

DEAD LANDS NOIR



**THE OLD ABSINTHE
HOUSE BLUES**



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Night Stalkers: David Fry (Jacob Whateley), Terry McGregor (Terence "Mac" McGregor)



THE OLD ABSINTHE HOUSE BLUES

An Adventure for *Deadlands Noir*

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DEDICATION

To Dad. My favorite crooner.



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THE OLD ABSINTHE HOUSE BLUES

Delilah Starr was an ebon goddess on a dirty stage, belting out tunes to the locals every Friday and Saturday night at the Old Absinthe House. Delilah loved Bourbon Street. She sang to the drunks and the sailors and the roustabouts and they sang back. They sang in quiet murmurs and lewd catcalls and the clink of the ice in their glasses. Delilah loved the chatter—even while she sang. She loved everything about Bourbon Street, and she tweeted at them like a canary out of its cage.

A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

But Delilah wasn't always Delilah. A while back she was little Rose Marie LaGrange, a sharecropper's daughter from a little town called Manchac, northwest of New Orleans. Rose Marie was always good with numbers, and when Hexaco Oil came to Manchac six months ago she was one of the many locals hired to work in their camp.

Rose Marie's work got her noticed and soon after she was offered a job at the corporate office in New Orleans. It paid well and offered great status for the little girl from a small town, and she was happy shuffling papers for several months. Till she shuffled the *wrong* papers. Four months ago Rose Marie stumbled on reports from other towns where Hexaco had installed their new experimental oil rigs—courtesy of the latest patent science—and how the local water had been poisoned. Seems the rigs were more efficient but leaked spook juice and oil that killed off fish and shellfish the locals depend on.

Rose Marie made the mistake of telling her hot-headed brother, Delmer, about Hexaco's little problem. He took a flatboat out to the pumping stations one night, confirmed the damage, and realized the volatile

mixture was doing more than just killing the wildlife—it was transforming it. Spook juice and greed make a deadly cocktail and Delmer had enough knowledge of hoodoo to realize it.

The righteous but rash young man decided to confront the men at the rig. One of them, Deacon Smith, was a big bruiser of a man and beat most of the fire out of Delmer's crusade. When Delmer staggered back home that night, beaten and bloody, Rose Marie was frantic. She put her brother on the back of her family's horse and rode out into the woods to Father Etienne, head of her church. Her *voodoo* church. The houngan did what he could for Delmer, then the three prayed to the *loas* to protect their town from Hexaco's evil.

The next morning, Delmer, mostly healed from Father Etienne's midnight mass, asked his sister to go back to work and do a little spying to find out where else these new experimental rigs had been constructed.

Rose is an amazing singer but a terrible actor. Hexaco's top man in New Orleans, Josh Thaler, grew suspicious fast. Rose packed up her few belongings and resigned without even collecting her last paycheck.

THE FLOWER BLOSSOMS

Knowing she might not ever work in the city again, Rose Marie threw caution to the wind and decided to try something she'd always dreamed of. She walked down to Bourbon Street, sauntered into the first bar she saw—the Old Absinthe House—and told the proprietor she wanted to sing. "Fat" Dan Waller loved her voice and told her to come back that night to see how she worked a crowd.

"Delilah" was a hit and sang the blues there for the next few months.

THE CREEPER AWAKENS

Unknown to Rose Marie, the faulty oil rigs have already created an abomination in the Manchac bayou—the *bayou ranpan*, or “swamp creeper.” The thing rose in the darkness of the marsh and headed straight to Pumping Station 13. There it slaughtered the work crew and night watch, including Deacon Smith, who had beaten Delmer so badly two months earlier. It also demolished the rig—unwittingly spewing thousands of gallons of oil into the swamp in the process and causing even more damage.

Two days later, with no contact from station 13, Hexaco sent a crew out to restore contact. They found the carnage, wrapped up what was left of the bodies, capped the oil well, and returned to Manchac where the locals were told there had been some kind of “sabotage”. The team took the crew’s remains back to New Orleans and haven’t been seen since.

HEXACO STRIKES BACK

The regional director of Hexaco, Josh Thaler, believes Delmer and other local “terrorists” are responsible for the incident. He already knew Rose Marie had changed her name to Delilah Starr and was certain his former secretary had given her hot-headed brother the tip. Delmer was nowhere to be found, so Thaler ordered two of his “trouble shooters,” Rico Manziti and Gator

Boudreaux, to grab Rose Marie and use her to draw Delmer out.

After her set Friday night, Manziti and Gator followed Rose Marie home and watched as a local police man chased off a stalker. When all was quiet, they went to her door and gained entrance by saying they were from Hexaco with the final paycheck she’d left behind. Once inside, they took the frightened girl at gunpoint and drove to Manchac to try and find her brother. When they got there, Rose Marie began screaming. She broke free and Manziti shot her in the back as she ran. Gator picked her up, said she was dead, and threw her body in the swamp. Then the two drove back to New Orleans.

But the *bayou ranpan* sensed the dying girl. It rose from the mire and looked at the fading light in her eyes...then picked her up and carried her to Father Etienne. When the stunned houngan got past his shock at the encounter, he patched Rose Marie up as best he could and put her in his bed. The next day, she told him her story and they both realized they had to keep her hidden—even from her family—until the Hexaco killers were dealt with.

That night, Fat Dan Waller of the Old Absinthe House sent a runner to find out where his star singer was but the boy found only an empty house. Sunday morning, Fat Dan called a few friends to help find her.

That’s where our story begins.



TIMELINE

6 months ago: Hexaco Oil installs a number of new “patent science” oil pumping systems fueled by a mixture of steam and “spook juice,” gasoline mixed with ghost rock. Oil Pumping Station 13 is set up within a few miles (as the crow flies) of the town of Manchac.

5 months ago: Hexaco sets up a staging camp in Manchac to install several of the new rigs out in the bayou. Rose Marie LaGrange is offered a job keeping track of the camp’s inventory.

4 months ago: After an exemplary performance at the Manchac camp, Rose Marie is offered a job at the New Orleans’ main office as a secretary. Delmer drives her to work each day from their home in Manchac.

3 months ago: Rose Marie tells Delmer about reports claiming the new pumps are poisoning everything around them. Delmer goes out to Pumping Station 13 to see for himself and ends up in a fight with the foreman, Deacon Smith. Delmer makes it back to Manchac where he’s treated and hidden by Rose Marie and their houngan, Father Etienne.

The next day, Rose Marie quits her job at Hexaco. She wanders down to Bourbon Street and decides to audition at the Old Absinthe House. The proprietor, Fat Dan Waller, hires her on the spot.

2 months ago: “Delilah Starr” is a huge hit. She sings every Friday and Saturday from 10pm to 2am for \$10 a night plus 20% of tips.

6 weeks ago: Delilah rents her house at 637 Delaronde. She starts services (such as milk) a few days later.

6 weeks ago: A local bank cashier, Phillipe Deware, hears Delilah sing and falls in love with her. Phillipe begins to leave love letters that begin to scare the young girl.

4 weeks ago: Delilah asks Fat Dan to bar Deware from the premises and he does so, but Deware stands out on Bourbon Street and listens anyway. His letters become more obsessive.

7 days ago: The *bayou ranpan* rises, born of Father Etienne’s prayers to destroy Hexaco and the poisonous concoction spewing into the swamp. It goes to Pumping Station 13 and kills Deacon Smith and two other workers, then demolishes the rig—unfortunately spilling even more oil and spook juice into the waters.

5 days ago: Hexaco Oil hasn’t heard from Pumping Station 13 and sends a crew out to check on them. They find the crime scene and bring the bodies back. Word spreads through Manchac. Delmer remains in hiding in the woods near his family’s sugar cane fields.

4 days ago: Hexaco Oil hires two brutal thugs, Gator Boudreaux and Rico Manziti, to find the “terrorists” who destroyed their pumping station and murdered their employees.

2 nights ago (Friday night): A little legwork told local Hexaco Oilboss Josh Thaler that Rose Marie is now Delilah Starr. He orders Gator and Manziti to grab Rose Marie and use her to get at Delmer. Delilah plays her set at the Old Absinthe House. Her admirer, Phillipe Deware, follows her home afterward (around 2:30am) but is intercepted by the local beat cop. The officer beats Deware and chases him off.


Manziti and Gator wait ‘til the cop leaves, then knock on her door saying they’re from Hexaco with the final paycheck she left behind. Once inside, the two thugs take Rose Marie captive and plan on using her to force Delmer out of hiding. They drive to Manchac where she breaks free, but Manziti shoots her as she runs and Gator drops her body in the swamp. Thaler is furious but hasn’t figured out what to do yet.

Yesterday (Saturday): Rose Marie and her houngan, Father Etienne, decide she has to remain “dead” for now or Hexaco will threaten her family. She hides out at Etienne’s remote shack with Delmer for the next few days while the adventure takes place.

Last Night (Saturday Night): Rose Marie doesn’t show up for her set. Patrons are angry and Fat Dan is worried. He sends a runner to her house but there’s no answer.

Sunday afternoon: The adventure begins.

WILD CARDS

 Characters with this symbol by their name are Wild Cards, meaning they roll a Wild Die and can take more than a single wound as described in *Savage Worlds*.

LADY SANG THE BLUES

"Fat" Dan Waller is the current proprietor of the Old Absinthe House on Bourbon Street. Most people see the burly bartender as an angry curmudgeon, swabbing out dirty glasses and overcharging for watered-down whiskey. But Fat Dan loves two things—strong drink and a good set of pipes. The singing kind. His drink of choice is straight whiskey (ironically he hates absinthe), and the pipes he favors are those of the locals. Black, white, or other, Fat Dan doesn't care. He tolerates the drunks and the crowds just to hear a bird sing.

And he really loves the blues.

One afternoon little Rose Marie LaGrange walked up and squeaked that she wanted to wail. Fat Dan grunted and told her to belt it out. A big sound came out of that little girl. Dan asked her name, but Rose Marie didn't want Papa LaGrange finding out she was singing on Bourbon Street, so she thought about the Bible's temptress Delilah and looked up to the heavens for the rest of it. Delilah Starr was born.

Dan gave "Delilah" a shot and within two weeks a little crowd had gathered at the little bar to hear her belt the blues. Two weeks later it was a big crowd and Delilah Starr was warbling every Friday and Saturday night from 10 'til her pipes gave out.

Then the music stopped. Delilah played her usual Friday night set but didn't show up for Saturday's gig. Fat Dan sent a boy to her house but there was no one there. Now it's Sunday morning and he's worried, so he called on a few friends. That's where our heroes come in.

Each player character is either known to Fat Dan or hired by him, and he's asking for help in finding Delilah. He can't pay much—the Old Absinthe House is surviving the Depression but prospering might be a stretch. Dan can extend a generous bar tab the group can share though: \$100 total for the safe return of Delilah Starr, or \$50 for confirmation of something more dire. If the investigators are local they may well have heard Miss Starr one weekend and want to help all on their own. Even the toughest mugs can't deny the girl could warble.

The scene opens a few minutes before Fat Dan Waller opens the Old Absinthe House on a warm Sunday evening:

It's Sunday on Bourbon Street at a quarter to seven. Fat Dan Waller is the booze-slinger at the Old Absinthe House, the oldest bar in the quarter. Maybe in America. The pirate Jean Lafitte himself opened the place way back in the 1700s.



"FAT" DAN WALLER

Fat Dan is rough as sandpaper and half as friendly. He's asked you to come down to his ancient watering hole and paved the road to hell with a free shot of the house's trademark—the "green fairy," or absinthe. It smells like licorice, tastes like brimstone, and goes down like boiling water and gravel.

"Delilah's gone missin'," Fat Dan grumbles as he lines up shot glasses on the worn counter.

Delilah is Delilah Starr, a gorgeous little gal with a big set of pipes you heard at the Old Absinthe House a few weekends back. You remember her well. Something about her voice got in your gut and sat there a while, making all that other bile and hate uncomfortable to be in the same space with it. She was pretty—but more like a little sister than a lover. She wore a red sequined dress that sparkled against her black skin. Her eyes were like jade, and her pearly whites shone even in the darkness of Fat Dan's dirty bar.

"I ain't rich. Damn Depression. But you get her back alive and I'll set up a tab for you. \$100 for the group. Up to you how you split it. Bring back less happy tidings and I'll comp you \$50 in drinks for your trouble."

Dan's a man of few words, but if a fast-talking shyster works him over he'll go as high as \$150 to get Delilah back. If anyone knows Dan was a former Texas Ranger (see below), they might also realize that doing him a favor might be paid back in spades some day should they run afoul of the law as their type often does.

Here's all he knows:

- **Question:** Tell us about Delilah.

"She came by about three months ago just before opening. Dressed more for Sunday school than a bar. Said she wanted to sing. She gave me a little sample and I gave her the floor that night. Couldn't keep folks away afterwards. She sang Friday and Saturday night from about 10pm on. I think she lived somewhere outside of town up until about a month and half ago. Used to have a brother who brought her down to the quarter. Then she got a place across the river. Cheap, but nice enough. She was doing pretty well here."

- **Question:** When did she go missing?

"She sang her set Friday night but didn't come in Saturday. I sent a boy to her place but he said the door was closed and there was no answer when he knocked."

- **Question:** Where does she live?

"637 Delaronde. 'Cross the river."

- **Question:** Did Delilah have any enemies?

"No. Just the opposite. There was this young fella who couldn't keep his ears off 'er. Left her love letters for a while 'til I threw him out. Spied him listening from out on Bourbon Street a few times. Seemed harmless though. Name's Phillipe Deware. Some kinda accountant or something. 'Lilah took the letters. That brother I mentioned was pretty hot-headed too though. Came in a few times angry at the world. She called him Delmer. Didn't catch his last name...I doubt it's 'Starr'."

Dan doesn't know anything else, such as Delilah's real name or that she used to be a secretary or *anything* about Hexaco Oil. He's not really the small talk type. Delilah tended to play her set and leave, but while she was singing it was like she was in a whole other world.

FAT DAN WALLER

Fat Dan is from Texas. Most in New Orleans know it, but he served in the Rangers for a time. Officially, he was discharged for "Lack of Professionalism and Conduct Unbecoming." In truth, he uncovered a Northern Agent who had tracked an out-of-control Harrowed down to Austin, Texas. The two worked together to stop a grisly killing spree, but then Dan's boss told him to arrest the Agent. Dan refused and let the Agent escape. He was drummed out soon after and drank his way to New Orleans. He won the Absinthe House in a card game—then had to fight to keep it when the mobster who lost it sobered up the next day. Dan's fight with the mobster—a member of the Black Hand—was settled when a few of his former Ranger friends showed up and reinforced the "legitimacy" of Dan's win.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d8, Investigation d6, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Business) d6, Knowledge (Occult) d4, Notice d8, Riding d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Hindrances: Mean, Obese

Edges: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Comfortable, Guts, Hard

Gear: Dan keeps a sawed-off shotgun under the bar (Range 5/10/20, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 1-2).

637 DELARONDE

Delilah's place is a small but comfortable rental house across the river. The investigators must take a ferry to get there. The front porch is concrete and barren except for a couple of planters of flowers. The front door is closed but unlocked.

Assuming the investigators push it open, the place is a wreck inside. No roll is required to realize it's been

ransacked for valuables. A Smarts roll at -2 reveals a little more detail. There are no signs of actual struggle. It seems one or more people went through the room looking for anything worthwhile—drawers are open and spilled, cabinet doors are ajar, etc—but there's no blood, areas without valuables aren't disturbed, and so on. It's not proof Delilah *wasn't* taken forcibly—it's just that there are no signs that confirm it.

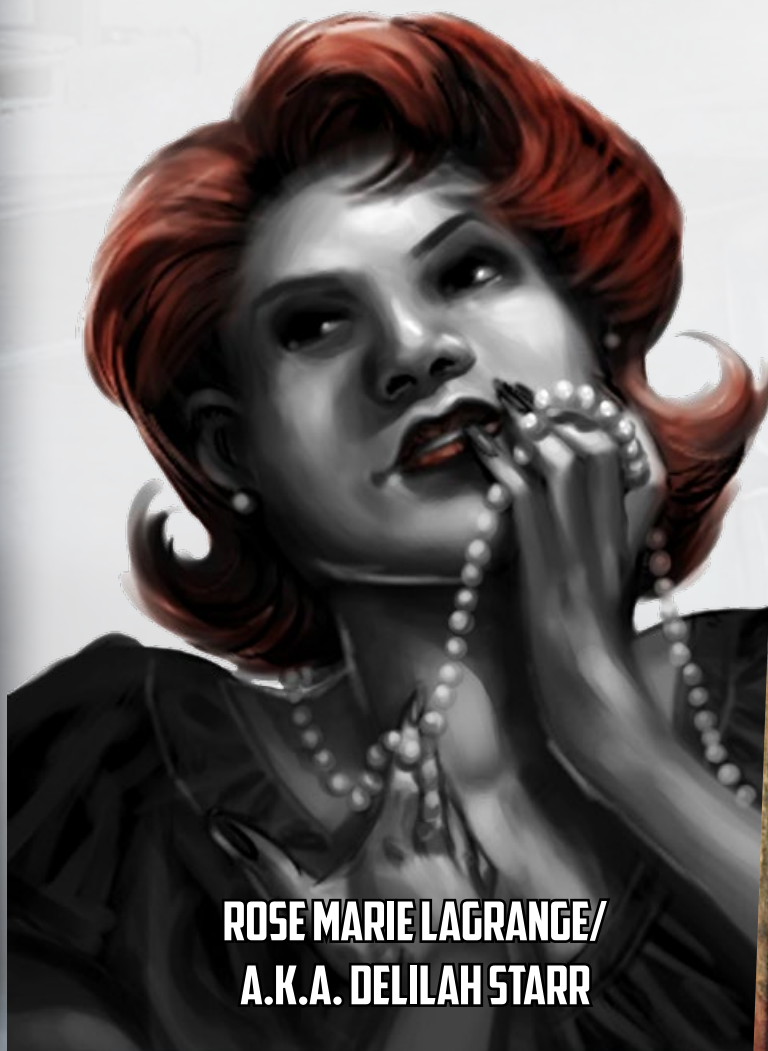
Delilah was taken from her home Friday night by two thugs from Hexaco Oil. A couple of local youths saw her taken and ransacked the place a few hours later when it was clear she wasn't coming back (and *after* Fat Dan's runner came and found the door closed).

Here are the clues the investigators can find inside:

- Delilah has several simple crucifixes and Catholic icons on her walls. A Notice roll at -2 notes they're placed in very obvious places. Some practitioners of voodoo see stark similarities between Catholicism and voodoo and frequently mix the two. Delilah doesn't want her belief in voodoo ruining her new career with the less-enlightened, so she keeps only the Catholic icons in plain sight in case of

visitors. Her voodoo icons can be found mixed in and around the mess in the room (see below).

- Papers are scattered throughout the house. Detailed inspection discovers paystubs for a "Rose Marie LaGrange" from Hexaco Oil for \$17 a week but doesn't say what for. That's an average salary for this time and place. The paystubs are neatly bound together and the first is dated a little over four months earlier. They stop a little less than three months ago.
- Delilah was very organized, and her receipts for milk delivery, for example, are bound together with twine and go back five weeks (she's been in the house for six weeks).
- If anyone thinks to go through her trash, Delilah has thrown away an unopened envelope. It says only "Miss Starr" on the front, and bears no stamp or return address (it wasn't delivered by the post office). Inside is a love letter. She



**ROSE MARIE LAGRANGE/
A.K.A. DELILAH STARR**

My dear Miss Starr,

I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed your rendition of "Love for Sale" last night at the Old Absinthe House. Fitzgerald couldn't have done it better. It felt like the world stopped turning when you started, and when you stopped the entire planet came to a crashing halt.

I imagined the very oceans ceasing their eternal shift. I believed the moon would swoon and crash down upon the world at the sound of your voice.

To live in the presence of such beauty and grace is a far better fate than a poor cashier like me deserves. I will attend every performance you give for the rest of my natural life.

Yours forever... PD.

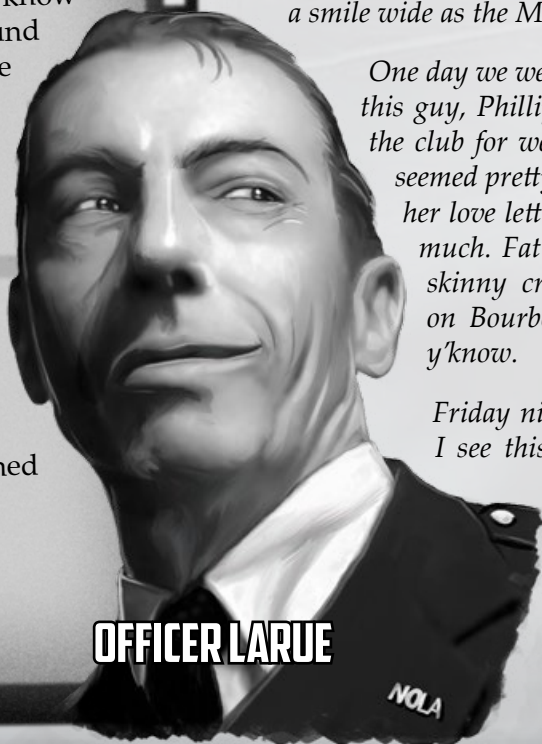
didn't keep any of the other letters Phillip sent. The letter is mocked up on page 9 (and repeated as a handout on page 30):

- In the ruins of the living room is a gris-gris bag—a voodoo charm believed to ward off evil spirits. This was in an ornate box by Delilah's bed, but the thieves dumped it out when they took the box. The charm does, in fact, grant the user +1 to Spirit rolls made to resist supernaturally evil magical abilities.
- In the ruins of the bedroom is a lacquered chicken foot attached to a stick along with the small bones of weasels and frogs. Delilah used

WORKING THE STREET

The gumshoes might decide to ask around in the neighborhood about Delilah to see if anyone saw anything. The locals are a tight-lipped group and the kids who robbed her house are the only ones who actually did see anything—and they're not around. They haven't sold Delilah's things yet...they've stashed them somewhere waiting to see who might come looking. This makes it impossible for the group to figure out who robbed the house at this time since the few who know what happened aren't around and none of the items have yet been sold or fenced.

A blown Streetwise roll while working the neighborhood is likely to result in a fight. The locals attack with bottles, clubs, and other improvised weapons. They aren't out for blood—just to make sure any outsiders know they aren't here to be pushed around.



OFFICER LARUE

this when praying. The thieves knocked it off her nightstand.

- Delilah's wardrobe has been mostly sacked of any of the dresses one would normally see her in while singing at the Old Absinthe House. There are a few more casual clothes still lying on the ground, including a couple of blouses and accessories one would associate with a low-level professional girl (her "secretary" clothes).

LOVE LETTERS

As the investigators leave the house they're approached by the local beat cop, Jean Larue, who walks the district from 8pm to 4am. He's here regardless of time because he believes something fishy is going on.

Jean is suspicious of the strangers and draws on them as they exit. They'll have to Persuade him they're not the ones who sacked the place or took Delilah. Once Larue is convinced of the investigator's innocence, he tells them to scram. He liked Delilah and is genuinely sorry to hear something might have happened to her. If cajoled to share a bit more, Jean walks into the house and looks around on his own for a few minutes, then opens up:

"Delilah moved into this house five or six weeks ago. I watched her brother move her in. Angry fella. I noticed 'cause I didn't want a troublemaker on my beat—but he never came 'round again that I saw. Delilah was all right. Real peach. Sometimes I'd hear her singing in her kitchen. Practicing, I suppose. Sure made my beat a little more pleasant. We even talked a few times. That girl has a smile wide as the Mississippi.

One day we were chattin' and she told me about this guy, Phillip Deware. He'd been coming to the club for weeks to hear her sing. At first he seemed pretty normal, then he started leaving her love letters. I guess they got a little...too much. Fat Dan kicked Deware out but the skinny creep just watched her from out on Bourbon Street. No law against that, y'know.

Friday night I was walkin' the beat when I see this guy following her. He doesn't notice me...just keeps followin' Delilah. I figured it was Deware and I decided to put an end to it. I dragged the little bastard into the alley and showed him I didn't appreciate him makin' my pet bird nervous. After I...

spoke...with him he crawled off back to whatever hole he came out of. I'm damn sure he didn't take our missing friend—he could barely walk after our 'conversation.' You can check if you want, but I don't know where he lives or anything.

One more thing, shamuses. Don't assume Delilah was taken just 'cause the house got robbed. That kinda thing happens around here sometimes. Kids, usually. I'm only one man, after all."

If the group found the love letter, they know Phillipe Deware is a cashier (a person who works in a bank in this time period), and most of the banks can be found in Uptown.

If the group missed this clue, have Larue add: "I think Delilah said he was a cashier or something, so if you wanna find him you might try the banks. Most are in Uptown."

OFFICER JEAN LARUE

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Investigation d4, Knowledge (Law) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Corrupt (Minor), Greedy (Minor)

Edges: Alertness, Comfortable

Gear: .38 revolver (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1), nightstick (Str+d4).

LEGWORK

Phillipe Deware does indeed work in a bank, but it takes some work to find him. The banks are closed on weekends so the investigators must wait until Monday morning. When that occurs, a little Legwork is called for (see *Deadlands Noir*). The Streetwise roll is made at -2 since they don't have any hard information on where Deware works. In addition to the normal consequences, failure means they don't find the information until 4pm that afternoon, losing most of the day. Splitting up to go to all the local banks is faster and allows a cooperative roll from all the helpers.

Eventually, the gumshoes meet Frank Monroe, Supervising Manager of the New Orleans Farmer's Bank in Uptown. He confirms that Phillipe Deware works there, but he hasn't come in today. Frank needs some serious convincing to give out his employee's address. Bankers are very sensitive to this as their employees can be milked for information about their security, or blackmailed into stealing or giving out security details, so Frank takes Phillipe's confidentiality *very* seriously. Here are some of the tacks the investigators might use to get it out of him:

- **Persuasion:** If the group is honest and expresses their concern about Deware, Frank says he'll look into it himself but doesn't give out his employee's address. Phillipe doesn't have a telephone, so Frank sends a boy to the cashier's apartment to check on him. Frank doesn't allow the group to leave until the boy returns so he can't be followed. When the boy returns 15 minutes later and says Phillipe isn't answering his door, Frank calls the police and the heroes easily overhear the address he gives them.
- **Trickery:** A clever party might concoct a story—such as an urgent delivery—that requires Deware's address. Monroe is very clever and sees through most lies that try to reveal where his employees live. If the story is convincing *and* the character succeeds at an opposed Persuasion vs. Smarts roll at -2, Monroe calls for a runner with the same results as listed under **Persuasion**, above.
- **Seduction:** Sex appeal has a chance—Frank's Achilles Heel has always been beautiful women—but even this must be handled very delicately. First, an attractive female might get Frank's attention out on the bank floor, but won't be able to really work him over with so many eyes on them. If Frank can be isolated, such as by opening a safety deposit box back in the vault (he doesn't have a private office), seduction has a little more chance to work—assuming the rest of the party didn't follow them in! Even then, a conversation about how handsome Frank is doesn't turn easily to "What's the address of a junior teller named Phillipe Deware?", so only if the character is *extremely* clever in how she turns the conversation should this have any chance to work. Even then, he's likely just to summon a runner as described under **Persuasion**, above.
- **Threats or Intimidation:** Frank is susceptible to threats as much as anyone, but does his best to lie or get the attention of the banks' two guards (use Police Officer statistics from *Deadlands Noir*). The shamuses are walking on *very* thin ice here. The mayor and his police force have a lot of friends in the banking industry, and if word gets back that they're being threatened, blackmailed, extorted, etc., the New Orleans Police Department quickly gets involved.

FRANK MONROE

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Knowledge (Finance) d10, Notice d8, Shooting d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Lech, Obligation (Minor, to the bank)

Edges: Comfortable

Gear: None.

DEWARE'S APARTMENT

Phillipe rents an apartment in Uptown about five minutes' walk from the bank. No one bothers the investigators as they approach unless they look particularly strange or violent—then someone might quietly wander off to find the local beat cop.

Inside the apartment building, Frank doesn't answer the door. He's fearful after the beating he received Friday night (two nights ago). Assuming the troubleshooters find their way in—one way or another—here's Phillipe's story:

"What? Hurt Miss Starr? Never! I admit Friday night was a little...strange...I tried absinthe for the first time. When in Rome, you know..."

Anyway...she walked home after her set all the way across the river. I thought that was incredibly dangerous, so I always followed her home. That night I remember a car followed her all the way...trying not to be seen. It was a '33 Packard with a rear bumper held on by wire. I remember that clearly, at least.

Then I remember getting near her house when this crazy cop comes out of nowhere and starts beating the hell out of me with his nightstick! After that I barely remember staggering home!"

Phillipe really doesn't know any more. He's too embarrassed to go to work with a massive shiner (black eye) and swollen lips. He hasn't figured out what to do about that yet, but he's been a loyal employee for a few years and figures he's due at least one unannounced day off.

The Packard he saw belonged to Hexaco Oil's thugs Rico Manziti and Gator Boudreaux—the men who actually took Delilah, but the investigators won't have any way of knowing that yet.



PHILLIPE DEWARE

PHILLIPE DEWARE

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Knowledge (Accounting) d4, Notice d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4

Hindrances: Obligation (Minor, to the bank), Schmuck

Edges: —

Gear: None.

HEXACO OIL

The groups' only other lead is Delilah's paystubs from Hexaco Oil. A trip to their corporate office at 2134 St. Charles in the nearby Garden District provides the next clue in this adventure. Anyone who makes a Common Knowledge roll knows the address (+2 to those with any past experience with railroads, oil, or other industry).

With a raise, the gumshoe also knows the following:

Hexaco Oil is an offshoot of Black River Holdings, formerly Black River Railroad out of Memphis—one of the companies that made a bid for the transcontinental line back during the so-called "Great Rail Wars" of the last century. The oil division has been around for the last 20 years or so, and has mostly made its money pumping crude out of the bayous. You hear it's high-paying but dangerous work thanks to mosquitos, gators, snakes... and likely worse.

On arrival, they see the following:

The New Orleans office is in a prominent building in the Garden District. You walk inside and see a pretty young blonde working the receptionist desk. On the green walls behind her are several pictures. A quick glance reveals Hexaco officials donating money to one of the local orphanages, cutting the ribbon on a new pumping station, hosting a charity ball for polio, and shaking hands with some skeezy politician. (A Common Knowledge roll reveals this to be Mayor McKendrew.)

The secretary, a comely gal in a red jacket and skirt, smiles up at you with baby blues, "Can I help you?"

The secretary is Jane Row. She doesn't know a "Delilah Starr," but if someone describes Delilah—or even better has a picture from her apartment—she adds: "Oh, well, I don't know any Delilah, but that girl looks a little like Rose Marie LaGrange.

She was a secretary here a few months back, but she quit or something."

The regional manager, Mr. Josh Thaler, isn't in the state, so talking to him isn't going to happen at this point. A good story and a Persuasion roll at -2 does get Jane to

pull Rose Marie's personnel file though. A quick flip through it reveals she was originally hired as a hand at one of their field camps, was highly regarded, and was then hired as a secretary here at the main office handling ingoing and outgoing mail. Jane didn't really know her—she kept to herself and seemed to work hard. Then she just left abruptly about seven weeks ago.

Jane might be convinced to hand out Rose's home address, a general delivery address in Manchac, a small town between Lake Maurepas and Lake Pontchartrain, about a half-hour drive northwest of New Orleans. (Jane doesn't have the 637 Delaronde address since Rose moved there after resigning).

The investigators need to get this address from Miss Row to proceed, so if they don't think of it on their own, she bats her baby blues at a handsome member of the party and asks if he'd be a dear and drop a letter for her at the post office. Seems Rose Marie was owed for some expenses and a check for two dollars and 17 cents is in the envelope. The letter is addressed to Miss Rose Marie LaGrange, General Delivery, Manchac, Louisiana.

BLASTS FROM THE PAST

Take a little time now to handle some of your party's personal subplots or introduce some other encounter. This is a good chance to insert a Savage Tale from the *Deadlands Noir* book, or even better, a side adventure drawn from the player characters' Hindrances and backstories. For example, maybe one of your hardboiled detectives has enemies in the Black Hand and the group crosses paths with them while doing their research.

Inserting a personal event keeps the adventure from feeling so linear and make New Orleans feel like a live, active city. It also reinforces the overall network of life, mystery, and adventure that surrounds your hardboiled heroes.

"I THOUGHT THE MEEK WERE SUPPOSED TO INHERIT THE EARTH. ALL I SEE IS THE MEEK GETTING PICKED ON BY THE BULLIES. MAYBE THE MEEK SHOULD INHERIT A .38 INSTEAD."

—Phillipe Deware,
Bank Cashier

CRITICAL PATH

Here are the clues and events that must happen for the investigators to reach the end of this adventure:

- They're hired or convinced to look for Delilah by Fat Dan Waller.
- They go to Delilah's house at 637 Delaronde.
- They find out Delilah's stalker is a cashier, either from the love letter in the trash can at her house, or via the policeman they encounter outside.
- They track down the cashier, Phillipe Deware, and are told about a '33 Packard with a broken bumper held on by wire.
- They go to Hexaco Oil and find out Delilah was really Rose Marie LaGrange from Manchac.
- They visit Manchac and hear about the crime at Pumping Station 13.
- They visit the station and encounter the *bayou ranpan*.
- They track down Delmer and Father Etienne.
- They learn the ritual that can kill a loa.
- They see the '33 Packard with the busted bumper.
- Father Etienne is told by one of his parishioners that Hexaco is hiring up goons for an attack on Manchac.
- Father Etienne sends a note to the heroes revealing that Delilah is alive and they should come to her as soon as possible.
- The heroes arrive at the LaGrange sugar cane fields as the Hexaco goons attack.
- They use the ritual to defeat the swamp creeper for good.



RESTLESS IN MANCHAC

Manchac is a sleepy little fishing town and railroad stop of about 200 souls. Chickens scamper rampantly underfoot, goats run wild, and a grand total of three cars are parked haphazardly about town. There's a small train station, a single pier for a couple of local fishing boats, a couple dozen simple homes, a tent housing a small bar, and an old general store.

A character with Knowledge (Occult) may make a Notice roll to note subtle voodoo trappings throughout the town—charms and gris-gris bags hung in inconspicuous places. (Actual practitioners of voodoo see these signs automatically.) The people of Manchac don't hide the fact—they just know better than to advertise it to passersby.

Lone Star Train Station: A train comes through daily to pick up fish packed in ice by the local fishermen. It has one dilapidated passenger car in case there's anyone waiting or a passenger to drop off. The train runs from New Orleans to Atlanta, Georgia.

The Piers: There are typically three to four fishing boats, a half-dozen rowboats, and two flatboats here. The fishing boats go out for a few days at a time, spend a few days off with their families, then get back at it. The rowboats and flatboats are for individual fishermen.

The fishermen pack their fish in ice and crate it up at the Dixie Rails Train Station (see above). Several local trucks pick up fish, crawdads, shrimp, and shellfish for delivery straight to New Orleans markets as well.

Ice is delivered by truck via the New Orleans Ice Company twice a week and stored in iceboxes in blockhouses near the pier.

General Store: The small store sells sundries—cold soda and chocolate bars are particularly popular here—and doubles as a post office. At this time in history, outlying farms in distant agricultural areas didn't often have their own official address. Mail was delivered to local post offices marked "General Delivery" for the nearest town. The recipient then had to come to the post office and ask for mail in their name.

The store's owner and post master is Hyrum Akers. Hyrum is an easy-going black man and he knows the LaGrange family well. If the party seems threatening, there's no power on earth that will make Hyrum tell them how to get to Rose Marie's place. He'll lie before he'll give them information if tortured or something more sinister is threatened.

If the group blows it with Hyrum, the LaGranges are known by others in Manchac. A Streetwise roll at —2 provides the information to friendly outsiders. A bribe

of \$20 loosens lips if the questioner is a little less than friendly-looking.

The Bar: The bar is just a large, enclosed tent left behind by the Hexaco Oil crews about six months back when they first used Manchac as a staging area. Bartender Moe Scruggs bought what was left and set up shop.

About dinner-time every night, the "Manchac Temperance League" pickets the bar. Most have long given up, but a half-dozen hearty souls remain diligent. The leader of the league is an 89-year old woman named Elsie Baker. She's a no-nonsense lady with more willpower than family—and she has a *lot* of family. Elsie and Moe exchange pleasantries when he opens the tent to the locals...then become bitter enemies for the next six hours. Mostly, the League just sits around on stools (provided by Moe himself!) and gossips with their signs held in their laps for a few hours. Only Elsie is really a strong believer, chastising anyone who enters the bar.

Moe is a great source of information about the LaGranges and the recent attack on the pumping station:

- **Question:** Tell us about Manchac:

"Not much to tell. We do a little fishing, and Lone Star stops by here to water their trains. Biggest thing to happen here in a while I reckon is Hexaco coming in and putting in the oil rigs. Some of the fellas around here work for them from time to time, servicing the rigs or their crews and such."

- **Question:** Tell us about Hexaco:

"They found oil all over these bayous but it's real hard to get at and expensive to maintain. They came about six months ago and put up several rigs out in the bayou. Manchac was their staging area. I inherited this tent when they was done. A lot of locals got well-paid to help them set up their rigs so most folks here were fond of 'em. Least 'til the pumps started leakin' some kinda nasty oil. Killed a lot of fish and crawdads and such."

- **Question:** Has there been any trouble with Hexaco?:

"A week ago something happened out at station 13 and a couple of their folks wound up dead. They didn't tell us what happened, but my understanding is the rig blew up or something."

(The rig didn't blow up—the tenders were killed by the swamp creeper and the rig demolished, but Moe doesn't know this.)

- **Question:** What do you know about the LaGranges?

"Able and Mose are the family heads. Good people. Hard working. They own a sugar cane farm a little northwest a'here. Able's wife Mamie's a saint. She's helped a lot of folks here through the years. Midwifin'. Givin' 'em food when they was down. That kinda thing.

They got a daughter, Rose Marie. Real sweetie. Smart too. She worked here when Hexaco was setting up, taking inventory, handing out pay to the local contractors and so on. I hear she went and worked for 'em in the city or somethin' after they was done.

Her brother Delmer is a real hot-head though. He had a rough time a few years back with some regulators—racist bastards—and never saw the world right again afterward. He got in some kinda trouble with Hexaco a few months back. Just before the pumping station blew up and those fellers got killed. They probably think he had something to do with what happened, but he's no killer."

THE LAGRANGE PLACE

The LaGranges are an extended family who live on a sugar cane farm about four miles northwest of Manchac. There are numerous little farms along the road to their place, most purchased or inherited from former plantation owners after slavery ended in the South in 1864. Swamps and bayous dot either side, and at one point during the party's short drive they see a 14-foot alligator lazily cross the road in front of them.

The LaGranges live in three adjacent, simple houses south of their sugar cane fields (about six acres, all told). The family is Catholic with a strong side of voodoo, though that's not overly evident from any personal effects or the building exteriors.

The descriptions below assume the party arrives by day. If they come at night, the various members of the family are in their homes. They might be playing cards, reading to their children, or eating dinner depending on the time.

- **Papa Able LaGrange:** The eldest of the LaGrange's is Able LaGrange, but everyone calls him "Papa." He is indeed Rose Marie's father. Able is on the porch taking a break from tending the cane when the group arrives. He's a fit man in his fifties with kind, wise eyes.
- **Uncle Mose LaGrange:** Able's brother doesn't say much. He just sits on the porch and watches strangers with child-like curiosity. He's not simple—he's just quiet, ponderous, and more than a little lazy after a long hard life of pulling and cutting sugar cane.

- **Mamie LaGrange:** Able's wife is Mamie. She's stringing beans on the porch when the party arrives and doesn't get involved, but she and Able exchange worried looks now and then when the conversation turns to Rose Marie's disappearance.
- **Delmer LaGrange:** Rose Marie's temperamental older brother is nowhere to be found.
- **"Sissy" LaGrange:** Rose Marie's younger sister. She's 12 and already a handful. She likes to ask lots of questions, especially of outsiders.
- **"The Boys":** Delmer has three boys who are currently being watched by Uncle Mose while Delmer hides out. They're 12, 13, and 9, and were sired with a woman named Sally who left in the night with a saxophone player about three years ago. The boys are rambunctious and a little out of control. They might make faces at the outsiders, climb in their car to play with the steering wheel and horn, or otherwise cause a little chaos (but no real trouble or harm).

ABLE & MOSE LAGRANGE

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Knowledge (Agriculture) d6, Notice d6, Riding d4, Shooting d4, Survival d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Loyal

Edges: —

Gear: None.

The senior LaGranges know Delmer and Rose Marie are hiding out in the woods, of course, but they don't know where exactly and won't give them up for anything. They're very clever people and aren't easy to trick. They don't take their two children food, visit, or do anything else that might give them away.

The senior LaGranges don't seem overly alarmed when told Rose Marie is missing. Mamie replies with "That girl's always runnin' 'round doin' her own thing. Can't control her, no sir. She'll turn up when she wants ta." Delmer's the same way, she repeats if her son is mentioned.

If the party seems friendly and brings up their concerns about Hexaco, Able speaks quietly:

"Hexaco's got several rigs out here in the bayou. Don't much care for 'em myself. That oil leaks out sometimes and makes my crawdads taste funny. I mus' not be the only one cause someone blew up one o' their rigs about a week ago. I hear some say Delmer did it. An' killed the fellas workin' out there too. My eldest is a bit hot-

headed, I'll grant you. He's had some reason to be. But he ain't no killer. That's a fact."

If asked about Rose Marie, he says:

"We brought both our children up right. Taught 'em readin', writin', an' 'rithmetic. Rose Marie took to it best. Kept our books here at the farm since she was nine. Did a right fine job too. 'Bout six months ago Hexaco Oil sets up a camp here to build rigs out in the bayou. Rose Marie did a little inventory for 'em and they was right impressed.

After a few weeks one of the boss men tol' her she could work in the main office down N'awlins if she wanted. So me and Mose bought her a new dress and hitched a ride to the city. She took some kinda test there and I reckon she aced it. The next week she was a secretary or somethin'. Ha. Lil Rosie made as much money that first month as the rest of us combined.

She quit kinda sudden like a few months back and started singin'. My little bird always could sing. Can't say I care much for the lifestyle though. But I always was the quiet type."

"Thas right," laughs Mamie as Mose nods.

Papa won't give up his children hiding in the woods, of course, but he drops one final clue before he's done.

"Mebbe someone oughta take a look at that pumping station and see what really happened out there. All we got is Hexaco's version of it. I don't know 'bout you, but I like to see things with my own eyes 'fore I take too much stock in 'em."



If voodoo is brought up, Able just shrugs and says it's what some folks believe. Then Sissy steps in. She starts with an attack and ends with a tease.

"Voodoo ain't nothin' but worshippin' saints same as Catholics. You city-folk get all scared when someone says Legba but he just another saint. Like John the Baptist or Michael. You know your Bible, mister? That whole creepy voodoo you folks is so scared of is just more of the same. You ain't believin' those wild tales about it bein' all zombies and bogeyman are you?"

At that the children hold their arms out and stagger around like zombies...trying not to laugh. They genuinely have never seen the dark side of voodoo (but Papa, Mamie, and Mose certainly have).

PUMPING STATION 13

Station 13 is several miles out into the bayou. The only way to get there is by bateaux, a flat boat poled by a guide who knows the way. Most of the boatmen at the docks act like they don't know where the oil rig is exactly and some flat out refuse to go there—citing gators, snakes, or simply that they don't care to stick their noses into Hexaco business. Eventually though, a persistent party runs into Henri Volant, an ambitious Creole who scoffs at the rumors and offers his services and his uncle's boat for \$10.

The trip through the bayou takes about two hours. It's murderously hot and the mosquito swarms are thick. Halfway there, each investigator must make a Vigor check or be Fatigued until he can get out of the heat, humidity, and insects for an hour.

The trip takes the group over a lake and through open marshlands for about two miles before Henri cuts into a channel heavy with mangrove trees, swamp moss, and lush green plants. As he enters the darker channel, Henri shares some swamp wisdom:

"Hexaco folks been comin' roun' here few years now. Found some gas, some oil, some trouble. Dat oil was expensive to get at, dey say. Den dey made some kinda new machines. Some kinda new pump or sumpin'.

'Bout a week back dey was some kinda trouble out here. Don' know what. Hexaco fellas went in on a barge an' came back with bodies. Think they was workers out at one a' da pumps or somethin'. Gators probably got 'em. Or snakes. Or skeeters. But some folks say it was the bayou ranpan. The swamp creeper."

Henri acts serious for a moment...then laughs. He doesn't believe in monsters but he likes having a little fun with his paying customers. If pressed, he recounts the legend:

"Ah, da creeper is da spirit of da bayou. But it's not a pleasant spirit. Dat t'ing senses sumpin' goin' wrong out here and it only knows one way to fix it. 'Course, that's all jus' legend, hear. When I was a little boy my mammy used to tell me the ranpan'd get me if I didn't eat my collard greens. But my grandpap'd tell her to hush—that it could hear us. He believed in it. Said it killed some slavers what was chasin' him and some others in da bayous when he was a boy. Back in darker times, if you can believe there was such a thing. He never saw the ranpan...just saw it splashin' in the water and guttin' those trackers like fish."

Henri goes quiet for a minute, genuinely remembering the terrible fear he saw on his grandpa's face. Then he laughs quietly to reassure himself in the oppression of the dismal swamp.

DEAD IN THE WATER

Once in the channel, the trip takes another hour. Just before the group arrives at the station they see the bloated bodies of dead fish, a cottonmouth snake, and even a mid-sized gator—all poisoned by the leaking rig. The bateaux quietly (and disturbingly) bumps into the bodies as Henri poles onward.

At the site, the heroes see a wooden maintenance building, the attached pier, and the toppled wreck of the oil derrick. Henri explains for those who don't know anything about the oil business:

"Normally a few fellas live at da pumpin' station and keep da steam engine goin'. That metal wreck should be stickin' straight up. Dat's da derrick. Dat's how dey pump up the oil. Somethin' knocked it down though. Someone don't like Hexaco pumpin' oil back here, I reckon."

Hexaco took the bodies away already, but there's still evidence to be found. Allow everyone in the group to make Notice rolls.

- There are several large blood stains on the walkway and at the door of the tender's shack.
- Something clearly broke the door down to the shack and there are signs of a scuffle inside.
- Between the shack and the derrick is a pump that looks more advanced than usual. Anyone making a Weird Science roll notes that it is, in fact, a patent science device designed to burn coal, wood, or other combustibles longer and more efficiently than normal engines—by dripping a volatile mixture of ghost rock-tainted gasoline into the boiler. The pump has been hit repeatedly with something large and heavy (the creeper's claws!), but remains relatively intact.

PUMPING STATION 13

SUNKEN BOAT

RUINED DERRICK

TENDER'S
SHACK

- Inside the tender's shack are four bunks, one of which looks unused. A small quantity of dried meat, a bag of flour, jugs of fresh water (and one of whiskey), and other sundries sit in a small kitchen. Most are now filled by various beetles and other vermin.
- In the water nearby is a sunken *bateaux* used to transport coal for the steam engine. Piles of coal sit just beneath the water. It might look like ghost rock to some but it's not. The boat rests about five feet deep and is irreparably shattered.

Though it's difficult to figure all of this out from the crime scene, the creeper attacked while the men were unloading coal from the boat. It tore down the derrick while the men watched, then advanced up the decking toward the pump and smashed it too.

Two of the workers retreated to the shack but the creeper pulled open the door and killed them where they stood. The third tried to hide around the exterior corner but the invisible horror erupted from the water and killed him as well.

It then smashed the boat and retreated off into the swamp where it sank back into the tainted waters.

THE SWAMP THING

When the investigators are winding things up, have everyone make Notice rolls. Those who make it suddenly realize the swamp has gone deathly quiet. Frogs stop croaking, birds quit squawking, and even the constant drone of insects is silent.

The party listens—hearing only the beat of their own hearts—then they detect the soft creak of a loose board on the pier's blood-stained planks. Then another board creaks. Something is getting closer. The *bayou ranpan* is invisible so it can't be seen unless someone has and uses the *detect/conceal arcana* power. It gets closer, then those who have the right position see Henri's *bateaux* dip suddenly—as if a heavy person stepped on one end. Henri stands, stutters “W-who’s dere?” and then screams as something tears him open from crotch to chin. He falls heavily into the bayou, gurgling “... helppp...” as he passes from this life.

The *bateaux* rocks again and then something pounds on it heavily, snapping it to splinters and sending it to the bottom. Something moves in the water, heading straight toward the team, but no figure is seen!

The *bayou ranpan* seeks to kill anyone it perceives as “belonging” to the oil well. The heroes are on or about the premises and that’s good enough for the creature. This is a very deadly situation and the gumshoes would



be wise to flee into the shallows. The investigators can drive the thing off but they can't truly kill it.

The swamp creeper is black voodoo, warped nature, and hate made real. It is a protector of the swamp—but a fierce and tainted one with little discrimination for the humans it sees as its main foes.

Though the bayou ranpan is invisible, those who can see it with magical sight see an emaciated, ghoul-like thing with yellow slits for eyes, stringy white hair, jagged teeth, and long, ragged claws. It lopes low to the ground as it walks—frequently crawling on its long arms and skinny legs. It is an utterly alien and frightening horror to behold.

THE BAYOU RANPAN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d12+4, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d10

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 7

Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** Str+d6
- **Fear:** Characters must make Fear tests when they detect the invisible creature's angry presence. They must make the test at -2 if they can see it somehow!
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Invisibility:** Attacks against the creeper suffer a -6 modifier as long as it can't be seen. The penalty stands even when the thing stands in muck or shallows as it hunches and moves in very alien ways from what one would expect. Splashing it with mud or other natural elements from the swamp reveals it for a flash—long enough to make a Fear test but not long enough to negate the penalty. It's a master of the swamp so mud, muck, and other slime are simply absorbed or turn invisible with it seconds after contact. Things that don't come from the swamp—such as the bag of flour in the maintenance house—can foul its invisibility though, reducing it to -2 to be hit if it's hit with such materials in the first place.
- **Invulnerable:** The thing can be attacked normally (though its invisibility makes that very difficult), but it can't be truly killed except by the ritual described on page 24. Otherwise it reforms the following evening at midnight, ready to strike again.
- **Night Vision:** The creeper can see in the dark without penalty.
- **Rage:** If the bayou ranpan's Action Card is a heart, it rages. The creature summons energy from the spirit realm and makes a two-fisted smashing attack that adds +5 damage to its Fighting attack this round.
- **Teleport:** The creeper may appear anywhere within its bayou within a few minutes. This is a slow process and not a combat power.

SOUTHERN COMFORT

If the group defeats the creature, they can make a Repair roll (an hour for each attempt) to fix Henri's bateaux with planks from the pier. If they can't defeat the creeper, they must flee into the bayou.

Either way, the group must find their own way back to Manchac. This isn't a pleasant experience.

Have the party make a collective Survival roll, adding +2 if they managed to fix the boat, then consult the table below.

BAYOU SURVIVAL TABLE

Failure: Roll four times on the table below.

Success: Roll three times on the table below.

Raise: Roll two times on the table below.

BAYOU ENCOUNTER TABLE

D8 Encounter

1-2 Bayou Ranpan: The creeper wanders the swamp, sensing outsiders. The group hears its low, mournful wail from the distance...approaching nearer. Have them make a cooperative Boating roll at -2 if they repaired the raft, or Survival at -2 if they're on foot. If they're successful, they manage to evade the creeper for a time. If they fail, it senses them and moves to attack. Exactly how it does so is up to you. It might slosh through the shallows if they're on foot, running straight at them, approach stealthily from beneath the water if they're on the raft, or jump down from a cypress tree branch as they pass below.

3 Fatigue: Everyone must make a Vigor roll at -2 to avoid Fatigue that can only be removed after an hour out of the heat and humidity.

4 Interlude: Run an Interlude (see *Savage Worlds*) as the group poles through the swamp or trudges through the mud. Treat this as Fatigue if you roll it twice.

5 Hostile Fauna: A large and hungry gator lurks just beneath the surface waiting to attack, or a cottonmouth drops from a tree onto a random character. If using the serpent, a Notice roll at -4 avoids a bite. Otherwise the cottonmouth strikes and then slithers off into the swamp. The victim is poisoned—see the effects of Venomous Poison in *Savage Worlds*.

6 Cajun Trappers: A trio of trappers spy the investigators. The Cajuns have suffered mightily from invaders before and these three in particular are quick to anger. They block the investigators' path with their flatboat and ask them what they're doing there. Allow

the player characters to speak, then make a Persuasion roll at -4. If successful, the hunters offer to take them to Manchac for the base fee of \$20 (they know they have the strangers over a barrel). If the roll is failed, they quietly pole away and decide to go on a hunt. They follow the group and use their knowledge to set traps or lure them deeper into the swamp. Their statistics are below. Treat this as Fatigue if you roll it twice.

7 Quicksand: If the group is on a raft, they reach a dead-end in the channel and must port it across to the next outlet. If they're on foot, they encounter this naturally. The lead investigator falls directly into a puddle of fast-acting quicksand. Resolve this as a Dramatic Task using the Strength of the hero trying to pull the victim free (see *Savage Worlds*).

8 Bitter Enemies: The heroes find an old hunter's shack. Inside sits a moldy skeleton with a rotted musket across its lap. The dead hunter holds a skeletal cottonmouth in its bony hands—the serpent's fangs locked firmly in his now-sagging flesh. The hunter wears a ragged Confederate jacket with several bullet holes in it. Inside the jacket in a sewn-on coat pocket is a bottle of green fluid. An old label reads "Dr. Samuel T. Whicker's Amazing Elixir! Good for all ailments including wounds, sicknesses, illnesses, and maladies!" The elixir still works, though this unfortunate fellow was too slow to get to it when he was bitten by a cottonmouth decades ago. There are two doses, and it automatically heals all current wounds and Fatigue one round after being swallowed.

CAJUN HUNTERS

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Boating d4, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Tracking d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Illiterate

Edges: Woodsman

Gear: Two of the men have shotguns (Range 12/24/48, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 1-2) and the third has a Winchester 1894 rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2). All three have machetes (Str+d6) and large knives for skinning (Str+d4). On the raft are several beaver traps they'll drop in the party's path if needed (see below).

BEAVER TRAPS

The trappers know where a party of tin horns is likely to traipse in their woods and might place their traps directly in the path—typically in shallow water they know they must cross.

Narrate the party's crossing of a shallow pool when you're ready to spring the trap and give the hunters a

group Survival roll. Failure means no one steps on their traps, success means one random character is caught, and a raise means two random characters are caught.

The beaver traps aren't bear traps so they only cause a level of Fatigue, but the deep, infected cuts or bruised bones last 1d4+2 days regardless of rest. They require a Strength roll to remove, at -2 if the hero is still in the knee-deep water.

Of course the hunters choose this moment to snipe at their prey. Spotting the shooter requires an opposed Notice roll versus their Stealth (adding +2 for their Woodsman Edge and likely subtracting 2 from the Notice roll for the dim light).

The hunters don't close if they can help it—they just let their friend with the rifle fire off a shot whenever he can. Their goal is to kill the strangers and take their stuff, so they aren't interested in getting close enough to be shot at.

BACK IN THE WORLD

After the ordeal in the swamp, the investigators may be in need of immediate medical attention. There's no local doctor, but Moe Scruggs (the bartender) was a corpsman in World War I and can at least bring a little comfort to someone in need (Healing d6). Better care can be found in New Orleans.

CALM BEFORE THE STORM

The investigators now know Delilah Starr was also Rose Marie LaGrange, and that an invisible terror is destroying Hexaco Oil wells. This leaves them with a few leads to follow. They can head back to Hexaco or dig up some general information on the *bayou ranpan* and manifesting loas.

HEXACO OIL

Josh Thaler is back in town now and willing to meet with anyone who says they know something about the destruction of station 13. Thaler is a mid-level executive in a company owned by descendants of witches and warlocks. He believes in magic and monsters and even has a few on his payroll. He might scoff at the party's tale briefly, but it's the merest pretense of plausible deniability. Without admitting to believing, he's likely even to offer the group a bounty of \$100 (up to \$500 with hard negotiation) if they somehow manage to stop the sabotage of his company's holdings.

During this conversation, he tries to find out how much the investigators' know about Delilah, and who they suspect is behind her disappearance. If they

mention they know she was Rose Marie and once worked at Hexaco, Josh says:

“Rose Marie was Delilah Starr? Huh. Yes, she worked for us here for a while. Good work, I recall. Then she just up and quit a few months back. I never heard her sing but I’ve heard of her. Pity something may have happened to her.”

If someone mentions the sabotage or the creature, Josh adds:

“Well, I don’t know if I believe in swamp monsters, but something has been tearing up our derricks. It’s costing us thousands.”

Finally, if someone mentions the experimental pumps, Thaler laments:

“Yes, very expensive experiment. We know about the leaks so you’ll be happy to know we’re replacing them with conventional boilers. Sometimes progress advances a bit too fast for us, eh?”

JOSH THALER

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Business) d10, Knowledge (French) d6, Knowledge (New Orleans) d6, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Knowledge (Oil) d8, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Taunt d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 9 (4)

Hindrances: Greedy, Overconfident

Edges: Charismatic, Connections, Strong Willed

Gear: Josh wears a pendant most of the senior level executives carry that grants him +4 *armor*, just like the power. He can invoke this ability for one hour out of every 24 simply by touching it. Josh carries a .38 pistol with him on rare occasions if he feels he might be in danger (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1), but he’s more likely to call on hired goons to do his fighting for him (see Thugs in *Deadlands Noir* or more powerful types like Gator and Rico Manziti in the back of this book, depending on his needs).

THE VOODOO CULT

Now that the gumshoes have seen the *bayou ranpan* with their own eyes, they may decide to confront the Manchac locals about it. This requires some real finesse that can be handled through bribery (at least \$50), seduction, or intimidation. Play this out and make the characters work for it. They’re asking a small, tight community to name their church’s houngan. It’s actually public knowledge—voodoo in this community isn’t a dark cult, it’s just a Creole spin on the Catholic religion.



When someone does talk, he or she reveals the church is hidden out in the woods. The trappings of voodoo don’t sit well with polite society sometimes so they meet a short way away from stranger’s eyes. The priest of the church is Father Albert (pronounced the French way—“al-bear”) Etienne. Etienne lives in a small shack in the northwest woods near a running stream of fresh water. Locals describe him as a tall, thin, friendly man in his late ‘50s. He typically wears a white cotton smock and sandals unless he’s about to summon some mojo, in which case he switches into a more traditional (and colorful) houngan outfit.

Congregations are held outdoors—rain or shine—at a small voodoo shrine near his shack adorned with animal skulls (including one from a large alligator), chicken bones, playing cards, mardi gras beads, fish hooks, bloody moss from a cypress tree, a dead pelican matted with oil (from the area around the pumping station), and other personal artifacts of Manchac locals.

A Common Knowledge roll by anyone with Arcane Background (Voodoo) realizes sacrifices have been made here to commune with loas connected to the bayou. Anyone looking closely also detects one other thing—a long, white lady’s glove with mud and blood stains on it. This is Rose Marie’s glove—she was still dressed in her performance attire when she was taken. Father Etienne added her glove to the shrine after she staggered in near-dead from the swamp.

Etienne knows the bayou ranpan is real. He’s detected the thing lurking at his shrine on three separate occasions. He’s never seen it since it’s invisible, but he has a basic understanding that it’s evil—but might serve his congregation until Rose Marie’s attackers are brought to final justice.

He’s out tracking the thing and trying to figure out how to use it—and then kill it, so he cannot be found

INTIMIDATING THE LOCALS

The investigators are likely to use intimidation in their quest to find Delilah Starr. That can work but comes with heavy repercussions. If someone threatens a mambo for the information on how to destroy a loa, for example, the priestess might spill the beans, but as soon as the strangers leave she's likely to contact her friends in the Red Sect and ask for a little protection of her own. This can quickly lead to enemies all over town—from the Red Sect to friends and relatives of the victim or even the police.

The townspeople of Manchac aren't a particularly tight-knit community—unless something really bad happens. If one of their own is assaulted by strangers, the rest of the locals get more tight-lipped, resistant, or downright hostile. There's no law in town, but there's a county sheriff about 30 minutes away who can bring some heat if there's enough of a problem.

If things get really out of hand, especially if there's hoodoo involved, the Texas Rangers might even get involved, and they're really bad enemies to have.

it, and a piece of the loa itself—like a hair or a fingernail or somethin' like that. You also goin' need somethin' that represents its rage. If it came to destroy someone, put somethin' 'bout that in the bowl."

Then you goin' pour a lil' alcohol or oil in dat bowl to make it light fast...cause that loa goin' know you after it soon as you do. When the mandrake turns black, you need a houngan or a mambo to say a few words over it. If he got da faith, that loa goin' turn mortal for as long as that mandrake burn. Kill its body and it'll go back to the beyon'. Don', and ain't no power on earth I know of goin' stop it from tearin' out your soul..."

The same information can also be turned up by a houngan in the party going out and talking to his mentors or getting a raise on an Investigation roll at a black library. The ritual isn't common though, so player character houngans and mambos must still seek out the information.

Essentially, the ritual requires the items above. The mandrake root turns black three rounds after the fire is lit. The next round, the loa is summoned to the spot and made flesh. The screaming *bayou ranpan* is also made visible—a sight that instantly causes a Fear check. The monster loses its Invulnerable Special Ability for the next eight rounds. After that, the mandrake root crumbles to ash and the swamp creeper returns to its normal invisible and invulnerable state—mad as hell. It remains in the area for another eight rounds killing anyone connected to the summoning and any bystanders foolish enough to be nearby, then fades back into the depths of the bayou. The creature is generally restricted to its native domain—in this case the bayous—but instantly knows if the mambo or houngan who performed the ritual enters its domain and teleports there within minutes. The ritual *can* be repeated.

BEATDOWN

The big break in the case comes with more than a little pain for one of the gumshoes. The classic Noir trope is for the hardboiled detective to get roughed up by the goons. Josh Thaler wants the investigators to back off, so his enforcers hire a small group of local toughs to try and scare the heroes off the case. The toughs wait until one of the heroes is alone and then use nonlethal damage to beat him severely. This might happen after the character's dropped off at his house or apartment for the night, as he leaves the diner where he just met the others to discuss next steps, as he's out making a Streetwise roll for more information, or whatever makes sense.

just yet. He doesn't make an appearance until the final act.

KILLING A SPIRIT

Killing the physical manifestation of a major loa is no easy matter. Gathering this info requires a veteran houngan or mambo back in New Orleans, where the local voodooists are a bit more mercenary. For a small bribe (\$10) or a successful Intimidation, the following information turns up:


"Ain' no easy t'ing sendin' a loa back to the beyond. But it can be done. You gon' need a mandrake root from a graveyard, a bowl to burn it in, a black candle to light

The encounter starts with questions and threats, but no matter what, ends with fists and bruises. (Use the nonlethal rules in *Savage Worlds*.) The leader of the toughs, Brock Chastain, asks why the hero is digging around in Hexaco's business, whether or not he sabotaged Pumping Station 13, and who hired him.

If the thugs are defeated and can't run away, they say they were hired by some fast-talking Yankee (Manziti) driving a Packard. If asked, they confirm it has a busted bumper held on by wire. They were told what questions to ask. They were supposed to meet at a bar in the French Quarter afterward (that won't happen now though—Manziti and Gator are watching and won't show up if they see their hired goons being questioned).

If the thugs win, they leave the character Incapacitated and retreat off into the night. After they leave, the beaten hero sees a Packard with a busted bumper held on by wire drive slowly by, a shadowy figure watching from the driver's seat.

- **Thugs (3):** Use statistics for the Thugs in *Deadlands Noir*. These are armed with baseball bats, lead pipes, or other heavy clubs (Str+d6).

 **Brock Chastain:** As above, but he's a Wild Card with a d8 in Fighting and brass knuckles (Str+d4).

MEAN STREETS OF THE BIG EASY

The team must figure out who's driving the busted Packard. They don't have a license plate to look up so they have to spread a little money around—or bust a few heads—to find it. Use the Legwork rules from *Deadlands Noir*.

The owner of the Packard is Rico Manziti, a local thug for hire who usually pals around with Gator Boudreaux. Rico likes knives and Tommy guns; Gator favors a machete. Rico was working for the Black Hand a while back but got in a little trouble with Silver Dollar Corolla and now does odd jobs for...Hexaco Oil.

Gator and Manziti can't be found before the next scene occurs. The heroes are welcome to storm into Hexaco's office and make a scene, but Thaler just denies it. There's no paper trail linking his organization with Gator or Manziti—it's all done through fifth and sixth parties. He certainly takes the party's names and addresses down though—in case he turns up something that could help them, he says.

THE LADY RETURNS

This is a good time to insert a personal subplot or *Savage Tale*. When you're ready to get back on track,

fast forward to dinner the next day, when one of the investigators receives a handwritten note that says:

I have that song bird you're interested in. Meet me where the Roses grow sweetest as quick as you can. It might fly away soon.

The "bird" is Delilah, and the "Roses" is capitalized because it's referring to Rose Marie, who grew up in the sugar cane fields of her family's farm. Father Etienne sent the note a few hours ago when he discovered that a bunch of Hexaco's goons are coming to Manchac to get him, Delmer, and maybe Rose Marie if they somehow know she's alive.

LIKE BATS OUT OF HELL

If the party doesn't understand the urgency of the situation, you might need to explain it to them. Manziti, Gator, and two truckloads of goons are heading to Manchac to level the place. They plan on beating people until someone turns Delmer over (or whoever the saboteurs are). If the group convinced Thaler that a swamp monster is responsible for the destruction, Gator and Manziti are sent to figure out if Delmer is controlling it. (Thaler would love to control an invisible enforcer for himself! That would work wonders for his career with Hexaco.)

Manziti's been watching the heroes and is no dummy. He has two men stationed on the road to Manchac watching for the party's car. When they see it (or the lead car if there are more than one), one of them drags a rope across the road looped with tire jacks. Have the driver make a Driving roll at -4 as all four tires blow out or go Out of Control at the vehicle's Top Speed (unless the player described his character's speed otherwise).

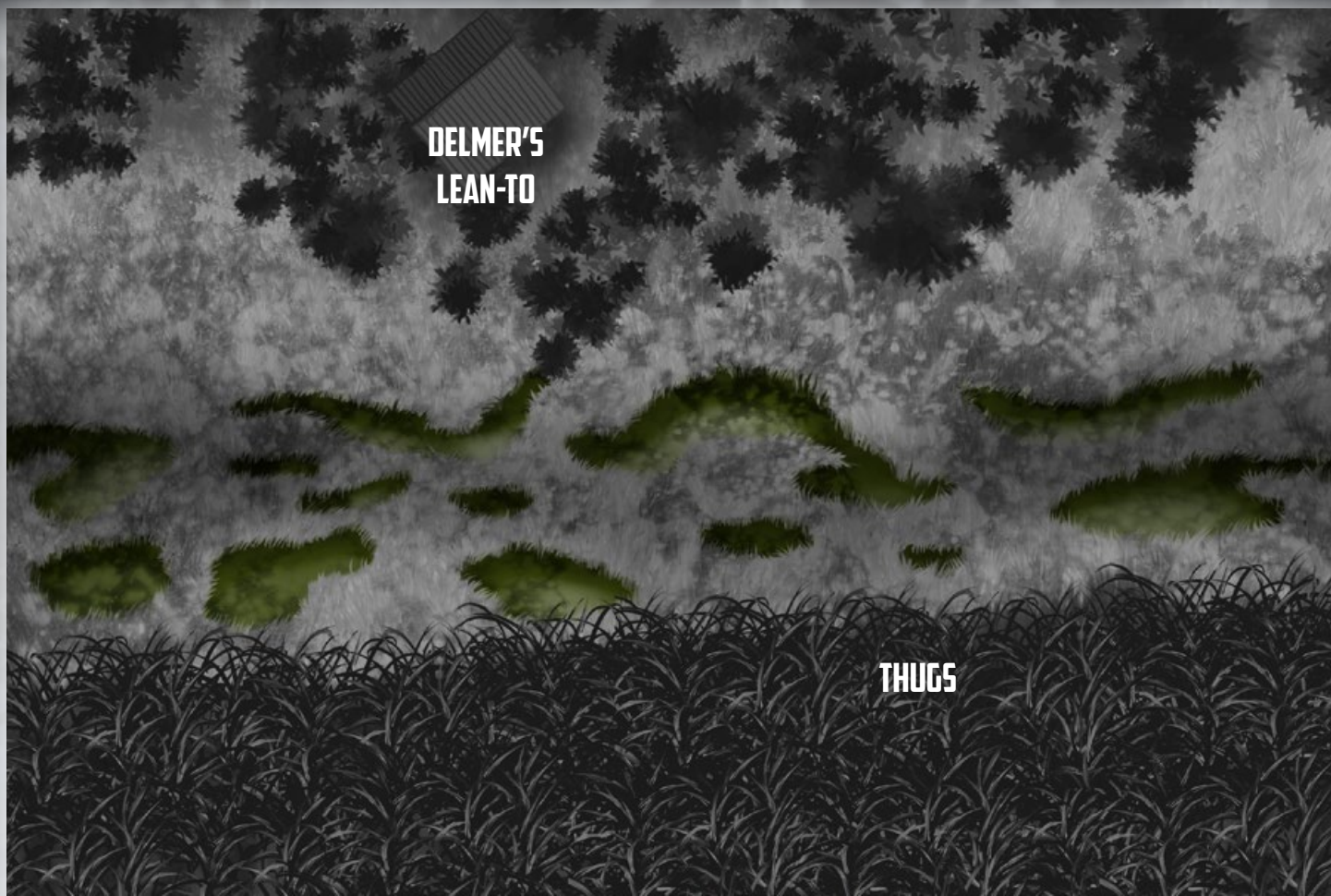
The second goon then opens fire with a Thompson submachine gun, riddling the vehicle with holes even as it crashes. The next round, the goon who pulled the rope grabs his shotgun and tries to finish off any survivors.

- **Thugs:** Use statistics for the Thugs in *Deadlands Noir*. One of the two is armed with a Thompson (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 3, AP 1), the other with a shotgun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 1-2) and a .38 pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1).

The two have an old Model-T hidden nearby that can be taken if the gumshoes' car is disabled (almost certainly if they hit the jacks).

THEY WENT THATAWAY

Manchac looks like a cyclone hit it. People gather in small clumps tending to wounded family and



neighbors, and the general store is on fire, lit by bottles of alcohol taken from Moe Scruggs' bar. Moe sits near his smashed tent being tended by Elsie Baker. He's bloody and beaten but not truly wounded. As soon as he sees the gumshoes he says "LaGrange place. Cane fields," through his swollen lips, and points northwest. Moe can barely talk, but Elsie adds that two truckloads of goons tore Manchac apart looking for Delmer LaGrange before someone finally squealed.

The group should know the way to the LaGrange farm already. As they head north, they see recent heavy tire tracks on the dirt road left by the two truck loads of goons.

There's no one at the LaGrange place, but the heroes can hear the sounds of gunfire north through the tall sugar cane. Vehicles can't enter the flooded and muddy fields, so the investigators must get out and run.

If you game this out tactically, movement is halved in the cane fields, and if anyone rolls a 1 while running, they fall at the end of their move. Standing up out of the thick muck requires a Strength roll. The sugar cane is about six feet high at this point, so it's also near-impossible to see through. The group must move blind through the cane fields to reach the fighting if they choose to do so.

Delmer, Father Etienne, Rose Marie, and two of Delmer's friends make a stand at Delmer's lean-to. Manziti, Gator, and their goons are in the cane field. Both sides fire hesitantly. Delmer's group is reluctant to use up their ammo—Manziti's group is trying to pick off shooters before rushing in with their clubs.

The heroes come up behind the bad guys from the southwest corner, but if they're not careful or stealthy (Stealth rolls at -2 thanks to the thick cane), they're likely to walk right into the middle of Manziti's crew.

Let the party decide how they want to handle things, but the standoff should hold long enough to let them plan. If they don't get involved after a while, Manziti cuts loose with a Tommy gun and takes out Delmer's friends. Gator then leads a charge of the other goons into the survivors.

 **Gator & Manziti:** See page 29.

- **Thugs (8):** See *Deadlands Noir*. These are armed with .38 pistols (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1) and heavy clubs (Str+d6).

- **Allies:** See the Rogue's gallery for the named characters, and use Citizens from *Deadlands Noir* for the two friends, both of which are armed with .38 pistols (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1).

THE CREEPER AWAKENS

The round after the heroes get involved in the fight (or Gator charges the survivors if they didn't), everyone hears a low moan from the southern cane field, just audible over the sounds of gunfire and combat. Something crashes loudly through the stalks. The *bayou ranpan* has sensed its foes in the muddy fields and come to collect its due!

The heroes should still be battling most of the bad guys when the creeper arrives the next round. It approaches from the southeast and attacks the first person it sees. It's bent on blood and nothing deters it except death—permanent or otherwise.

If the shamuses learned the ritual and gathered the appropriate materials, they must hold the thing off (and deal with the goons) until the spell is complete. Otherwise they have to figure out a plan to deal with the current situation and put down the creeper another time. Completing the ritual is a Dramatic Task (see *Savage Worlds*) and uses the Knowledge (Occult) skill. A caster has five rounds to complete the spell and make the *bayou ranpan* vulnerable. Of course, the creature senses its peril the moment the ritual starts and moves to attack, so the occultist's friends had best be prepared to handle the furious petro loa!

If the ritualist suffers a complication and fails his Knowledge (Occult) roll, the ritual can continue, but the *bayou ranpan* is enraged. It draws spiritual energy from the area, draining 2d6 Power Points from every spellcaster within a hundred yards and raising its Strength to d12+6 for the next six rounds. This does *not* stop the ritual, however.

Once the ritual is complete, the creeper loses its invisibility and invulnerability. It may be attacked and killed normally—but it still has to be killed! When it is, the monster howls like a banshee and collapses into a pile of bones and reeking swamp muck.

 **Bayou Ranpan:** See page 19.

TACTICS

The thugs are overconfident at first—there are nearly a dozen of them against a priest, a girl, and three men. Their attitude when the heroes show up depends on what happens. Most of the toughs were expecting nothing more than fists and clubs (though a few are a little more murderous). If a private dick shows up blasting .45s or a Tommy gun, they put up a fight until something big happens—like a gory kill (a high damage roll) or any kind of hoodoo weirdness they happen to see.

Gator and Manziti are even more wise. They're itching for a fight but don't like 'em fair. If they can

isolate someone (perhaps due to the tall sugar cane) they'll go for the beat down—and a kill if the victim uses lethal force. Otherwise they try to circle around and grab their targets (Etienne and Rose Marie are highest priority, then Delmer) and use them as hostages to escape. If that's too risky, they bug out and live to fight another day.

THE PRETTY LADY SINGS

Assuming the creeper is banished (even for the night) and the thugs are defeated, the PIs might decide to turn Manziti, Gator, or the thugs over to the police. If so, the goons rot in jail for several months. Hexaco hires a fast-talking lawyer to get Manziti and Gator free the very next day (though it's not obvious Hexaco is paying the bills). If that doesn't work they're more than willing to bribe the judge, the jury, or whatever else is needed. The pair then lie low for several months and can then be used in your party's future encounters with Hexaco Oil.

Rose Marie is extremely grateful to the heroes—especially if they protected Delmer and the LaGrange family. She might even become a love interest.

Fat Dan is thrilled to hear 'Lilah is okay. He doesn't ask a lot of questions about what happened, but a few days later a Texas Ranger might come around to hear the group out. That book they carry full of monsters and how to defeat them doesn't write itself, of course.

A few days later, Rose Marie is healed up and ready to sing. She invites the party to hear her croon and Fat Dan sets them up with a few rounds of the green fairy. Delilah Starr sings the night away. For a few hours, the people of Bourbon Street forget about the Great Depression, the cold war to the north, or whatever else is bothering them.

If Delilah continues to sing for another month, she lowers the Fear Level of the French Quarter by one.

ROGUE'S GALLERY

DELMER LAGRANGE

Delmer is 24 and full of fire. He's suffered from discrimination on more than one occasion and (rightfully so) has a chip on his shoulder about it. His anger is frequently misplaced, however, and may get him into trouble he doesn't deserve.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Knowledge (Farming) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d4

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Impulsive, Short Temper, Quirk (Delmer hates musicians—his girlfriend Sally ran off with a saxophone player about three years earlier).

Edges: Fleet-Footed

Gear: Single-barrel shotgun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 1), machete (Str+d6), 20 shells. He also has access to a double-barrelled shotgun and an axe (Str+d6).

FATHER ETIENNE

Albert Etienne is a clever man who has seen more than his fair share of troubles. Through it all though, he manages to keep an optimistic view as he guides his flock through their many trials and tribulations.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Boating d4, Fighting d4, Healing d4, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Notice d8, Voodoo d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Destitute, Heroic, Loyal

Edges: Arcane Background (Voodoo), Charismatic

Powers: *Bolster, healing*; Power Points 10

Gear: None

ROSE MARIE LAGRANGE

Rose Marie is truly a beautiful soul, inside and out. She loves to sing and see its magic bring a little peace and harmony to people's troubles lives. She's still heavily wounded (two wounds) from Manziti's shot, and blood leaks through the bandages around her midsection on occasion. She wears a loose cotton gown Father Etienne gave her when her sequined dress was ruined.

Note that Rose Marie has the Voodoo skill but not the Arcane Background. That means she can aid a Voodooist like Father Etienne with a cooperative roll, but doesn't have any powers of her own.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Knowledge (General Business) d6, Knowledge (Occult) d4, Notice d6, Perform (Singing) d8, Voodoo d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4

Hindrances: Loyal, Lyin' Eyes, Small

Edges: Attractive, Talented (Singing)

Gear: None

"IT WAS LIKE A CHOIR OF ANGELS DESCENDED ON THE EARTH. AND JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE, EVERYBODY FORGOT THEIR ALL THEIR WORRIES AND CARES AND JUST LISTENED TO MISS STARR CHANNEL HEAVEN RIGHT DOWN TO OUR UNWORTHY SOULS."

—Phillipe Deware,
Bank Cashier



FATHER ETIENNE

RICO MANZITI

Rico is the brain and the gun to Gator's brawn. He's loyal only to money, and Hexaco pays well. He has few morals, low standards, and a cheesy mustache to boot.

He's loyal to Gator—but only because the big guy gives him a lot of bargaining power with his clients.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d8, Gambling d6, Intimidation d8, Investigation d4, Lockpicking d6, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Arrogant, Greedy, Mean

Edges: First Strike, Hard, Marksman, Quick Draw, Rock n' Roll

Gear: Switchblade (Str+d4), '33 Packard, Tommy gun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 3, AP 1).

GATOR BOUDREAUX

Gator gets his name from a bad case of psoriasis, a wide smile, and his desire to bring great pain to the world. He's a massive Cajun who literally grew up wrestling alligators when he wasn't running from the law. He's cruel, vicious, and made for bloody, eye-gouging, fighting. When he can really cut loose, he prefers to hack his victims to pieces with a machete. He also knows how intimidating it looks and often opens a fight by brandishing the rusty weapon and giving a foe his best "alligator grin."

Gator is loyal to Manziti just as long as the "little guy" keeps them in trouble and dough—in that order.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d8, Gambling d4, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Repair d4, Shooting d4, Stealth d8, Survival d10, Taunt d6, Tracking d8

Charisma: -6; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9

Hindrances: Boorish, Impulsive, Mean

Edges: Brawny, Combat Reflexes, Hard, Guts, Sweep

Gear: Machete (Str+d6).



GATOR BOUDREAUX

RICO MANZITI

My dear Miss Starr,

I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed your rendition of "Love for Sale" last night at the Old Absinthe House. Fitzgerald couldn't have done it better. It felt like the world stopped turning when you started, and when you stopped the entire planet came to a crashing halt.

I imagined the very oceans ceasing their eternal shift. I believed the moon would swoon and crash down upon the world at the sound of your voice.

To live in the presence of such beauty and grace is a far better fate than a poor cashier like me deserves. I will attend every performance you give for the rest of my natural life.

Yours forever... PD.

HANDOUT: LOVE LETTER

Notes

