



Rivalry - Chapter 2 (Option A)

[Note - Chapter 2 is divided into two paths, A and B. Option A is an adventure path that reflects a choice of travel by train out of New Orleans following the events of Chapter 1. This is considered the default option. Option B, which will be released separately, involves travel by airship. It should only be attempted by a party with a skilled Aviator. Both storylines will rejoin for Chapter 3.]

Prologue

You have recently completed a short retrieval job on behalf of the Wells Fargo office in New Orleans in the Confederation of Texas. It is now clear that there are agents working on behalf of the Southern Pacific Railroad itself that have been responsible for lost Wells Fargo shipments, mostly of advanced technology. You have just finished thwarting the theft of a prototype mining automaton bound for San Francisco.

Because of the ongoing threat, you have now been hired to escort the automaton in transit all the way to the office in San Francisco, the capital of the Rocky Mountain Republic.

You have decided that the train remains the safest mode of travel in spite of the concerns about railroad employees. You will simply have to be on your guard, watching for anything and anyone suspicious.

Scene 1 - Traveling Through Texas

The party will begin with a couple of days of normal travel through the states of New Orleans and East Texas. During this time, they may investigate passengers and workers, examine portions of the train, and ask any relevant questions they like. Important points and difficulties are listed below, but these should in no way be considered to be the only avenues of investigation.

- The passengers consist of a diverse mix of laborers, entrepreneurs, and others. The majority of them are indeed traveling to San Francisco from the American Consolidated Union to make their fortunes out west.
- A simple Investigation, Persuasion, or Streetwise check will determine that although there are a

number of people looking for physical work, there are also a few professional scientists, both Spark Wranglers and Gearsmiths.

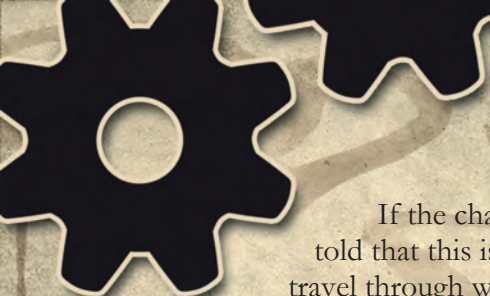
- A slightly more difficult Investigation or Persuasion check (-2) will allow the character to strike up a conversation with Adelaide Kellerson, a wealthy gentlewoman who is traveling with her son Edward to live in San Francisco. Her husband is a very important executive who was responsible for Wells Fargo's acquisition of the Central Pacific Express.
- Another slightly difficult check (-2) using Intimidation, Investigation, or Persuasion will determine that the crew members of this train are unaware of the thefts that some Southern Pacific employees have committed.
- A series of checks using some combination of Stealth, Lockpicking, Investigation, and perhaps even Climbing (if entering from above) will allow the characters access to the luggage and mail cars. They will be able to determine that their automaton is secure. They may take additional measures (such as rigging traps to the crate) if they like.

Scene 2 - Into the Wilds

At San Antonio, a number of things change about your train. First of all, you are asked to disembark and make your way to the station office for the signing of, as they put it, "standard legal forms." These turn out to be Hold Harmless agreements that specifically refer to the very likely possibility that the train will be attacked by bandits somewhere between here and the RMR border. You notice that a number of passengers who have made this trip before seem to regard the forms as routine. Others who are traveling west for the first time are understandably alarmed.

In addition, you notice that a new car is being added to the train between the coal car and the luggage. This is a flatbed with very short but very sturdy walls all the way around it. In the center of the flatbed is a rotating vehicle mount with a large gatling gun.





If the characters ask, they will be told that this is standard procedure for travel through what is known as “high risk” territory. Bandits from Mexico

frequently cross the border and attempt to raid the Southern Pacific trains for money and goods, and also to destroy any “ungodly” automatons they might find. Passenger trains are at slightly less risk than cargo trains, but only slightly.

Two additional railroad personnel also board at this time. A rifleman will ride in the caboose, and another gunner will man the gatling in the flatbed. A very difficult Investigation or Persuasion check (-4) will alert the players that something is odd about the gatling operator. If they are particularly vigilant, they may notice that he seems to man the gun somewhat casually, as if he does not expect to see any action.

The journey from San Antonio to El Paso proceeds without incident. After a night spent in El Paso, most of the passengers appear more relaxed about the trip. If approached about this attitude, they point out that raiding across the deserts of Nuevo Mexico and Arizona is much more difficult, and they will scoff at any attempts to inspire concern.

Scene 3 - The Raid

As is expected, the train comes under attack somewhere in the desert. If the party members are paying attention to likely ambush points, they may have time to prepare a defense. They will not be able to rely purely on notice, as the attack occurs immediately as the train is exiting a tunnel.

Complications:

- The gatling gunner is nowhere to be found. The rifleman is still available in the caboose, but he can't do all the work. Anyone with Shooting can attempt to operate the gatling gun.
- One of the passengers, a rather well-dressed woman with an east-coast accent, is wondering if anyone has seen her son. He is not in her car, and she is very worried that he will look out the windows while gunfire is happening. She will keep trying to interrupt the party members as they are trying to move through the cars to actually defend the train.

- The party may notice (with a -2 Notice check at first) that the train is beginning to slow down. When asked, the firemen will indicate that they do need to refill the boiler. They can't keep going if they run out of water. What's worse, if the characters try for a stop-and-defend strategy at the water tower, they will discover that the next tower on the line is empty.

To scale the battle appropriately, there should be two bandits for every melee or short-range combatant in the party (such as Spark Wranglers) and three for every long-range combatant. Do not include the rifleman in the caboose, as he can be used at will to compensate for particularly good or bad luck on the part of the players.

BANDITS

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

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d8

Equipment: Remington 1858 Navy, horse

Once the fight begins to wind down, some of the characters may engage in a more direct search for the boy and the gatling operator. It turns out that neither can be found anywhere on the train.

Scene 4 - The Kidnapping

The well-dressed woman is hysterical by this point. She introduces herself as Adelaide Kellerson, wife of wealthy businessman Grant Kellerson. She says that her son Edward may have been taken with the intention of demanding ransom. Assuming the party members agree to try to track him down, they will have to follow the rails back a bit to find where two sets of footprints lead off into the desert. Locating and following the trail will certainly require Tracking or Notice checks. A raise on either might reveal that the smaller footprints are stumbling as if forced.

As the party travels, Survival, Notice, or Stealth will be appropriate for avoiding being caught unawares. However, even without the advantage of surprise, the kidnapper has a very advantageous position. He is placed high up on a mesa, and he has a very long-range rifle. He has the boy tied up inside a nearby cave, and the boy is being guarded by a very large automaton scorpion.

The party need not face both of these Wild Cards at once, but may end up doing so depending on the choices they make, or to provide additional difficulty if the GM determines that the players need a more challenging encounter.



KIDNAPPER

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

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Shooting d10,

Equipment: Martini-Henry Mark I, a mysterious electrical device

[Note - This mysterious electrical device is designed to emit a powerful electromagnetic field that will suppress all automaton activity within a short range. It is used by the kidnapper to get past the scorpion. If the party takes the time to examine it, they may also use it to avoid combat with the scorpion. If the party keeps it, they will find that it is unreliable and breaks after a few uses.]



SCORPION AUTOMATON

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d4, Strength d12, Spirit d6, Vigor d12

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 8, **Toughness:** 10 (2)

Skills: Fighting d12

Special: All Automaton edges and hindrances. Also, the Scorpion Automaton has several special notes:

Bite: Str + d8

Claw Grab: The Scorpion attempts to grab an opponent. Success requires a hit with a raise. Any grabbed character may only attempt to escape on her action, which requires a simple success on an opposed Strength roll. The Scorpion may have up to two opponents grabbed at a time.

Weakness, Large: Finding weak points is easier than usual on this automaton. Saboteurs get a +1 bonus on Sabotage rolls, and successes allow the Saboteur to declare attacks that disable specific portions of the Scorpion (such as a claw) with a simple hit, regardless of damage. Such disabling attacks do not count as wounds, however.

Epilogue

Mrs. Kellerson is very grateful for the rescue of her son. She will offer a reward upon the train's arrival in San Francisco.

If the kidnapper has been returned alive, the engineers and other railroad officials will insist that he be taken to the police station in San Francisco to be charged. The party may question him if they want, but they will not get very much out of him. If pressed very successfully (GM's discretion), he may reveal one or more of the following facts:

- He was hired by someone in San Francisco, a man who often pays him to do "odd jobs." He will not tell you the man's name or any other details.
- He had nothing to do with the bandits. He was not responsible for the empty watertower, so he assumes the bandits did that.
- He did not build the automaton. He has no idea who did. He was just told how to handle it.
- He was expecting a zeppelin to come and pick him up in a couple of days, after the train arrived in San Francisco without the boy.

The rest of this part of the journey will proceed uneventfully. But there are many questions left to be answered and even more that will be raised in Chapter 3!



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Rivalry - Chapter 2 (Option B)

[Note - Chapter 2 is divided into two paths, A and B. Option A, released separately, is an adventure path that reflects a choice of travel by train out of New Orleans following the events of Chapter 1. This is considered the default option. Option B involves travel by airship. It should only be attempted by a party with a skilled Aviator, and it can be more difficult in multiple ways. Both storylines will rejoin for Chapter 3.]

Prologue

You have recently completed a short retrieval job on behalf of the Wells Fargo office in New Orleans in the Confederation of Texas. It is now clear that there are agents working on behalf of the Southern Pacific Railroad itself that have been responsible for lost Wells Fargo shipments, mostly of advanced technology. You have just finished thwarting the theft of a prototype mining automaton bound for San Francisco.

Because of the ongoing threat, you have now been hired to escort the automaton in transit all the way to the office in San Francisco, the capital of the Rocky Mountain Republic.

You have decided your expertise will allow you to take the speedier but more dangerous air route west. You will take a Wells Fargo light courier zeppelin, and you are solely responsible for your own travels.

Scene 1 - Setting Out

The first day or two of travel are largely uneventful. The characters may travel with impunity west across the state of New Orleans into East Texas and resupply quite easily in Austin. After Austin, however, the Aviator will discover that prevailing winds paired to a low-dipping jet stream are making travel across the middle of Texas territory to be very difficult. The pilot will have a choice of either dipping south directly over Mexico or veering north, still in Texas but approaching the border of the Plains Tribal Federation. In either case, the party will have to plan on resupplying in the wilderness, and in particular cutting their own wood to fuel the airship's small but somewhat inefficient steam engines. The party

will have to decide whether to fly at night to escape detection, which risks increasing the pilot's fatigue and also makes landings more dangerous. Flying during the day makes it more likely the airship will be seen, but also makes easier the party's own Notice rolls to spot pursuers.

Depending on which route the heroes take, they are going to face a number of difficulties. In both cases, water is an important and ongoing concern. If they head north, the Brazzos River is the most reliable source of water, but following it will take the airship almost directly to the Red River, which is the border of the PTF. Travel along the Red River will mean interacting with some of the bison herds that are being watched by Apache and Comanche scouts. Some of those scouts may try to track the party's movements. Much of North Chihuahua is very dry, so they will have few choices but to risk it.

If they travel over Mexico, both water and landing sites will be even more scarce, as they will have to fly over the rocky deserts between the Sierra Madre ranges. They will have to spend several days making difficult flying and survival decisions before a new complication arises.


At any point during this stage of the scenario, the heroes may choose to reconsider their travel plans. They may divert back to Austin and instead take a train. If they do so, simply switch to Chapter 2 (Option A). The GM should give the party enough hardship to make it clear that they are choosing the more difficult route. If they definitely wish to continue, go on to Scene 2.

Scene 2 - The Chase

GM Note: Your job at this point is to engage the characters in a chase. This will take one of two forms, depending on which route they chose to fly. Prior to this, you should build the tension by asking them repeatedly to make decisions about survival.

In the case of flying over the northern part of Texas, drifting close to the Plains Tribal Federation, this is





done by choosing where to land and find fuel and water. Ask whether they are flying through the day or night so as to raise the possibility that they might be spotted. If they continue trying to travel by night, make the Aeronautical Navigation rolls more difficult, and also suggest that the pilot is growing fatigued.

In the case of flight over Mexico, the landings themselves should be more dangerous because of the rocky terrain. Make the Piloting rolls more difficult, and consider forcing the group to Repair damage if they happen to fail at one. In addition, there should be more Survival rolls to find water for travel over Mexico.

Once the tension has been raised, the chase will ensue. In both cases, this should be considered a standard-length chase using the Chase Rules in *Savage Worlds Deluxe*, Chapter 4. (Page 82 in the full-sized SWD, page 94 in the SWD Explorer's Edition.) The specific scenarios for each chase are as follows:

Airship Chase Over Texas

Over northern Texas, the adventurers will actually be chased in the air by Apache and Comanche pirates flying two airships of unknown design. (The group may later do some research and discover that these are dirigibles of French origin.) The pirate crews will attempt to shoot holes in the adventurers' zeppelin. Ordinarily these would be considered Called Shots, but this is balanced out by the size of the airship itself. This is true for the heroes shooting back as well. All shots to an airbag will ignore armor.

Because each airship has a single pilot, cards are drawn and Advantage is determined only once for each vehicle. The pirates will continue to have the +2 speed bonus. However, Steamhands or other heroes with the Repair skill may attempt appropriate cooperative rolls to support their Aviator by working the boilers and ballast. Also remember that the Ace Edge will allow the Pilot to spend bennies to soak damage done to the zeppelin.

The GM may adjust the difficulty on this chase by raising the enemy Piloting skill. The default should be the same as the hero Aviator's, but increasing it will make it more likely that the adventurers' airship will be brought down. It should be at least possible for the heroes to escape and avoid further conflict.

Foot Chase Across the Sierra Madre

While out looking for water, the adventurers will happen upon a small camp of bandits on their way north to raid into Texas. The bandits will spot the heroes and chase them. If some party members (such as the Aviator) are still at the zeppelin, this chase will involve only those who are actually away from the airship.

Because this is a foot chase, Advantage is determined individually with all appropriate modifiers. Terrain is difficult, providing a -2 for everyone. Injured heroes may keep going, but any bandits injured during this chase will retreat and not be available for the chase itself. After five turns of chase, the heroes and any uninjured attackers will arrive at the zeppelin. Proceed directly to Scene 3.

Scene 3 - Defending the Zeppelin

If the party was shot down over Texas, then they will need to defend themselves at the crash site. The typical procedure for air pirates is to land and engage a downed vessel on the ground. If the party is able to defend themselves successfully, they may either repair their own zeppelin or take the pirate ship. If the party ran afoul of bandits in Mexico, then they will need to either drive off the bandits completely or simply hold out long enough to take off.

In either case, this is going to be a difficult fight. All of the opponents are Wild Cards, and there are as many enemies as there are party members. However, initiative should still be determined for the enemies on a group basis. (One group for the bandits, two different groups for the pirates. There are also some slight mitigating factors for each scenario:

Fighting Off the Pirates

The attacking pirate force is split evenly between Saboteurs and Braves. If the fight seems to be going very badly for the group, the Saboteurs may focus more on attempting to disable the zeppelin itself than on attacking the heroes. This is of course GM's discretion. You may determine how deadly you would like this fight to be, but keep in mind that with this many Wild Cards it could potentially be extremely dangerous. The stats for the attacking force are as follows:



SABOTEURS

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

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

Skills: Fighting d8 Sabotage d8

Equipment: Tomahawk (Str +d8)



BRAVES

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

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d8

Equipment: Bow

There is a pilot as well who remained behind, but he is unarmed and will be easy to defeat should the party wish to take over the pirate airship.

Escaping the Bandits

There are only as many bandits as heroes who were out looking for water, which may mean that the heroes outnumber their opponents once the chase is complete. This is especially true if any of the bandits were injured during the chase itself, because they will retreat immediately rather than continuing on. However, because the bandits are Wild Cards, it is also possible that there may be some injured party members. If this fight seems to be going particularly badly for the adventurers, the GM may make it easier for them to take off quickly, thus allowing them to escape rather than having to defeat the entire group of bandits. The stats for the bandits are as follows:



BANDITS

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

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d8

Equipment: Colt 1860 Army

If for some reason this fight goes too easily for the adventurers, the GM can always make the rest of the bandit camp ride up on horseback. The size of those reinforcements are of course GM's discretion.

Epilogue

The rest of this part of the journey will proceed uneventfully. When you arrive in San Francisco to deliver the automaton, you share your amazing exploits with the Wells Fargo office. Soon you discover that everyone in town wants to buy you a drink and hear your story firsthand. Even the Governor has sent you an invitation to dinner. All of this attention and more exciting events await in Chapter 3!



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Rivalry - Chapter 3

[Note - Some dialogue in this chapter will vary based on which route the heroes took to arrive in San Francisco. For instance, if they traveled by train and stopped the kidnapping (Chapter 2A), then the Kellersons will be particularly friendly towards them. If they traveled by air, then it is more likely that Governor Haight and the Kellersons are simply treating the group as notable adventurers.

Prologue

You have finally arrived in San Francisco and safely delivered the automaton prototype to the Wells Fargo office there. You are enjoying a well-deserved rest in the city, although it turns out that tales of your travels are beginning to spread.

After fielding numerous questions and offers for free drinks at saloons around town, you receive an offer from a more prominent source. Henry Huntly Haight, the Governor of the State of California, has invited you to dinner at his house in San Francisco. (He ordinarily lives in Sacramento but regularly travels to the capital to meet with President Stanford.) In attendance will also be Grant Kellerson and his family.

Scene 1 - Dinner With the Governor


The dinner scene should be played as a free-form conversation. It will begin with thanks and congratulations (and more requests to hear stories) directed towards the heroes. There is also some discussion about the kidnapping of the Kellersons' young son, Edward. However, as the conversation continues, a number of facts may be revealed:

- There have been a number of other raids on Wells Fargo shipments, mostly over the last few months.
- Most but not all of the raids were carried out by agents of the Southern Pacific or its subsidiary railroads.
- All of the shipments were of automatons or steam machinery bound for Weaverville, a small mining town in the mountains to the southwest of Mt. Shasta.

- Weaverville is a town controlled entirely by Chinese immigrants and even Chinese nationals. The RMR has very generous property sovereignty laws, meaning that owners are allowed to determine legality within the boundaries of their own private property, as long as it is not within an established municipality. Using these laws, the Chinese landowners have declared Weaverville to be officially part of China. After the shipments arrive in Weaverville, it is presumed that they are then airlifted to the coast and put on ships bound for China, thus avoiding scrutiny and tariffs that would come from shipping the items normally through the San Francisco port.
- Wells Fargo, under the local direction of Grant Kellerson, has been supporting the nation of China and its efforts to smuggle high-end technology out of North America. Kellerson does not consider this process to be in any way illegal, since the letter of the law is followed at every step.
- Governor Haight, on the other hand, is upset not only about the loss of tariff revenue, but the growing power of local Chinese politicians who he believes are supported by money from China through this quasi-legal trade. He also has a somewhat isolationist viewpoint and would prefer that North American technology remain on the continent. He sees this as both a money and a resource drain on his state and his nation.
- Governor Haight has actually been working with the Southern Pacific Railroad, providing them with information that will help them intercept the smuggled goods before they arrive in Weaverville.

Exactly which of these facts are revealed and how they are explained depends on whether the adventurers seem more inclined to support Mr. Kellerson or Governor Haight, how they feel about Wells Fargo and Southern Pacific, and even how they feel about China and the RMR. This is a point at which they will begin to take a side in the greater rivalries that guide the





politics of the region. There are many reasons for choosing each side, and the GM should use the NPCs involved in this conversation to argue for and against each position. There will be more opportunities later in the campaign to change sides, but these decisions should not be taken lightly.

As some of the initial facts are brought out into the open, Governor Haight has a heated argument with Mr. Kellerson. Kellerson takes his family and leaves, allowing the heroes time to discuss further with either Kellerson or the Governor alone. This determines which of the deeper secrets the heroes can learn, and what perspective they might take on those secrets.

Scene 2 – The Jailbreak

Whether they are now conversing with Mr. Kellerson or Governor Haight, the group will be approached by a runner with an urgent message: the man who kidnapped Edward Kellerson on the train to San Francisco has broken out of jail before he could be put on trial. Upon hearing this, the Kellersons will hurry to their expensive hotel and secure themselves there, pleading for the adventurers to do something about this dangerous man. The Governor will wonder aloud how someone could have broken out of the jailhouse and will ask the adventurers if they would mind checking it out and making sure it wasn't an inside job.

Investigating the jailhouse itself is somewhat difficult, because there is a crowd of gawkers gathered outside the door. The heroes must find a way to persuade, trick, or sneak their way into the jail if they want to see what's happening. If they are able to do so, they will discover that the two guards who had been on duty are having head injuries tended. They had been knocked out and their keys taken from them. Neither one remembers who it was that knocked them out, only that they had called a nearby runner to bring them some food.

Further Streetwise or Investigation outside will reveal that the runner, a boy named James, went to order the food at a local saloon, but he did not actually bring it to them. The saloon is called "The Wealthy Mountain," which James says is owned by some local Chinese businessman. He doesn't really know any more than that.

Scene 3 – The Wealthy Mountain Saloon

The Wealthy Mountain Saloon is a typical one-story wooden building with a sloping roof and a wooden front porch. It is along a sloping street, so one side of it is actually slightly in the ground and the other is slightly raised. The underside seems to be built on brick, and it has a large brick chimney in the back.

There is an old British gentleman in a pith helmet smoking a pipe on the front porch. He is courteous and polite to all passersby, especially the ladies. He has only been there for an hour, but is curious about anything the group wants to tell him about the goings-on at the jailhouse.

Inside, there are a number of tables, an automaton playing the piano, and a bar in the back corner. At one fairly central table, there is a poker game happening, where a rather loud and brash woman seems to be doing quite well. She will invite the heroes to join so there can be new money for her to win. (If any of the adventurers are good enough at Gambling to actually beat her, she will lose in a very loud but good-natured way.) If asked her name, she will give it as Myra Maybelle Shirley Starr.

Several of the other tables are occupied, mostly by what appear to be miners. Everyone is clearly curious about the newcomers, but no one will speak up aside from the woman and the bartender, who will merely ask what they want to drink.

Whether or not the group starts asking questions about the jailbreak, the bartender is immediately suspicious. A very difficult Notice roll (-4) will catch him knocking his foot on the floor in a specific place behind the bar. If the heroes do not make this roll, they may still spot the impressive number of Derringers the woman at the poker table has lining the inside of her jacket, and they cannot miss the shotgun hanging on the wall behind the bar. Aside from the bartender and the woman, however, no one seems to be armed.

If the group rushes the bartender or asks him questions, they will only have to fight him at first. If they wait too long getting a lay of the land, the bartender's help will arrive through the front door and start the fight. If the adventurers have played poker or otherwise befriended the woman, she will help them. If they barge in and disrupt everything, she will try to hinder them. Either way, she will cause further complications later.



BELLE STAR

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

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 4, **Toughness:** 5

Skills: Fighting d4, Gambling d10, Shooting d10

Edges: Level Headed, Quick Draw

Equipment: 12 Derringers

BARTENDER

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

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d8

Equipment: Double-Barrel Shotgun

When the bartender's reinforcements arrive, there should be as many of them as there are party members:

REINFORCEMENTS

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

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Shooting d8

Equipment: Colt 1860 Army

A round or two after the help arrives, another complication occurs. A deep voice calls from outside of the Saloon, "Belle Star, drop your weapons and come on out of there." It turns out that a bounty hunter has been tracking Belle, since she is a wanted leader of an outlaw gang. She will now ignore the rest of the fight and get into a shootout with him. If the group appears to be helping her, the bounty hunter will attack them as well but will try to focus on Belle. Either Belle or the bounty hunter will give up after sustaining two wounds.



BASS REEVES

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

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d10

Edges: Gunslinger Profession

Equipment: Starr Revolver

Once the many aspects of this fight are resolved, the group can check behind the bar, where they will find a trapdoor leading into the hidden cellar, which has a loading door covered by dirt outside. Down there they will find the kidnapper hiding out with another scorpion automaton (see chapter 2A). Depending on how the last combat went, the GM can decide whether or not to make fight these two again.

From either the kidnapper, the bartender, or Belle Star, the heroes will discover that the owner of the saloon and the man who contracted the kidnapping of young Edward Kellerson is a local businessman named Mr. Nakamura. Some of these people are aware that he is not in fact Chinese but rather Japanese. However, a few quick inquiries will also reveal that he has recently left town.

Epilogue

Why is a Japanese businessman involved with a kidnapping? Where is he getting these large and very advanced automatons? What is happening in the Chinese-controlled mining town of Weaverville? What connection does all this have to Wells Fargo and the Southern Pacific Railroad? There will be much more to discover in Chapter 4!



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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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Rivalry - Chapter 5

Prologue

You have finally arrived in the mountain town of Weaverville. What secrets does it hold?

GM Note - This chapter is built more as a list of locations to explore and scenes to experience rather than a sequential adventure. At this point in the story, the heroes' interactions with Weaverville will depend greatly on the choices they have made and continue to make regarding their allegiances and motivations. The events in this chapter are available to be sampled and remixed as needed and as appropriate for the party.

Also, if you like pictures and maps, the town of Weaverville was a real historic gold mining town. It is also the location of the oldest Taoist temple in North America, and that temple is still standing today. For pictures, search "Weaverville Joss House." The airfield can be placed in the modern location of Lonnie Pool Field, which lies to the northeast of the temple. Pictures of that air strip may help players visualize the location. The rest of the town is mostly situated between those two locations or west of the temple.

Scene 1 - The Delivery

One of the first things the heroes will need to do upon arrival is complete the delivery that has brought them here in the first place. Official shipments are received at a small airfield at the north end of town. There is enough room between the trees to fit two medium-sized airships, and in fact there seems to be one here already.

The airship that is parked at the airfield is like nothing the heroes have ever seen, even if any of them are knowledgeable aviators. It is built with an external rigid frame and open crew deck like French-style dirigibles, but the shape of both is more angular and decorated. The bag comes to more of a point at the front, with an ornate wooden bowsprit extending from the frame. On the prow of the crew cabin, there is also

what at first glance appears to be long narrow cannon forged to look like the mouth of a dragon.

A quick Common Knowledge check will confirm that this is unusual because cannons and shot are usually considered too heavy for airships and the firing of a cannon too disruptive to flight. Also, no crew could possibly muzzle-load such a cannon while in the air, as it seems to be hard-mounted on the prow. An appropriate Knowledge or Gunsmithing check may allow someone to realize that the tube is hollow straight through, which would seem to serve no practical purpose. There do not seem to be any other clues as to this mysterious object's purpose or function.

On one end of the airfield there is a large wooden storage building. There are a few workers moving crates and barrels into this building. Nothing is being brought out at this time. Overseeing the activity is an older, distinguished-looking Chinese gentleman. He wears a bowler hat and a suit and carries a clipboard. His name is Lo Bao.

When the heroes actually deliver the package, Lo Bao will simply have the workers take it into storage building. They will do nothing else at this time. If anyone manages to get a glimpse inside, there are many wooden crates inside, some of them also big enough to hold a person. They are not currently being loaded onto any vehicles for immediate transport.

The leader of the workers is a large, burly man. Lo Bao may call him directly to move the crate or check on something, in which case the heroes will hear that his name is Lo Feng. Upon closer examination, there is indeed some family resemblance between the old man and the laborer, but it is slight. As the adventurers meet more people around town, they will discover that most of the Chinese residents are either from the Lo family or the Liang family.

Unless the heroes start any incidents themselves, the delivery should go very smoothly. They are then free to wander around the town.





Scene 2 – Around the Town

In the town of Weaverville there are a number of locations that the adventurers may visit. They are presented here in no particular order, with a simple framework of setting and character information for each. In all of these cases, the townsfolk seem to be willing to go about their business as usual, welcoming the heroes as they would any other visitors. There is no immediate evidence of anything out of the ordinary happening in the town.

The Ba Gua Inn

There are a number of saloons, but only one has an inn. If the heroes intend to stay the night, they will need to make their way to the Ba Gua Inn. The sign for this inn is an octagon with a number of longer and shorter bars ringing a strange circular symbol in the middle.

The inn and its attached saloon are run by one of the small number of women you have seen around the town. Women are still somewhat more rare in the Rocky Mountain Republic than in other countries, and Chinese women in particular are not seen very often, even in San Francisco. You have seen several as you have walked around the town, suggesting that Weaverville - although still clearly less than 50 percent - may have a higher female population than other Chinese communities in North America.

The manager of the inn introduces herself as Liang Hui. She is a very friendly woman in her thirties. She will engage the heroes in whatever conversational topics they wish, although she doesn't seem as boisterous as many saloon owners can be. She encourages all visitors to take time to visit the Temple of the Trees Under the Clouds, a prominent Weaverville landmark. She also indicates that her husband might be found there.

Temple of the Trees Under the Clouds

The temple is located on the southern end of town, and is usually the first building travelers see when approaching from the east. The design is a mix of frontier practicality with Chinese ornamentation. It is not a large building, comprising only two medium-sized rooms. The first room is clearly the main temple, with ornate rugs and pillows framing a lavishly

decorated altar. The second room seems to be used mainly for storage, especially of chairs and a few other pieces of furniture.

In the temple, an older man sits cross-legged on a pillow facing the door. He does not rise to greet visitors but welcomes them quietly to the temple. He introduces himself as Liang Tao. He is happy to answer questions about himself, the temple, the town, or Taoism.

Liang Tao himself is not a priest or holy man, but rather the local Gearsmith. He has a workshop near the Ba Gua Inn, which his wife oversees, but he spends much of his spare time meditating in the temple. Others in the town visit occasionally, but often he is alone.

If asked about his work as a Gearsmith, Liang Tao will indicate that most of his work involves repair and maintenance for automatons that work in the mine. He is happy to offer his services to any automatons in the party, since he has no pressing projects at the moment.

The Apothecary

The apothecary is a small store in the middle of town that acts as a general store, but with some very specialized medicines.

Instead of the usual bottles of cocaine drops, hashish pills, and Mr.s. Winslow's Soothing Syrup (made with opium), there are strange herbal and even animal concoctions lining the shelves behind the counter. The pleasant and talkative proprietor, Lo Xing-fu, will engage all visitors in a spirited discussion about the many uses of his various medicines. He is happy to explain why Chinese medicine works much better than European medicine. (He does not even acknowledge the existence of "North American" medicine, and if pressed on this topic he will point out as an example that the continent has the wrong sort of snakes.)

In one corner of the store, there is also a display that may alarm some members of the party - a small open barrel of gunpowder with a scoop sticking out of it as if ready for serving. When asked, Lo Xing-fu explains that the powder is available for purchase by weight so that you may make your own rockets, fireworks, or dynamite. He does have some small rockets and fireworks that he makes and sells for special occasions, and the heroes may purchase some if they wish. Adventurers with

appropriate skills may even attempt to figure out how these creations work.

The one topic that Lo Xing-fu will not discuss is his other customers. He will attempt to deflect any such questioning, and will grow more firm if the questioning persists. He will be particularly tight-lipped about any discussion of the mine, the airship, or Lo Bao.

Other Locations

The rest of the town consists of a normal mix of frontier mining town locations, such as houses, stables, saloons, blacksmiths, and even a small bank and telegraph office. Most of the owners of these locations are indeed Chinese, though there are a number of miners from around the area who are not. The few automatons in town seem to be owned by miners or townspeople..

Scene 3 – Disturbance in the Night

Eventually the heroes will settle in for the night at the Ba Gua Inn or in the woods if they choose to camp. In the middle of the night, they will hear gunshots from the direction of the airfield. The nature of this disturbance will depend on what the heroes have done with the mining automaton and the Highwayman. The most likely possibilities are listed below, but feel free to adapt as necessary:

- The Highwayman was hiding in the crate with his gun, and when the workers opened it, they discovered that he was active and dangerous. The gunfire occurs as he is escaping into the woods north of town.
- If the mining automaton was delivered and the Highwaymen are still active, the gunfire occurs during a nighttime assault on the storage barn by the Highwaymen. The airfield is too well defended for the Highwaymen to be successful, but they may injure some of the workers. The rest will chase the attackers into the woods.
- If the original Highwaymen were incapacitated in the attack in the previous chapter, the attacker is yet another Highwayman, but operating alone. He is likely to be less successful in injuring the defenders, and so will flee sooner.

If the heroes go to the airfield either during the night or the next morning, they may volunteer or be asked by Lo Bao to join the manhunt for the Highwayman. (Use the stats from Chapter 4.) If the adventurers are allied with the Highwayman, they will be followed by Lo Feng. They will have to lose him if they want to do anything besides capturing the automaton and returning him to Lo Bao.

If the Highwayman is captured and returned, Lo Bao will trust the heroes slightly further. If the heroes are spotted conspiring with the automaton, Lo Feng and his workers will attempt to capture them as well. (Stats for Lo Feng and his crew will be provided in Chapter 6.) The heroes may prefer to escape into the woods rather than have that fight.

Epilogue

Now that you have a few answers but many more questions, you realize that you will need to spend a little longer watching the residents of Weaverville. It may also be time to visit the mine and see exactly what is happening there. Delve deeper into Weaverville's secrets in Chapter 6!



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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.

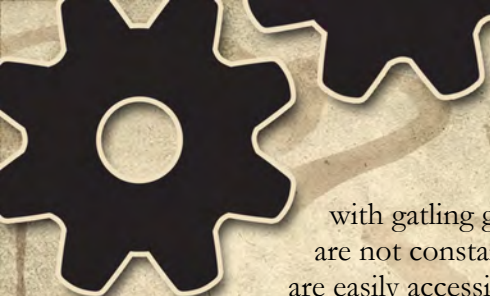
Scene 2A - Into the Mine

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. Automatons 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.

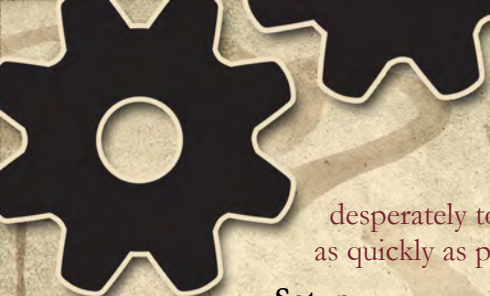
Once the characters have had some time to discuss their ethical dilemma in light of all this new information, they are forced to make a final choice. An alarm sounds from the northern watchtower—the mine is under attack! Which side will our heroes join?

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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