



Rivalry - Chapter 4

Prologue

The Kellersons are very happy that you have successfully apprehended (or removed) the kidnapper. The Governor is also very impressed by your work. The question now is - which one of them has convinced you? Who do you want to help?

Scene 1 - Who Do You Work For?

This is an important decision point in the adventure path. The heroes will choose to work for either Grant Kellerson or Governor Henry Huntly Haight. Many of the events that follow will be similar regardless of which choice the party makes, but the reasons and effects will vary greatly. Also, some choices in later adventures will be affected by this choice.

If the players are having trouble deciding, the GM might ask some or all of the questions below to prompt discussion:

- Which company do you trust more, Wells Fargo or the Southern Pacific Railroad?
- How do you feel about Wells Fargo's flaunting of the laws and tariffs of the Rocky Mountain Republic?
- How do you feel about China and their efforts to acquire technology?
- Do you have any suspicions about how Mr. Nakamura might be involved? How might that change the way you view the two sides?

Once the players have decided, they can meet with their chosen employer. If they are working for Governor Haight, read that section first. Otherwise, skip to Grant Kellerson.

Working for Governor Haight

The Governor is very grateful for your assistance. He explains that he has had a difficult time getting any of his operatives near Weaverville to find out what is going

on there. He suggests that you might be able to use your favor with Grant Kellerson to get inside.

Assuming you agree, you will pretend to work for Wells Fargo until you are able to see Weaverville for yourselves. At that time, it will be up to you to decide whether you are able to disrupt the operations there or if you will need to simply extract yourself and report back. You should make your way to Mr. Kellerson now and offer to work for him.

[Continue with the "Working for Grant Kellerson" text, but with the heroes acting as double-agents.]

Working for Grant Kellerson

Mr. Kellerson is happy to have you working for him in a more direct fashion. He cannot imagine a more reliable group to entrust with Wells Fargo's most important shipments. He would like to hire you to escort the mining automaton on the last leg of its journey to Weaverville.

He notes that although this is a relatively short trip, it is not by any means easy. There have been reported attacks on both air and ground travel between San Francisco and the Chinese-controlled town. These attacks have often been from rifle fire, though there have been unconfirmed reports of oddly coordinated animal attacks as well.

You make plans to set out with the automaton. It will be up to you to decide how to travel. There is a rail line that travels North through the Sacramento Valley, but you would still need a steam cart to get into the mountains. You may also choose to travel by light airship if you prefer.

If the party does not include an Aviator or Steamhand, Wells Fargo may supply them with someone who can get them there.

Whichever method of travel the heroes prefer, the first few hours will be uneventful. However, as they get far enough north to see the peak of Mt. Shasta clearly in the distance, they will be attacked.





Scene 2 – Animal Attacks

As the adventurers travel into the Klamath Mountains, they may begin to notice that something is odd. A successful Notice check at -2 will reveal that the forest seems strangely quiet. There are occasional insect sounds and distant coyote calls, but there are very few bird sounds.

Another Notice check (at a +2 if the last one was successful) will call attention to a murder of crows that is heading directly towards the vehicle. A Survival check will reveal that the crows are moving somewhat awkwardly and making no sounds themselves. As the murder nears (or sooner if one of the heroes has a looking glass or goggles with a telescopic attachment), it is obvious that these crows are in fact automatons.

There are 20 crows in the murder. They will attack different targets in groups of 5 to maximize their Gang Up bonus. If the party is in an airship, one of the groups will attack the hydrogen bag. (Use a Toughness of 6 for the bag itself.) In general, one such wound on an airship will make it harder to fly, two will cause it to descend slowly, and three will force it down immediately. Crows that are attacking the airship are considered to have cover.

AUTOMATON CROWS

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

Size: -2

Pace: 8 Flying, **Parry:** 4, **Toughness:** 3 (1)

Skills: Fighting d4

Attack: Claw Attack - Str+d4

Tactical note: Because of the Gang Up bonuses, many of the crows will hit their targets, especially at first. Luckily their attacks are not very powerful. However, with this many dice being rolled, they are still likely to get in a few wounds. If you want to be a little more merciful in this combat, keep the crows in groups attacking their original targets even as they lose individual members. This will make them much easier to handle as a few are picked off. If you prefer greater danger, have groups recombine into clusters of 5 when they get down to 2 and 3. Also, per the normal Savage Worlds rules, each group of 5 should get its own initiative card.

Scene 3 – Ambush at Whiskeytown Lake

The crow attack should force the party to rest on their way into the mountains toward Weaverville.. This can be done in one of several ways. If they are traveling on the ground, they will simply stop at a convenient source of water. If they were in the air and their airship was forced down, they can begin hiking up the mountains and stop at the lake. If they managed to escape unscathed in an airship, they may have had to push their engines such that they need to refuel and refill the boilers.

Whatever explanation makes the most sense for the events in your game, the heroes will find themselves on the shore of Whiskeytown Lake, on the road between Redding and Weaverville. As they rest and resupply, a rifle shot will be fired from a hidden position in the trees a little ways up the slope. If you wish to increase the danger for this encounter (for instance, if the crows were too easy for your players), this shot will not be a warning shot but an attack, and the attackers have The Drop on the party.

Alternately, if the last encounter was particularly difficult, the attackers will fire warning shots and attempt to get the heroes to throw down their weapons and give up the mining automaton.

There are half as many attackers as there are party members (round down). They are automaton rifleman who have concealed themselves in very good cover overlooking the road.



THE HIGHWAYMEN

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

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 6 (2)

Skills: Fighting d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6

Equipment: Sharps Carbine

The Highwaymen (each of them simply refers to himself as “The Highwayman”) will attempt to wound but not kill the heroes. Their goal is to drive the party away from the mining automaton or to have them give it up somehow. The party can attempt to fight back or concede immediately. It is possible, though difficult, for the party to fight off the automatons, in which case the

story will proceed to Weaverville without the information that comes from talking to the Highwaymen. [Read Epilogue 1.]

If the party chooses to give up or try to talk to the attackers, the conversation will proceed differently depending on who the heroes are working for. In both cases, the following information may be revealed:

- The Highwaymen attempt to liberate any automatons bound for Weaverville. They consider the work done there to be slavery.
- They also consider your actions to be smuggling, as you are illegally removing technology from the Rocky Mountain Republic and giving it to China.
- The Highwaymen themselves were constructed for various purposes but have since been liberated, and now act to free other independent automatons. A Common Knowledge check will remind you that this is itself only quasi-legal, as automatons generally do not have citizenship rights in the RMR.

If the party is working for Grant Kellerson, then the Highwaymen will simply retrieve the mining automaton and allow the heroes to continue without it. [Go now to Epilogue 2.] If the party is working for Governor Haight, then the following additional conversational points will be made:

- The Highwaymen work for Saito Nakamura, a master Gearsmith who wants to stop China's technological advancement. Mr. Nakamura makes mostly animal-shaped automatons. The crows and the giant scorpion were both his creations.
- Mr. Nakamura has tried very hard to stop shipments into Weaverville. He has been unable to track what happens to automatons after they arrive there, but he would very much like to find out.
- The Highwaymen will not allow the mining prototype to be taken to Weaverville. However, if you want to keep up your cover of working for Wells Fargo, one of them will volunteer to take the prototype's place in the crate.

With a Highwayman placed in the crate, the party can now proceed to Weaverville. You may conclude with Epilogue 3.

Epilogue 1

Someone definitely did not want you to get this shipment to Weaverville. Despite the hazards, you are finally able to deliver the mining automaton to its destination. But what is so important about this town? Find out more in Chapter 5!

Epilogue 2

Mr. Kellerson will certainly be upset that you lost the automaton. But perhaps there will be someone in Weaverville who can help you retrieve it, or at least answer some questions. Find out more in Chapter 5!

Epilogue 3

As glad as you might be to have a new ally in your efforts to infiltrate the Chinese stronghold of Weaverville, you are also a little concerned about Mr. Nakamura's methods. Are you sure you want to be involved in this international conflict? Find out more in Chapter 5!



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