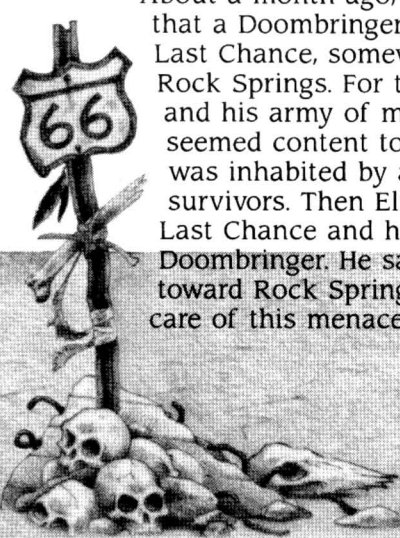
### The Roadway

The Lincoln Highway is obviously the most direct route to the posse's destination. If the posse is traveling by any kind of wheeled vehicle other than an ATV, it may be their only real option.

### Ambush Sites

The highway runs through the foothills and some other pretty rugged terrain. There are many spots which would make ideal ambush locations. In a number of spots burned out vehicles and bodies stripped of all possessions litter the highway.

If your posse chooses to proceed cautiously through these areas have them make Fair (5) *trackin'* rolls. Those who succeed find signs that some of these areas were indeed occupied by ambushers. Most of the tracks look to be at least a week old or more. These ambushes were the work of the mutant patrols Malias sent to harass the inhabitants of Last Chance.





# Last Chance

## No Hitchhikers!

Around mid-morning, the posse hears the unmistakable sounds of a heavy vehicle rumbling toward them from behind. They turn to see the following sight:

*A tanker truck is heading down the highway straight toward you. Even from a distance, you can see that the truck has sheets of armor plating along its sides and a gun mount on top of its cab. The driver is red-balling your way at a good clip, stirring up quite a cloud of dust.*

If the heroes attempt to halt the vehicle with anything short of a full-scale roadblock (which could be difficult to assemble in the few minutes they have), the driver continues on without stopping. If any of the brainers try to stand in the roadway to block its path, the driver gives one warning blast of her air horn and barrels straight ahead without slowing down.

Anyone who abandons position immediately suffers nothing worse than the indignity of brushing some dust and dirt off their clothes. Anyone who stands their ground must make an Onerous (7) *dodge* roll, or wind up as a hood ornament for a few yards before being hurled to the ground for 14d6 massive damage. The driver extends the posse the universal finger salute of greeting and continues on down the road.

If your heroes get their panties in a bunch over this rudeness and bullets start flying, check out page 18 for the stats of the truck and its driver. Any attack now might provoke some tense negotiations later, when both parties wind up at the Last Chance.

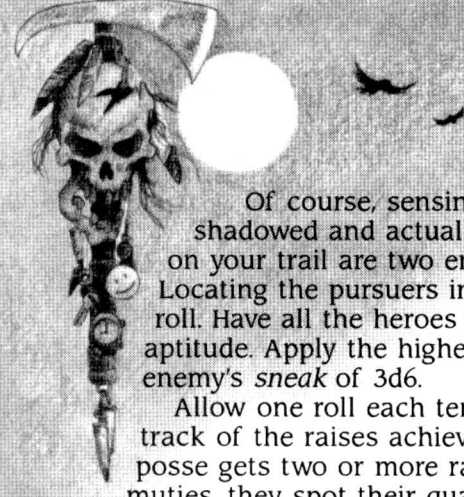
## Cross-country

A posse that doesn't want to draw attention to itself may decide to stay off the roads and approach their destination via a cross-country route. The surrounding terrain is rugged but by no means impassable. It slows the posse's pace, but doesn't pose any dramatic tests of navigational skill.

Not long after they set out, however, one or more posse members gets the feeling they're being watched. Make a hidden Hard (9) *search* roll once per half hour of game time for each member of the posse until one or more gets an inkling that the group is being watched—then leave it up to the group to decide what to do next.



# Last Chance



Of course, sensing you're being shadowed and actually finding out who's on your trail are two entirely different things. Locating the pursuers involves an opposed roll. Have all the heroes roll their *search* aptitude. Apply the highest roll against the enemy's *sneak* of 3d6.

Allow one roll each ten minutes and keep track of the raises achieved on each roll. If the posse gets two or more raises ahead of the muties, they spot their quarry, a mutant patrol (described below). If the enemy gets two or more raises ahead, the posse believes they lost their pursuers. The process may begin anew later if their presence is noticed again.

If the posse retraces its own path, a Fair (5) *trackin'* roll reveals the tracks of their pursuers (with additional successes adding details about the type and number of tracks), which the posse can then attempt to follow at an Onerous (7) TN.

If the patrol sees the posse approaching its way from a distance, it turns and flees into the wastes. They can be pursued and hunted down, but it may take several hours to do so. If the heroes engage the patrol in close quarters as the result of an ambush, switchback, or other clever tactic, the mutants stand and fight.

If any of the patrol members survive an encounter with the posse, they immediately head for Malias. The Doombringer immediately dispatches fresh patrols to keep an eye on the heroes, but doesn't attack again. He can't afford to lost another army just yet.

## Mutant Patrol

There are eight muties in the patrol. They have no way of contacting Malias and no idea the posse members are anyone important. They just follow the norms to see what they're up to.

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

Climbin' 3d6, fightin': various 4d6, sneak 3d6, throwin': unbalanced 4d6

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

Area knowledge: region 3d4, guts 3d6, scroungin' 4d6, survival 3d6, trackin' 3d6

**Hindrances:** Ugly as sin 1

**Edges:** Thick-skinned 3

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 16

**Gear:** The mutants are armed with a variety of makeshift weapons. Roll a d8: 1-2 axe (STR + 1d8), 3-5 large club (STR + 1d6), 6-7 pair of hatchets (STR + 1d4, or thrown at speed: 1, ROF: 1, Damage: STR+1d4), 8 bare hands (STR).

## The Commune

### Fear Level 4

The posse's arrival time at Last Chance varies according to its route. If the heroes come by road and don't waste too much time investigating nonexistent ambushes, they reach the gas station slightly before noon. A posse traveling cross-country can arrive anywhere between 1 and 5 PM, depending on how much time is wasted dealing with the mutant patrol.

Either way, the scene the heroes observe upon their arrival is pretty much the same. The posse comes over a small rise and sees a compound of buildings up ahead, including a gas station with a large overhead sign that reads "Last Chance Gas N' Go—Last Gas for 50 miles".

The station consists of a pair of gas pumps in front of a concrete block repair garage. Two other buildings flank the garage along the roadside. Parked out in front of these buildings are a dozen motorcycles and a tanker truck.

Behind the station, a level piece of land contains some well-tended fields of growing crops. There are several other structures, ranging from tents and tar-paper shacks to a large, two-story, wood-frame building in the center of the complex and a windowless concrete building. Barbed wire fencing surrounds much of the compound's perimeter and people can be seen putting up more. There are crude barricades at both edges of the compound bordering the highway. Both are manned by two armed guards.

By making Onerous (7) *search* rolls, the posse can observe other details about the scene. Reveal one fact for each success rolled, whether by one or several characters:

Smoke and the grinding sounds of machinery are emanating from the windowless building.

There are small children playing happily in the vicinity of the wood frame building.

Signs in the windows of the roadside buildings read "Free Air With Fill-up", and "Try Our New Low-Fat Veggie Burger".

One of the guards in the barricade nearest the posse looks like a syker (the bald head and tattoos give it away).

## The Checkpoint

There is minimal cover between the posse's position and the checkpoints, so nobody is going to get close to the complex without rousing the guards at the barricades. This shouldn't cause a hardship, however, as the posse doesn't look anything like the mutant army the commune is on the lookout for.



**Marshal:** 16



# Last Chance

As soon as the posse comes within a hundred feet of the checkpoint, a long-haired man with a headband pokes his upper torso up over the barricade, levels a rifle at the closest hero and calls out, "State yer business, stranger". As soon as a posse member offers any reasonable story to explain his presence (whether or not it's the truth), the guard lowers his weapon. "Well, come on in, then. We got gas and grub, and a few other things you might like, too." Posse members can either talk further with the guards, or head toward any other part of the compound.

## Billy Clifton

Clifton, 38, is a long-haired rebel without a cause, an ex-CSA soldier who doesn't care much for authority—particularly "those damn Law Dogs who think they know what's best for everybody." He's made his way through the Wasted West as a hired gun—and a very good one—but he doesn't consider himself a hero by any stretch of the word. Billy is highly superstitious, and all the omens tell him something ugly is about to go down (a fact he shares with anyone who listens). If it were up to him, he'd have moseyed on down the road before stuff hit the fan. For the past two years, however, Willy has followed the lead of Sgt. Phoenix (see below), and the Sarge has no intention of leaving the commune in the lurch.

## Profile

**Corporeal:** D:4d12, N:4d10, Q:4d8, S:2d6, V:4d10  
Drivin': motorcycles 3d10, fightin': brawling 3d10, filchin' 3d12, shootin': pistol, rifle, SMG 4d12, sneak 3d10, speed-load: pistol, rifle 3d12  
**Mental:** C:3d6, K:1d10, M:2d4, Sm:2d10, Sp:1d4  
Area knowledge 3d10, demolition 2d10, scroungin' 3d10, search 4d6, streetwise 2d10  
**Edges:** Eagle eyes 1, light sleeper 1, the Voice: grating 1  
**Hindrances:** Bloodthirsty -2, intolerance: law dogs -3, superstitious -2  
**Pace:** 10  
**Size:** 6  
**Wind:** 14  
**Gear:** Motorcycle helmet, .50 caliber pistol with 12 rounds, SA assault rifle with 8x scope and 20 rounds

## Sgt. Phoenix

Phoenix is a tall, lanky syker with haunted eyes and a bald head resplendently tattooed with a crimson dragon. His experiences on Faraway left him partially deaf, and with even

deeper scars on his soul. He seldom speaks at all, and when he does, he often appears surprised by the sound of his own voice.

Phoenix and Clifton are an odd couple to say the least, but they make a pretty good team. They pulled in to the Last Chance for gas about three months ago and have stayed on because the commune gave Phoenix the first real sense of belonging he's had since his Legion days. The Sergeant is looking forward to using his special talents to repay the group for its past hospitality.

## Profile

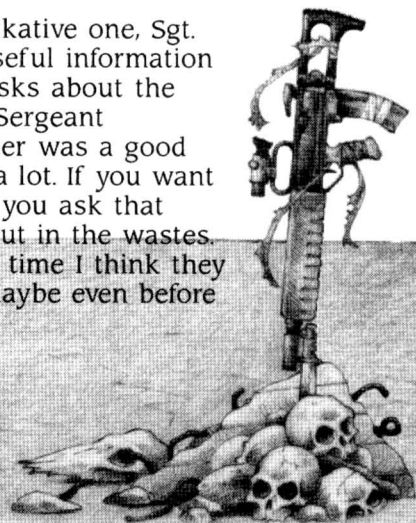
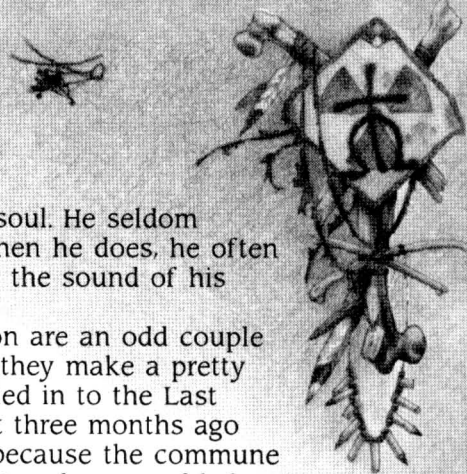
**Corporeal:** D:2d6 N:3d8, Q:1d12, S:3d10, V:4d12  
Climbin' 2d8, drivin': motorcycles 4d8, fightin': ax 3d8, shootin': rifle 3d6, sneak 2d8  
**Mental:** C:1d10, K:2d10, M:1d12, Sm:2d8, Sp:4d4  
Academia: occult 2d10, area knowledge 2d10, blastin' 5d10, guts 3d4, medicine: general 2d10, overawe 2d12, survival: desert 3d8, trackin' 2d10  
**Edges:** Arcane Background: Syker 3, brave 2, fortitude, sand 3  
**Hindrances:** Bad ears: mild -1, loyal (Billy Clifton) , oath: Unity sykers -2  
**Pace:** 8  
**Size:** 6  
**Wind:** 16  
**Gear:** Motorcycle helmet, lever action rifle with 40 rounds  
**Syker powers:** Arson, brain blast, fleshknit, mindwipe, slow burn

## Getting Acquainted

Once Billy decides the group is OK, he shoots the breeze with anyone except a Law Dog. He can tell the players what the various buildings in the complex are (see descriptions below).

If the posse asks to meet the commune's leader, Billy directs them to Tom in the cafe. If asked about a map, Clifton shrugs and says "Don't take a map to see that yer in the middle a' nowhere, boyo."

Though Billy is the talkative one, Sgt. Phoenix has the more useful information to impart. If the posse asks about the Templar Eliot Ritter, the Sergeant suddenly interrupts. "Ritter was a good man. Came around here a lot. If you want to know more, I suggest you ask that crazy old junker Burke out in the wastes. Ritter visited him all the time I think they were friends, long ago. Maybe even before the War."



# Last Chance

## Inside the Commune

Once past the checkpoint, the posse members are free to investigate any of the Last Chance buildings. The sections below briefly summarize what and whom the posse may encounter in each area.

## Gas Station/Garage

If the players have the need and the barter to pay for it, there is alcohol available in the pumps. Two bikers are working on their cycles in the garage itself.

In addition, a tanker truck is parked just outside the garage, and someone is leaning under its hood. If the players have come by the Highway, this truck looks very familiar. As soon as anyone comes within 50 feet of the truck, the driver stands up to check out the intruders. Her reaction depends upon whether she has previously encountered the posse on the road.

### Allie Worthington

Allie is a tall, raw-boned frontier woman with broad features and sun-bleached auburn hair. Her deep, husky voice is frequently punctuated by a chronic hacking cough. She's an independent road warrior who has seen (and survived) her share of the Wasted West's horrors. The Last Chance is a regular stop, where she drops off fuel or other goods in exchange for crates of tooth powder that she sells elsewhere. Her big rig, with its armor-plated sides and roof mounted machine gun, is her pride and joy.

Truth be told, it's fortunate Allie works alone. She's loud, argumentative, stubborn, and just plain mean-spirited. She's also got a long memory about anyone she believes has done her wrong, and won't rest until she's evened the score.

If she has not seen the group before, she acknowledges them warily with a nod.

If she saw the group on the roadway and they did no damage to the vehicle, she snorts "You, again." She is unrepentant about refusing to stop, but otherwise reacts the same as outlined above.

If the posse fired on the truck, Allie is livid, and rushes the nearest posse member screaming vengeance. She wrestles with him until the two nearby bikers pull her off, then struggles to get free until a long, evil-sounding coughing fit brings her to her knees. By this time, Tom arrives on the scene. Allie denounces the posse as

ambushing scavvies, and demands either reparations (if they actually did any damage to the truck) or the group's ejection from the premises. Tom listens to the posse's explanation; if they are properly apologetic to Allie, he lets them stay. Allie turns away sullenly, however, and if not later bribed or cajoled into a better mood, looks to gain vengeance on her attackers at the first opportunity.

### Profile

**Corporeal:** D:3d12 N:4d10, Q:2d8, S:2d6, V:2d10  
Drivin': wheeled vehicles 4d10, fightin': sword 3d10, shootin': rifle, machine gun 3d12, ridin' 2d10, sleight o' hand 3d12

**Mental:** C:3d10, K:3d8, M:1d8, Sm:4d6, Sp:2d6  
Area knowledge 3d8, bluff 4d6, gamblin' 4d6, guts 3d6, scroungin' 2d6, streetwise 3d6, survival: desert 2d6

**Edges:** Belongings: tanker truck 15, sense of direction 1, veteran of the Wasted West 0

**Hindrances:** Ailin': chronic -5, mean as a rattler -2, stubborn -2, vengeful -3

**Pace:** 10

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 16

**Gear:** Kevlar vest, .30-.06 rifle with 15 rounds, and a big knife.

### Allie's Rig

If you're using the basic vehicle rules from the *Hell on Earth* rulebook, assume Allie's tractor/rig combo has a Durability of 100/20. If you have access to the *Road Warriors* book, her truck is a standard cab-over tractor and tanker trailer which have been given an AV of 3 in all locations.

The rig has a NA SAW mounted in an articulated mount on the roof of the cab.

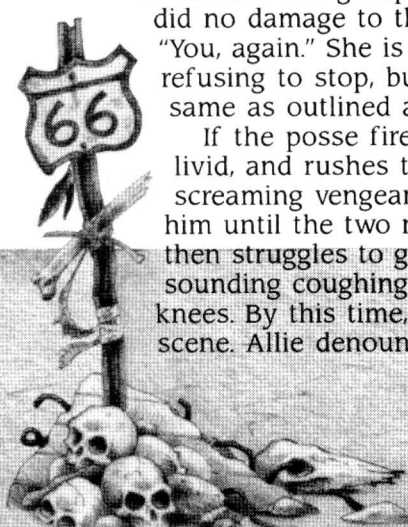
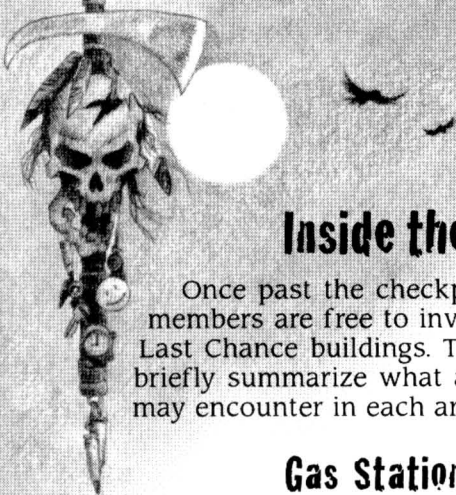
## Tom and Myra's House

The middle structure of the three roadside buildings is a small unassuming residence. Its doors are unlocked, but no one is inside. The furnishings are rustic, and there's nothing here worth filching or even examining more closely.

## The Cafe

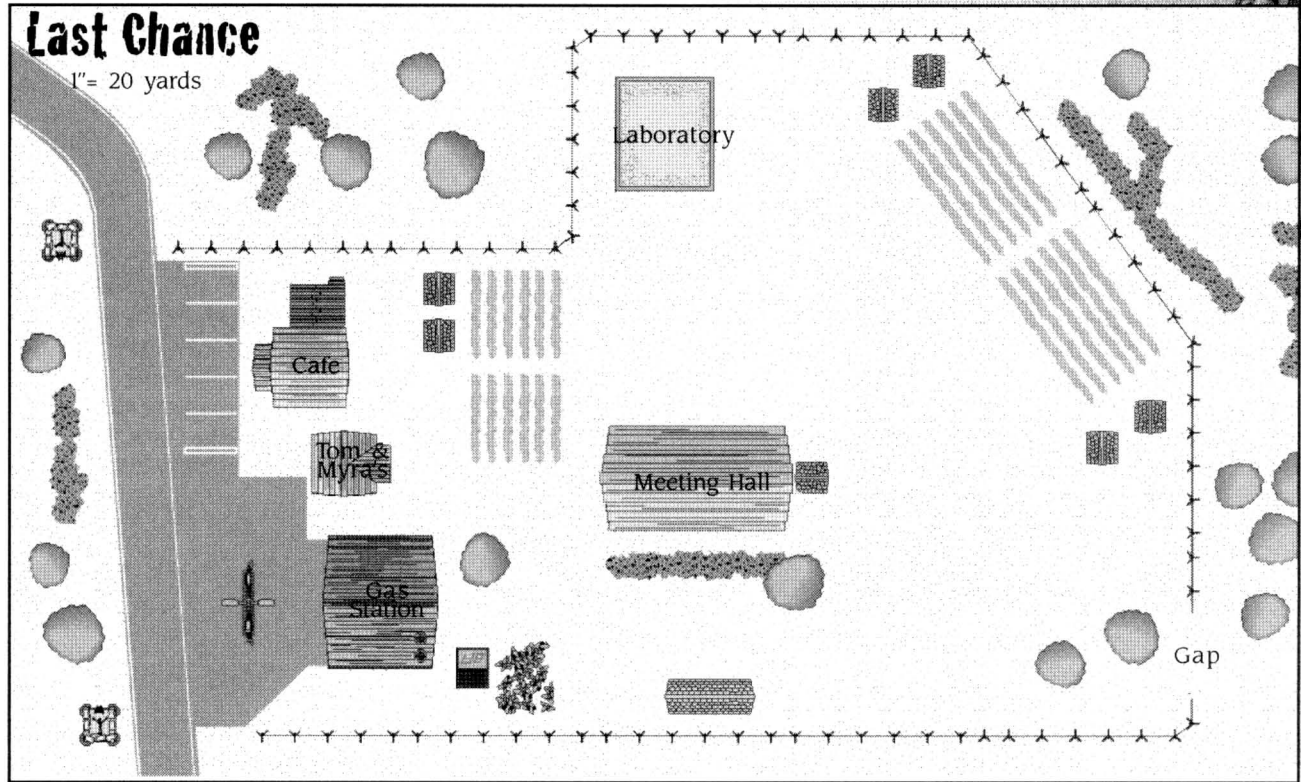
This building contains a lunch counter with eight stools along one side and a food preparation area on the other. There is a glass display counter with a few traveler's essentials for sale (your discretion as to the pickin's available) and a manual cash register. The east

**Marshal: 18**





# Last Chance



wall of the building is covered by an enormous map of the surrounding region, which contains a yellow area noting "You Are Here". This map is identical to the one found in Eliot's home, though the locals have marked all the roads and bridges that were destroyed in the war.

A slender well-tanned man in a work shirt and jeans stands behind the counter. He asks if the posse wants lunch. If they do, they learn meat is not on the menu. ("Too hard to come by out here. Not to mention what that stuff does to your colon . . .") Instead the fare consists of soy burgers, turnips, garden salads, fresh baked bran muffins, etc. Tom takes any ribbing or criticism about the food in stride, and maintains a friendly demeanor toward the group regardless of the attitude they take toward him.

## Tom Weir

Tom is the sort of man many people underestimate at first. He is unassuming physically, and his quiet voice retains a bit of a Maine accent from his boyhood days back East. However, anyone with an ounce of Spirit soon notices that he exudes an extraordinary presence. Unlike many who wander the Wasted West, Tom Weir is where he wants to be, doing

exactly what he wants to do. He has found a way of life that he would die to defend, and has the ability to make others feel the same way.

Tom admired Ritter greatly, and would like to know what has befallen his friend. Once he gets an inkling of what the posse is seeking, he offers them assistance, but he withholds revealing too much until he decides the heroes are suitable successors to the Templar.

## Profile

**Corporeal:** D:2d6 N:2d12, Q:2d6, S:4d10, V:4d6  
Climbin' 3d12, dodge 2d12, drivin' motorcycle 3d12, shootin' pistol 3d6, swimmin' 2d12

**Mental:** C:3d6, K:4d6, M:3d12, Sm:3d6, Sp:4d12  
Area knowledge: local 3d6, guts 2d12, leadership 2d12, persuasion 3d12; scrutinize 3d6, tale tellin' 3d12

**Edges:** Fleet footed 2, nerves o' steel 2, tough as nails 2

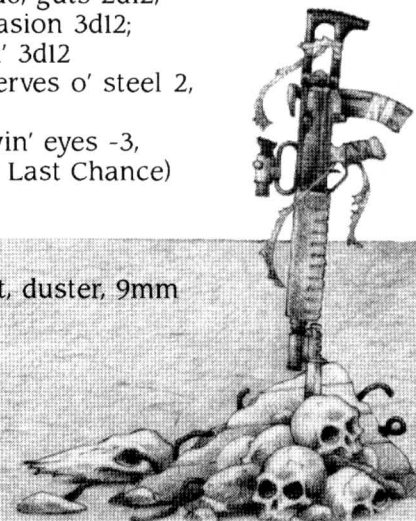
**Hindrances:** Loyal -3, lyin' eyes -3, yearnin' -3 (preserving Last Chance)

**Pace:** 12

**Size:** 7

**Wind:** 20

**Gear:** Motorcycle helmet, duster, 9mm pistol with 25 rounds.



# Last Chance

## Friends in Need

If the heroes ask any questions about Ritter, show Tom the map overlay in their possession, or simply pay enough attention to the map to suggest their intentions, Weir uses the knowledge he possesses to bargain for their aid. He tells them just enough about the Templar's visits to Last Chance (see Tom's Story later in this chapter for details) to make it clear that he knows a lot more, then says that he can't speak further now due to some pressing problems.

He briefly outlines the commune's situation, and asks for the posse's help. After the group decides, he excuses himself to help put up fencing outside. Anyone who wishes to may join him, the remainder of the posse is left to continue its inspection of the commune grounds.

Even if the posse gives no indication of their interest in the deceased Templar, Tom still asks for the group's help by playing up the danger of the situation and the innate goodness he senses in them (hopefully, there's actually some in there). In either case, the posse is free to say no, and to leave at any time thereafter.

## The Fence Brigade

About a half dozen men and women are busily adding to the barbed wire fencing that surrounds most of the perimeter of the compound. If the posse has not already encountered Tom Weir, he is among the workers here (and acts just as described in The Café above). If at least two members of the posse lend a hand in putting up this fencing, the project is completed by dinner time. If not, a small gap remains along the east side of the compound and provides a second point of entry for the attackers later in the evening.

## The Meeting House

The front door of this barn-like structure opens into a large central chamber with several long wooden trestle tables and a podium at one end.

At in a corner at the far end of the room, two women are laboring over a large pot of boiling water on top of an old wood stove. On a table nearby is a pile of old, torn sheets. As the posse enters, one of the women uses a large stick to pull a wad of sodden rags out of the pot. She places them on a clean sheet on a second table.

Once the women notice the heroes, they introduce themselves as Myra and Blossom. They explain that they are boiling rags to use as bandages in case the mutants attacks as expected. The pair are more than willing to talk to the posse about life at the commune or Eliot Ritter (although they have very little information to offer on that subject). The two fold bandages as they talk. They also flirt shamelessly with any of the male heroes in the group.

If the posse engages the women in conversation for more than twenty minutes, they finish folding the last of the bandages, then announce that they need to go get some more water from the spring. With a wink, they invite the heroes to come along.

If any posse members take the ladies up on their offer, the trip consumes the rest of the afternoon. The pool lies almost due south of the commune at the base of a rocky ridge. Everyone sets off with a complement of containers (canteens, ten-gallon jugs, etc.) in hand. The afternoon is sunny, the view is picturesque, and it almost seems like you can hear "Born to be Wild" echoing in the distant breeze. What happens next depends on the maturity of your group, but let's just say it's time for a little R&R before the fight begins in the next chapter.





# Last Chance

The bad guys are not in evidence on either the trip out or back, however. What the posse does see, on an Easy (5) *search* roll, is a solitary building off in the distance that appears to be hewn out of the very rock face and surrounded by a high barbed wire fence. If asked about this place, the women tell them Burke the toy-maker lives there. If pressed for details, they offer the following information:

*Burke's a crotchety old coot who wants little to do with other people. He lives alone, waited on by a bunch of automatons that he dresses up in fancy costumes and has programmed to perform household duties. Burke maintains minimal contact with the commune; he contributed some of the equipment for Glory's lab. In exchange, Last Chance trades him food and other basic supplies on a regular basis. Burke has a rather lethal security system set up to keep out unwanted intruders.*

Myra and Blossom have made deliveries there and know how to get past the first two parts of Burke's three-tiered security system. They provide this information if the heroes have been very friendly and make a successful *persuasion* attempt with a raise versus the women's *Smarts*. They know Burke doesn't like uninvited guests and he'll be furious with them if he finds out they compromised his security.

## Myra Crosby

Though Myra originally joined both the cycle gang and the commune because of her long-standing relationship with Weir, she is far more than just Tom's "old lady." She's a two-fisted, pistol packin' mama, a voluptuous blonde who is also the commune's best crack shot. She enjoys raising Hell and a good fight as much as she enjoys making love. While she's happy enough at Last Chance, she does miss the open road, and loves to hear the stories of the adventurers who pass through.

### Profile

**Corporeal:** D:4d12 N:4d10, Q:4d6, S:4d8, V:2d12  
Drivin': motorcycle 3d10, fightin': knife 2d10, quick draw 3d6; shootin': pistol 4d12, throwin': balanced 2d12

**Mental:** C:1d8, K:2d8, M:3d12, Sm:1d10, Sp:4d8  
Area knowledge 3d8, guts 2d8, language: Spanish 2d8, persuasion 2d12; performin': singing 2d12

**Edges:** Purty 1, Two-fisted 3

**Hindrances:** Clueless -3, randy -3

**Pace:** 10

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 20

**Gear:** Pair of pearl-handled .45 pistols with 20 rounds, and a bandolier with four throwing knives.

### Blossom

Blossom is a slender, athletic, young, dark-haired savage who Tom found lying injured on the roadside near the outskirts of Rock Springs nearly four years ago. She awoke with amnesia, and has not recovered her memory to this day (although she is haunted at times by ominous dreams of mysterious creatures that look like machines).

### Profile

**Corporeal:** D:2d10 N:4d8, Q:3d6, S:4d10, V:4d8  
Climbin' 2d8, fightin': brawling 2d8; filchin' 3d0; shootin': pistol 2d8, sneak 3d8

**Mental:** C:2d8, K:2d6, M:3d8, Sm:4d6, Sp:4d6  
Area knowledge 3d6, guts 2d6, scroungin' 3d6, trackin' 2d8

**Edges:** Purty 1, thick-skinned 3

**Hindrances:** All thumbs -2

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 14

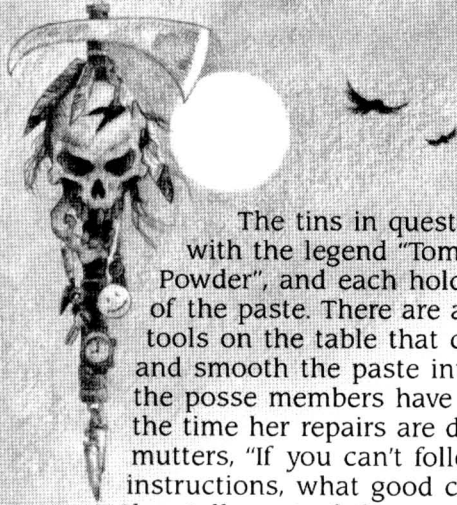
**Gear:** .50 pistol plus 12 rounds.

## The Laboratory

As the posse approaches this windowless, cinder-block building, it hears the loud whir of a fuel-powered generator and a variety of strange clinks, clanks, and rattles. A small but neatly tended, herb garden stands to the north, giving off a pleasant aroma of fresh spearmint leaves.

The door to the building is unlocked. A silver-haired woman wearing jeans, a work shirt, and pilot's goggles is inside, tightening a conveyor belt. All around, a variety of other machines grind, heat, and mix various ingredients into a lumpy mass of whitish paste that also smells of mint. The woman turns and says, "I've been expecting you. Take that pail full of powder over to the table and start putting it in the tins for shipping. Allie wants this batch all loaded on the truck before dinner, so that she can leave tomorrow at first light." She turns back to her repairs and totally ignores the posse for 10 to 15 minutes (except to glare at anyone who doesn't follow her instructions).

# Last Chance



The tins in question are embossed with the legend "Tom's Back East Tooth Powder", and each hold about two ounces of the paste. There are a number of small tools on the table that can be used to pack and smooth the paste into the tins. If none of the posse members have done any work by the time her repairs are done, the woman mutters, "If you can't follow simple instructions, what good can you be to us?" She stalks out of the room, and refuses to talk to the posse again until after the night's attack.

If at least some of the posse does as they are told, Glory's face slowly brightens. When her repairs are finished, she responds more cheerfully, "I think you'll do after all." She stops long enough to answer a couple of the posse's questions, then gets back to work. Topics she has information to contribute about include the following:

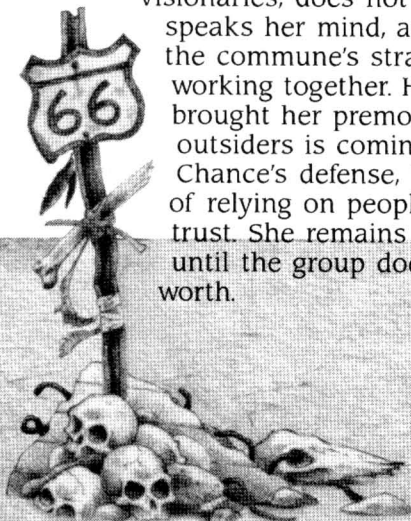
**The Templar:** Glory last Eliot about a month ago, about the time the Doombringer showed up. Eliot spoke to Burke the junker just before he vanished.

**The junker, Burke:** Burke's robot servants are former military automatons he has refit, but they remain highly lethal. Glory has never been inside Burke's compound, but knows it is heavily guarded. Nonetheless, Burke once told her that getting inside his front door was "easy as pie".

## Glory Dupre

Glory Dupre is as close to a true scientist as you'll find in the Wasted West. She knows the old techniques of the mad scientists, and understands the methods of junkers like Burke, but rejects both approaches. She has found her own inspiration out here in the desert, in the form of a sixth sense fueled not by ghost rock but by the spirit of this tiny community. And that sixth sense warns her that Last Chance is about to become embroiled in the greater struggle between good and evil.

Dupre is a true visionary, and like many visionaries, does not suffer fools lightly. She speaks her mind, and relies on Tom to keep the commune's strange mix of inhabitants working together. Her recent dreams have brought her premonitions that a group of outsiders is coming to play a role in Last Chance's defense, but she dislikes the idea of relying on people she doesn't know or trust. She remains skeptical of the posse until the group does something to prove its worth.



## Profile

**Corporeal:** D:4d6 N:3d4, Q:1d10, S:2d12, V:3d6  
Climbin' 2d4, lockpickin' 3d6

**Mental:** C:4d6, K:4d10, M:4d6, Sm:3d10, Sp:3d8  
Academia: occult, area knowledge 3d6, language: Spanish 2d10, medicine: general, surgery 3d10, ridicule 3d10; science: chemistry 4d10, search 2d6, tinkerin' 3d10

**Edges:** Gift of gab 1, mechanically inclined 2

**Hindrances:** Cautious -3

**Pace:** 4

**Size:** 5

**Wind:** 14

**Gear:** Set of surgical knives, and a collection of small useful tools.

## Dinner and Entertainment

As dusk approaches, the aroma of cooking food begins to emanate from the meeting house and the residents begin to congregate there. Even if the posse has not agreed to help defend the commune, it is invited to stay for dinner and left to eat in peace. If the heroes have agreed to help, some of the commune members encountered during the day join them at their table and press the group for any knowledge they possess about Doombringers and their ways or other news of the West.

The meal is hearty and filling enough for anyone without a *hankerin'* for fresh meat. After the meal is over, Tom goes up to the podium. He welcomes Allie and the posse to Last Chance, and if the posse has agreed to lend a hand, he announces this fact (which earns a round of applause from the residents and a derisive snort from Allie). The group then discusses what tactics they should use in fighting off the Doombringer's forces. The posse is free to join in the discussion as it pleases. Let the scene play out for a few minutes, introducing any major extras the posse has not already met, then cut to the following:

Glory suddenly stands up and motions for silence. "They're coming", she says. "Go quickly, before the sentries are overwhelmed." Just as she finishes speaking, a lone shot rings out in the night.

The people of Last Chance spring into action. Glory directs the noncombatant members of the commune into the storm cellar on the south side of the meeting house. Tom, Myra, Blossom, and three other bikers grab their weapons and head toward the roadside where Willy and Phoenix are already posted along with two other



# Last Chance

men. (Treat the five generic bikers as having Tom's physical stats, *shootin'* skill of 2d8, and .45 caliber pistols with 15 bullets each.)

Allie also runs out of the building and heads straight for her truck. The posse is free to position itself as it pleases. The attack commences 2 minutes after the warning is given above. If any posse member reaches the south sentry station before the attack begins, he finds Willy peering through his scope into the night. He declares, "I saw a bunch o' muties movin' thisaway up the road—maybe a dozen or more. They ducked down into the wash when I fired on 'em."

Within a matter of seconds, however, the bad guys are through ducking...

## And For Dessert, a Slaving Horde

The bad guys mount their primary attack by advancing up the west side of the road. The force gathered there at the outset of the assault consists of two squads of ten mutants, each led by an overseer and a Doomsayer.

In addition, a second force consisting of one squad of mutants and an overseer has approached Last Chance from the rear. If the fencing around the commune's perimeter has not been completed, these forces attack through the gap in the defenses; otherwise, they circle around to the road and enter the fray later as reinforcements.

The mutants think their task is to wipe out the humans. In truth, Malias would love that, but his real goal is to raise an army by striking against a well-defended norm settlement. If the muties win, other mutants will flock to his side. If they lose, that's okay too as long as the norms suffer some fairly serious losses and the horde doesn't.

The rad-priest isn't keen on mixing it up with the norms himself—he feels it's too important to capture the Rock Springs technology for Simon Rasmussen and the Cult of Doom. So he sits back in the treeline and casts *nukes* at the strongest points of the norm's defense, then retreats. His mutants have orders to retreat if the battle is going badly for them. Malias knows that's a risky order—letting the horde decide for themselves when to run away—but it's a risk he has to take. Besides, this band is pretty violent and he has little doubt they'll put their tails between their legs (some literally) before the situation is truly hopeless.

Malias is also paranoid about Templars now. If there's one in the party, he gets the first *nuke*.

## Tactical Considerations

Marshal, you can conduct the attack how you please based on these parameters. However, there are a few matters of special interest that should be kept in mind:

The roadside portion of the commune contains a number of vehicles that might come into play. Either side may attempt to jump-start and drive the motorcycles present. You can use the basic vehicle rules in the *Hell on Earth* rulebook or you can use the more detailed rules in *Road Warriors* to keep track of these vehicles.

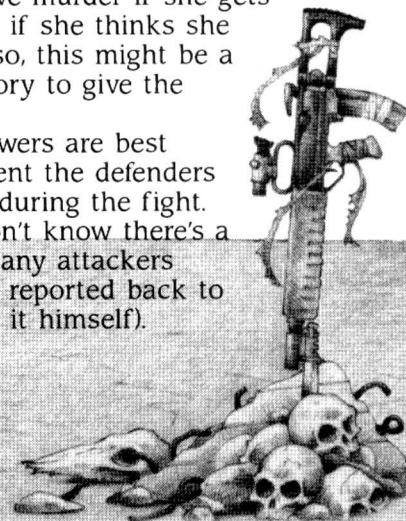
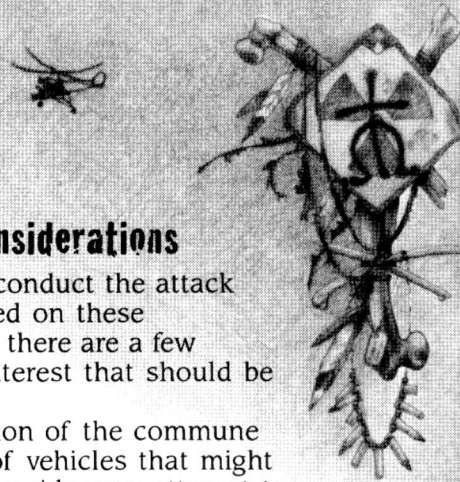
## No Smoking, Turn Off Engine

In addition, the fuel tanks of all the vehicles, as well as the gasoline pumps and underground storage tanks beneath, are all highly flammable and carry some risk of exploding in the midst of the hail of gunfire and blasts of irradiated energy that is likely to erupt around them.

Whenever there is any weapon's fire in the vicinity of the gas pumps use the innocent bystanders rules to see if any round connects with the pumps. Pull a card every time a round hits one of the pumps. If the card comes up a Joker, the pump explodes, showering the area with flaming alcohol. This does 6d20 damage with a Burst Radius of 10 yards and burns for 1d6 rounds thereafter. On the plus side, if a pump blows, assume it wipes out 1d10 mutants and causes the rest to flee as well. Blowing up the Last Chance counts as a victory in their book.

Allie cares solely about protecting her truck and only spends her own bullets to fire on those who are directly attacking the vehicle. If she is still carrying a grudge against one or more posse members from earlier in the day, and the feud between them has grown volatile enough, she may even attempt to gun one of them down during the confusion of the melee if nobody is watching. Allie's not above murder if she gets angry enough. Especially if she thinks she can get away with it. If so, this might be a good time for Tom or Glory to give the hero a quick warning.

Sgt. Phoenix' syker powers are best held in reserve in the event the defenders run into serious trouble during the fight. Assume the attackers don't know there's a syker present (though if any attackers survive, that fact will be reported back to Malias if he couldn't see it himself).



# Last Chance

## Mutant Grunts (30)

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

Climbin' 3d6, fightin' various 4d6, sneak 3d6, throwin' unbalanced 4d6

**Mental:** C:3d6, K:1d4, M:2d8, Sm:1d6, Sp:2d6  
Area knowledge 3d4, guts 3d6, scroungin' 4d6, survival 3d6, trackin' 3d6

**Edges:** Thick skinned 3

**Hindrances:** Ugly as sin -1

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 16

**Gear:** The mutants are armed with a variety of makeshift hand weapons.

## Mutant Overseers (3)

**Corporeal:** D:3d8, N:2d8, S:4d10, Q:2d8, V:3d12

Climbin' 3d8, fightin' axe 4d8, sneak 2d8, shootin' shotgun 3d8

**Mental:** C:3d6, K:1d6, M:2d10, Sm:2d6, Sp:2d8  
Area knowledge 3d6, guts 3d8, leadership: 2d10, scroungin' 3d8, trackin' 3d8

**Edges:** Brawny 3, thick-skinned 3

**Hindrances:** Ugly as sin -1

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 7

**Wind:** 20

**Gear:** Double-barrel 12 gauge shotgun with 10 rounds, and a great ax (STR+2d10).

### Special Abilities:

Mutation: Leathery skin (-2 to all damage rolls)

## Doomsayer (loyal to Silas)

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

Climbin' 3d6, dodge 3d6, fightin' brawlin' 3d6, sneak 2d6

**Mental:** C:4d6, K:3d10, M:2d6, Sm:1d12, Sp:3d10  
Academia: occult 4d6, area knowledge: Vegas 3d10, faith 4d10, guts 2d10, science: physics 2d10, scrutinize 3d6, search 2d6, survival 2d12

**Edges:** Arcane background: Doomsayer 3

**Hindrances:** Intolerance: non-mutants -3, self-righteous -3

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 20

**Gear:** Doomsayer robe (green), knife, Geiger counter, military radio

**Powers:** Atomic blast, doomstones, EMP, mutate, nuke, sustenance, tolerance





# Last Chance

## Tom's Story

Presuming the combined efforts of the posse and commune members are enough to turn back the enemy, the survivors return to the meeting house. Glory assists in patching up the wounded, while Tom relates what he knows of the Templar Eliot Ritter:

*Eliot Ritter was a regular Joe before the bombs fell—a salesman, marketing specialist, somethin' like that. We talked quite a bit about life and the war. He was a thousand miles from home on Judgment Day. He made it home somehow. Even found his wife and kids, but that didn't last long. They all caught one of the plagues a year or so later.*

*That left Eliot all empty inside. He packed up what he held precious and left town, headin' west. Folks in Jarrett figured that was the last they'd see of him—but he came back a year later with a Templar tabard and that magic sword of his.*

*Folks actually laughed at him at first—you know how people are—but then they saw him use that sword against the things that came outta the Wastes. After a while, the bad guys—at least the smart ones—stayed away from Jarrett. The pickin's were easier elsewhere I guess.*

*Eliot didn't stay hidin' in Jarrett all the time though, no sir, we saw him out here at the Last Chance from time to time, and he knew Burke pretty well from before the War, so he'd go visit up there. Like most folks, he went scavengin', though everything he found he gave away.*

*The last place he went was Rock Springs. He went out there a lot. Most folks think that's where that damn Doombringer is holed up. That may be, but if that's the truth, he's been there longer than most people think. See, Eliot was pokin' around Rock Springs for a few weeks before any of us heard about the Doombringer. He went out there a few times, quiet like, to check things out. He had some kind of hidey hole where he stashed supplies and caught a few winks.*

*I reckon we're the last folks to have seen him since he disappeared. He passed through here about a month ago on a borrowed motorbike. He fueled up here, paid a quick visit to Burke, then strapped*

*some kinda box on on the back of the bike. Two boxes, actually. One was long, about the size of his sword, though his sword was strapped on his back as usual. The other box was about the size of a milk crate. He was real careful with it. Borrowed some bungee cords from me to secure it on his seat. I didn't ask what was in it. I figured if he wanted me to know, he'd have told me himself.*

*When he left, he took the access road—the Point of Rocks Bridge got bombed early on in the War, so you can't get to the Lincoln Highway 'til almost Thayer Creek. But he was headed to Rock Springs all right. I knew where he was goin'.*

*I know in my gut that Eliot is dead. I have a sixth sense about these things. But I also know he didn't quite finish whatever it was he was up to. The Doombringer's still around, of course, and that's part of it, but I got a feelin' there's somethin' worse out there.*

*Then of course, there's that damn sword. Someone ought to find it before the muties do.*

Once Tom finishes his story, he looks the heroes right in the eyes and says, "Eliot did a lot of good for the people in these parts. You people did us a good turn tonight fighting off those muties. We wish you the best of luck in finding that sword and pray that you don't meet the same fate I fear Eliot did."

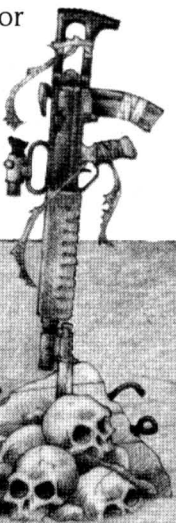
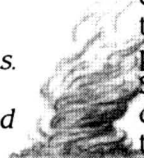
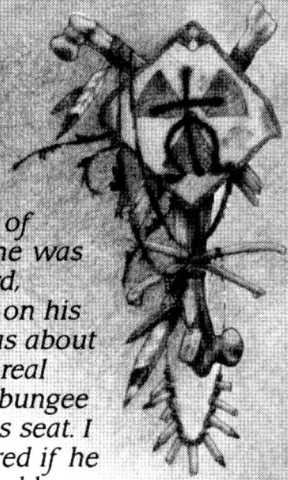
With that, Tom solemnly shakes the hand of each of the posse members and wishes them luck on their quest.

## Bounty

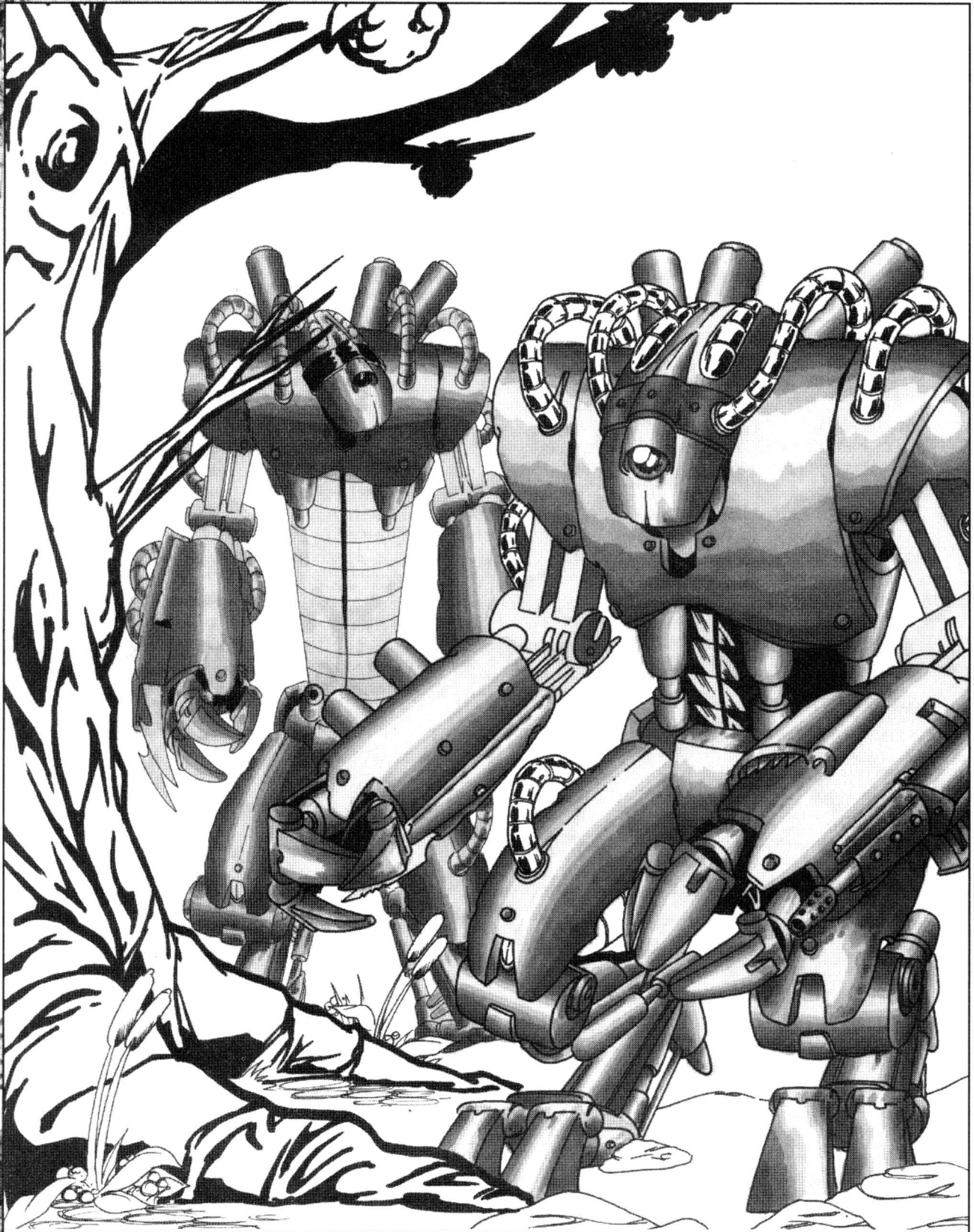
**Defeating the mutant patrol early in the chapter:** 1 white chip.

**Playing a major role in saving the commune:** 1 red chip.

**Transportation to Rock Springs:** If one or more posse members makes a genuine contribution to the defense of Allie's truck, she is amenable to giving the posse a lift to the outskirts of Rock Springs, virtually eliminating any chance of creature encounters during that leg of the trip. If the group has decided to first visit the toymaker Burke, she agrees to wait until noon the next day before leaving, but no longer.



# Burke the Hermit







## Chapter Three:

# Burke the Hermit



If the posse has talked with enough members of the commune, they should have learned that Ritter visited the hermit junker Burke, who lives in the wastes south of Last Chance, before he set out on his mission to Rock Springs. Based upon what they have learned, the posse should feel that a brief detour to visit Burke is in order. In truth, a trip to the hermit is absolutely essential to their successful recovery of Eliot's sword, and likely their ability to survive this adventure as well.

Unfortunately, Burke is not exactly anxious to receive unannounced visitors, and keeps his residence fortified with a bunker, lethal automatons, and junker devices. The commune members know how to circumvent most of this security network, and share this information freely if asked. The final barrier, however, requires the posse's own deductive powers to solve.

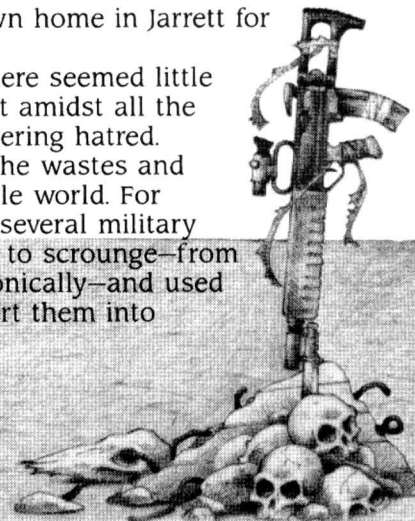
### The Toymaker

Thaddeus Burke was a local schoolteacher who loved mathematical puzzles, and designed and built mechanical toys in his spare time. He lived happily with his wife and two young sons until 2077, when he met Carl Colton, a colleague of Ridley Velmer. Colton introduced Burke to the science of technomagic, and found Burke a most apt pupil. Soon, Burke had constructed his own G-ray collector and taken up the craft of the

junker on a full-time basis. He pursued his new avocation so single-mindedly that he neglected his family and alienated most of his old friends. When he was drafted into the Northern Alliance army in 2080, no one mourned his departure, and his family did not move with him to his posting in Washington, D.C.

Burke's military service came to an abrupt end after the Last War with the coming of the Reckoners. He gradually made his way back west, only to find his hometown reduced to rubble and his family dead. Burke was overcome with grief over the fact that he had failed to protect them and that his self-absorption with his new abilities had blinded him to the things that were truly important. Even most of his former friends and neighbors treated him like a pariah, a madman whose powers derived from the very ghost rock that had devastated their lives. Only one man, an old college buddy named Eliot Ritter, believed Burke's remorse was real, and took him into his own home in Jarrett for a time as a boarder.

In the end, however, there seemed little reason to remain in Jarrett amidst all the memories and the smoldering hatred. Burke moved away into the wastes and built his own solitary little world. For companionship, he took several military automatons he managed to scrounge—from Apfeltech's showroom ironically—and used his twin talents to convert them into



# Burke the Hermit

household robots with limited AI and communication skills. To protect himself, he kept their destructive capacities intact, and built walls and other defenses to keep out predators.

For five years he lived alone, until Tom and Glory took over the Last Chance and the commune began to spring up around it. Eventually, Tom came to see Burke, and despite nearly being killed by the complex's defenses, somehow convinced him to come to the Last Chance for dinner that night. Although he no longer felt comfortable in the company of other humans, Burke still recognized the group's uncommon kindness and decency, and found himself agreeing to help build the equipment required for Glory's toothpaste production line. Since that time, he has retained minimal but civil relations with the commune members.

A few years ago, Burke received another shocking visitor: Eliot Ritter appeared on his doorstep wearing the tabard of a Templar. Given Burke's own distaste for humanity in general, the hermit snorted derisively at Ritter's transformation into a do-gooder and scoffed at the "magic sword" he had belted around his waist.

Two months ago, Eliot asked the junker to make him two special devices. One was a protective "lock box" for his sword that could only be opened with a key. One key would be carried by Eliot and set to destroy itself should Eliot's heart stop. The other, Burke would hold onto for safekeeping. The junker thought the Templar's paranoia was laughable. Just how powerful could one little sword be anyway. In the end, he did it anyway because it was a challenge and another project to let him exercise his considerable talents.

The second device was an electro-magnetic-pulse generator. Eliot needed to generate an EMP but obviously didn't want to detonate a nuke. This one was easy. Burke whipped up such a device in only a few days.

Now Burke is feeling a little guilty. He gave the devices to his friend a month ago and laughed at his paranoia and altruism. Eliot hasn't been seen since, and Burke wishes he could have told his friend goodbye.

## Getting There

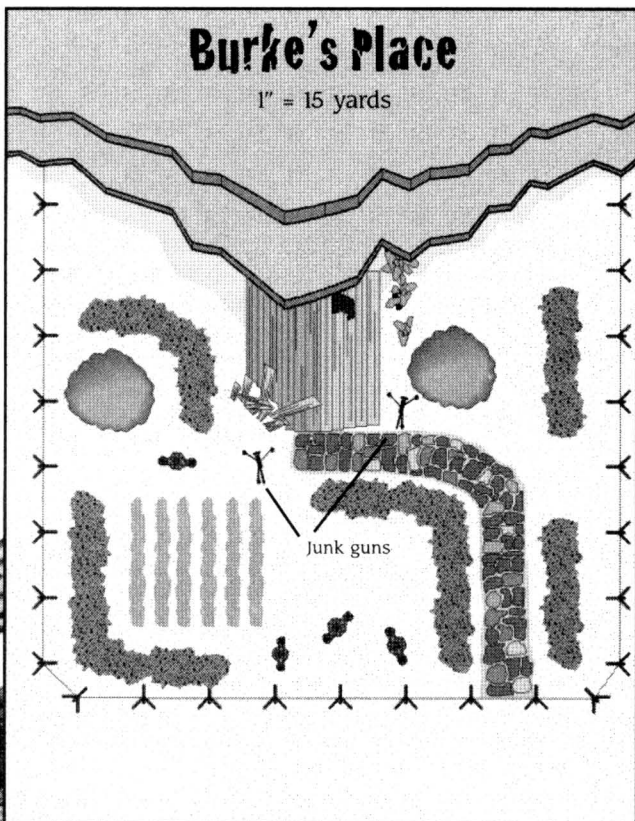
Burke's place is just a few miles south of the Last Chance. It's an easy trip by vehicle and only a little more dangerous on foot. If the heroes have had an easy time of it, feel free to let them run into a small band of muties heading to join Malias' gang. Otherwise, let 'em be, Marshal.

## Getting In

As the posse approaches Burke's, read them the following description:

*Burke's complex sits on half an acre of land, located at the base of a jagged rock outcropping that towers 150-200 feet above it. The focal point of the complex is a small structure cobbled together out of scraps of wood, stone, and tin, along with part of the rock face itself.*

*Beyond the building is a tiny oasis of lush growth, with cacti, flowering shrubs, and even a small vegetable garden. The property is surrounded on the other three sides by a 6-foot high chain link fence with triple strands of barbed wire across the top. A single metal door stands in the southeast corner of the fence. Several figures are moving back and forth across the grounds of the property; upon closer inspection, they seem to be a group of four automatons performing a variety of gardening duties.*





# Burke the Hermit

A visual inspection of the rock outcropping reveals it to be impossible to ascend without mountaineering gear. Anyone who attempts to climb the fence (or to cut through it with wire cutters) finds the gardening robots moving rapidly in his direction and replacing their gardening implements with submachine guns. They open fire on anyone who crosses over the barbed wire or sets foot on the grounds, and fight until destroyed. Conversely, they allow those who withdraw to pull back unharmed.

## "Gard"-Bots

**Corporeal:** D:3d8, N:2d6, Q:3d8, S:4d12, V:2d12+4  
Climbin' 2d6, dodge 4d6, fightin': brawlin' 3d6,  
quick draw 2d8, shootin': SMG 4d8

**Mental:** C:3d6, K:3d4, M:—, Sm:3d10, Sp:—  
Scrutinize 3d6, search 4d6

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 8

**Terror:** 5

## Special Abilities:

**Armor:** 3

**Fearless**

**Gear:** Commando SMG, with two 30-shot clips

## The Door

This leaves the posse with the door in the southeast corner. The door is made of solid steel and mounted flush against the fencing around it. It bears no obvious indication of a lock or latch. The center of the door is embossed with eight buttons in the shape of Greek symbols placed around a compass rose in the following pattern:



Just above the rose is a plaque engraved with the following message, in fancy block print:

*This door has neither lock nor key  
in hopes that you will let me be.  
If you must enter, make it fast.  
Press three times, Change First to Last.  
But if three times you are mistaken,  
It's hard to say when you'll awaken!*

Posse members may recognize the symbols as letters of the Greek alphabet. Three of the symbols, Alpha (the first letter of the alphabet, located at the east point of the rose), Omega (last letter of the alphabet, located at the south point), and Delta (the mathematical symbol for change, located at the northwest point), form the answer to Burke's riddle. To change first to last, one must press the symbols in the sequence Delta-Alpha-Omega.

Pressing any of the eight symbols causes it to light up and initiates the "entry sequence" (although pressing the same symbol again immediately extinguishes the light, and cancels the sequence). Once three symbols have been pressed, either the door opens (if the correct solution is entered), or the lights click off. On a failed attempt, the door itself begins to vibrate and hum with energy, which increases in intensity with a second failure. On a third successive failure, the door discharges a burst of electrical energy, doing 4d12 massive damage to anyone in direct contact with it. The process then repeats itself until a resolution is reached.

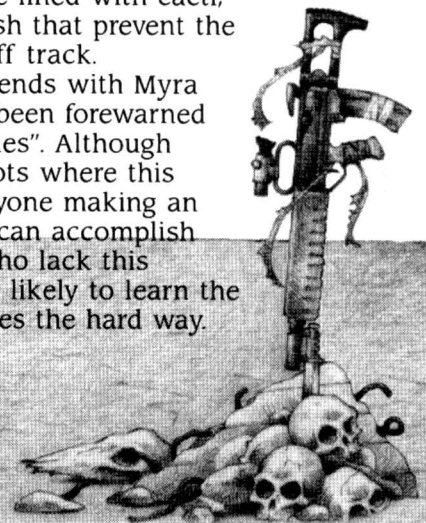
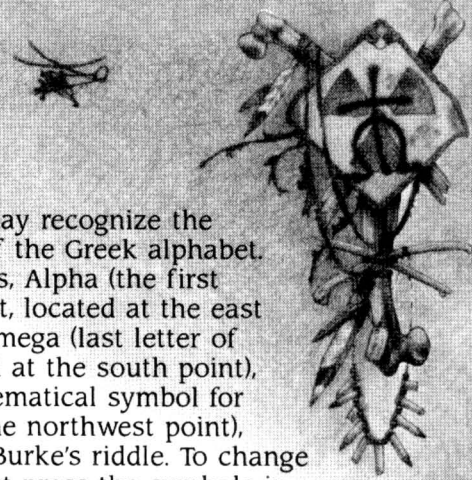
If any of the posse members made friends with Myra and Blossom, they might have been told the answer to this puzzle in purely mechanical terms: press the NW, E, and S points on the compass in that order to open the door. Posses who have not received the solution from the commune and can't reason it out on their own may make an Incredible (11) *Knowledge* roll. Those who succeed recognize what each of the Greek letters symbolize. The players can take it from there.

If the posse decides to blow up the door, they are welcome to do so, though this is unlikely to make the hermit at all cooperative.

## The Garden Path

When the correct solution is finally entered, the door swings inward, opening onto a flagstone path of gray, red, and brown stones. The sides of the path are lined with cacti, brambles, and other brush that prevent the posse from wandering off track.

If the heroes made friends with Myra and Blossom, they have been forewarned to "stay on the gray stones". Although there are a couple of spots where this requires a short leap, anyone making an Easy (5) *Nimbleness* roll can accomplish this with ease. Posses who lack this information, however, are likely to learn the pitfalls of the other stones the hard way.



# Burke the Hermit



If the posse makes no attempt to avoid the red and brown stones, or one of the heroes fails his *Nimbleness* roll, draw a card for each hero who has strayed from the gray stones. If the brainer pulls a Deuce or a Joker, congratulations! She just avoided the dangerous stones through sheer luck. Any other other result means the hero put her foot down in the wrong place. A red card means she stepped on a red stone; black means she got a brown stone.

Red stones activate two junkguns (Speed 1, ROF 3, Damage 3d10 AP2, Ammo: 30, Range Increment 10) placed along the path as shown on the map. The guns swivel to face the target on the stone, fire a burst, and deactivate. Attacking the guns causes them to activate and fire continuously until no targets remain. Each gun has a Durability of 9/2 and an AV of 2.

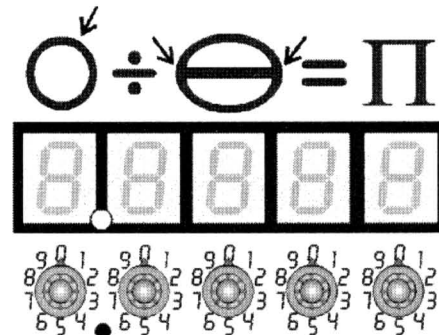
Each gun has a *shootin'* Aptitude of 2d8 and a *Quickness* of 4d6. Targets may dodge, but risk triggering additional stones by doing so. Make a Hard (9) *Nimbleness* roll. If failed, the brainer hit another stone while dodging. Draw another card.

Brown stones are set atop small explosive charges. These do 2d10 damage with a Burst Radius of 5.

## Building Entrance

Finally, the posse reaches the door to the residential structure itself. There are no more guns, bombs, or hostile robots in the vicinity—just a final puzzle for the posse to solve.

At the door, the heroes see the following:



Beneath the engraved symbols are five dials, each of which has ten settings from 0 to 9. The dials can be turned in either direction.

## Bye, Bye Miss American Pie

If the posse talked with Glory Dupre on the previous day, they may have heard about Burke's comment that the front door is as "easy as pie." What he actually meant, of course, was "easy as Pi", as the symbols depict the mathematical formula for that measure. The solution to unlocking the door is to input the mathematical value of Pi, 3.1416, into the dials below.

Again, if the players can't come up with the solution on their own, the posse may attempt to deduce the answer, either by making an Onerous (9) roll versus any *science* Aptitude, or an Incredible (11) roll versus *Knowledge*.

Whatever the means of their inspiration, when the right combination of digits is finally entered, the door swings open, setting off the delicate tinkle of wind chimes. Before the posse is a hallway that slopes downward in elevation and gently widens as it extends north.

## Jeeves

Within moments, a robot decked out in formal butler's livery putters up the hallway toward the players. If they have made it through the security system unscathed, he welcomes them in a clear mechanical voice:

*Good day to you all. If any of you wish refreshment, we have fresh fruit and clean spring water on hand in the day room. If not, the master awaits you in his study.*

**Marshal: 30**





# Burke the Hermit

If one or more heroes have been injured however, the house-bot takes quite a different tack:

*Dear me, look at the blood and dirt you're tracking in here. You shouldn't see the master in this condition. Come with me to the kitchen and we'll see if we can't get you cleaned up a bit.*

In either event, the robot's appearance and patter should strike most of the posse as quite ludicrous. If anyone actually makes a joke or rude comment out loud, the automaton does not respond and continues herding the group down the hall.

The butler and other servants of the house provide refreshment or bandages as appropriate. Posse members should note that all of the robots are armed in one fashion or another, but they only fire if attacked. Naturally, if the posse harms any of the robots, they are unlikely to get any cooperation from Burke. There are six house-bots inside the bunker ready to fight if the posse abuses their host's hospitality.

## House-bots (6)

**Corporeal:** D:3d8, N:2d6, Q:3d8, S:4d8, V:3d10  
Dodge 4d6, fightin' brawlin' 3d6, quick draw 2d8,  
shootin' pistol 4d8

**Mental:** C:3d6, K:3d4, M:—, Sm:3d10, Sp:—  
Scrutinize 3d6, search 4d6

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 5

**Terror:** NA

**Special Abilities:**

**Armor:** 2

**Fearless**

**Gear:** 10mm police pistol, 9 rounds of ammo.

## The Study

Assuming the posse behaves, they are presently shown into Burke's study.

This room is part sitting-room, part library, and part toy store; other than a comfortable armchair and two straight-backed wooden chairs, every surface, shelf and flat surface is arrayed with objects of various descriptions. Most are made of metal, but there are wood, glass and ceramic items: figurines, toys of various kinds, clockwork mechanisms. In short, this place is a junker's dream. Though chaotic, Burke's possessions look meticulously kept. As the posse enters, some of the mechanisms turn, whirr, or move about.

If the posse has resorted to violent entry, Burke is seated in the armchair, with a 12-gauge shotgun cradled in his arms, pointed at the door. He tells the posse to state its business and then get out.

If the posse has been harmed by the traps in the entryway, Burke may be either amused or hostile. The posse has about 60 seconds to explain themselves before he definitely goes over to hostile.

If, on the other hand, the posse has arrived relatively unscathed, Burke is somewhere in the room, tinkering with one or another toy. He looks up as they enter, and ambles over to his chair, still holding whatever he was adjusting, and addresses the posse:

*If you're selling something, I'm not interested. If you're looking for money, I don't have any. Nothing's for sale, and I don't take commissions.*

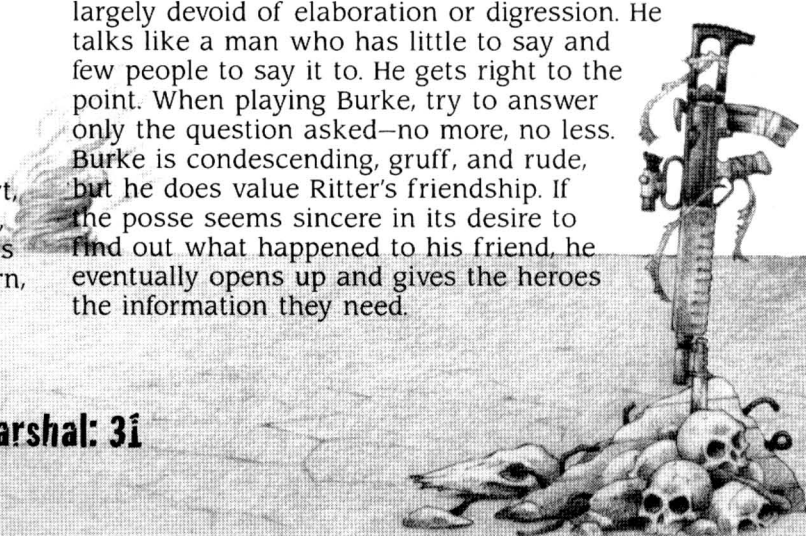
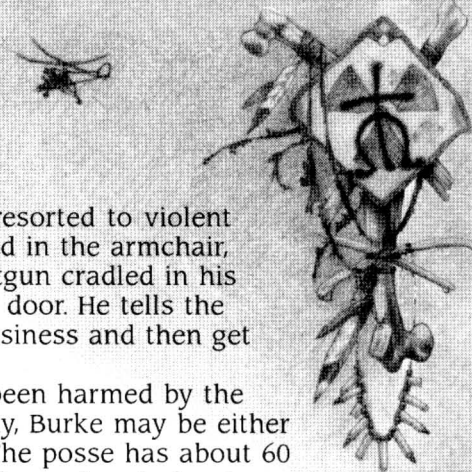
*Now what is it you want?*

## The Hermit Speaks

The posse should not come to Burke unless they are hot on the trail of Eliot Ritter's adventures or his sword. Their approach to getting information, and Burke's perception of their relationship to Ritter, the Templar Order, or even the town of Jarrett or the Last Chance commune, determines his response to their questions.

Burke does not respond to threats, and uses his equipment and robot supporters to whatever extent necessary to protect himself. He does not respond to bribery, either, though offers of equipment or components by scavengers or junkers in the posse improve his reaction. In no circumstance does Burke offer to leave his house or accompany the posse anywhere—particularly Rock Springs, which he is loathe to discuss.

Burke's speech consists of short sentences, largely devoid of elaboration or digression. He talks like a man who has little to say and few people to say it to. He gets right to the point. When playing Burke, try to answer only the question asked—no more, no less. Burke is condescending, gruff, and rude, but he does value Ritter's friendship. If the posse seems sincere in its desire to find out what happened to his friend, he eventually opens up and gives the heroes the information they need.





## Burke the Hermit

### Burke

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

Climbin' 2d6, dodge 3d8, drivin' car 3d8, shootin' junkgun, shotgun 4d6, sneak 2d8

**Mental:** C:4d8, K:3d12, M:4d6, Sm:3d10, Sp:3d8  
Academia: occult 4d12, science: occult engineering 5d12, area knowledge 2d12, search 2d8, scrutinize 3d8, scroungin' 4d10, tinkerin' 5d10

**Edges:** Arcane background: junker 3, mechanically inclined 2

**Hindrances:** Cautious -3, intolerance: strangers -3

**Pace:** 8

**Size:** 8

**Wind:** 14

**Junker Powers:** AI, ammo, commo, gunsmith, sensor, shield

**Gear:** 12-gauge shotgun, 24 rounds of 12-gauge ammo, kevlar vest, and a collection of small useful tools.

### Getting Information From Burke

Provided the posse can gain Burke's trust. This should involve some roleplaying and a few hefty *persuasion* rolls. The TN for these is up to you, but should be based on the posse's behavior in gaining entry to the place. As long as the heroes don't do anything further to honk him off, Burke can provide the group with some valuable information about the goal of their quest.

When asked about his relationship with Ritter, the grumpy junker tells the heroes:

*Eliot and I went to school together and we've been friends for a long time. He came up here from time to time, both before and after he started wearing that ridiculous tabard of his.*

*He put me up in his house in Jarret when I was going through some tough times after the War. He was a good man. Maybe the only good man. But he was stupid.*

*Eliot elected himself the defender of this part of the West. I told him that painting a target on his head was just plain foolish, but he wouldn't listen. He said he had a higher calling he had to follow. Plain foolish if you ask me.*

*He was always welcome around here. No one else is. Now, if you're finished, you can show yourselves out the same way you came in.*

If asked about why Ritter went to Rock Springs, Burke has the following to say:

*I don't know exactly. He didn't talk about his heroics to me much because I didn't want to hear them. I've heard about the mutants, but I don't think that's why he went to Rock Springs. He's been doing something out there for well over a month—a few weeks before the DNA challenged showed up.*

*He had a hideout in Rock Springs, in a water tower, I think. Ask those hippies down at the Last Chance. Or the idiots in Jarret. They yap about what a hero he was constantly. Eliot this, Eliot that. You'd think they believed he was the Messiah, Himself. That may sound nice to you, but that's a lot of responsibility to put on one man's shoulders! How would you like it if people were always asking you to save the world?*

When asked about the devices Burke made, he answers only if the heroes seem trustworthy and make a *persuasion* roll with at least 2 raises. Until that time, he simply answers "That's Eliot' business. Piss off!" When they finally win him over, he reveals the truth:

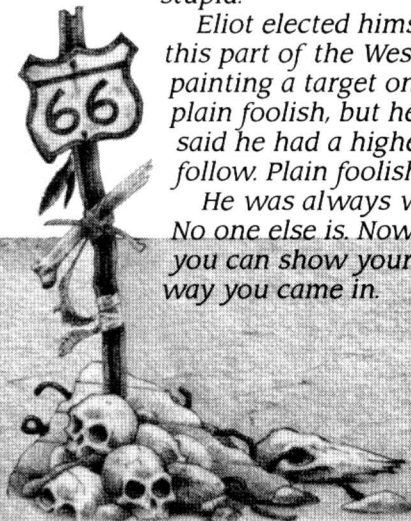
*Eliot believed that sword of his was the next Excalibur. Thought he could save the world with it. I never saw him use it, but the locals all talk about it like it was the true cross itself.*

*The last time he came here, he said he was afraid it would fall into the wrong hands if he were to...die. He wanted me to build him a special case for it, one he could put the sword in if he were about to die. If someone tries to open the case, and they don't have the key, it destroys the sword. Eliot, of course, had one of these keys. His was set to melt down should his heart stop.*

*I have the other key. Mine has a locator in it as well. I'll give it to you if you'll go out there and find that fool.*

Assuming the party presses for more information on the second device, continue with the following:

*The other device? It was an EMP generator. That stands for "electromagnetic pulse" students. I suspect Eliot*





# Burke the Hermit

*ran into some kind of robot out near Rock Springs. Maybe it's one of the Combine's automatons. Or a cyborg. Or maybe it's something entirely new. There was an experimental lab there before the war. Apfeltech. I know, because I scavenged a few parts from there when I got back to Wyoming. Eliot brought me some parts from there, too. Had Apfeltech stamped right on the circuit board. But I didn't want them. All the parts I got before burned up my robots. They don't seem designed for normal electronics. Don't ask me anything more about them 'cause I don't know anything else. They were experimental. I'd need documents and design specs to learn anything else.*

If the heroes ask Burke to make another EMP, he says he used all the rare and necessary parts in Eliot's device. The party really doesn't have time to wait around another 3 days either. If they insist, you'll need to find a way to get their keisters in gear. Maybe a lone traveler is captured by Malias, overhears his plans, and somehow escapes to the Last Chance. When the party hears this, they should be given only a few hours to get to Rock Springs.

## The Key

Assuming the party agrees to find Eliot, possibly playing on Burke's guilt, he gives it to them with instructions for its use. It is concealed in the back of a small windup toy, a metal man adorned in Templar garb, sitting on the mantelpiece behind his chair.

Burke explains how the key works. At the top of each hour it emits a low, beeping tone for 15 seconds. This tone becomes louder and more rapid when pointed in the direction of the box.

To determine the right direction, the key should be held away from the body with the point outward. The wielder can then make a *Cognition* roll to discern the direction. The TN for this roll depends on the distance to the box. Check out the Key Location Table. Once the posse gets within 100 yards of the box, the key pulses continuously.

If the roll succeeds the wielder is pointed in the general direction of the box. Traveling in this direction without losing one's way requires a *Hard (9) survival: any* roll. Heroes with the *sense o' direction* Edge get a +4 to this roll. Failing the roll means the posse is pointed the wrong way, and won't come anywhere near the sword.

Marshal, apply whatever modifiers seem appropriate, but bear in mind the key only pulses for 15 seconds once an hour, so only allow one *Cognition* roll per person per pulse.

Once in Rock Springs, the posse has to achieve a number of successes with the key to get close enough to activate it fully. See Chapter 4 for details.

## Key Location

### Location

In Jarrett, or farther north or east  
At the Last Chance or Burke's house  
Between the Last Chance and Rock Springs  
In Rock Springs

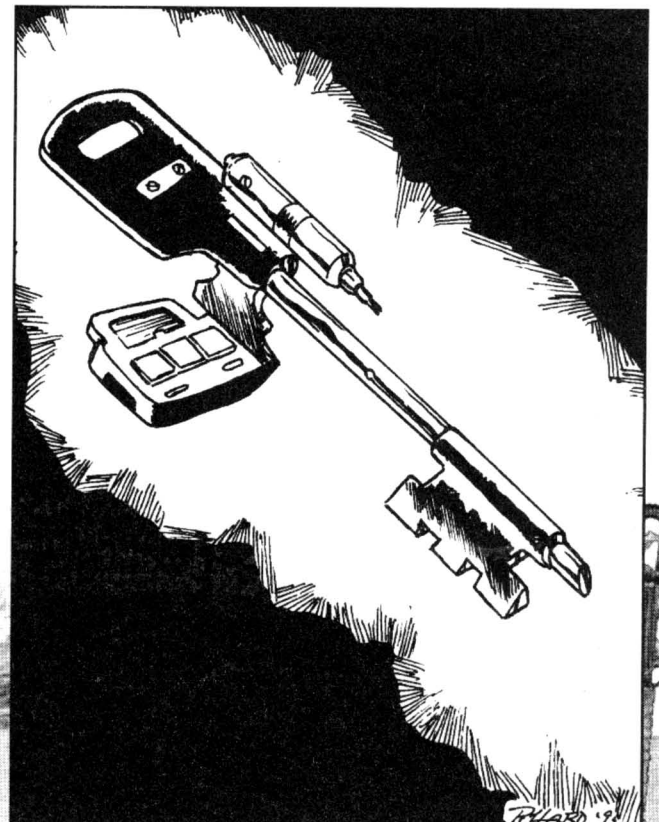
TN  
13  
9  
7  
5

## Bounty

**Solving the puzzles:** 1 red chip per puzzle to whoever figures it out.

**Getting information from Burke:** 1 white chip.

**Getting the key and instructions for its use:** 1 red chip.



# End of the Trail







## Chapter Four:

# End of the Trail



This is it. The last stop on the posse's trail and the big climax to *Something About a Sword*.

Hopefully, the heroes possess the key to Eliot's lock box and the information that the Templar's hiding place was in a water tower somewhere in Rock Springs. If they don't, they might well be doomed. The fight they're about to get into is nasty. If they don't have the EMP device, and probably Evanor as well, they're likely screwed.

### Hitting the Trail

Before the heroes set out for Rock Springs, they might want to ask some of the Last Chancers some questions. If they ask about Apfeltech, they just get blank stares. No one here (except Burke) has ever heard of it. About Rock Springs, the locals think the danger comes from the growing mutant horde. They have no idea of the true dangers there, though they don't recall hearing of anyone ever living there, even though it wasn't nuked in the War.

### Rock Springs

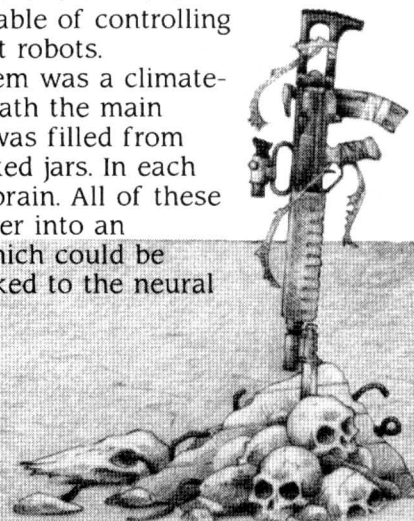
Even as the second largest city in Wyoming, Rock Springs didn't exactly qualify as a first-strike target for the Apocalypse. Southern Alliance planners had the city near the bottom of their list of follow-up targets, but since the world went to Hell on a rocket sled once the bombs started dropping, they never got quite that far down the list.

The bunker bigwigs would have changed that assessment if they had known what was hidden beneath the streets of this out of the way place.


An innocuous brick building in downtown Rock Springs served as the headquarters of Apfeltech, a small-time computer hardware developer. At least that's the appearance it gave to the outside world. Behind the shabby lobby and offices with threadbare carpets was a state-of-the-art electronics and robotics laboratory. Apfeltech was a division of Home Electronics Industries, which in turn, through a series of dummy corporations, was a subsidiary of the bio-engineering giant Pentacorp (for more on Pentacorp take a look in *The Wasted West*).

Just prior to the war, the scientists at Apfeltech had been hard at work on a neural network computer that could be used to boost its user's mental capacities. The system was developed with military applications in mind. A single operator hooked to one of these computers would be capable of controlling dozens of remote combat robots.

The heart of this system was a climate-controlled room far beneath the main laboratories. This room was filled from ceiling to floor with racked jars. In each jar was a single human brain. All of these brains were wired together into an enormous mass mind which could be accessed by anyone hooked to the neural interface in the labs.



# End of the Trail



## Fresh Meat

What made this use of human brains for computing power different from similar attempts by Hellstromme Industries was that these brains weren't zombified. They were living brains harvested from clones vat-grown by Pentacorp. Since the clones had never been awakened, the brains had no memories or structured thoughts—they were blank slates ready for use by the computer.

Unfortunately, this also meant the brains had no natural defenses against spiritual predators like manitous and the like. The chamber housing the brain banks was heavily warded and shielded against intruders from the spirit world.

## Meet the New Boss

On Judgment Day, the founder and lead researcher at Apfeltech, Rosalita Apfel, was hooked into the computer's neural interface. She was using it to run through some training exercises with the practice robots in the basement.

Although Rock Springs wasn't high on the Rebs' target list, the US missile silos outside of Flaming Gorge were. This area was blanketed with ghost-rock bombs. The supernatural shock wave from these weapons was felt in Rock Springs. One of its many effects was to collapse the arcane wards protecting the Apfeltech brain bank. Manitous which had been trying to penetrate these defenses for years swept in and possessed the brains.

This sudden onslaught of malicious spirits sent Rosalita into a coma. She awoke days later to find that the manitous had taken over the system and had already begun redesigning the practice robots into harvesters which in turn could gather the resources needed to build even more robots. Rosalita immediately tried to shut the system down, but found that the spirits had already dismantled most of the computer's built-in safeguards and—to her horror—had even hard-wired her into the system.

There was one defense mechanism that the manitous hadn't been able to get around: the deadman's switch. Rosalita had installed this system for just such an emergency. If the user of the neural interface ever flat-lined, the computer was hard-wired to dump gallons of acid into the brain bank; destroying the brains. It was a stand-off; she couldn't escape, and the manitous couldn't kill her without destroying themselves.

## Chop Shop

Large clouds of radioactive fallout from the detonations of other towns and targets nearby forced most of the population of Rock Springs to move away in the days shortly after the war. Those who didn't leave were quickly overwhelmed by the mechanical monstrosities which swarmed up from below the city streets.

The robots' victims were hauled back to the robotics lab. There they were dismembered, and their body parts used as components in the biomechanical abominations being assembled in the Apfeltech basement. The brains of most victims were added to the brain bank. This has been the fate of all who have run afoul of Rock Springs' mechanical inhabitants since the war ended—all except Eliot Ritter.

## On the Move

The number of robotic creatures in Rock Springs has grown in the years since the Last War. So much so that they have nearly exhausted the resources available in the city. They've still got plenty of bulk materials like scrap metal, but the delicate electronics needed to create more robots are scarcer than hen's teeth. The city's supply of TVs, radios, and home computers was used up long ago—soon the metallic horde will need to expand its territory to gain new sources of electronics.

If the posse fails to destroy the evil growing in Rock Springs, the countryside will soon be crawling with the mass mind's mechanical shock troops.

## The Knight Templar

Eliot Ritter had been a Templar for nearly three years when he made his final journey to Rock Springs four months ago. During the time he wore the tabard, he investigated every crevasse, scrub forest, and urban ruin within a few days' ride or walk of his home town of Jarrett. The survivors of the Last War knew Eliot Ritter well, as did the shadowy creatures that the War had spawned. The first group welcomed him whenever he came through, and the second group knew to stay out of his way.

Eliot knew he was just one man; he had no great resources he could count on—no army like Throckmorton, no legion of rad-priests like Rasmussen. But he also knew that as a wearer of the Templar cross, his duty was to push back the power of the Reckoners wherever he was able. He picked his battles carefully, and like most people, largely avoided Rock Springs.



# End of the Trail

Two months ago, in pursuit of a raiding band that had made an attempt against the Last Chance, Eliot Ritter found himself approaching the abandoned city.

He quickly lost the trail of the raiders, but like most who entered Rock Springs, they never emerged again. Eliot did find huge blood stains and leftover "parts" of the raiders, however. His subsequent investigations in the area told him there were bizarre metallic creatures—robots mostly but with grisly human parts either stuck or attached to their frameworks. There were too many of them for him to fight, even with Evanor, but fortunately, it seemed the creatures were content to stay in Rock Springs. For a while, at least.

So Eliot establish a hideout on the outskirts of the city and studied them. That's when he decided he needed an EMP to take the robots out and get to whatever was controlling them.

## Welcome to Brainville

### *Fear Level 5*

Once the posse determines that it must go to Rock Springs, there are a number of ways in which it can approach the city. How the characters make their approach depends largely on what they know, and what they've obtained.

If they possess the acetate map, and have successfully located the hideout on it, they know where to start in Rock Springs. There is further information there, including the rest of Ritter's journal.

If they possess the key (but not the map) and know how to use it and what to look for, Ritter's hideout is not on their itinerary, but they can use the key to approach the hiding place for the box that holds the sword.

### Approaching Rock Springs

Use the following description for the city:

*From the outside, Rock Springs does not appear to have been nuked. There is a ghost-rock storm to the south, but it does not hover over the city itself; many multi-story buildings still stand, and there is an extensive railyard to the southwest. The city is divided by a narrow river that flows northwest to southeast.*

Regardless of their direction of approach, the city appears the same—a sprawling ruin scarred by conventional bombing and fires. It is abandoned but most buildings still stand.

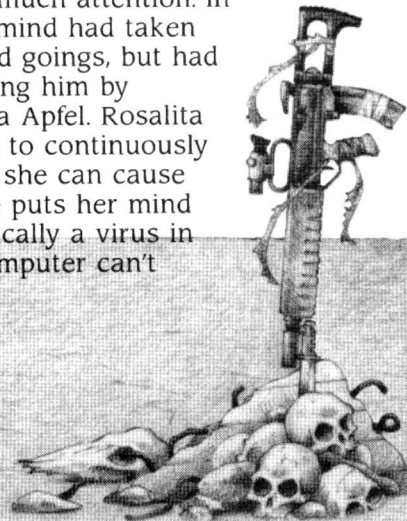


### Eliot Ritter's Hideout

After his first visit, Ritter realized that to remain in the city for any length of time, he'd need a bolt-hole to rest while performing his reconnaissance. He chose an abandoned water-tower in the Blairtown section of the city overlooking the rail yards. The party should be able to spot it easily enough by climbing to a high place and making a Fair (5) *Cognition* roll.

During each foray into Rock Springs, Eliot made his way to this tower and used it as a base, a wall against which he could put his back, and a vantage point to view the city and its bizarre inhabitants.

It was Eliot's belief that he had made these visits without attracting much attention. In fact, the Apfeltech mass mind had taken notice of his comings and goings, but had been prevented from killing him by interference from Rosalita Apfel. Rosalita doesn't have the strength to continuously fight the mass mind, but she can cause problems for it when she puts her mind to it. The scientist is basically a virus in the system which the computer can't eradicate.



# End of the Trail

## The Water Tower

The water tower, originally part of the Wasatch rail yards below, is a tank twenty feet in diameter and thirty feet in height on the top of a framework forty feet in the air. It can be reached by means of a single ladder on the southwest corner attached to one of four support pylons. The ladder extends to the roof of the tower, and gives access to a trap door. There is a similar ladder on the inside of the tower, extending to the floor of the tank.

The tower itself is long since empty of water. During Eliot's trips to Rock Springs, he gathered scaffolding material and sheets of scrap metal, which he has used to build an interior structure around the inside walls.

Climbing the tower requires a Foolproof (3) climbing roll for each member of the posse. Make a single Incredible (11) search roll for the mass mind, using a scavenger bot's search score (see page 41), to notice something happening at the tower. If it's successful, the brain sends out a patrol of four scavengers which arrives within an hour.

The following description can be used when the posse gains admission to the water tower:

*The inside of the tank is a maze of scaffolding, catwalks, and makeshift platforms. In the dim light from outside from the open trapdoor and your flashlights, the view is of a frightening place, with lurid shadows cast by the haphazard furnishings. Every step you take is echoed like the pounding of a hammer.*

## What's In The Tower

Other than the place Eliot slept, the tank contains little of value. Various junk and scavenged material from Rock Springs, perhaps meant for Willy's junk yard in Jarrett, or for the hermit Burke, is stored in semi-organized fashion on the various platforms and scaffolds. Junkers can make Fair (5) scroungin' rolls to find structural or mechanical components.

Ritter's sleeping space in the tank is located on a platform a man's height below the roof of the tank. It is in the northeast corner of the tank, facing the town, and can be reached by a counterclockwise walkway attached to the interior. A section of the tank wall has been cut away and replaced by

a set of metal shutters. A person standing on the platform can unlatch the shutters and view Rock Springs.

The sleeping area has a bedroll and a few days' supply of dried food. There is also a whetstone and a small bottle of oil. Judging by the dust, nothing appears to have been disturbed for several months.

## The Cache

If the heroes search the immediate area of the platform, have them make a Hard (9) search roll. Anyone who succeeds locates a sliding mechanism in the floor of the platform. A Fair (5) lockpickin' or tinkerin' roll is sufficient to open the compartment. More action-oriented heroes can bash it open with 10 pints of damage.

Inside, the posse finds \$200 in NA silver and a cardstock envelope. The envelope contains Eliot Ritter's notes on the creatures of Apfeltech.

## The Notes

Eliot was no dummy. He knew it would take an army or a really clever plan. The trouble with the army was that it would not only get people killed, it would provide the robots with more "people parts" if they were defeated. So he opted for the "clever" angle. That's where Burke and the EMP device came in. (The EMP device can be found on Eliot's body. See page 42 for the details, Marshal.)

**Note:** June 23, 2094 is an arbitrary date for Eliot's departure from Jarrett. Choose any date that fits your campaign, but the timing of Eliot's travels should be maintained.

**25 June.** Reached Last Chance midafternoon. Tom knows where I'm headed, and he says that I won't come back if I go. He's weird like that. Still, I can't let the creatures spread out of Rock Springs.

**25 June.** Later. Spent the day with Burke. He was happy with the sensor array, but overjoyed with the four model train cars. Funny thing for most people, but not for Burke—what he needs is far different from what he wants, or doesn't want. We talked about Rock Springs. He's dead set against it. He called me a martyr, a damn fool, and a dozen other things. He even said that I was throwing my life away because I had nothing left to live for. I should've knocked him on his ass for bringing up Val and the children. He has no right.

At least he made the box for me. And the generator. Hope it works.



# End of the Trail

**27 June.** On the road. Took lunch near Point of Rocks. Bitter Creek is running more clear than I remember. It doesn't taste as much like aluminum. I refilled the canteens, and when I come back—if I come back—I'll let Tom know.

**27 June.** Later. At Rock Springs. Tired, not much to say. The cache is undisturbed.

**29 June.** After watching these machines for the last few weeks, I've noticed there are two distinct types.

The first type is some sort of scavenger, like a rug cleaner or a vacuum. There doesn't seem to be any regular schedule for this type, they just move around the city, picking up anything in their path. There was a group of three that passed near the water tower late this morning. They clamped on to the rails and cleared off some debris that was left by a storm. They don't look too heavily armed.

The second type is more dangerous. These things are one-of-a-kind, some kind of combat robots. Some have sets of claws or pincers. Some have guns. Some have wheels, some walk like huge men. Every one is different, and they're all dangerous.

I'd better describe one of them, in case something happens to me. One of them caught

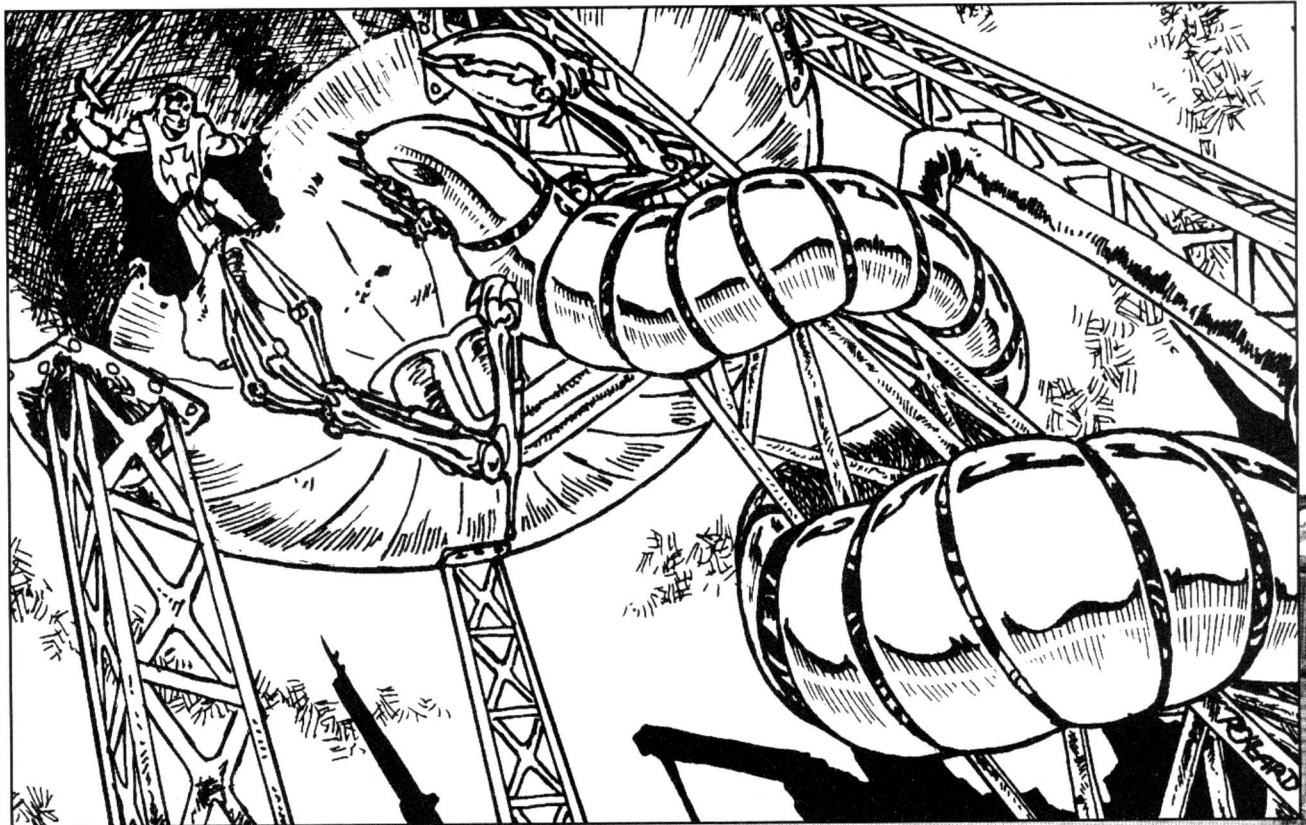
me following the scavengers on my last trip here. It was like a spider, or a segmented worm, all made of metal and plastic—although I saw some human parts mixed up in its innards. Its weapons looked like big dental drills. It was plated. Bullets would have bounced right off. Thank God I had Evanor. I took the parts to Burke but he didn't want them. Said they were defective. Willy didn't want them either. Too high-tech for him. Sold them to Rick instead.

Later. I was just getting some shut-eye when I swear I saw a pack of metal crows flying over the water tower.

**30 June.** The creatures must be controlled from somewhere. Some sort of "mass mind." Burke said there was a high-tech company here. Apfeltech. That's got to be where the central mind is. If I can EMP the bots, or maybe the mind itself, I can probably hack them to pieces with Evanor.

Later. Spotted ten men on foot. Look like mutants. There was a Doomsayer with them. Or maybe a Doombringer. Could they be in league with these things? Good God. I hope not. If the Cult of Doom gets this technology...

I'd best strike tonight.



# End of the Trail

## Searching The Town

The heroes have two objectives: find the sword and find the Apfeltech mass mind. The first task is relatively easy. See **Using the Key**, below. The second task is a little harder. Apfeltech can be found by simply roaming the city and scoring 10 successes on a Hard (9) *search* roll, attempted once per hour. This is dangerous because the party must dodge robot patrols all the while (see **The Welcoming Committee**). An easier way of finding Apfeltech is to look in an old phone book and scan the steet address. It takes a single Hard (9) *search* roll to find a phone book that hasn't been ruined by the weather.

### Using The Key

If the posse has the key (and God help them if they don't), they can use it to find the location of the lock box. If the posse hasn't yet figured out how to make use of it, it's time to clue them in somehow. Make the sound more obvious or add a vibration or some other behavior to draw the attention of whichever character is carrying it. ("What's *that* in your pocket?")

In order to locate the box, the posse needs to accumulate 5 successes on the wielder's *search* rolls. Only the person carrying the key can make the roll, and he may only do so at the top of each hour (until the key gets within 100 meters of the lock box). For instance, if the hero gets a success and raise on his first attempt, and then a success and two raises on his second, the heroes have accumulated a total of five successes toward this total. Use only the highest *search* total in the posse to figure this. Anywhere within Rock Springs, the TN for these rolls is 5.

The key goes on full automatic with the fifth success, indicating that the box is within 100 yards of the key's present position. At that point the heroes have to use the old Mk I eyeball to spot the sword.

If the character holding the key goes bust, it means the posse has gotten way off track in finding the box. Cross out all of the successes the posse has already achieved. If they mess up their very first *search* roll in Rock Springs, they're out in left field somewhere. Require a TN of 9 for the next roll in searching for the box.

If the heroes play a hunch and head straight for Apfeltech, they're in luck. The key starts buzzing up a storm as soon as they enter the complex.

## Fighting In The Streets

As your heroes set out into the city to find the sword, give them the following description to set the mood:

*The city of Rock Springs is never quiet. As you travel through the streets, empty of life, there is the constant hum of machinery. Shapes and figures are picked out in stark shadows and it seems as if nothing is ever quite where it was when you last looked. It is as if the city is one vast machine—a living entity; a malevolent thing watching your every move.*

### The Welcoming Committee

As the group moves about the city, they are sure to encounter some of Rock Springs' unique denizens. For the most part, the heroes should avoid them as much as possible. Even though they can likely win an encounter or two, the more they fight, the more they'll be worn down for the big finale. And they really want to be as fresh and full of Fate Chips as possible when they run into Malias and his mutie horde.

Make a 1d10 roll once every half hour as the posse moves around Rock Springs. If they are just gallivanting around making no attempt to hide themselves, add +1 to the roll. If they actively try to use *sneak* skills or special abilities, have them make Onerous (7) rolls. Each success and raise on the roll lowers the encounter roll by -1, but use the lowest total in the group to determine this. In addition, add +1 to the roll for every encounter the posse has yet had. If they've fought three bands of robots, it's a +3. The more they meet, the worse it gets. There are no other modifiers to the roll. The robots can see in the dark, for example, so there is no real difference between day and night.

### Patrol Encounters

#### Roll

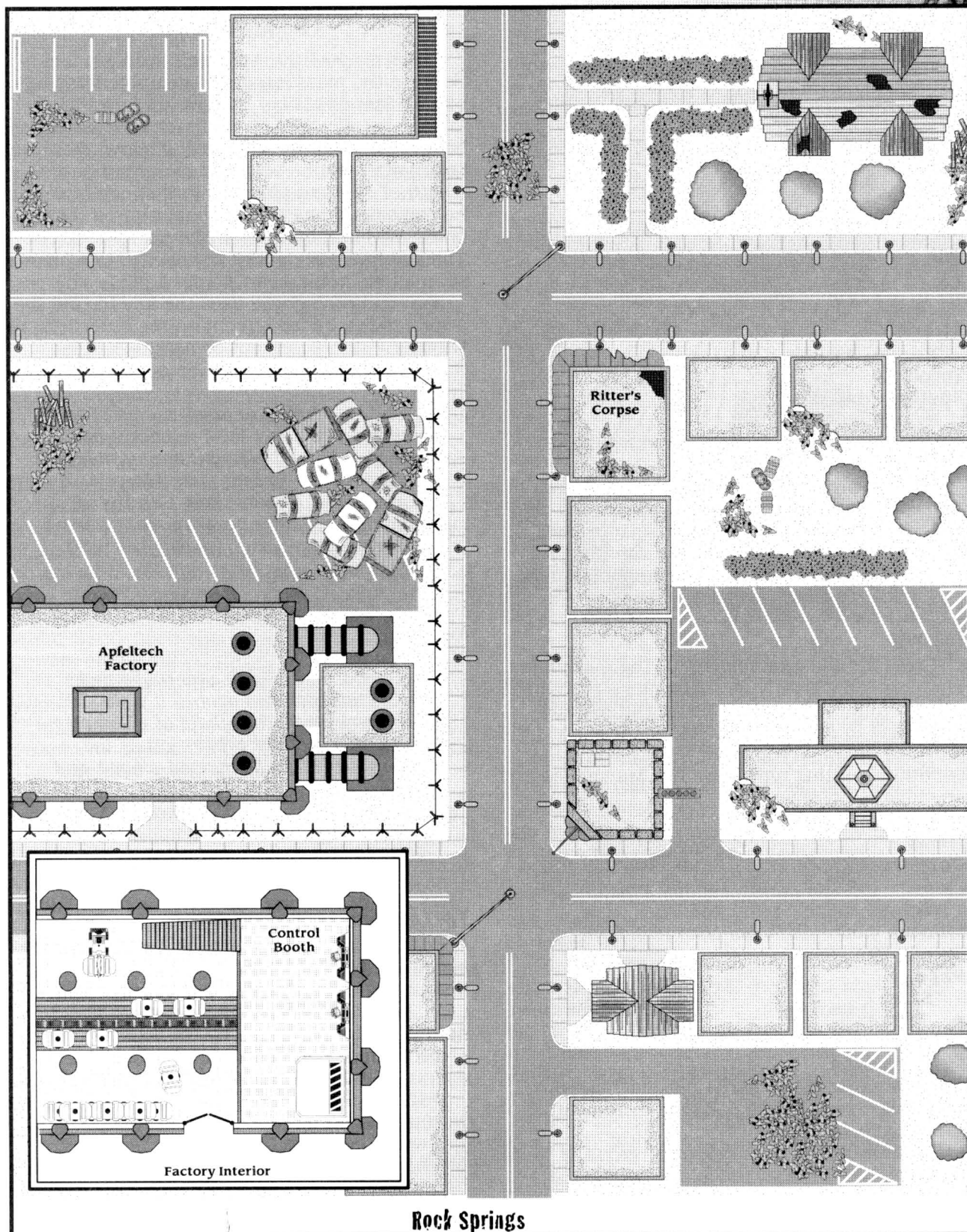
1-3  
4-6  
7-8  
9  
10+

#### Patrol

The posse encounters nothing.  
A group of 1d4 scavengers.  
A single combat.  
A group of 1d4 combots.  
A group of 1d6 combots.



# End of the Trail



Rock Springs

Marshal: 4i

# End of the Trail

## Scavengers

Scavengers are small gatherer robots. They scurry around the city scrounging for raw materials used in the robotics factory in the basement of Apfeltech headquarters. They are built for climbing and equipped with mechanical blades and cutting torches.

### Profile

**Corporeal:** D:3d8, N:3d8, Q:3d8, S:4d8, V:3d8  
Climbin' 5d8, dodge 4d8, fightin': brawlin' 3d8

**Mental:** C:3d6, K:3d4, M:—, Sm:3d6, Sp:—  
Search 4d6, scroungin' 4d6

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 4

**Wind:** NA

**Terror:** 3

### Special Abilities:

**Armor:** 2

**Damage:** Blades (STR+1d8), torch (3d8 AP2)

### Fearless

**Summoning:** When the scavengers detect an enemy, they automatically summon a single combot that arrives within 2d20 rounds.

**Wallcrawler:** The scavengers can cling to nearly any surface with a combination of hooks, cables, and suction cups.

## Combots

These are the foot soldiers of the mass mind. They can vary greatly in shape and size, but the most common ones are bipedal and roughly humanoid in shape. The stats for these are provided below. If you want to throw in a few variations on this type, have fun Marshal. Nearly anything is possible.

### Profile

**Corporeal:** D:3d8, N:2d6, Q:3d8, S:4d12, V:2d12+4  
Climbin' 2d6, dodge 4d6, fightin': brawlin' 3d6,  
shootin': machine-gun 4d8

**Mental:** C:3d6, K:3d4, M:—, Sm:3d10, Sp:—  
Search 4d6

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 7

**Terror:** 5

### Special Abilities:

**Armor:** 4

**Damage:** Claws (STR+1d8), machine-gun (4d8, Speed 1, ROF 6, Range Increment 20)

### Fearless

**Summoning:** If a combot or group of combots senses defeat, one member of the group sends a summons that is answered in 2d20 rounds by 1d4 more combots.

## The Hiding Place

Ritter reached the Apfeltech headquarters because the mass mind was distracted wiping out the last of Malias' mutant horde. Badly injured, he managed to break into the factory's boiler room through a busted window. With fading strength, he wrapped his sword in a length of silk and placed it in the lock box. Then he say quietly and tried to heal himself, but failed. Within minutes, the Templar passed on. The key to Evanor's lock box melted down as soon as his noble heart stopped.

Assuming the posse uses the key to find the sword, they'll be led directly to the busted window in the basement of Apfeltech. Read them the following description of the scene:

*The key leads you to a battered office building. The street-level windows are all broken, and the basement level visible through them appears to be a large storage room of some sort. Cartons of molding stationery, boxes of leaky pens, and assorted other office supplies litter the room.*

When they crawl inside, continue with the following:

*After a brief search, you find a male corpse half-propped against a wall. The dead man wears the tabard of a Templar and a Masonic ring. What's left of the body has been badly mauled, singed, and beaten.*

*Beside the body are two boxes. One is long and thin, the other square and taped shut.*

## The Lock Box

Burke's lock box is just a bit longer than the sword itself, with a handle on one side like an instrument case. The lock is electronic and cannot be picked or circumvented by any normal means. Eliot had Burke build the box to prevent any but the most determined from opening it without the special keys.

If the key is used, Evanor sits within it, wrapped in a length of silk. The pommel is still wet with Eliot' blood.

Without the key, opening the box is a much more difficult proposition. The characters must either take the box back to Burke, or invent



# End of the Trail

some sort of incredible device (most likely a junker device) that can decode the IR pulses that trigger the lock (it works something like the remote control to a television).

Trying to force the box open triggers the booby-trap inside. Explosives lining the case cause 4d20 damage with a burst radius of 5 yards. An incendiary device is also triggered. It is supposed to melt the sword, and in fact, could melt the engine out of a hover tank. Evanor is magical, however, and the incendiary device won't actually hurt it. Neither Eliot nor Burke ever suspected it was this tough.

## Evanor

Finding the sword might not be the most important goal of this epic tale, but it is very likely the greatest treasure some lucky character is going to gain before he joins a thousand other heroes in Boot Hill.

Evanor has the following statistics: Defensive Bonus: +5; Speed 1; Damage STR+3d12. The weapon's basic statistics work for anyone who wields it. However, its true advantages are only present when in the hands of a Templar or others who are divinely inspired by the forces of good. Good Doomsayers can also use it, as can old-fashioned *blessed* (such as those from the Weird West). Such characters can call upon powers of the sword simply by spending a Fate Chip. The color of the chip determines the sword's effect.

**White:** Each white chip spent increases the sword's AP by 1 and adds +2 to the damage total. The user may spend as many white chips at once as he wishes, up to his *faith* level. These may be spent *after* the sword has hit its target.

**Red:** The wielder can move the sword with lightning speed, allowing him to make two attacks per action. It also makes it hard to defend against. Lower any opponent's effective skill by -2 when figuring TNs. This effect lasts for a number of actions equal to the character's *faith*. This is very tiring, however. When the effect ends, the user suffers 2d6 Wind.

**Blue:** The sword can heal by transferring the vitality of any opponent it has wounded to the wielder. To use it, the sword-bearer must first strike a wound on a living creature. Undead and machines have no life-energy to siphon. Once wounds have been determined, the wielder can spend a blue chip and heal that number of wounds to his own body (not someone else's—this is an instantaneous effect). He may spread the vitality out among multiple wounded areas if he wishes.

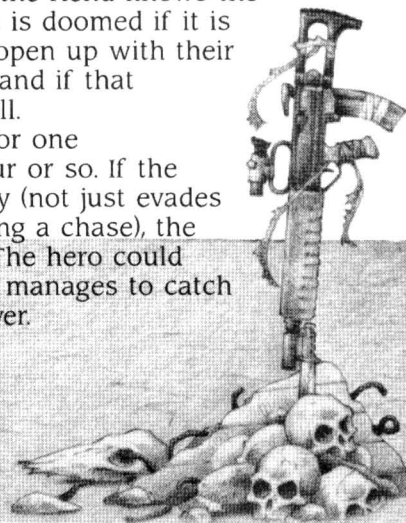


**Legend:** If a Legend Chip is spent while the user is facing an evil supernatural being, the sword begins to glow with an unearthly white light. This takes 2 full rounds, ending on the same segment in which it began 2 rounds later. During this time, the wielder can do nothing other than issue a litany of offenses to the damned creature. This means the sword-bearer can make an *overawe* roll on each of his actions of those two rounds but nothing else.

The next hit on the fiend that causes even a single wound automatically kills it (even if it would otherwise be immune to this kind of damage).

The only catch is that the moment the hero starts uttering his curse, the fiend knows the sword's power and that it is doomed if it is hit. Most such creatures open up with their most devastating attack, and if that doesn't work, run like Hell.

The power only lasts for one "encounter," up to an hour or so. If the evil entity truly gets away (not just evades the hero for a while during a chase), the power no longer works. The hero could spend another chip if he manages to catch the creature again, however.



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## The Second Box

The second box contains Burke's EMP generator. It looks like a miniature World War II sea mine—a basketball-size metal globe covered in metal prongs. Tough wires run between the prongs in an indecipherable pattern.

In the center of the globe is a big red button. When activated, it sends out a tremendous EMP that fries all lesser electronic devices (watches, calculators, pacemakers) within 100 yards.

It automatically shuts down all other electronics in the same range for 2d6 rounds. Electronics covered in military-grade shielding are safe unless they're within 5 yards of the bomb. Then they're fried, too.

## Showdown!

We're almost at the end, Marshal. The big showdown where everything comes together in one big fight to the finish. But first we have to get the posse to Apfeltech HQ and the mass mind. Fortunately, Rosalita Apfel herself helps us do just that.

As the heroes emerge from the building where the sword was hidden, read the following:

*As you crawl out of the window, you see a combot standing directly over you. You freeze, then watch in surprise as it turns its head slowly as if to say no. Its arms reach down toward you, palms up, as if offering you assistance.*

*Suddenly, a shoulder-mounted gun of some sort pivots left and fires! To your shock and relief, it blasts a scavenger emerging from a nearby alley. The combot then steps backward and motions for you to follow it.*

Give the heroes roughly twenty seconds of real time to decide. If they are still dithering around when time's up, the combot sputters violently, as if fighting some internal bug (Rosalita is fighting off a legion of manitous, after all!), and then turns its shoulder-gun on the party. Before a fight breaks out, let Rosalita regain control. The 'bot reaches up and bends the barrel of the gun, ruining it, then runs in the direction of Apfeltech HQ. With any luck, the heroes follow it into the final encounter.

## That's it! I'm Outtie!

What's left of Rosalita Apfel's good side is about to lure the hero's to the factory so that they can kill her, thereby destroying the mass mind and freeing her from a decade of mental slavery.

If the posse decides they've had enough and decides to leave, remind them that the evil here will spread soon. And if the Cult of Doom finds a way to replicate this incredible technology, well, let's just say the Wasted West is going to get a lot more Wasted in the future.

In any event, if your posse is Hell bent on leaving, navigate them by the Apfeltech HQ anyway. There they'll see several trashed combots and a pile of dead mutants. Malias is already inside and preparing to make a deal with the mass mind. If the posse won't go in now, it's time to find a new bunch of heroes, Marshal.

## Apfeltech HQ

As the heroes approach the factory, read the following:

*The combot limps down the street—it seems to have been wounded prior to your meeting. Its metallic head pans right to left as it hobbles along, obviously looking for danger. None appears, and within minutes, it points to an old fenced-in factory. The fence has long since been demolished, but the building within seems in good shape. Ominous clanging comes from inside.*

*Near the large entrance are several piles of smoking slag, burning scrap, and charred body parts. Mingled among the junk piles are the bodies of mutants. It seems the Doombringer you've heard so much about is already here...*

## Pact of Evil

It's time, Marshal. Break out the battle mat and the miniatures. The heroes are about to engage in one Hell of a fight.

As they enter the factory, whether they sneak in or not, they see Malias and his mutant horde standing in the center of the factory floor. Before them is another smoking combot. Surrounding them are four more combots, all poised to strike, but curiously holding their attacks. Malias has proven his strength (via the nuke spell) and gained the attention of the Apfeltech mass mind.



# End of the Trail

Describe this scene to the heroes, then allow them to overhear the following before they take any action:

*From the center of the factory floor comes a raspy voice. It can only be that of the Doombringer.*

*"...and spread your minions all over the West! That is the deal I offer you, Apfel. Else, my own minions and I will nuke your factory and everything in it!"*

*A thousand groaning computer voices respond from speakers placed in the corners of the building and the combots themselves. "We sense the truth in what you say, Doombringer. Now prove your loyalty to Apfeltech by destroying these intruders."*

*At that, the combots spin directly towards you!*

## The Fight

The whole gang turns to face the heroes now. There are four combots, a pack of mutants, and the Doombringer. If the heroes defeated the mutant horde at the Gas-N-Go, there are only a dozen. If they did not, there are 24 (a dozen healthy survivors plus a dozen new recruits).

If you feel this is too much for the party, see **The Cavalry?**, below. If this force is too small (that's one tough, posse, Marshal!), allow another couple of combots to arrive on the scene to protect their master.

At any rate, once the combots are destroyed, four more arrive. This continues until the heroes figure out how they need to get to the control booth where the mass mind oversees the creation of its minions. A Hard (9) *Cognition* roll during the fight can spy a dark mass behind the one-way glass of the control booth.

## The Cavalry?

Rosalita Apfel is doing her best to override the system. She's been practicing for a decade, and by now can control one combot at a time for about 5 minutes, before the legion of manitous living in the Apfeltech brains overwhelms her.

When the fight starts, have one of the combots shudder then turn on its companions. It blasts whoever seems to be doing the most damage to the heroes.

If it is destroyed, it takes Rosalita another 1d4 rounds to gain control of another.

## The Bad Guys

The mass mind keeps its best combots on duty in the factory. The first four the party encounters are these beefed-up versions. If you allow additional robots to show up in time, use the stats we gave you on page 42.

### Profile (Guard Combots)

These bad boys are humanoid with shoulder-mounted guns and claws fitted with tungsten blades (hence the AP value).

**Corporeal:** D:3d10, N:2d6, Q:3d8, S:4d12, V:2d12+4  
Climbin' 2d6, dodge 4d6, fightin': brawlin' 4d6,  
shootin': machine-gun 4d10

**Mental:** C:3d6, K:3d4, M:—, Sm:3d10, Sp:—  
Search 4d6

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 8

**Terror:** 5

### Special Abilities:

**Armor:** 5

**Damage:** Claws (STR+1d8; AP 2), machine-gun (4d8, Speed 1, ROF 6, Range Increment 20)

### Fearless

**Summoning:** If a combot or group of combots senses defeat, one member of the group sends a summons that is answered in 2d20 rounds by 1d4 more combots.

### Mutant Grunts (12 or 24)

These grunts are terrified of the combots. They had no idea what they were getting into. If Malias is put down (whether he's killed permanently or not), they break and run for the nearest exit.

**Corporeal:** D:3d6, N:2d6, S:3d10, Q:2d8, V:3d10  
Climbin' 3d6, fightin': various 4d6, sneak 3d6,  
throwin': unbalanced 4d6

**Mental:** C:3d6, K:1d4, M:2d8, Sm:1d6, Sp:2d6  
Area knowledge 3d4, guts 3d6, scroungin' 4d6,  
survival 3d6, trackin' 3d6

**Edges:** Thick skinned 3

**Hindrances:** Ugly as sin -1

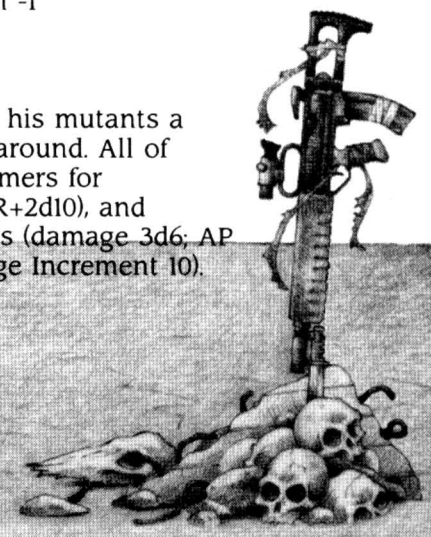
**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** 16

**Gear:** Malias has armed his mutants a little better this time around. All of them have sledgehammers for destroying robots (STR+2d10), and pistols with AP rounds (damage 3d6; AP 2; Speed 1; ROF 1; Range Increment 10).

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## Malias

Malias wants to win at any cost. He fights to the death, targeting troublesome Templars first.

**Corporeal:** D:2d10, N:2d6, S:2d6, Q:3d8, V:2d12  
Climbin' 1d6, drivin': car 4d6, fightin': brawlin' 4d6, shootin': SMG 4d10, sneak 4d6

**Mental:** C:3d8, K:2d6, M:2d8 Sm:4d8 Sp:3d10  
Academia: occult 6d6, area knowledge Las Vegas 3d6, faith 6d10; guts 5d10, leadership 3d8, overawe 4d8, science: nuclear physics 3d6, scrutinize 2d8, search 4d8, survival 2d6

**Pace:** 6

**Strain:** 24 (he's already used 10 for two nukes)

**Size:** 6

**Wind:** NA

**Terror:** 7

**Special Abilities:**

**Extra Strain:** Rasmussen's latest crop of Doombringers have more energy than the average Doomsayer. Their Strain is equal to twice their *Vigor*.

**Invulnerability:** Doombringers can be "killed," but their atoms reassemble in 1d6 days.

**Spells:** atomic blast, fission, globs, ICBM, mutate, MIRV, nuke.

## Undead

**Weakness:** Only a Doomsayer can permanently destroy Malias. (Or Evanor, of course.)

**Coup:** The character gets 1 point of Armor when resisting radiation-based attacks, including spells of the Cult o' Doom.

## The Control Booth

Once, before the Last War, the Apfeltech control booth had a great view of the floor as well as a tremendous panoramic view of Rock Springs itself. When the windows were here, it looked out over the up-and-coming industrial center of Sweetwater County, and the beautiful Uinta Mountains to the west, which turn purple and indigo as the sun set beyond them.

The view today is somewhat different. Rock Springs is a nightmare of machinery, and the climatic changes caused by the War make the sunsets much less spectacular. Even so, the president of Apfeltech might enjoy a look out those windows...if she could turn around. That and the scavengers have long since boarded over the window with slabs of metal.

Steel stairs lead up to the control booth. It takes one entire round to climb them. The door to the booth itself is locked, but it is a simple one designed to keep roaming employees out. A bullet to the lock, a *Strength*-based damage roll of 10 or more, or a quick *lockpicking* roll gets it open in a jiffy.

## Steel Medusa

On the west side of the office, framed against the eerily lit walls, is a complex console. In front of it is an old computer chair, now wired to the floor and the console with dozens of tubes and wires. Its occupant, Rosalita Apfel, was, and is, the brains behind Apfeltech; but now she is more a prisoner of her company's technology than its master. Metal and plastic interfaces connect her to the chair, the desk, and assorted equipment scattered around the room. Conduits connect these machines through holes bored in the office walls. These lead to the brains buried deep in the Apfeltech corporate offices across town (they die quickly when Rosalita is slain and so aren't detailed in this adventure).

Have whoever sees her make a Hard (9) *guts* check as they realize the horror this poor woman has been through.

As the posse enters, a female voice whispers from the pale face of Rosalita. She says only "kill me." It has been a long time since she has

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# End of the Trail

spoken aloud. Her lips are stiff, her jaw muscles have atrophied, and her eyes are blinded by whatever light slips in from the open door of the control booth.

The sound comes from all around, though the human figure's lips do seem to move in sync with the speech.

## Oh No You Don't!

Before the posse transforms into a debating society, the group's junker begins sizing up how to disconnect her chair, or someone takes a shot at Rosalita's noggin, the mass mind sends a surge through its human host, stunning her. She's cooked for the rest of the encounter.

If she still controlled a combot, it turns on the party now. In addition, the back wall of the control booth is suddenly ripped apart by the biggest combot the group has seen yet! This one is shaped like a giant centipede with spikes for legs and a head the size of a Volkswagen. It rips into the control booth and seems to actually swallow Rosalita whole! In fact, it's using its head as a shield to protect her. This keeps it from biting, but it still uses its two spiny forearms to impale any characters who happen to be present.

To get to Rosalita, the party *must* defeat this thing. Its head completely covers her otherwise. Remember that shots *can* penetrate the head and hit Rosalita, though. Use the standard rules for cover found in the *Hell on Earth* rulebook.

## Profile (Giant Centipede)

**Corporeal:** D:3d10, N:2d6, Q:3d8, S:4d12+4, V:2d12+4

Climbin' 2d6, dodge 4d6, fightin': brawlin' 4d6, shootin': machine-gun 4d10

**Mental:** C:3d6, K:3d4, M:—, Sm:3d10, Sp:— Search 4d6

**Pace:** 6

**Size:** 14

**Terror:** 9

### Special Abilities:

**Armor:** 5

**Damage:** Forearm spikes (STR+2d10; AP 2; each spike may attack independently), bite (STR, though it can't use this attack in this scenario), grenade launcher (4d12; Shots 5; Speed 1; ROF 1; Range Increment 20; the centipede obviously can't use these in the control booth, but might chuck a few down onto the factory floor if characters are firing at it from there.)

**Fearless**

## Mercy Kill

When the heroes finally defeat everything we've thrown at them, the centipede raises its head in a groaning, screaming death throe and falls backwards off the factory roof. It falls to the street below in a massive crash that rattles the city and shakes the remaining windows from the factory walls.

The control booth is trashed, but Rosalita still breathes. As the party approaches, she tries to whisper one last message before she passes on:

*"You have no idea the good you've done this day. Now quickly, finish me before more of the robots come."*

Any attempts at removing Rosalita from her chair kill her. After thirteen years, her nervous system is too inter-connected with that of the mass mind to survive separation.

Regardless of how she dies, any robots in contact with the group freeze up and can be easily dispatched. Read the following:

*Rosalita gives you one last smile as the life fades from her frail body. As she slumps back into her chair, a mind-numbing metallic din rises up through the building and from the streets outside. A horrific metal shriek shakes the building to its very foundation, then echoes from a dozen sites around the ruined city. You are listening to a metal cacophony directly from Hell. It ends with a crescendo of collapsing metal that nearly deafens you. When your ears finally stop ringing, all is silent.*

## Bounty

Hang on, Marshal. We're going a little nuts here, but the group deserves it for finishing *this* adventure.

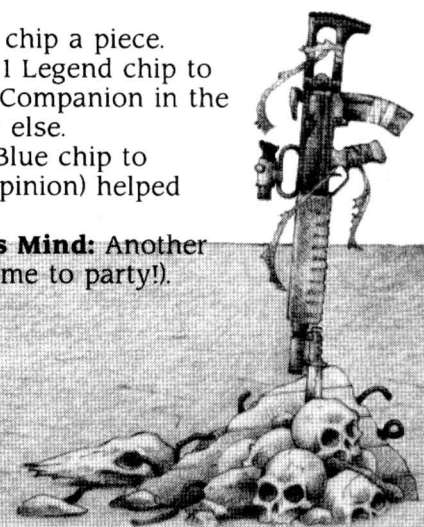
**Just Surviving:** 1 red chip a piece.

**Recovering Evanor:** 1 Legend chip to each Templar, squire, or Companion in the group. Blues to everyone else.

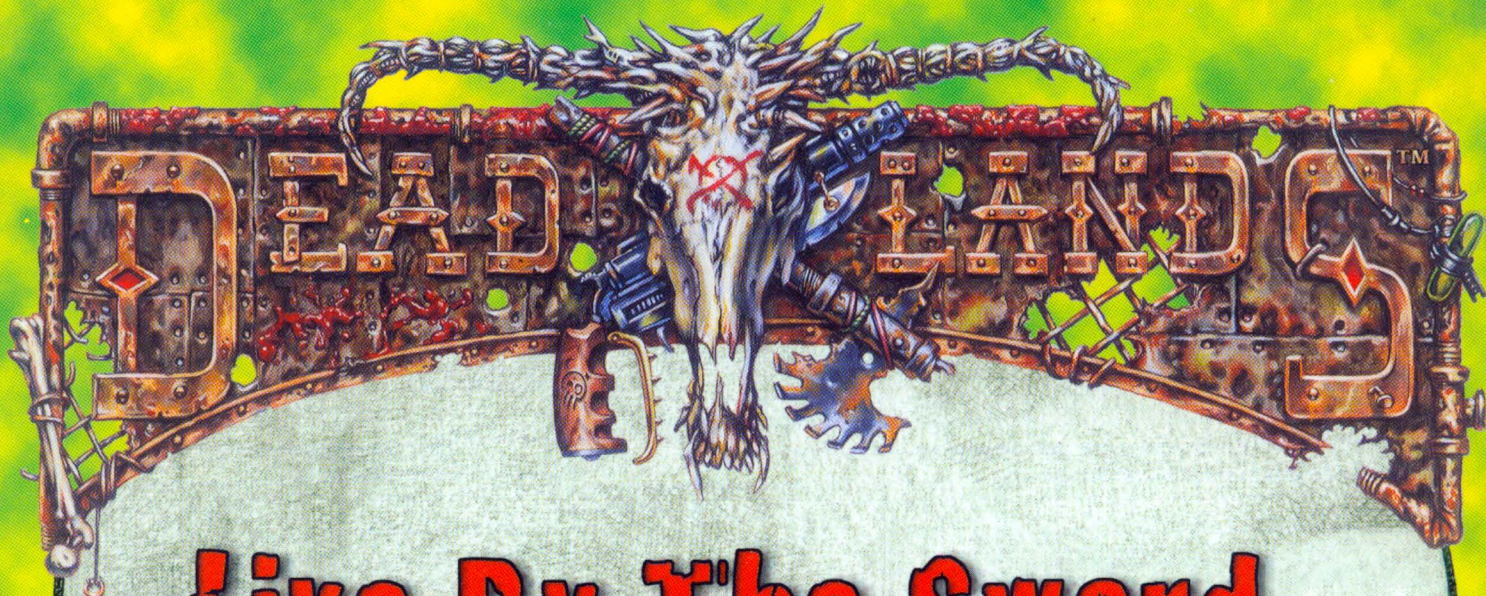
**Defeating Malias:** 1 Blue chip to everyone who (in your opinion) helped put him down.

**Destroying the Mass Mind:** Another Legend chip (woohoo! Time to party!).

**Marshal: 47**







# Live By The Sword...



...and you have a tendency to die by it! Heroes are rare in the Wasted West™, and the servants of the Reckoners would like to keep it that way. The people of the small survivor community of Jarrett, Wyoming had their own homegrown hero, the mysterious Templar, Eliot Ritter.

When Jarrett comes under attack by the forces of the Reckoning, Ritter vows to find the source of the evil and destroy it. He mounts up on a motorcycle, and zooms off to do battle—and that's the last that's seen of him.

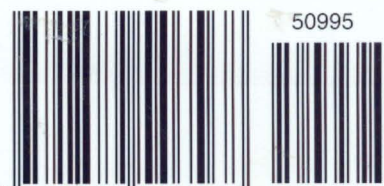
That's where the posse comes in. It seems Simon Mercer, the Templar's Grand Master, has had a disturbing vision about Ritter's sword—a sword that in the wrong hands could give the Reckoners a big boost (as if they need it). Simon needs someone to find the sword, and fast!

This adventure for the *Hell on Earth*™ roleplaying game pits your posse against hideous mutant attacks, rad-priests, and even peace-loving hippies in a desperate race to find the mysterious sword, lost somewhere in the ruins of western Wyoming. Only steely determination, a sharp eye, and a strong sword arm can prevent a terrible menace from being unleashed on the Wasted West. Think you're up to the task, brainer?



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