

· A TALE OF TWO KILLERS

BY MATTHEW CUTTER

credits () Acknowledgements

Additional Material: Shane Lacy Hensley Editing: Matthew Cutter Deadlands Brand Manager: Matthew Cutter Art Director: Aaron Acevedo Layout and Graphic Design: Matthew Cutter, Aaron Acevedo, Joel Kinstle Cover Art: Ross Grams Interior Art: James Denton, Ross Grams, Daniel Rudnicki, Cheyenne Wright Cartography: Alida Saxon

DEADLANDS AND SAVAGE WORLDS CREATED BY SHANE LACY HENSLEY

Savage Worlds, Deadlands: The Weird West, artwork, logos, and the Pinnacle logo are © 2015 Great White Games, LLC; DBA Pinnacle Entertainment Group. Savage Worlds, all associated characters, logos, and artwork are copyrights of Pinnacle Entertainment Group. All rights reserved.





. CONTENTS

The Tombstone Epitaph	1
The Hero-Killers	
Dante's Inferno	6
Dark Tales	13
Allies & Enemies.	



THE TOMBSTONE EPITAPH

Volume 6

Tombstone, Arizona - Sunday, April 10, 1881

No. 8

DEATH VISITS DANTE'S FERRY

NORTH of Virginia City, Nevada, the land turns dry and mean until one reaches Sparks and the comparatively verdant banks of the Truckee River. Follow that waterway east to Wadsworth and then north again, toward Pyramid Lake, and soon a traveler enters lands seemingly vomited forth from Hell itself. In short, proof positive the Epitaph's years of reportage have featured not fanciful tales cut from whole cloth, but rather true stories of terrible things that await us in the dark.

At the center of the blighted region sits Dante's Ferry, a Truckee crossing, trading post, and miners' camp that's had it's share of troubles in recent years. With an official population of only 33, the town has no law or leadership. Locals say only Dante's wife's shotgun stands between them and utter chaos. They may be right!

And one can't help but recall that the Truckee River flows east out of Donner Pass-where recent decades have brought such suffering to settlers.

In the interest of providing a true and factual account of the forces conspiring to blight Dante's Ferry, this author recently traveled the lonely trail to Pyramid Lake. There I hoped to beat the carpets, so to speak, until whatever was hidden fell out. I sought to carry a torch into that twilit valley, and to root out the causes for its decline. Truth be told, I fell far short of my own stated goals-and only barely escaped with my life and limbs intact.

Our hope is that this account shall act as guidepost for any travelers headed toward Dante's Ferry, lest they suffer some untoward fate. Tread carefully.

-Your Chronicler, Lacy O'Malley

Dante's Many Misfortunes

BEFORE we enumerate the present-day perils found in and around Dante's Ferry, it's best to recall how the place got its start.

Mr. Albrecht Dante, town founder and owner of its trading post, was born in San Francisco circa 1840. He worked in dry goods, amassing a sizable fortune of his own before he became engaged to Eloise Fay. Her father was one of the city's richest men, owner of Fay Dry Goods, Fay Importers, and a host of other concerns and entertainment

establishments. The wedding was scheduled for September 1868.

But in August the Great Quake put an end to Dante's aspirations as surely as it put a tragic end to so many others' lives. Destitute, alone, and despondent. Mr. Dante trekked east into Nevada on a swayback mare, dragging whatever gear he could salvage makeshift on a travois. His horse died of thirst only half a mile from Pyramid Lake.

Since then, most sources describe Dante's luck as much improved. He built a dock and raft in late 1869, and established the ferry crossing in March 1870. When silver and ghost rock miners came to the region a few years later, Dante built a trading post to supply them with gear and food. He even married a woman who bore him twin sons. In 1876 the Hell for Leather Saloon followed suit, providing the prospectors a place to take a load off and wet their whistles. Dante's Ferry should be as prosperous as any other hopeful boomtown.

And yet, this is simply not the case. Instead, some festering evil that defies all attempts to extract it has taken root. This author was witness to its effects on the people and the land, and-more horrible still-met at least one of its representatives face-to-face.



THE TOMBSTONE EPITAPH

Volume 6

Tombstone, Arizona - Sunday, April 10, 1881

No. 8

Tales of Terror

PROSPECTING brothers Hiram and Randy Felshaw were the intrepid souls responsible for bringing all this trouble to the town's attention. After an expedition north to Pyramid Lake in search of silver ore, they returned telling stories of the terrifying *things* they'd encountered.

Pyramid Lake, the brothers insisted, was haunted by the vengeful spirits of Paiutes killed back in 1860. It's wellknown that in two separate battles that year, Nevada settlers out of Virginia City organized into vigilante militias and fought the local Paiute Indians over territorial rights. But now, the brothers breathlessly insisted, they'd returned for revenge on anyone they encountered.

"They went so far as to hint they'd found something *else* out there too," said Tillie Downing, owner and proprietor of the Hell for Leather Saloon. "But neither Hiram nor Randy has been forthcoming on that point." Some locals speculate the brothers struck silver and remain loath to reveal its location, but the Felshaws aren't talking.

Ferry Out:

DESPITE the promise of the town's name, these days it features no functioning ferry across the Truckee. Which is to say, it *usually* has no functioning ferry. That statement may bear a little explanation, Dear Reader. Bear with us.

By most folks' accounting, it wasn't long after they'd heard tales of the revenant Paiutes of Pyramid Lake that they began to see horrifying proof. First, a few day-trippers went off to the lake for a picnic and disappeared without a trace. Then the Truckee River itself, formerly the town's primary water source, turned black and brackish-and clearly unpotable. It's said the only man to drink it, an old-timer they knew as "Kerchief" Updegraff, was dead in minutes. Eyewitnesses claim the flesh melted right off his bones. Needless to say, the rest of the town prefers thirst.

Finally came the phenomenon known locally as the "Truckee varmint." As this author heard the tale, ferry crossings are impossible due to the specimen that has taken up residence in the muddy riverbed-most likely, townsfolk agree, a cutthroat trout of gigantic proportions. After a few incidents in which the ferry rocked so violently its passengers went into the drink-and failed to come out-Mr. Dante shut down the service for good. Neither Dante nor his family were willing to comment for this story.

Interestingly, one night during my stay in Dante's Ferry a sizable group of riders arrived before dawn on the Truckee's far shore. They commenced to whooping it up and firing rifles in the air, creating such a ruckus that the entire camp was roused. To my surprise, Mr. Dante rushed out and took the ferry across for his insistent passengers, and transported them without untoward incident. The riders thundered into the west, and Mr. Dante returned to his home.

Later that morning at breakfast, I learned the night riders' identity: the Whateley Gang.

Mysteries of Whateley Ranch

WHAT mysteries might the Whateley Ranch hold for curious visitors? Surely any reader familiar with the *E pitaph's* prior reportage recognizes the name and recalls-likely with an involuntary shiver-all the grue its appearance implies. Few are forthcoming with details about the local branch of the Whateley clan, and this author was unable to visit the cattle ranch for lack of a means to cross the Truckee. But pointed interrogatives and a timely round of whiskeys revealed some pertinent facts.

Ransom Whateley runs the ranch, and-this author assumes-the gang. Most of its members are his immediate family, save "Beeve" Brazzleton, a hulking man-child wanted in Oklahoma for murder and arson.

After each of the gang's occasional trips west to California, they return with 50 or more head of cattle, which they ferry back to their ranch. Witnesses declined to remark upon the presence or absence of brands, or were unable to recall such details.

Since the Truckee started running black, the Whateleys have been selling potable well water to Dante. According to one witness, Ransom Whateley was heard to declare with a hard laugh, "That water keeps flowing for as long as you stay on my Mamaw's good side."

Best Intentions

IN Virginia City, Nevada, Marshal Kirk Enbree announced yesterday he has dispatched a posse to Dante's Ferry to aid its beleagured residents. Although Marshal Enbree arguably went beyond his jurisdiction with such an act, Dante's Ferry has no law to speak of. Enbree also claims the tacit approval of Storey and Washoe County officials, but such claims could not be confirmed by press time.

All that's certain is Dante's Ferry lies beneath a cloud of death, whose shadow has already begun to warp the very landscape in its image. Good luck and steady aim to any honest shootists who are headed there!

The Hero-Killers

when your group arrives in virginia city and hears the sordid tale of the lost shootists who preceded them, they're drawn into a growing web of horror. Make sure your posse's at least Heroic Rank when you begin, Marshal, 'cause this ain't no tiptoe through the daisies.

we don't provide solutions for every obstacle here. Your heroes are veterans, so we expect them to use their resources and abilities, and be able to think their way through some tough challenges.

THE STORY SO PAR

Dante's Ferry, Nevada—a silver boomtown about 55 miles north of Virginia City—is about to give rise to a new Deadland. And all because of folks' imaginations.

About a month ago the Felshaw Brothers, a silver-prospecting duo out of Dante's Ferry, discovered a derelict roundhouse along a deserted stretch of rail. Having found no signs of silver on their trip, Randy and Hiram hoped to salvage something of value in the ruins instead. Little did they know it was one of Hellstromme's special facilities, left over from when the Denver-Pacific railroad carried Wasatch freight.

In a forgotten complex beneath the roundhouse, the brothers found something neither could have imagined—a dust-covered laboratory complete with beakers, tubes, and disturbing gurneys equipped with leather straps to hold their occupants immobile. And they found 13 flasks of viscous, silver liquid. Believing it to be some form of the precious ore they were seeking, they uncapped a flask. The silvery blob sprang like quicksilver from its prison – and wherever it touched them, it melted into their skin.

Randy and Hiram Felshaw fled back to Dante's Ferry telling hair-raising, bloodcurdling tales of horrors lurking just beyond the town's borders. Their oddly affecting stories gave new (un)life to local superstitions...and soon propelled the Fear Level to 5. You see, it wasn't just any weird living quicksilver in the ruin...it was pure, distilled *fear*.

In the terror's midst, the Cackler and his entourage arrived in Dante's Ferry seeking one Ransom Whateley and his kin, owners of a shunned, failing cattle ranch east of town. The Whateleys were said to have taken on a ward. And although the Cackler's investigation

discovered suitably horrifying circumstances – the Whateleys' ward was not the young 'un he seeks, as told in *The Cackler* graphic novel. Nonplussed, the old albino rode back to town.

Meanwhile, Jasper Stone rode hard toward Dante's Ferry on Death's orders: to slay any heroes who might prevent the boomtown from tipping to a Deadland. Shane Lacy Hensley's short story "Dead Men Talking" recounts Stone and the Cackler's meeting at the local saloon, and the fates of the heroes who came to rescue Dante's Ferry from Hell's claws.

Amused by the carnage, the Cackler stayed for a few weeks. Then, eager to resume his search, he left town with his retinue, headed south.

As for Stone, all the killing sated him for now. But he tipped his hat and murmured something about lingering for a spell...just in case.

THE STRINOP

This adventure commences whenever your posse is kicking around the sprawling boomtown of Virginia City, Nevada. More details about Virginia City are found in *Deadlands: Stone and a Hard Place*. Officially speaking, this tale is set in May 1881.

One of your cowpokes happens on a fresh broadsheet posted in town, not far from the marshal's office. It reads:



A Posse Gathers

Just as the poster promised, Marshal Kirk Enbree is found in his office at 52 Taylor Street most hours of the night or day. Read the following when the heroes enter:

Marshal Enbree – if he really is the marshal – is quite a sight. He's got bleary bloodshot eyes and tousled gray hair. In fact, he's drunker than a peach-orchard sow.

He watches you enter without a word, then with quivering hands he refills the shot glass in front of him from a whiskey bottle.

"Howdy, 'migos," he slurs. "I reckon you're here 'bout th' job."

He tips his head back, drains the glass, and sets it down as he awaits your reply.

Marshal Enbree's not much for negotiating. He offers \$500 each, plus two reloads' worth of cartridges for any weapons the heroes carry. Success on a Persuasion roll ups the fee as high as \$1,000 each, plus four reloads.

If asked to explain more about the so-called "criminal elements" mentioned on the poster, Enbree licks his lips and intones,

"S'hard to explain, really. Certainly there's a ranch full o' murderers east o' Dante's Ferry. But recently they's...other things gone wrong around town. Things I cain't rightly explain. And you ain't the first posse I sent."

Enbree reaches into a desk drawer and hands the heroes a page torn from a recent issue of the *Tombstone Epitaph*. Marshal, give your players the *Epitaph* handout (pages 1–2).

• Marshal Kirk Enbree: Use the Gunman (Veteran) profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add the Habit (Major, alcohol) Hindrance.

Enbree's Shame

4

The marshal is clearly intoxicated from his whiskey breakfast, but any buckaroo who succeeds on a Notice roll during this exchange realizes that the marshal is also *terrified*. Of what, he's not saying. No amount of Persuasion causes him to spill the beans, but success on a Test of Will taps Enbree's keg of knowledge.

The marshal nearly breaks down,

"Somebody has to go to Dante's Ferry. Somebody has to help them people before the darkness plumb swallers 'em whole. And that's you, I reckon, 'cause there ain't nobody else left to do the job.

"Certainly not me, I cain't do it. I...cain't face him again. He's faster'n any gunslinger I've seen, and he never misses. And his count'nance... dear Lord...jest thinkin' 'bout it strikes my soul ice-cold. You can see the fires o' Hell burnin' in them eyes."

When shootists press Enbree for the badman's name, he stares at them and whispers,

"Papers call 'im th' Deathly Drifter. But that ain't his name. Oh, no. His name is Stone."

If one or more heroes have heard of Stone, this revelation is sure to give them pause. But Enbree clarifies he doesn't expect them to deal with the Deathly Drifter. Rather, he wants all the town's *other* troubles dealt with.

Anyone who does so despite Stone's possible interference, and returns to Virginia City with some form of proof, gets paid the agreed-upon fee. "Without you," Marshal Enbree says, "them people's as good as dead."

ON THE ROAD TO HEALL

The trip from Virginia City to Dante's Ferry covers roughly 60 miles. Travelers pick up Steamboat Creek and follow it north to the Truckee River, trek northeast to the backwater town of Wadsworth, and end up about four miles from Pyramid Lake's shores. A determined posse could make the ride in a single day, but for every five miles the group rides beyond 40, each rider must succeed on a Vigor roll (-2) or suffer a level of Fatigue, or two levels on snake eyes. This Fatigue fades with a good night's rest.

Draw a card from the Action Deck each day. On a face card, roll for encounters using the Wild Southwest table in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, or the expanded tables found in the *Deadlands: Stone and a Hard Place* Plot Point Campaign book.



If you're using one of our Plot Point Campaigns, Marshal, you might also apply a few of the Setting Rules found in those books. Either Famine's supernatural **Hunger** (see *The Flood*) or the **Killin' Heat** brought on by Death (see *Stone and Hard Place*) are great themes with which to plague the posse on their way to Dante's Ferry.

Wadsworth is little more than a miners' camp, and the folks there are reticent to say the least. With success on a Persuasion roll, a local confirms that Dante's Ferry has had its share of troubles lately. With a raise, the helpful sodbuster affirms that a large posse passed through Wadsworth about a month ago, headed for Dante's Ferry. They never came back.

Unbeknownst to the heroes, the Cackler is just now growing tired of his sojourn in Dante's Ferry. The ancient Harrowed and his retinue depart the town headed south only an hour or two after the posse sets out north from Wadsworth.

Dante's Inferno

This chapter lays out all the information a Marshal needs about the locations and populace of Dante's Ferry, the whateley Ranch about six miles east of town, and various abominations that plague the area.

But before your heroes reach Dante's Ferry, they're destined to encounter a traveler they've never seen before...and probably hope they never meet again!

MINNET THE CACENTER

When the posse's trail reaches a rocky, secluded spot two or three miles south of Dante's Ferry, call for Notice rolls. With success a hero notes travelers approaching—three figures on horseback.

If the heroes immediately leave the path and achieve success on simple Stealth rolls, they can hide out while the mysterious strangers pass by. Cowpokes clearly hear the horses crunch past, and one of the riders emits a dry, reedy laugh. Finally, there's a rush of wings as a whole flock of birds flies overhead. Once the stealthy compadres emerge, the travelers are gone.

Hombres who choose to greet the strangers are in for trouble, Marshal, because it's not just any riders coming down the dusty track—it's the Cackler and his cronies!

Read the following:

As you get closer, something about the strangers' countenances strikes you as odd. One rider wears a black suit and bowler hat, and stares straight ahead unblinking, a scowl stamped into his beefy jowls.

Behind him rides an Indian at least six-anda-half feet tall, powerfully built and dragging a massive war club at his side. The brave wears a similarly forbidding expression.

The third traveler is the one who strikes you most odd. He wears a duster, with a widebrimmed hat to shade his features. A thin chuckle boils up out of his throat.

"Heh-heh. Heh-heh. Greetings and wellmet," says the laughing man in an English accent. "And who might you be? Heh-heh."

Give the players a chance to introduce themselves and parley however they wish.

Neither the Cackler nor his companions interrupt them. Once they've said their piece, read the following:

The man in the wide-brimmed hat raises his head, revealing pasty, bone-white skin, a pair of rose-tinted spectacles, and a sickening rictus of a grin that seems to show every tooth in his head.

He hisses, "Perhaps it's your words, or perhaps your bearing...but whatever the cause, I can't shake the feeling that you are do-gooders. And there is only one way to deal with do-gooders."

A murder of crows appears overhead, cawing and shrieking, as the albino chants in some blasphemous language. What do you do?

Deal out Action Cards now, Marshal, and don't forget to draw one extra for the evil critters the Cackler summons up: On their card, a giant night scorpion and its smaller cousins burst up from beneath the trail—directly between the posse and the Cackler.

On their cards, the Cackler and his companions ride hard into the distance, leaving the heroes to fight the scorpions. The old Harrowed isn't really that interested in killing them. Besides, he knows Stone is waiting for them at Dante's Ferry!

- The Cackler: See page 22.
- Mr. Collins: See page 25.
- Stone Crow: See page 23.
- 🕲 Tlachtga: See page 24.

Night Scorpions (1 per hero)

These vicious black scorpions are about the size of dogs, and twice as ornery.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5 (2)

Special Abilities:

- **Ambush:** Night scorpions bury themselves under sand, loose dirt, or debris to lie in wait for prey. When in such a position and unmoving, opponents suffer a -4 penalty to Notice rolls for Surprise.
- Armor +2: A scorpion's carapace protects it.

- **Claws:** Str+d6. A scorpion uses its claws to Grapple a victim, then follows with the stinger (Fighting +2 against a Grappled enemy).
- Size -2: A night scorpion is dog-sized.
- **Sting:** Str+d4. Anyone wounded by the scorpion's sting must make a Vigor roll (-2) or gain a level of Fatigue that fades after 1d4 days.

🔕 Night Scorpion, Giant

Truly monstrous in size and decidedly mean in spirit, giant scorpions are fearless. They kill and eat any men or animals they come across.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d12+4, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 15 (4)

Special Abilities:

- **Ambush:** Night scorpions bury themselves under sand, loose dirt, or debris to lie in wait for prey. When in such a position and unmoving, opponents suffer a -4 penalty to Notice rolls for Surprise.
- **Armor +4:** The giant scorpion's thick carapace grants protection.
- **Claws:** Str+d8. A giant scorpion typically uses its claws to Grapple a victim, then follows up with a jab of the stinger (Fighting +2 against a Grappled enemy).
- Fearless: Too stupid to be afraid or anything or anyone, giant scorpions are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- Large: Attack rolls to hit a giant scorpion are made at +2.
- **Size +5:** The giant scorpion grows as large as a rhino.
- Sting: Str+d4. Anyone wounded by the scorpion's sting must make a Vigor roll (-2) or immediately become Incapacitated (death follows in 1d4 minutes). A successful roll means the affected location is paralyzed for 1d6 days (paralysis of the Guts or Head means unconsciousness for the duration).

DAMER'S FRRNY

Fear Level: 5

Dante's Ferry is a flyspeck town, composed of a trading post, saloon, miners' camp, and the Truckee River ferry crossing that gives the place its name.

These days it's also a town near the end. The Felshaw Brothers' horror stories have awakened the locals' fears and superstitions, and the Reckoning's dark magic has made them real. Of course, the fact that Randy and Hiram are all hopped-up on Hellstromme's *fear juice* isn't helping the situation very much.

From the moment the sodbusters arrive, it's clear that something's not quite right. In fact, Dante's Ferry is a near-Hellscape twisted by terror, and its inhabitants suffer from hunger and thirst to boot.

Points of Interest

A battered wooden sign posted about a hundred yards outside town announces the place as **DANTE'S FERRY, POP. 33**. The sign's pierced by several bullet holes, and broken cattle skulls and other bones are piled at its base. A passing hero who dismounts to inspect the skeletal remains more closely, or one who succeeds on a Notice check (-2), discovers several human skulls and other bones in the pile. Two of the skulls are pierced clean through by bullet holes.

The trading post sits at the center of town, faced by the Hell for Leather saloon opposite. A few other scattered outbuildings dot the blasted landscape. Ragged miners' tents are planted wherever there's enough bare ground to hold them. Beyond, the lazy Truckee River flows past a dock where the ferry is moored. But the water is almost black, like an oozing river of oil.

In fact, the sun never seems to pierce the haze of dust and clouds, leaving the landscape Dark during the day and Pitch Black at night (see *Savage Worlds*). When the wind blows out of the north, it brings a rotten stench from Pyramid Lake and if one strains to listen — a faint, otherworldly wail of lament that chills the blood. The town's flowers and gardens are wilted, its windows cracked and spider-webbed, its residents hollow-eyed and taciturn.

They don't roll out the Welcome Wagon for new arrivals, that's for sure.

Dante's Trading Post

Albrecht Dante, the trading post and ferry's owner, was born in San Francisco in 1838. His grandmother always told him stories of the family's legendary good fortune. And sure enough, Albrecht miraculously survived the Great Quake, but lost his family and livelihood in the disaster. He traveled east into Nevada with the few meager possessions remaining to him, not exactly sure what he was looking for until he found it.

Ironically, Dante was only a few miles from the Truckee River's shores when his horse died of thirst. But that ol' Dante luck reared its head again, for when Albrecht staggered up over the next rise he saw the glittering ribbon of water flowing northward into Pyramid Lake. Soon he'd established his land claim and constructed a dock and ferry to service local prospectors and ranchers. With the proceeds he built the trading post that bears his family name.

Mr. Dante is stocky, gray-bearded, and of decidedly saturnine disposition, given to proclamations of onrushing doom on those few occasions he speaks more than a grunt. He tends to glare at strangers a lot, but doesn't fail to offer supplies to those in need. Dante runs the post with the help of his wife and precocious 10-yearold twin sons who are decidedly more cheery than their pater.

- Albrecht Dante: Use the Townsfolk profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add Boating d8.
- Mary Frances Dante: Use the Townsfolk profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but Mary Frances is Hell with a shotgun – she has Shooting d10 and the Quick Draw Edge.
- Ambrose and Albrecht Jr.: Use the Townsfolk profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* for the twins, but they both have the Small Hindrance and Toughness 4. Ambrose, however, has Lockpicking d8 and Albrecht Jr. has Stealth d10.

DANTE'S INFERNO

Felshaw Brothers' Tent

When they're not drinking and telling hairraising stories at the Hell for Leather saloon, or working one of their (mostly worthless) claims, Randy and Hiram Felshaw can be found here in their rather nondescript tent. If either of the brothers ends up fleeing from the posse members in a blind panic – a distinct possibility – he takes a roundabout route to the tent and stays there for 2d12 hours, quaking in abject terror.

If the heroes go looking for the tent, they're in for a challenge. The local miners trust strangers even less than they trust each other, and therefore are extremely reluctant to provide any useful information. It takes a successful Streetwise roll (-2) to locate a grizzled prospector who's even willing to give the accurate time of day.

At that point, Marshal, roll on the Reaction Table (see *Savage Worlds*) with a -4 modifier to determine the old-timer's disposition: anything from neutral on down to hostile. No one's friendly or helpful here at first! Now the pistoleros can use Persuasion to improve the miner's attitude or use Intimidation (-2) to increase his cooperation levels. Raising the miner's attitude to Friendly or better, or success on an Intimidation roll, means the miner points out the Felshaws' tent.

• Randy and Hiram Felshaw: Use the Townsfolk profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Add Knowledge (Mining) d6 and the Yellow Hindrance.

Ferry Crossing

The mysterious "Truckee varmint" has taken up residence in the inky waters. When it first rose up from the river and shook Dante's raft a halfdozen miners went into the water shrieking. They never came out. Albrecht promptly suspended ferry services.

That is, he suspended them until Ransom Whateley and his misbegotten offspring (see page 12) arrived on the opposite shore and took potshots at the trading post with their squirrel guns. At their insistence, Albrecht ferried them across, and did so again when they returned from California a couple weeks later with a new herd of cattle – both times without incident. Next time Albrecht ferried travelers, the varmint shook half of them off the boat and into the depths. Now only the Whateleys are able to make use of the Dante Ferry without being eaten.

The so-called Truckee varmint is a river leviathan Mamaw Whateley summoned from the depths of Pyramid Lake when the Fear Level crept high enough. The Whateleys' weird influence over the thing allows them to use the ferry without incident.

Any other time, the evil octopus grasps the ferry from below and rocks it violently for 1d4 rounds. For each round the shaking continues, the ferry's passengers must make opposed Strength or Agility rolls against the leviathan's Strength of d12+4. With a failed Agility roll, the passenger tumbles into the river. (You might grant a second Strength or Agility roll at -4 to grasp the ferry's edge if you're feeling merciful, Marshal.) The water inflicts 2d4–2 corrosive damage (ignoring armor) each round to characters immersed in it.

• **River Leviathan:** See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. This specimen lacks a wreck to hide within and the Armor Monstrous Ability it would convey, so its Toughness is 19.



Hell for Leather Saloon

When visitors pass through the saloon's swinging batwing doors, the first thing that jumps out is a handpainted sign hanging above the bar mirror that reads:

If YOU'RE in a HURRY-go HELL for LEATHER!

That's about the most levity to be found in the Hell for Leather Saloon, where the bottles are dust-covered and dingy, the player piano's notes warble like clamoring souls, and all the clientele is as hunkered down and fearful as a pack of whipped curs.

The bar's owner is Tillie Downing, a tough and no-nonsense type who established her place about a year after the trading post got started... and has regretted it ever since.

When the heroes enter the Hell for Leather Saloon the first time, move on to the next chapter, **Dark Tales**.

Tillie Downing: See page 19.

Miners' Camp

About 25 miners dwell in this camp at any one time, roving out to their claims up and down the western banks of the Truckee. Only a few of the tents could be considered permanent; the rest are transients who typically dig for silver for a few months, then move on to more prosperous Californian sea channels.

The camp is laid out in no discernable pattern or organization whatsoever. See the **Felshaw Brothers' Tent** (page 9) if buckaroos go looking for a specific residence.

• Miners (25): Use the Townsfolk profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Most have Knowledge (Mining) d6 or more.

PYRANID LAKE

Fear Level: 4

This section covers the events that inevitably stem from a posse's visit to Pyramid Lake. The trail winds north along the Truckee River's desolate banks as the oily water slips past without a sound. When travelers reach the spot on the map (page 5) marked with a triangle, read the following passage:

Ahead you spy a pair of shadowy figures standing beside the trail. The moon's bonewhite glow reveals a pair of young Indian girls – Paiutes, to judge by their garb and tribal markings. In their eyes is such incredible fear, sadness, and suffering your heart can't help but ache. Then their features melt away in red streamers of gore, revealing bloody skulls and black eye-pits. Their shrieks echo in the valley.

Everyone who witnesses this horrifying event needs to succeed on a Fear test (at -4 for the local Fear Level). And then, just and quickly as they appeared, the apparitions vanish.

The Drowned Dead

When the posse approaches Pyramid Lake, the waters of which are as black as the Truckee River flowing into it, the region's true danger becomes plain. Read the following:

From the gloom you hear a thick splashing noise and a moaning voice. Clumsy feet clatter the lakeshore rocks. A voice chokes and bubbles, "Williams Station..." again and again. Other voices join the first. "Williams Station." They're approaching...what do you do?

Deal out Action Cards, Marshal. On their card, a mob of undead, waterlogged Paiutes and former settlers—all casualties of the battles fought here—emerge from the darkness.

Their favored tactic is to Grapple foes and drag them into the river to drown (see **Drowning** in *Savage Worlds*). In addition to the obvious hazard, the foul water inflicts 2d4–2 corrosive damage (ignoring armor) each round to anyone immersed in it.

Bloats (2 per hero)

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Swim d8

Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 8

Special Abilities:

• Claws: Str+d4.

- Fear -1: Their distorted features make bloats more frightening than other walkin' dead.
- Fearless: Bloats are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Puncture Resistant:** Bloats take half damage from most firearms and piercing weapons. Shotguns and cutting or slashing weapons do full damage to these abominations.
- **Reek:** Bloats have a much stronger stench than normally associated with the dead, granting +2 to Notice rolls to detect the monsters.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage (except to the head).
- Weakness (Alcohol): Splashing alcohol of any sort on a bloat inflicts 2d6 damage.

Settlin' Accounts

Lingering in the vicinity of Pyramid Lake is a fool's errand. Draw an Action Card for every hour that passes in-game: On a face card, another mob of bloated dead (two per hero) attack. On a Joker, there are four of them per hero. The trick to soothing the restless dead is to seize on their oft-repeated lament of "Williams Station." If a cowpuncher's native to the region, a sucessful Common Knowledge roll (-2) remembers her book-learnin'. Otherwise success on an Investigation or Knowledge (History) roll uncovers the information. If such methods fail or aren't available, a successful Streetwise or Persuasion roll in town leads the heroes to Mary Frances Dante, who's native to the area and shares the sordid tale.

In fact, the Battles of Pyramid Lake weren't fought over territorial rights. The proprietors of a combination saloon and trading post called Williams Station (see map on page 5) abducted, raped, and killed two Paiute girls. The Indians raided and burned Williams Station, where the girls had been held, for retribution. This event sparked a panic among the settlers, who organized into vigilante bands to hunt and kill the Paiutes.

Digging under Williams Station's scorched ruins reveals the girls' huddled bones. If they are properly buried, returned to the Paiute tribe, or a successful *exorcism* performed, Pyramid Lake's revenant dead never return.



WIELASMERLIEW IRADICHE

Fear Level: 4

Never will you find a more repulsive collection of villainous no-accounts than the inhabitants of Whateley Ranch. Thing is, Ransom Whateley and his kin don't see it that way. As far as they're concerned, they just do what they have to in order to get by.

But that's what makes them so dangerous to the people of Dante's Ferry: Somewhere along the way to steeping their souls in irredeemable evil, the Whateleys forgot what it was like to have a soul, to *suffer*. That makes them about the cruelest folk in the county. Hell, they're in the running for cruelest statewide.

Gettin' There

Reaching the Whateley Ranch requires traversing the Truckee River (see **Ferry Crossing** on page 9), or circumnavigating Pyramid Lake – a dangerous prospect if the heroes have not yet put its vengeful undead to rest.

Beyond the Truckee, the trail stretches about six miles to the Whateley property.

Nest o' Vipers

The Whateleys of Nevada are a dangerous bunch. They're more interested in sorcery and black magic than in venerating forgotten gods, which tends to give them a more pragmatic view of manitous than some of their kin. Mamaw Whateley rules them, and her children Ransom and Rowena are also the rest of the family's patriarch and matriarch. Like we said, Marshal – these Whateleys are crazier'n a bunch of locoed bedbugs.

Barn

Although it appears deserted and crumbling to pieces in the Nevada heat, the barn houses most of the Whateley kin and their horses. About a dozen sides of beef hang from the rafters, swarming with flies. Among them are a few cuts of "long pig," a discovery that provokes a Fear test. Arcane symbols are carved into nearly every surface, or scrawled on the walls in old blood. Without much else to do, the Whateleys spend their days here butchering cattle or tormenting captives before adding them to the larder.

In the barnyard, several scrawny chickens peck in the dust. On closer investigation, each has 1d6 eyes placed randomly on its head. There's a single milking goat, seemingly mundane...except for its *human* eyes. Realizing just how loco the barnyard is provokes a Fear test.

• Whateley Kin: Use the Outlaw profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add the Ugly Hindrance. Most Whateleys also have a physical deformity (One Eye, One Arm, etc.) or mental instability (Delusional).

Ranch House

When they're not leading raids into California to rustle cattle and horses, Ransom and Rowena Whateley spend most of their time in the house. They like to pretend they're the owners of a big plantation house Back East. Forget about Southern hospitality, though.

Ransom Whateley: See page 20.

Rowena Whateley: See page 20.

Mamaw's Shed

Mamaw Whateley spends all her time studying the stacks of ancient, wormeaten tomes that surround her, confined to her rocking chair. Due to dark pacts she's made with manitous, the old woman doesn't need to eat or drink anymore...and is barely human. Still, she enjoys a glass of fresh cow's blood every evening. One of Mamaw's books contains a ritual that can be of great use against Stone (see page 18); she offers this knowledge to save her own life, if need be.

Mamaw Whateley: See page 20.

Well o' Hell

The Whateleys' well is the only source of clean water in the region, thanks to Pyramid Lake being haunted and the Truckee's waters running black. But there's a catch, Marshal.

To satisfy the evil magic that keeps the well's water clean, one must squeeze 13 drops of fresh blood into the well before it grants a single bucket of potable water. Without blood, only black water with similar properties to the Truckee (page 9) can be drawn.

Dark Tales

All right, Marshal. We've set the scene, now it's about time we cover how things play out when a posse arrives in Dante's Ferry.

It doesn't take long for shootists to figure out what's gone wrong, and they may even have an easy time eliminating a few of the local threats to life and limb. But to truly save the town takes well-told stories. And did we mention stone's taken an interest?

HISTLI IFOR LISATONER

The Hell for Leather Saloon is where most of the townsfolk gather to drink away their cares... and listen to the Felshaw Brothers' stories, whether they want to or not. When your posse arrives in town and stops in to wet their whistles, this tale gets rolling.

Read the following after the heroes take stock of the saloon's offerings, as described on page 10. Then read the following passage:

Everybody in the place – mostly filthencrusted silver miners, from the looks of them – halts their conversation and drinking to look at you. They return to talking after an uncomfortable 20 seconds pass.

A player piano warbles hideously in the corner, and one young fellow at the bar seems to be doing most of the talking to anyone who'll listen. He rattles on and on about the dark doings out at Pyramid Lake:

"It's them Paiutes what was killed," he says, "and the settlers to boot. They're out there by the lake, waiting...for anyone durn fool enough to try to get water out of Pyramid Lake!"

This is Hiram Felshaw, deep in his cups and once again spinning tales of horror guaranteed to boost the local Fear Level, due to the distilled fear (see sidebar on page 16) still coursing through his system.

Any buckaroo who takes the time to survey the entire room and succeeds on a Notice roll catches sight of one particular hombre:

In a shadowed corner a dude sits alone, battered boots perched on the table, hat pulled low to shade his face. A half-full bottle of whiskey and an empty shot glass sit in front of him. He notes you but doesn't acknowledge you.

This is Stone himself, stationed in Dante's Ferry to see whether anybody'd be damn fool enough to try to turn the tide. No one seems to look his way, but everyone's uncomfortably aware of his foul presence. Stone pays special attention to anyone who speaks with Hiram. He's sated from the posse he just killed (in the short story, "Dead Men Talking"), but he's not too happy about any heroes who challenge Felshaw's narratives.

With success on a Persuasion or Streetwise roll a newcomer gets some of the other locals talking. They're quick to attest to the *Epitaph's* truthfulness in light of the menagerie of horrors gathered around Dante's Ferry—perhaps embellishing tales of the Truckee varmint and the Whateley Gang—and add that the town's running perilously low on water.

Hiram Felshaw pipes up at this point:

"I done told you. This-a here town is doomed, and there ain't a one of us can escape it. The darkness is closin' in. If it ain't thirst or the poison river or the Whateleys...if it ain't the drowned dead o' Pyramid Lake...the earth itself might jest swaller this whole place. Like it never existed. Swaller it right down to Hell."

Even the most oblivious cowpoke notes the chill that passes through the room when Hiram makes his dire pronouncements. With success on a Notice roll (-2), it's clear that there really is a physical effect accompanying his words; the temperature drops by a few degrees and the lights dim subtly, causing shadows to lengthen.

- Hiram Felshaw: Use the Townsfolk profile in the *Marshal's Handbook*. Add Knowledge (Mining) d6 and the Yellow Hindrance
- Miners (2 per hero): Use the Townsfolk profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

Stone: See page 21, and When Stone Gets Rollin' on page 17.

Down to Business

Now that they've arrived and seen the problem's scope, it's time for the heroes to figure out how to tackle it. One thing's for sure: Without the posse's intervention, Dante's Ferry transforms into a Deadland (Fear Level 6) before a month goes by. They can go after the Truckee varmint, the drowned dead, or the Whateleys, and putting a stop to any or all of them certainly improves the town's lot.

The important thing to remember, Marshal, is that merely destroying abominations isn't enough to save Dante's Ferry. The heroes have to return to the Hell for Leather and successfully tell the tales of their victory (see **Fear Levels** in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*) for their efforts to have any real effect. But as you'll see, Marshal, Stone doesn't make that process easy! Here are some likely courses of action for the pistoleros, and where they're likely to lead.

Clearly Present Dangers

If the posse goes after the dead of Pyramid Lake or the Truckee varmint (maybe by dropping a few bundles of waterproofed TNT into the riverbed), Stone observes but doesn't interfere in any way. He does seem amused, at least, but he knows it's too late for such actions to save Dante's Ferry on their own.

Questioning the Felshaws

Atfer Hiram's fearmongering display in the saloon, shrewd heroes may key in on the Felshaws' possible involvement, whether intentional or not, in the town's plight. The Felshaws are skittish, though, and do their best to evade interrogations. See the description of the Felshaw Brothers' tent (page 9) if Hiram gives searchers the slip and must be tracked.

If the heroes manage to corner one or both Felshaws and succeed on a Persuasion roll (-4) or a Test of Will, the miner breaks down and tells the tale of what they *really* found:

"There was one thang we left out. The most terrifyin' thang of all. Southeasterly from here, maybe 10 miles south o' Whateley Ranch, we came upon an old rail spur what leads to a ruined roundhouse. Left over from the Great Rail Wars, I reckon. What we found in there...I cain't describe it. But it's the most awful thang I ever saw. And it'll be the death o' this place!"

At that second one or two shots (one for each Felshaw) ring out like sudden thunder. One or both of the Felshaws slump dead, shot clean through the noggin. If it's daylight in a clear area, the posse might see Stone spin his revolvers back

DARK TALES

into the holsters and mosey away. At night or in the miners' camp, the shooter gets away clean.

• Hiram and Randy Felshaw: Use the Townsfolk profile in the *Marshal's Handbook*. Add Knowledge (Mining) d6 and the Yellow Hindrance.

Stone: See page 21, and When Stone Gets Rollin' on page 17.

Whateley Hoedown

Here's what happens when the posse rides to Whateley Ranch, either to procure water for the townsfolk or to run off the family. If the cowpokes approach on the sly or under cover of darkness, things might go a mite different. Read the following when the heroes arrive:

Up ahead you see a sprawling, desolate property surrounded by rickety split-rail fences. A decrepit painted sign forms an arch above the front entrance and reads, WHATELEY RANCH. A smaller, hand-lettered sign nailed to the fence says, "GO AYWAY."

About a quarter-mile off sits a squat ranch house, derelict barn, outhouse, and a covered well. About a dozen head of cattle stand in the field, more skin and bones than meat. A small shed sits off on its own, with a crooked, skeletal tree looming over it like the hand of Death.

Any hero with Danger Sense Edge gets the eerie feeling she's being watched. Other dudes might get a sense of the watching Whateleys with success on a Notice roll (-4). In either case, setting foot or hoof on the property brings the clan a-runnin'. Read the following:

As you set out toward the ranch house, a keening whoop issues from the barn. Abruptly a whole posse comes charging out on horseback... and they're headed straight for you!

The Whateleys ride in circles around the posse on their horses, whooping and hollering at them to throw down their weapons.

• Whateley Kin (2 per hero): Use the Outlaw profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, but add the Ugly Hindrance. Most Whateleys also have a physical deformity (One Eye, One Arm, etc.) or mental instability (Delusional).

EASIN' THE FEAR

Each time the posse eliminates a threat to the town, they can roll Persuasion to tell a rousing (and hopefully convincing) tale of their victory to gathered townsfolk. See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* for details.

Unless he's distracted somehow, Stone doesn't make it easy to tell stories. The first time the posse tells a tale, Stone uses Taunt to disrupt it (for each success and raise on his roll, apply a -1 penalty to Persuasion). The next time, he challenges the tale-teller to a duel. After that, Stone says he'll shoot dead anyone who tells a "feel-good story" (and he follows through).

As heroes lower the Fear Level, the following effects are apparent:

Fear Level 4: The sun shines a little brighter on Dante's Ferry, eliminating Dark and Pitch Black conditions except at night.

Fear Level 3: The Truckee River flows clear, providing fresh water in abundance.

Fear Level 2: The landscape begins to lose its blasted and desolate appearance. A few flowers bloom along the riverbanks.

Showdown With the Devils

If the heroes fail to surrender, they're entering a world of pain. Ransom and Rowena are watching from the house, and now they spring into violent action.

Mamaw Whateley doesn't leave her shack, but she uses her *zombie* power to summon up a shambling herd of walkin' dead to aid her kin. If she's threatened, she uses *burrow* to escape through the shack's dirt floor.

- **Ransom Whateley:** See page 20.
- **Rowena Whateley:** See page 20.
- Mamaw Whateley: See page 20.
- Walkin' Dead (2 per hero): See the Deadlands Marshal's Handbook.

Relic: Distilled Fear

Hellstromme's roundhouse laboratory is only one of many such secret locations scattered across the Weird West and linked by Wasatch rails. The doctor's purpose in creating them was to experiment with – and ultimately understand the true nature of – *fear* as a tangible energy.

One side effect of his experiments was the creation of pure distilled fear in liquid form. It looks like quicksilver in a thermometer, and absorbs instantly into exposed skin.

Power: A cowpoke infused with distilled fear has a certain knack for telling terrifying tales... the kind that cause an area's Fear Level to *rise*. When the infused character uses Persuasion for the purpose of tellin' a tale, apply a +2 bonus. If that buckaroo also has the Tale Teller Edge, apply a +4 bonus. With a success, the local Fear Level rises by 1, or 2 on a raise.

Taint: While infused, a dude's as scared as a rabbit in a wolf's mouth. He gains the Yellow Hindrance and suffers a -4 to Fear tests. A successful *exorcism* purges distilled fear from a person's system, as does entering a *sanctified* area.



RUDALED ROUMDHOUSE

The posse's in for trouble when it hunts down the ruins the Felshaws found. Stone may not be too concerned about sodbusters wiping out minor abominations here and there, but he's on a mission from Death not to allow the "fear juice" to fall into the wrong hands. It seems the Reckoners have plans for it...plans that involve Wasatch forces rediscovering Hellstromme's old laboratories and collecting the contents.

Read this passage as the heroes top the rise overlooking the roundhouse:

In the box canyon below squats an abandoned, crumbling roundhouse. Tall weeds grow between the railroad ties that lead up to it, and a rusted locomotive stands at its dead center. The walls are cracked from foundations to roof, as though ruptured by an earthquake. The windows are broken and dark. A tall, rusty derrick of steel girders juts up beside the structure, like a longdead arm thrust from a shallow grave.

The site is one of Hellstromme's "fear laboratories," left over from the brief period during which the Denver-Pacific R.R. carried Wasatch freight. The derrick served as a dock for Hellstromme's personal airship. The surface structures are ruined and falling to pieces, but the secret catacombs below contain samples of the distilled fear (see sidebar) Hellstromme collected before his falling out with Denver-Pacific forced him to abandon the installation.

Investigators searching the ruin must succeed on a Notice roll (–2) to discover a rubble-cloaked staircase leading to the lower level.

Busted Tunnels

See the map at left when the posse investigates the subterranean labs. Read the following to set the scene:

Broken, uneven steps lead down 40 feet to a pitch-black corridor carved from solid rock. The tunnel walls are marred by cracks from floor to ceiling, and several side passages have collapsed. The sound of your footsteps echoes off into the tomblike tunnel. A slow, steady drip of water is the only other sound.

DARK TALES

The remaining tunnels are relatively stout, but an explosion or explosive Trapping that causes 3d6+ damage anywhere in the complex also causes a cave-in. Every cowpoke in a Large Burst Template centered on the explosion must make an Agility roll (–2).

With success, a searcher leaps out of danger. Failure means falling debris strikes the character for 2d10 damage. A roll of 1 (regardless of the Wild Die) means the hero suffers 3d10 damage and is buried alive.

Buried characters can't extricate themselves and must be dug out. This requires a Strength roll at -4. In these wide tunnels, this can be a cooperative roll. Each roll requires an hour of hard work. Diggers with mining tools add +2 to their rolls.

If the cave-in separates the posse, roll 1d6+3 to determine how much of the area is impassable (in yards). Each success and raise on a Strength roll at -6 excavates 1 yard. Diggers with mining tools receive a +4 bonus to this roll. Every roll represents an hour's work.

Fear, Itself

The laboratory still resonates with the horror felt by its subjects so long ago, but as far as earthly foes there's nothing here to fear but the fear juice itself (see sidebar on page 16). Oh...and Stone too, when he shows his rotting mug.

You inspect the laboratory and find it empty and silent. But the metal gurneys equipped with thick leather straps, the odd black apparatuses hooked up beside them, the eyeless rubber masks ...these tell an ominous tale. Other gizmos with glass lenses and huge rolls of black tape on them defy explanation; they remind you of a highly advanced camera obscura.

You see something that makes your blood run cold and the hairs stand up on your neck: 12 stoppered vials on a rack containing what looks like mercury. When the weird liquid twitches and convulses on its own, you know this is what the Felshaw brothers were talking about.

Just then an ice-cold voice drawls, "Back away from 'at fear juice nice an' easy, amigos. Or I'll fill you so full o' holes you won't even float in brine. We clear?"

When Stone Gets Rollin'

Here's what you need to know on the fly about Stone's combat prowess.

Cha: -8; Grit: 7; Pace: 8; Parry: 11; Toughness: 11

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean, Stubborn, Ugly, Overconfident, Vengeful (Major), Vow (Major, serve the Reckoners)

Attributes: d12+2 across the board.

Duelin' the Devil: Stone gets an extra seven hole cards in Duels (see the *Deadlands Player's Guide*). He's immune to Intimidation, and uses his Intimidation (see below) during the Face Off.

Intimidatin' the Locals: The Deathly Drifter rolls Intimidation d12+12. He can use the Rebel Yell Edge to affect an adjacent Large Burst Template. When he scores a raise over a Wild Card, that hombre's got to roll on the Fright Table; Extras are panicked. Stone gets +2 on Tests of Will, and to resist them too.

Fast As Lightning: Stone gets three Action Cards per round. Anything lower than a Ten is considered a Ten of the same suit; any cards lower <u>than Five are redrawn</u>.

Shootin' 'Em Full o' Lead: Stone fires each Trademark Colt Dragoon every round, as a separate action, at Shooting d12+6 (or d12+4 if he moves his Fleet-Footed Pace of 8) and rolls a d10 for each Wild Die. Stone's guns deal 2d10 damage, AP 4.

Stone adds +2 damage when attacking supernaturally good creatures. And when Stone is dealt a Joker in combat, his shots deal double damage.

Tough Bastard: Stone can't be wounded – only Shaken – by anything but his Weaknesses, and he has Armor 4 versus magic (and +4 on rolls to resist it). He gets +2 on Spirit rolls to recover from Shaken, and +2 Toughness against damage from supernaturally good sources. Stone doesn't suffer wound penalties.

Stone *ghosts* through the wall, covering the posse with his Colt Dragoons as he becomes solid again. Success on a Notice roll tells a hero that the vials of fear juice seem to make Stone nervous; his eyes keep flicking toward them. Deal Action Cards as soon as the heroes make a play for the distilled fear; Stone opens fire. After all—his masters have plans for that fear juice.

Stone: See page 21, and When Stone Gets Rollin' on page 17.

LIENTE A ROLLIEN STROME

So when the heroes face off against a fullblown Servitor, what options do they have? Glad you asked, Marshal, because they've got more tactics available to them than you might think.

As mentioned earlier, Stone's just a foreboding presence during the adventure's early stages. He allows the cowpokes to go about the grim business of killin' abominations and sending their manitous screamin' back to Hell, only taking a direct hand in things when the posse tries to tell a rousing tale...and lower the Fear Level.

That said, there are three ways to get rid of Stone before the adventure ends...and not all of them are equally wise!

Stone's Offer: Early on, Stone confronts the posse at some inconvenient time or place, like while they're fighting Pyramid Lake's drowned dead or blasting their way across the Whateley Ranch. Stone sneers,

"Way I understand it, you was hired for this job by a yellow-bellied varmint name o' Enbree. Am I right? He's got an appointment with me.

"Listen, amigos: All you have to do is tell me where that varmint's hidin', and I'll vamoose. Leave you to your work, as it were. Just name the place, hombres, and I ain't your problem no more."

Although this method's effective for getting rid of Stone, it's far from heroic. Characters who take this route soon realize they've given Marshal Enbree a death sentence. At the very least, it'll be hard for him to pay the posse's bounty from six feet underground. **Mamaw's Tomes:** If an egghead inspects Mamaw's wormeaten books (page 12) and succeeds on a Knowledge (Arcana) or Knowledge (Occult) roll, she discovers an incantation called "Verse to Dispel the Dark Hand of Death" – which can be used to drive Stone away!

Reading the incantation is a **Dramatic Task** (see *Savage Worlds*), and must be undertaken in Stone's presence (or at least within his earshot). For each of five rounds, the leader rolls Knowledge (Arcana) or (Occult) at -2 to properly intone the spell. Others can aid the leader with a Knowledge roll or Smarts at -2. While the incantation is being read, Stone can't fire his Colts – although he tries with growing frustration. If the leader collects five successes, Stone holsters his gun and walks away, unable to return for 13 days. But he promises, "You'll see me again."

If the group doesn't collect five successes, the spell fails and can't affect Stone until 13 days pass. In that case, Stone guns everyone down and burns Mamaw's books.

Fear Juice: The last, but perhaps most likely, way to drive off Stone is to simply splash or smash a vial of distilled fear (see page 16) all over him. Doing so doesn't frighten Stone in the least, but it scares the bejeezus out of his manitou!

There are 12 vials of fear juice. For each thrown on Stone, his manitou gets an immediate chance to seize Dominion, along with a Benny for the opposed Spirit roll. If the manitou takes control, Stone runs off in a panic and doesn't return.

Aftermath

When all's said and done, a posse's successful if it manages to secure or destroy the distilled fear and lower the Fear Level around Dante's Ferry to more manageable levels. Eluding or driving off Stone is the biggest obstacle heroes face.

If the shootists restore a little sunshine and light to the town, they become local folk heroes. Songs and tales are written about them, and they're always welcome to drink free at the Hell for Leather Saloon.

For his part, Marshal Enbree pays the agreedupon bounty when the sodbusters return. And he's mighty obliged if the heroes declined to tell Stone his current whereabouts.

Allies & Enemies

To finish things off, we present a rogues gallery of potential allies and dastardly villains to go up against your posse, including the infamous cackler and his gang! We leave you the option of fleshing out a few of the local miners, or even the whateley's notorious ally "Beeve" Brazzleton, should the urge strike you.

As usual, wild cards are marked with a handy marshal's badge to distinguish them from the Extras.

🕲 Tillie Downing

It's been several years since Tillie and Doc Holliday blazed a trail o' trouble a mile wide across west Texas. These days she's more interested in keeping a low profile, lest someone try to settle an old score. When the chips are down and the posse's in deep trouble, Tillie could be their best friend in Dante's Ferry.

See the *Stone and a Hard Place* Player's Guide (free download at **www.peginc.com**) for more information on hexslingers.

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Gambling d10, Guts d8, Hexslinging d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Occult) d6, Notice d8, Riding d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d10, Taunt d6

Cha: +2; Grit: 4; Pace: 6; Parry: 6; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Loyal, Wanted (Minor)

Edges: Arcane Background (Hexslinger), Attractive, Born to Kill, Dodge, Marksman, New Power, Quick Draw, Strong Willed

Powers: Boost/lower Trait, numb, shootist, smite. **Power Points:** 10

Gear: Double-action Colt Peacemaker (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, AP 1), Bowie knife (Str+d4+1, AP 1).

19

🕲 Mamaw Whateley

Ol' Mamaw Whateley traveled Out West from Providence, Rhode Island in 1864, after the folk traditions she'd practiced for so long bloomed into sorcerous life with the Reckoning's advent. Packing up her kin and her milquetoast husband—who didn't survive the journey west—Mamaw made her way to Dante's Ferry, Nevada, before she put down roots.

Now those roots have grown into a blackhearted, inbred hive of cannibalism and depravity called Whateley Ranch, and Mamaw Whateley is far more abomination than human. She sits in her creaky rocking chair all day long, studying bloodcurdling rituals, hideous face shadowed by a dusty and fraying shawl. But her gnarled gray claws clutch the armrests, white-knuckled with hatred.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d12+2, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d12

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d12, Spellcasting d12

Cha: -6; **Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10 (2)

Hindrances: Mean, Ugly

Edges: Arcane Background (Black Magic), Reputation, Whateley Blood

Powers: Barrier, bolt, boost/lower Trait, burst, burrow, curse, deflection, environmental protection, fear, fly, mind rider, obscure, puppet, zombie. **Power Points:** 50

Special Abilities:

- Armor +2: Mamaw's hide is like a tree's bark.
- Claws: Str+d6.
- Coup (Black Magic): A deader who absorbs Mamaw Whateley's essence gains one of her powers (player's choice) and 5 Power Points to activate it by Spirit roll. She also acquires the Unnatural Appetite (Minor) Harrowed Hindrance—for fresh cow's blood.
- Fear (-2): Seeing the bestial Mamaw without her shawl provokes a Fear test (-2).
- Fearless: Mamaw Whateley is immune to fear and Intimidation.
- Hardy: Additional Shaken results do not cause a wound on Mamaw.

🕲 Ransom Whateley

Mamaw's branch of the Whateleys is a matriarchy, meaning only the women get to learn black magic. That doesn't mean they refrain from using their dark powers for, *ahem*, male enhancement – as it were.

Ransom Whateley – tall, muscled, scarred, with a scowl that could peel the paint off a barn – is a perfect example of what their evil magic can create. And if anyone gives the family trouble, he makes that hombre suffer.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d6 Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Climbing d12, Fighting d12, Intimidation d8, Notice d12, Shooting d12, Swimming d12

Cha: 0; Grit: 4; Pace: 6; Parry: 7; Toughness: 9

Edges: Brawny, Improved Arcane Resistance

Gear: Double-barrel shotgun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 1–3d6, RoF 1–2), double-action Colt Peacemaker (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, AP 1), Bowie knife (Str+d4+1, AP 1).

🕲 Rowena Whateley

Rowena is Mamaw's prodigy in black magic. She's blonde, blue-eyed, purty as Hell, and twice as evil.

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

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d12, Spellcasting d10, Taunt d8

Cha: +4; Grit: 2; Pace: 6; Parry: 8; Toughness: 5

Edges: Arcane Background (Black Magic), Attractive, Block, Strong Willed, Whateley Blood (Exotic)

Powers: *Bolt, boost/lower Trait, fly, puppet, zombie.* **Power Points:** 15

Gear: Knife (Str+d4).

2(0)

Allies & Enemies

🕄 Stone

We covered Stone in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. But if you're using this adventure, Marshal, consider that entry a decoy of sorts. A convenient fiction to throw your players off the scent. Here we present Stone's *real* profile.

Stone is the first Harrowed of the Reckoning, and by far the meanest. He's such a bastard, in fact, that Death made him his Servitor, and the Reckoners appointed him their chosen assassin.

When heroes get too powerful—that is, they reach Legendary Rank and still actively hunt down abominations—the Reckoners send Stone to take them out. The Deathly Drifter prefers duels. It's far more amusing for him that way, and secretly he wonders whether anyone is fast enough to beat him.

Sometimes Stone aims for the head or attempts to disarm a foe – just to heighten the challenge. When facing lawmen of any stripe Stone makes a point of shooting them with a single bullet, dead center through the badge. He decorates his battered duster and waistcoat with his extensive collection of "dead stars."

Attributes: Agility d12+2, Smarts d12+2, Spirit d12+2, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12+2

Skills: Boating d10, Climbing d12, Driving d10, Fighting d12+2, Gambling d10, Guts d12+2, Intimidation d12+2, Knowledge (Battle) d10, Knowledge (Occult) d12+2, Lockpicking d12, Notice d12+2, Persuasion d10, Piloting d8, Repair d12, Riding d12+2, Shooting d12+2, Stealth d12+2, Streetwise d12+2, Survival d12+2, Swimming d12, Taunt d12, Throwing d12, Tracking d12+2

Cha: -8; Grit: 7; Pace: 8; Parry: 11; Toughness: 13

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean, Overconfident, Stubborn, Ugly, Vengeful (Major), Vow (Major, serve the Reckoners)

Edges: Alertness, Ambidextrous, Behold A Pale Horse..., Champion, Combat Reflexes, Command, Danger Sense, Dead Shot, Duelist, Fast As Lightning, Fleet-Footed, Giant Killer, Hard to Kill, Improved Arcane Resistance, Improved Block, Improved Dodge, Improved Hip-Shooting, Improved Level Headed,

21

Improved Tough as Nails, Improved Trademark Weapon (Colt Dragoons), Marksman, Master (Shooting), Nerves of Steel, Quick, Quick Draw, Rebel Yell, Reputation, Speed Load, Steady Hands, Strong Willed, True Grit, Two-Fisted

Gear: Relic Colt Dragoons (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d10, RoF 1, Shots unlimited, AP 4, Heavy Weapon).

Special Abilities:

• Aura of Death: Stone is the red right hand of Death. No one, not Stone or anyone else, may use Fate Chips for any purpose while within Stone's line of sight.

- End of the Line: Wounds inflicted by Stone cannot be healed by supernatural means, and Stone's victims cannot return to life by any means—including Harrowed.
- Fear: Stone is obviously Harrowed, and inflicts a Guts check on anyone who gets a good look at his desiccated mug.
- Fearless: Stone's manitou is afraid of him, but Stone himself fears nothing and no one. He is immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- Harrowed: Grit +1, Toughness +2, needs 1d6 hours of sleep per night, only a head shot can kill Stone permanently, "death" only lasts 1d6 days, immune to poison and disease.
- Harrowed Edges: Charnel Breath, Death Mask, Ghost, Implacable, Improved Cat Eyes, Improved Claws, Improved Stitchin', Rigor Mortis, Soul Eater, Speakin' With the Dead, Spook, Supernatural Trait (Agility, Smarts, Spirit, Strength, Vigor), Trackin' Teeth, Unholy Host. (See the *Stone and a Hard Place* Player's Guide, a free download at www.peginc.com, for details on these Edges.) Dominion: 0
- **Invulnerability:** Though Stone can be Shaken, he takes no wounds from magic or mundane attacks.
- Weakness (Bullets o' Betrayal): Stone can be killed by the actual bullets his own troops used to kill him at Gettysburg. But retrieving that old, used-up lead is a major undertaking. A few rounds might still be lodged in Stone's carcass! The lead must be recast into new bullets before it can be used on Stone, and you can bet the Reckoners make Stone aware of anyone foolish enough to try such a thing. Finally, due to his Harrowed state, these bullets can wound Stone but only an Incapacitating head shot puts him down for good.
- Weakness (By His Own Hands): Stone can also be killed by a gun fired by his own stonecold hands, but only an Incapacitating head shot seals the deal.

THE CACINLER'S GAING

🕲 The Cackler

22

The Cackler is one of the oldest Harrowed still walking. He claims to be the first, although there's some debate about that. He's certainly been around since the Dark Ages. He also managed

to "live" through the Old Ones' long sacrifice, which made it more difficult, but not impossible, for evil things to pass to and from the Hunting Grounds.

The Cackler's purpose in the Weird West is to find his blood relative, a girl named Rachel. With her body as a vessel, he hopes to bring back his long-lost mother. Their family has a strange heritage. Some of their bloodline are among the most noble souls who have ever lived – others are black-hearted villains such as the Cackler and that strange branch of their twisted family tree, the Whateleys.

The Cackler's true name? You know it, but it's a surprise revealed only in *The Cackler* graphic novel. In the meantime, think of him as a giggling fiend who delights in the misfortune of others. He's obsessed with black magic, but mostly so he can bring back his long-dead mother. He is a momma's boy, after all.

The Cackler is an albino with porcelain-white skin. He hates the heat and bright sunlight, hence the broad-brimmed hat and sunglasses he wears wherever he goes.

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

Skills: Boating d6, Climbing d6, Driving d6, Fighting d10, Gambling d6, Intimidation d6, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Occult) d12, Notice d10, Repair d6, Riding d8, Shooting d10, Spellcasting d12+2, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Swimming d6, Taunt d12

Cha: -4; **Grit:** 7; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 11; **Toughness:** 12 (4)

Hindrances: Bad Eyes (Minor), Curious, Habit (Minor – cackles), Quirk (Momma's Boy), Stubborn, Ugly, Vengeful (Major), Wanted (Major)

Edges: Alertness, Arcane Background (Magic), Combat Reflexes, Command, Command Presence, Danger Sense, Improved Dodge, Elan, Fervor, Unholy Warrior, Improved Level Headed, No Mercy, Master (Spellcasting), Improved Rapid Recharge, Whateley Blood, Wizard

Harrowed Edges: Dead Reckoning, Improved Death Mask, Devil's Touch, Improved Nightmare, Rigor Mortis, Improved Speakin' With the Dead, Spiritual Barbwire; **Dominion:** 0

Powers: Armor, blast, bolt, boost/lower Trait, deflection, detect/conceal arcana, dispel, entangle, fear, obscure, speak language, stun, windstorm, zombie. **Power Points:** 50

Gear: Amulet of the Ages (spiritual Armor +4, immune to AP), Bone-

handled knife (Damage Str+d10), rose-colored glasses, white mare.

Special Abilities:

• Harrowed: Grit +1, Toughness +2, needs 1d6 hours of sleep per night, only a head shot can kill the Cackler permanently, "death" only lasts 1d6 days, immune to poison and disease.

Stone Crow

Boyahwahtoyehe – better known as Stone Crow – was the scourge of Hell's Half Acre, that peculiar part of Oklahoma Territory carved out for the Coyote Confederation as their own. Of all the threats within that territory, or that have come spilling out of it like the Devil's own smoke, Stone Crow may have been the worst.

The massive Indian, whose name means "Iron Mountain," was always mean down to the backbone. But he became especially vicious when he was chased to the hills near the Great Serpent Mound_____ and found the axe he calls hanit – or

> "Bad Deed." The magical axe granted him great power, and a subsequent encounter with Coyote rendered him near-invulnerable to the one thing that cowed the killer: firearms.

So bold and bloody were his subsequent raids that they threatened the tentative truce between the Confederate States and the leaders of the Coyote Confederation. Eventually, both nations formed a war party to hunt down Stone Crow and put an end to his bloody trail of terror. At great cost of life and limb, the massive Comanche was finally caught and dragged to the scaffold in Coffeyville, Kansas. Moments from twisting for his sins into the eternal night, the Cackler and Mr. Collins showed up. Mr. Collins put one round through the executioner's heart, another through the badge of the town marshal, and a third through the rope around Stone Crow's neck.

To the Cackler's glee, the Indian stormed inside the jail, retrieved his axe, and stood by the stranger's side. He has served the grinning goon ever since.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d12, Guts d12, Intimidation d12, Knowledge (Occult) d6, Notice d12, Riding d6, Shooting d4, Stealth d12, Survival d12, Swimming d8, Throwing d12,

Tracking d12

Cha: -8; Grit: 5; Pace: 6; Parry: 10; Toughness: 11

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Bloodthirsty, Mean, Overconfident, Stubborn, Ugly, Vengeful (Major), Wanted (Major), Vow (Serve the Cackler)

Edges: Alertness, Brawny, Combat Reflexes, Danger Sense, Fast As Lightning, Giant Killer, Hard to Kill, Improved Arcane Resistance, Improved Block, Improved Dodge, Improved Level Headed, Improved Tough as Nails, Improved Trademark Weapon (war axe), Nerves of Steel, Improved Sweep, Quick, Strong Willed

Gear: War axe (Str+2d6, Parry +2, but only when held by a Native American, or Str+d10, Parry –1 for non-Natives), strong horse.

Special Abilities:

• Sacred War Paint: The Comanche shaman Coyote granted a magical blessing to Stone Crow. The war paint on his chest halves the damage of all non-magical ranged attacks.

😥 Tlachtga

Tlachtga was a dark druidess from the days of ancient Ireland. Legends say she was the daughter of the famous sorcerer Mug Ruith, raped by the sons of his mentor and dark mother to three ruthless offspring. Though her children faded into the mists of time, Tlachtga served her people for many years. The residents of County Meath still light candles to her dark reign every Samhain. Eventually, some brave hero dispatched Tlachtga. Her followers dragged her broken form into the Hill of Ward and continued to honor her black memory for another century. But the memory began to fade.

Until the Cackler came. The albino sorcerer dug deep into the hillside one dark and rainy night and dragged forth Tlachtga's bones from the eath. He used his own dark magic to raise the long-dead witch and laughed with glee as her bony form took shape.

Now the black witch serves the Cackler, her hideous face hidden deep within her ebon cowl. She is often followed by a cloud of black ravens, which she can use to befuddle her foes or send singly to spy on them from afar.

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d12, Intimidation d12, Knowledge (Occult) d12, Notice d10, Riding d10, Spellcasting d12+2, Stealth d12, Survival d10, Swimming d6, Tracking d12

Cha: -6; Grit: 5; Pace: 6; Parry: 12; Toughness: 11

Hindrances: All Thumbs, Mean, Ugly, Vengeful (Major), Wanted (Major), Vow (Serve the Cackler)

Edges: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Danger Sense, Expert (Spellcasting), Improved Level Headed, Strong Willed

Powers: Tlachtga's powers manifest as druidic spells or sizzling green energy. *Barrier* (flock of crows), *beast friend*, *blast*, *bolt*, *boost/lower Trait*, *burst*, *curse*, *deflection*, *detect/conceal arcana*, *elemental manipulation*, *entangle*, *fear*, *shape change*, *telekinesis*, *wilderness walk*. **Power Points:** 40

Gear: Broom (see below).

Special Abilities:

• Flock of Ravens: Tlachtga can conjure and control up to five Medium swarms of ravens. She can also send them separately and see through their eyes or hear through their ears up to 100 miles distant. If a swarm is dispersed (defeated), she cannot re-summon it until the next full moon.

- Flying Broom: Tlachtga can summon and ride what looks like a handmade broom of black wood and rotting straw. She can summon it as a free action. It has a Pace of 24" and a Climb of 1.
- Samhain: Every Samhain (sunset on October 31st 'til morning), Tlachtga is free to roam as she pleases. This is the only time she is out of the Cackler's service, though she still may not cause him direct harm. Tlachtga usually uses this time to appear to her loyal followers in Heath County and mourn the death of her children. Far away from Ireland, however, she is just as likely to cause mischief instead.
- Undead: +2 Toughness, +2 to recover from being Shaken, doesn't breathe, immune to disease and poison, no additional damage from Called Shots, ignores one level of wound modifiers, -2 Charisma. Tlachtga is not Harrowed – she's a true creature of undeath.

💭 Mr. Collins

Little is known of Mr. Collins, or why a gunslinger of such repute would serve a creature like the Cackler. What is known is that his reputation began in New York City where he was responsible for a massacre at a hotel known as a safehouse for the Agency. He next turned up in Abilene where he gunned down a trio of veteran Pinkertons – some say with three bullets before any of the victims cleared their holsters.

Mr. Collins, his first name still unknown, is wanted on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line and most places in between. His cool aim, however, means most sheriffs and town marshals pretend not to recognize him. The few who have wind up with neat bullet holes in their vests and a plot of land six feet deep.

His trademark weapon is the long Buntline, or perhaps a similar design by someone other than Colt. The long barrel doesn't seem to impede Mr. Collins' smooth draw or dead-eye aim.

On those rare occasions a foe manages to get a shot off or fire back, Collins subtly wears one of Smith & Robard's patented bulletproof vests beneath his usually immaculate suit and long coat.

Collins is also canny and cautious. He's a shootist. His strength is in one-on-one duels. He's deadly in a larger fight, but doesn't walk into bad odds if he can help it – there's just too much chance some tinhorn will get lucky and sling lead his way.

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d12, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Notice d10, Riding d12, Shooting d12+2, Stealth d10, Survival d6, Swimming d6, Tracking d10

Cha: -2; Grit: 5; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Hindrances: Cautious, Mean, Wanted (Major), Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Alertness, Ambidextrous, Improved Arcane Resistance, Attractive, Combat Reflexes, Counterattack, Dead Shot, Duelist, Harder to Kill, Investigator, Jack-of-All-Trades, Killer Instinct, Improved Level Headed, Marksman, Nerves of Steel, No Mercy, Master (Shooting), Rich, Steady Hands, Quick, Quick Draw, Improved Trademark Weapon

Gear: Bulletproof vest (Armor +2), Colt Buntline (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, AP 1), strong horse.

26