



Rivalry - Chapter 6

Prologue

The situation in Weaverville is growing more tense. Are you prepared for the conflict that is coming?

Scene 1 - Incident at the Airfield

As the heroes begin to poke their noses into the various businesses of Weaverville, Lo Bao grows suspicious that they may be looking for something specific. The town has just sent off its latest shipment of gold to Beijing, so there is not as much precious metal to steal. However, there is still plenty of value in the town and in the mine, so Lo Bao remains fairly cautious.

If the adventurers seem to be spending more than a casual amount of time near the airfield and especially near the warehouse, Lo Bao tells Lo Feng and some of the workers to keep an eye on them. A simple Notice or Investigation check will reveal that the party is being followed, as Lo Feng is not trying too hard to avoid being seen.

Once he realizes he has been spotted, Lo Feng confronts the heroes directly and tells them to stay away from the airfield. Any reluctance or hesitation on the heroes' parts causes Lo Feng to resort to violence. Workers appear from all around the airfield and attack. (There should be two of these Extras for each player.) The heroes can flee at any point to end the fight.



LO FENG

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

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 7, **Toughness:** 6

Skills: Climb d8, Fighting d10, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Edges: Brawler, Frenzy, Martial Artist, Unarmed Stunning Strike (see below)

- **Stunning Strike:** Make a called shot at -2. Add any armor the defender is wearing to the defender's Parry. If you are successful, the defender must

succeed at a Vigor roll or gain one level of Fatigue. Each raise adds -2 to the defender's roll. Any Fatigue levels accrued in this way can be removed by resting for ten minutes after combat.

LO FENG'S POSSE (TWO PER PLAYER)

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

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 6, **Toughness:** 5

Skills: Climb d4, Fighting d8, Shooting d4

Equipment: Bowie Knife (as Short Sword)

Win or lose, the adventurers are no longer welcome in the town after this fight. Members of the Liang family are less hostile but nevertheless urge the group to leave as soon as possible. They are not rushed out of town if they fled or left before the fight, but they do find that their every activity is being watched. Eventually, the social pressure should cause them to leave. If the heroes leave town for any reason, skip to Scene 2B below.

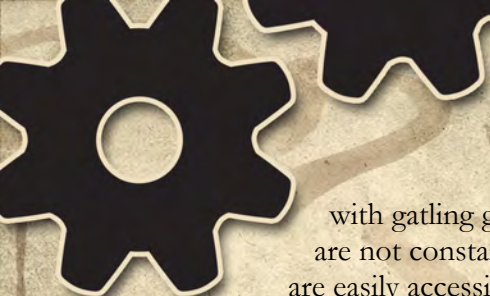
Scene 2A - Into the Mine

If the heroes have maintained a positive relationship with the leaders of the town—particularly Lo Bao—they may request a tour of the mine. Otherwise, they may choose to sneak around the edge of the mine to get a look (see Scene 2B below). Either way, there are some aspects of the mine and its defenses that are easy to spot and some that are more difficult. The easiest way to resolve this is to have players roll Notice or Investigation and provide the following information based on their degree of success:

Simple Success

- The mine is very well defended. The tree line has been cut back 200 yards in all directions. In addition to regular patrols, there are watchtowers with riflemen and several ground emplacements





with gatling guns. The gatling guns are not constantly manned, but they are easily accessible by anyone in the open area outside of the mine entrance.

- The outdoor area of the mine consists of several storehouses, a small office building, and a large sluice mechanism. Automaton can be seen working the sluice and also entering the mine itself.

One Raise

- There are several spark wranglers overseeing the automaton workers, approximately one wrangler for every five automatons. A successful Electromagnetism roll can determine that their equipment is fairly advanced.
- There is an automaton hanging on a wall by the entrance to the mine. It appears to have railroad spikes through its arms and legs. It is still moving slightly but cannot seem to break free.

Two or More Raises

- There does not seem to be much consistency in the models or even construction style of the automatons. Not all of them even seem well-suited to mining. A successful Mechanical Programming roll can determine that they were not only likely made by different gearsmiths but also for widely different purposes.

Regardless of their degree of success, what the adventurers do not see is any sign that automatons are ever leaving the mine. It seems as though the technology being smuggled or stolen is mostly being used right here. The key activity is definitely the gold mining. It is unlikely but possible that one of the characters might have sufficient knowledge of Chinese history to realize that China's trade has traditionally been conducted in silver, so gold is important for taking a more active role in international commerce.

If the heroes are being given a tour, they may ask questions about the treatment of the automatons. Lo Bao clearly takes the opinion that the workers are simply objects and therefore property. The nailed-up

automaton was put there as an object lesson after it malfunctioned and helped some of the other machines escape. (Lo Bao considers an automaton's desires for anything other than work to be the product of poor programming or simple malfunction.)

If the party asks about the automaton that they delivered for Wells Fargo, they are shown into the mine where that automaton is working. Lo Bao is very happy with this latest acquisition, as it is able to extract ore much more carefully than any of their other machines. (Finding this automaton is much more difficult if the adventurers are sneaking around.)

Scene 2B – Heading for the Hills

If the heroes are forced or hurried out of town, they may choose to simply return to San Francisco, in which case the adventure has ended for those characters. Offer players the option of playing through the Battle of Weaverville on behalf of the two sides, just so they can experience it. Otherwise, paraphrase the second half of the Epilogue and wrap up the adventure with any roleplaying scenes they would like to have with the Governor or with Wells Fargo.

If instead the heroes choose to stay and find out more about Weaverville and its mine, they need to hide somewhere out of sight. That means finding somewhere outside the range of the patrols that circle the mine itself. It also means avoiding a potentially vengeful Lo Bao. Depending on the circumstances under which the adventurers leave Weaverville, they may be forced to confront or flee Lo Bao himself. He is a fearsome Wild Card, and several town guards accompany him.



LO BAO


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

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 8, **Toughness:** 7

Skills: Fighting d12, Notice d8, Shooting d6

Edges: Command, Dodge/Improved Dodge, Fervor, Martial Artist/Improved Martial Artist, Unarmed Throw/Unarmed Defensive Throw (see below), Unarmed Redirect (see below)

- **Throw:** Make an opposed Fighting roll. If you are successful, the defender is Shaken and prone. The



target takes a wound if already Shaken. Raises have no effect.

- **Defensive Throw:** You may now use Throw to interrupt melee attacks. If you are unsuccessful, the attack continues as normal. Each defensive maneuver you have used since your last turn adds -2 to your Fighting roll.
- **Redirect:** When an opponent attempts a combat maneuver against you on their turn, make an opposed Fighting roll. If you are successful, the combat maneuver is instead applied to the attacker. Each defensive maneuver you have used since your last turn adds -2 to your Fighting roll.

TOWN GUARD (ONE PER PLAYER)

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

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 6

Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d8

Equipment: Colt 1860 Army (12/24/48, 2d6+1)

If Lo Bao is threatened, the guards will throw themselves into the line of fire to save him. Use the Fanatics Setting Rule for any encounters involving Lo Bao.

Once the heroes finally make it into the forests and hills surrounding Weaverville, they can conduct their surveillance around the mine. (Use the Notice and Investigation roll results from Scene 2A.) While they are doing this, they come across a gathering of automatons that is being conducted by a Japanese man dressed in a fine suit and derby and carrying an ornately-topped cane. He introduces himself as Mr. Nakamura.

Mr. Nakamura gestures to his automaton companions and explains that the Highwaymen have related to him the stories of your travels and the reasons you are here in Weaverville.

“The Highwaymen and I intend to free the rest of the workers from that mine,” he says. “Their treatment is unacceptable, and many of them are being used for physical labor far beyond their design parameters. While I understand that your purposes may not necessarily

align with ours, I would like to invite you to join us in this act of liberation.”

The adventurers can agree or politely decline and walk away to make their own decisions. If they decide to behave violently towards Mr. Nakamura and the Highwaymen, this should be considered the start of the battle. Go directly to Scene 3.

Scene 2 Wrap-up

Whatever method the party uses to examine the mine, the most important information that becomes clear is that there does not seem to be any exportation of technology, only gold. There are probably tariffs being avoided with this legal loophole, but on the other hand the gold is technically originating from within the Chinese claim, so it's not as clear that tariffs should apply or that anything actually illegal is going on.

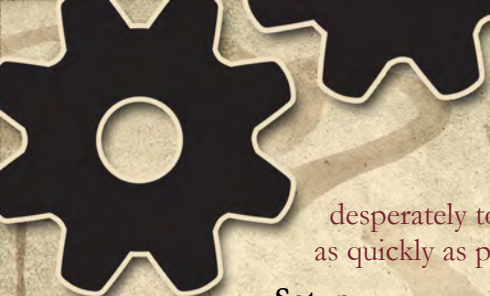
Once the characters have had some time to discuss their ethical dilemma in light of all this new information, they are forced to make a final choice. An alarm sounds from the northern watchtower—the mine is under attack! Which side will our heroes join?

Scene 3 – The Battle of Weaverville

If the heroes wish to participate on either side of the ensuing conflict, it should be run as a mass battle scenario (see *Savage Worlds*). This can even allow the party to split and choose opposing sides if the characters cannot agree who to support.

As the battle begins, read or paraphrase the following:

There is gunfire and a tremendous clatter from the north. Out of the tree line charge a number of automatons armed with pistols surrounding two giant scorpion automatons like those you have seen before. [Describe them if the players have managed to skip those encounters in previous chapters.] A cloud of clockwork crows flies from the trees at the nearest watchtower. Behind all of them, you can just barely make out a human figure who seems to be directing them. As the attackers approach, the mining automatons begin to turn on their masters, who try



desperately to deactivate the workers as quickly as possible.

Setup

For the Knowledge (Battle) rolls each turn, use the following leader's skill levels for each side. Both are considered Wild Cards:

- Defender: Lo Bao, Knowledge (Battle) d8
- Attacker: Saito Nakamura, Knowledge (Battle) d10

Tokens and situational modifiers are as follows:

- The attackers have a slight strength advantage and begin with 10 tokens. 2 tokens represent the scorpion automatons, 1 the clockwork crows, 3 the highwaymen, and 4 the automaton mine workers.
- The defenders begin with 9 tokens. 4 tokens represent spark wranglers, 3 the gatling gun crews, and 2 the riflemen in the watchtowers.
- Although the workers are causing chaos within the mine, the defenders still hold a slight terrain advantage because of the watchtowers, buildings, and gun emplacements. Apply a -1 to the attackers as long as the defenders hold these locations.
- The attackers have slight air support from the crows, but the gatling guns provide light artillery support to the defenders. These factors apply a +1 to their respective sides.
- Although the attackers are automatons, they are not fearless drones. They can still feel a sense of self-preservation, so they do not get an automatic +2 morale bonus.

This is a desperate situation for both sides. Play until one side is completely routed or destroyed.

Epilogue

The mine falls silent. The cost of victory has been terribly high. As you survey the battlefield and its wreckage of brass and blood, you begin to consider the larger ramifications of what has happened here. Whatever personal causes or local politics have led to this moment, a Japanese agent has just attacked

Chinese territory. The shots fired here will no doubt reverberate across the Pacific.

What will you do? Will you return to San Francisco and tell the governor? Will you collect your fee from Wells Fargo and walk away from something that doesn't concern you? Or will you dedicate yourself to the country you feel is in the right, traveling even further from your home to join the war that will no doubt be stirring between these two Asian powers?

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