

SAVAGE EXPLORER WORLDS

7



DEADLANDS: HOUSE AT THE EDGE O' NOWHERE
RIFTS®: TRITON INDUSTRIES CATALOG
THE LAST PARSEC: TALES OF THE RED BAND

SAVAGE EXPLORER WORLDS

DEADLANDS: THE WEIRD WEST HOUSE AT THE EDGE O' NOWHERE. 2

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House at the Edge o' Nowhere

A series of baffling heists. The chilling legacy of a mad architect's all-consuming vision. A cunning spirit whose true goals are shrouded in secrecy.

Can a newly arrived posse sort out the mystery before a dark fate befalls the folk of Brass Spur?

This adventure is intended for a posse composed of Veteran or higher Rank heroes, although lesser cowpokes may prevail with some sound strategy, luck, and maybe a few allies. A blessed with the ability to invoke the *exorcism* power is advisable but not strictly required. Some familiarity on the players' part with the particular conceits of *Deadlands: The Weird West* can be helpful.

For a group new to the setting, the Marshal should lean on Common Knowledge rolls, the Knowledge (Occult) skill, and capsule summaries to convey information most characters would know.

As written, "House at the Edge o' Nowhere" takes place in southeast Wyoming, but it can be transplanted to another locale by altering some of the flavor text.

Wherever the Marshal places the town of Brass Spur, it should sit near the edge of some vast emptiness: prairie, desert, plains, or the like.

THE STORY SO FAR

This is the story of a haunted house. But the haunts were present long before the house's foundations were sunk.

Our yarn begins hundreds of years ago with the Shoshone medicine woman Bloody Elk. Following the Old Ones' traditions, Bloody Elk pledged her life to safeguarding the sunlit world from manitous and their ilk. She hunted a rogue spirit that had escaped the Hunting Grounds to spread terror and death — a shapeshifting greater manitou.

The foul creature led a spirited chase, but eventually Bloody Elk trapped her quarry and forced it halfway back into the Hunting Grounds. There she imprisoned it by driving a huge stone spear through its midsection. It writhed, changing from monstrous snake to giant toad to a shadowy chiropteran man-thing...none of its shapes able to escape.

Bloody Elk left it there, and went off on other journeys and quests. She died peacefully decades later. But the hoary old spirit never perished.

Abysselfa Arrives

A few hundred years later, a lesser manitou that called itself Abysselfa happened upon the trapped beast. Abysselfa was a peon, a mere worm, accustomed to being trod upon by its peers and betters. In this ancient, greater manitou it saw a marvelous opportunity to increase its own power.

But even trapped and depleted as it was, the old beast was more than a match for the young manitou. Abysselfa deluded itself, told itself it held all the cards. They bargained, and the ancient creature promised Abysselfa power beyond imagining.

"First," the thing whispered, "you will cause a vast castle to be erected in my honor. You shall provide me with such human flesh and blood as to sate my hunger. Only then will you enjoy the power you seek."

The trapped spirit channeled arcane energy into Abysselfa, granting it power to achieve the master's goals. Little did the manitou know, the old spirit wanted not only human flesh but also souls. When it collects enough, it will possess the strength to escape Bloody Elk's trap and roam the Hunting Grounds once more.

So Abysselfa followed its orders and wandered far and wide, searching for a way to build a "vast castle" for the master. Years later, the manitou hit paydirt.

Harrigan's Dream House

In 1875, Nathaniel Harrigan – inventor, astronomer, architect – came to the area from Denver, Colorado. He dreamed of the house he would build for his family – literally! It would be home, observatory, and place of learning and invention, all in one. Harrigan's talents with regard to the New Science made him uniquely able to achieve his peculiar vision.

Inspiration came to him in his dreams not long after he arrived on newly purchased land near Brass Spur, Wyoming. He frequently awoke in the night to scribble down ideas and bits of blueprints. But Nate's dreams weren't solely his own. The darkest inspirations came from the manitou, Abysselfa.

In our world the inventor built a small house and garden, an observatory, and a barn that served as his workshop. He doted on his wife Emeline (who harbored her own uncanny talents) and their son Nate Jr.



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For a time they were happy.

Things went awry when Nate Harrigan's dreams carried him away into flights of madness. Emeline and her son withdrew. Meanwhile, Harrigan built a vast mansion on the Hunting Grounds' periphery and developed an arcane means to access it.

Now Abysselfa had a gateway to the sunlit world, where it could hunt its favorite prey: the young, old, and defenseless. It used the house as a means to lure victims into the spirit world, where they went mad – until the trapped master consumed them.

The bastard left Harrigan's home and family in ruins. Nate buried Emeline and his son following their deaths in a freak workshop accident. Not long after that, Harrigan vanished. Property rights reverted to the First Bank of Wyoming in nearby Brass Spur.

Since the original tenants, a German couple named Brüdorf and the Houck family have resided on the premises. All of them disappeared under mysterious circumstances, so the property remained uninhabited for years after.

Enter the Jakes

Most recently, an outlaw gang called the Blue Jakes took up residence at the old Harrigan place. Following a spree of robberies across northern Colorado and Wyoming, they needed a place to lie low until the law lost their scent. The abandoned ranch and barn seemed perfect.

In short order, Abysselfa revealed itself to the gang's leader, an accomplished huckster by the name of Diamond Jake McDaniel. It showed him how to access Harrigan's invisible mansion, and gave him a silver bell to magnify his hexes' power. Pretty soon Abysselfa extracted a pledge of the outlaw's loyalty.

Diamond Jake McDaniel has been using the mansion's powers to access various establishments in the nearby town of Brass Spur, robbing them blind. Unbeknownst to Diamond Jake, he and his gang are set to join all the other souls the house has consumed over the years.

And that's how things look when your posse arrives, Marshal.

THE SETUP

This adventure works best if the posse is already on the Blue Jakes' trail, whether seeking a reward or perhaps satisfaction for some prior dispute. A

previous encounter with Diamond Jake McDaniel (see page 17 for his profile) can provide a posse with ample motivation to catch the ne'er-do-well and his confederates. Should the Marshal prefer it, the cowpokes can also learn what they need to know on arrival in Brass Spur.

If this is the group's first outing, give each player a chance to describe his or her character's appearance and reason for being there.

Read the following while your posse rides a southeastern Wyoming trail, near the edge of a vast prairie that stretches off toward Nebraska. The party's lead rider spots a solitary figure atop a nearby hill, out of place in the otherwise empty landscape.

On a low, grassy hilltop about 60 yards off stands a woman. She wears a pale blue dress, her brown hair hangs down, and she holds a white flower in one hand. She seems washed out somehow, drained of color. And even from this distance, you see desolation in the woman's blank stare. She has lost all hope. She turns and walks away, vanishing over the rise.

By the time anyone reaches the hilltop, the woman is gone. Where she stood lies a single, fresh-cut white orchid. A successful Tracking (+2) or Notice (-2) roll determines the woman left no footprints. Cowpokes can take the flower, but it wilts and crumbles to dust in a few hours' time.

The apparition is the ghost of Emeline Harrigan, doomed to walk the earth until her husband's evil is undone. The ghost has no ability to affect the physical world (and thus no statistics). She left clues to help out the heroes, however, which the saddletramps can uncover later on.

New in Town

Soon the posse rides into Brass Spur, a small town about 60 miles east of Cheyenne, Wyoming. As townsfolk turn to gawk at the newcomers, the same question is on everyone's lips:

"You after the reward?"

Heroes who request some elaboration learn,

"The \$500 reward for Diamond Jake McDaniel and his gang, the Blue Jakes. They've been robbin' Brass Spur with impunity and gettin' away clean every time. It's like them varmints appear from thin air – and vanish into it when they're finished."

Folks hurry off as though they've said too much. No one wants to be seen talking to strangers. A pall of fear hangs over the town.

BRASS SPUR

Fear Level: 3

Brass Spur is far from a boomtown—there's no railroad or telegraph—but it's a central hub of commerce for cattle ranchers and miners who dwell nearby. Townfolk tend toward services and suppliers, while cowboys and other ranch hands form the bulk of the visiting public. Ranchers drive their cattle to Cheyenne for sale at the railyards.

Consult the town map on page 6, and let the players explore as they like. Townsfolk are generally superstitious, and recent events have left them especially suspicious and afraid.

Rolling snake eyes on any sort of social interaction (Intimidation, Persuasion, Streetwise, etc.) may result in an argument, brawl, or deadly fight at the Marshal's discretion. Thereafter, the posse suffers a -4 penalty on social interactions in Brass Spur, as word of their missteps gets around. Evidence of supernatural activities or abilities is liable to garner the same result.

Town Locations

Visiting the locations listed below can yield further information about the Blue Jakes and their local offenses. See each entry for details. A few locations on the map are left intentionally blank so the Marshal can populate them as desired.

Unless otherwise noted, use the Townsfolk profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook* for Brass Spur's residents. Any modifications to the standard profile are listed in parentheses after the character's name.

Barber: The town barber (also providing dentistry and undertaking services) is 53-year-old spinster Vivian Krummeck. She's seen a lot of business lately; the Blue Jakes have murdered two locals in the course of their recent thefts. Ms. Krummeck doesn't have any idea where the gang is hiding out. They haven't plundered her establishment.

Blacksmith/Livery: Esteban Luna and his two teenage sons, Miguel and Alejandro, run the livery. Stabling and services are available here for the usual rates. The gang hasn't robbed this place.

Brass Spur Saloon: This is usually the town's busiest establishment, and the spot where locals are most likely to speak freely. The bartender is Clem Briscoe. Success on a Persuasion or Streetwise roll (at +2 if the charming so-and-so buys a round of drinks) coaxes one or more townsfolk into talking about the Blue Jakes:

ONE TOUGH TOWN

Marshal, put the stereotype of townsfolk as cowering victims in need of rescue out of your mind. They may be a frightened and superstitious lot, but it takes a tough breed to live on the Wyoming prairie. Brass Spur's residents are no different.

In times of trouble, the locals are more likely to run toward a source of danger than away from it. The Blue Jakes' depredations have them pretty much baffled, but they'd all relish a chance to string up the villains for their crimes. On top of that, locals tend to go armed or at least have guns in easy reach at home.

Moreover, everybody knows everyone else in a small town like Brass Spur. In times of need, they all throw in and stick together.

"Diamond Jake McDaniel is their leader. He likes to think he's charming – but he ain't. The gunman Jacob Storms is his primary compatriot. He don't say much. They have at least three accomplices. And they've robbed nearly every place in town with anything worth stealing – the bank, the Wells Fargo office, you name it."

Prodded for more information about the gang's techniques, a local adds,

"That's why Marshal Follett can't run them to ground. Them no-good killers seem to appear out of thin air. One second they're not there...the next they are. And then they's gone again!"

If the posse asks about any likely hideouts in the area, no one has any ideas except for the old Harrigan house east of town – which no one visits.

"You don't want to go to the Harrigan house, mister. For one thing, it's on the edge o' nowhere. And people claim to see peculiar things out there...those who come back, at least. It's a haunted place."

If a cowpoke insists on hearing more, most folks in town can relate the house's public history since Nate Harrigan and his family arrived in 1875 (see **Harrigan's Dream House** on page 3, but the locals know nothing about any spirits or manitous). Folks refer to it as the Flower House, since Emeline Harrigan maintained an outdoor garden and greenhouse

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while she lived. If the posse mentions the woman they saw outside town, townsfolk visibly blanch and confirm that must have been Mrs. Harrigan's shade.

Just before he lapses into unconsciousness, town drunk Knox Bogus—partial to poetic flights of fancy—blurts out:

"I've been to that ol' Flower House. Harrigan had secrets! There's more to that place than the naked eye can apprehend. Under the moon, I looked upon a vast palace of towers and spires rising in the darkling expanse. Hic!"

The saloon is a hazardous place to roll snake eyes on a social interaction (as described above), due to the clientele being mostly ranch hands and cowboys (three per hero, Fighting d8, Parry 6). They don't take kindly to strangers poking their big fat noses in everyone's business.

Church: Reverend J. M. Hargreaves (Knowledge: Theology d10) is responsible for the spiritual welfare of the town's residents and ranchers for miles around. He's not built for fighting, but offers solace

to all who visit his church. If the posse visits during a sermon, Rev. Hargreaves tells the congregation about a dream he had concerning a sacred silver bell, a book of knowledge, and an illuminating candle, and how they helped him to withstand a seemingly endless, suffocating darkness.

Doc Tunstall's Office: Dr. Bill Tunstall (Healing d8) can stitch up a wound or dig out a bullet for a nominal fee.

First Bank of Wyoming: Stuffy and self-important Erastus J. Lark (Rich Edge) is the bank manager. He employs three clerks. A wanted poster hangs outside the front door, offering a reward of \$500 for Diamond Jake McDaniel, \$500 for Jacob Storms, and \$250 for each of their four accomplices—dead or alive. Listed offenses include murder, rape, armed robbery, horse theft, and card sharpening.

Mr. Lark is only too happy to relate what he knows of the previous robberies:

"Why, yes, that band of killers robbed this bank twice. No posted guards could stymie them. On the



first occasion they strolled into the open bank vault and drew down on me, although no one saw them enter the bank or even ride into town.

"Now. The second time was only a few days ago, when they walked into the teller's cage. Again – no one saw them come to town or depart. It was like they appeared in the cage. They got away with close to five thousand dollars."

Guns & Ammunition: Amos and Mae Horan, married for going on 30 years, own and run the gun shop. Wagstaff General Supply carries a few pistols and shotguns, but this is the place for a full selection of Colt firearms, Winchester rifles, and Gatling weapons imported from Hellstromme Industries Ltd. The Horans were robbed once by the gang; the varmints walked out of the back room and made off with a small arsenal.

Hotel: Prim and proper Amanda Ivers is the hotel manager; she runs the place with a staff of six. Two robberies took place here. Once the Blue Jakes seemed to be hiding in a hotel room closet, from which they emerged to rob the tenant blind. Afterward, they withdrew into the closet...and vanished. The other time they strolled into the hotel office and swiped a cash box containing \$679.35.

Marshal's Office: Marshal Ulysses Follett (use the Gunman profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, add Persuasion d4) is a grizzled old law dog. He claims to be stymied in his hunt for the Blue Jakes, on account of the way they tend to vanish. A hero who succeeds on a Notice roll versus Follett's Persuasion senses the gray-haired marshal is hiding something.

Success on a Persuasion or Intimidation roll causes Follett to spill the beans:

"It was that snake, Diamond Jake McDaniel. He came here in the middle of the night. I awakened to find him holding a Bowie knife at my throat. He told me him and his gang could be anywhere they wanted to be and no one was safe. And if I knew what was good for me, I better not try too hard to run them Blue Jakes to ground."

Follett is disgusted by his own cowardice. If the players try to convince him and the Marshal allows it, he might join the posse as an allied Extra.

Stagecoach Office: The stage office sits beside a large dirt yard, which usually has a stagecoach or two parked in it. A large barn out back handles the horse teams as they pass through on the trail to Cheyenne. No one's robbed the stage office as of yet, as clerk Hutch Blumer tells anyone who asks.

RUMORS IN BRASS SPUR

Brass Spur's locals have all manner of information and hearsay to share about the old Harrigan place, whether they're asked or not.

The Marshal can roll a d6 for a random rumor or choose from the table below, using them to flesh out encounters as needed.

- | d6 | Information |
|----|--|
| 1 | Gold and lost riches are buried somewhere in or near the Harrigan place. (False.) |
| 2 | The Indians say the land on which Harrigan built is cursed, because a shaman named Bloody Elk trapped an evil spirit in the earth there, long ago. (True.) |
| 3 | A fella claiming to be sent by "The Explorer's Society" went out to the Harrigan place last autumn and was never seen in Brass Spur again. (True.) |
| 4 | Hans and Ilsa Brüdorf, who dwelled in the house briefly, were in fact Austrian royalty on the run following an assassination attempt. (False.) |
| 5 | The Houck family lived in the house until the father, Robert, died of cholera. (True.) |
| 6 | All these ghost stories are a load of nonsense. Indian raiders from the Sioux Nations kidnapped all the house's residents. (False.) |

EXPLORING THE FLOWER HOUSE

Once the searchers reach the Harrigan place, it's up to them to poke around and discover the truth. Don't explain what's going on, Marshal. Instead, use the house's strange features and personalities to keep the players uneasy and uncertain. After all, only the unknown is likely to give your jaded gamers the shivers.

The posse's goal is to figure out how the house works and root out Diamond Jake and his boys. In the process they learn that something evil — Abysselfa — roams the halls. If they're persistent, the cowpokes also figure out an old spirit is trapped here...and maybe even defeat it.

Finally, even though Nathan Harrigan was corrupted by evil, his wife Emeline was a blessed. She left behind her holy bell, book, and candle, hidden throughout the house, which together can fuel an exorcism that destroys the ancient manitou and Abysselfa.

Wagstaff General Supply: Helmut Wagstaff owns the general store, and runs it with the help of his wife Olga and their seven children. They sell their wares for the usual prices, and have a good supply on hand. The general store has not been robbed.

Wells Fargo Office: Office clerk "Ace" Lee Tremaine (use the Rail Warrior profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*, no faction) had a colorful past in the Great Rail Wars, which he hoped to leave behind for a quiet life on the Wyoming prairie. But then the Blue Jakes came to town. True to form, they walked out of thin air into the express vault and robbed Tremaine blind—no one saw them come or go.

"Ace" Lee Tremaine received a formal reprimand from his employer after the theft, so he's hankerin' for a little payback. If the heroes ask him and the Marshal allows it, Tremaine joins the posse as an allied Extra.

It's Them Varmints Again!

If the posse tarries for more than two days in Brass Spur, the Blue Jakes strike again. At precisely 10 a.m., Diamond Jake and his boys walk out of the storeroom at Wagstaff General Supply. They mention they've been getting a little peckish and need supplies to tide them over. They steal armloads of food and dry goods, clear out the till of \$47.50, and step back into the storeroom — to vanish once more.

If by some chance one or more heroes are at Wagstaff Supply when the heist transpires, see the Blue Jakes' profiles beginning on page 18. The villains trade gunfire before fleeing back through the storeroom door.

A character who watches the outlaws retreat and succeeds on a Knowledge (Occult) roll, or who views the escape with the benefit of the *detect arcana* power, sees that a magic effect or portal of some kind allows the gang to transport instantly away. That said, there are seemingly no commonalities between all the doors the gang has used to commit their crimes.

If the posse remains in town after the most recent robbery, a delegation of townsfolk formally requests that the heroes track down Diamond Jake McDaniel and his accomplices. Harrigan House seems the likeliest place to start. And although the gang is hiding out there, finding them isn't so simple a proposition.

HARRIGAN HOUSE

Fear Level: 4

The old Harrigan place lies about 10 miles east of Brass Spur. A lonely, overgrown trail leads to it through desolate prairie. The only sound is of wind rushing through the tall grass. Although the townsfolk warn them to look out for Sioux war parties, the cowpokes meet no other travelers.

At the very edge of the trackless prairie, in a hollow between two low hills, sits the ruin of the Harrigan house, a small barn, and a well. See the nearby map for the house and grounds' layout. There's no sign of life; the wind is still the only sound.

If the house is viewed under the moonlight, onlookers may make a Notice roll at -4. With success, an observer can barely perceive the outlines of an enormous, sprawling mansion just behind the house. With the benefit of the *detect arcana* power, a caster discerns that the entire area is suffused with

magic and dread. Perceiving the titanic, ghostly manse invokes a Fear check.

Barn: This sagging structure looks as if its roof should have caved in a few months ago. The rear half is a bit more sound, however, and anyone inspecting the old stables there finds six riding horses (see *Savage Worlds*). There's also a store of feed, some buckets full of water, and saddles and kits. These are the Blue Jakes' steeds, stashed here while the gang passes the time inside Harrigan house.

House: The house is a large, one-room farmhouse with extra constructions added to either side of it. On the left is an adjoining, glass-and-wood-framed greenhouse and topiary. The windows are grimy and cracked, and all the flowers and bushes inside look brown and withered. To the right side of the house sits a long, low adjoining wing made of stone and topped by a cracked glass dome. There's a front and a rear door; neither is locked.

Inside the House

Until the posse figures out how to "revolve" the Harrigan place partially into the Hunting Grounds—allowing access to the parts of the house where the gang hides out—they're limited to three areas: the main room, the greenhouse, and the observatory. See the Harrigan House map on page 10.

Main Room

The house's single room is nondescript and deserted, all its surfaces covered with a thick layer of dust. A corner of one glass windowpane is busted out, allowing the lonely prairie wind to moan through it like a distant lament.

There's a dishevelled bed in one corner. A tall, mahogany wardrobe stands beside it. To the right of the front entrance is a potbellied stove and a pile of firewood; to the left is a rickety old table with four chairs, and a small wooden dowry chest. In the center of the right wall a door leads into Harrigan's former observatory and lab. To the left, a door leads out to the greenhouse. Directly across from the posse is a rear entrance. Beside it, a trap door with an iron ring in the floor hides a tiny, empty root cellar.

Should an investigator succeed on a Notice roll before the heroes tromp all over the room, he detects a clear series of tracks running back and forth through the dust to the right-hand door—the laboratory. After saddletramps have disturbed the dusty floor, Notice rolls to find the tracks suffer a -2 penalty.

RELIC: EMELINE'S BELL, BOOK & CANDLE

When they're all held by a single cowpoke, Emeline Harrigan's articles of faith form a potent relic. They're imbued with a bit of the powerful goodness she possessed in life.

Power: A hero who carries the bell, Bible, and candle is protected as though he has the Arcane Resistance Edge. A blessed who carries all three items also adds +1 to Faith rolls. The owner may attempt to perform an *exorcism* (see the *Deadlands Player's Guide*) even if he does not know the power, but such attempts suffer a -3 penalty to the Faith roll.

Taint: None.

Nothing of interest hangs inside the wardrobe, only a half-dozen dust-covered, threadbare jackets and pairs of pants in varying sizes. A hero who pokes around inside the potbellied stove finds charred human bones and a skull among the ashes.

A pistolero who searches under the woodpile and succeeds on a Notice roll discovers a mason jar whose lid is sealed with wax. It contains a silver skeleton key, which opens the door to the observatory (see below).

Should a hero look inside the dowry chest, she finds an old, neatly folded quilt. Under the quilt is a worn, dog-eared Bible with the name Emeline Harrigan written neatly on the inside front cover. A blessed or other character with the Faith skill feels strongly that this Bible is important, but doesn't know exactly why; she "just has a feeling." Use of the *detect arcana* power reveals a golden aura surrounding the book. If a reader flips through the book, she notes that the rites of exorcism are marked with a purple ribbon.

Greenhouse

Several panes of glass are broken in the greenhouse walls, but the interior is still as hot and dry as blazes during the daylight hours. It's filled with flowers, creeping vines, annuals in long troughs, and overgrown fruit trees—all dead, dry, and crumbling. There's also an exterior door, long rusted shut, that can be opened with success on a Strength roll (-2).

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At the center of the greenhouse are a pair of graves, with marble headstones reading EMELINE HARRIGAN, 1851–1876 and NATHANIEL HARRIGAN JR., 1868–1876. The epitaphs respectively read *Beloved wife* and *Loyal son*.

Observatory

This long, low bunker is sunk into the earth. From the outside its roof seems only six or seven feet tall, with a glass dome a dozen feet taller. Within, the ceiling is nearly 12 feet above the paved stone floor and the cracked glass dome rises to 24 feet at its apex.

From the house's main room, a staircase descends into a short hallway that ends at a reinforced ghost steel door (Toughness 17, Lockpicking –4), which is locked. The silver key hidden in the woodpile (see above) opens it; Diamond Jake has an identical key.

Inside, the domed room does triple duty as astronomical observatory, classical orrery, and New

Science laboratory. A large telescope sits unused, but could be put in working order with a Repair roll (–4) and 2d8 hours' work by someone with Knowledge (Astronomy) or a comparable discipline. The telescope is too large to be moved without a vehicle (roughly 600 lbs), but would be worth \$1,000 or more to the right buyer.

Two long lab tables are littered with dusty tools and spare parts, none of which seems to have been touched in years. With success on a Repair or Weird Science roll, a determined engineer could scrounge up a full tool kit, or a needed component to help recover from a Malfunction. There is no ghost rock to be found, however.

The orrery is a large brass apparatus, roughly 15 feet across, with various spheres on moving arms emulating the path of the solar system's eight planets through the heavens, around the sun. Even the recently discovered Neptune is present. The mechanism within is corroded and fused in place, and cannot be repaired.

Any hero who inspects the orrery can see that the sun — a large brass sphere at the center of the apparatus — is covered with multiple layers of brown, crusted stains. Success on a Notice roll reveals the stains are actually handprints. Success on a Healing, Knowledge (Medicine), or Common Knowledge roll at -2 reveals the brown stains to be old blood.

“Revolving” the House: A cowpoke who cuts her palm deeply enough for it to bleed (one automatic wound, which can be Soaked) and puts a bloody handprint on the orrery’s “sun” causes the Harrigan house to revolve partially into the Hunting Grounds.

Heroes in the laboratory hear a high-pitched squeal like metal grinding on metal, feel a subtle vibration under their boots, and jump as a sudden gust of wind rattles all the panes in the observatory dome.

Anyone standing outside the Harrigan house when it “revolves” detects no change from the exterior, although people inside the observatory seem to vanish. Any hero with the *contact spirit world* power knows instinctively what has happened; others are likely to remain in the dark unless the Marshal decides otherwise. The house does not actually move; rather, the posse has been shifted into a spirit-world version of the locale.

HARRIGAN HOUSE, REVOLVED

The posse may not know right off the bat they have accessed a space nearby the Hunting Grounds. There are few, if any, differences to be found in the laboratory. The Fear Level remains 4, and the heroes have only partially entered the Hunting Grounds: All the physical world’s laws remain in effect, even though the landscape grows more disorienting and uncanny the farther they travel from the orrery.

As soon as the house revolves, the ancient manitou and Abysselfa are both aware of the change. Abysselfa moves to the main room of Harrigan house, so it can first identify intruders and then creep away to warn its master and the Blue Jakes.

Observatory—Revolved

The laboratory, orrery, and telescope appear almost exactly as they did before. If a curious hero looks through the telescope — which is now aimed out into the Hunting Grounds — he or she catches a glimpse

of their Worst Nightmare. Have that player make a Fear check with a total penalty of -5!

Placing another bloody handprint on the orrery’s sun causes the same phenomena as previously described. This action restores the Harrigan house’s access to the physical world, and once again cuts off access to the Hunting Grounds.

We Ain’t in Wyoming No More

It’s not immediately apparent in the laboratory, but once the searchers return to the main room of Harrigan house it’s clear they’ve gone somewhere else. As we mentioned earlier, Marshal, avoid the temptation to explain too much. Keeping the players off-balance helps to establish an atmosphere of uncertainty and creeping, unseen malice.

Main Room—Revolved

Quite a few things are different in the main room, some more readily apparent than others. In the hallway that accesses the laboratory, a hero who succeeds on a Notice roll can hear a voice muttering undecipherable words in the main room.

Read the following passages when the cowpokes enter:

Harrigan house isn’t empty anymore. A stocky, gray-haired gent in a dingy nightshirt is seated at the table. He doesn’t seem to see you. His staring eyes are haunted, and he murmurs words from under a big, waxed mustache. And that’s not all. Someone’s in the bed. A quivering, person-sized lump lies under the blanket.

Other things have changed too. The potbellied stove and woodpile are a dangerous-looking automaton and a pile of ghost rock now, and the dowry chest has become a ghost steel footlocker. You catch a sharp, metallic odor, and note a pool of blood spreading from under the wardrobe.

Saddletramps alert for egress quickly note the exits. The front door has vanished entirely, as have the windows. The trap door in the floor is gone. The door opposite remains and leads to the **Greenhouse — Revolved** (page 9). What was the back exit has become an ornately carved mahogany door that accesses **Ghost Mansion** (page 15), now the Blue Jakes’ hideout.

The main room holds a few clues for hombres who snoop around.

At the Table: The portly, mustached gent looks like Hans Brüdorf did in life, but it’s actually a

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manitou wearing his form and memories. He says the same words over and over in German:

"Das böse Gewissen verrät sich selbst."

A character who understands German or uses *Speak Language* to translate the phrase hears it as, "The guilty conscience needs no accuser." Manitou-Brüdorf doesn't respond to questions. He only persists in his lonely monologue.

The table is scattered with old blueprints and a number of daguerreotype photographs. Any egghead who gets a mind to read the blueprints must roll Smarts to comprehend what he's seeing. Most of the designs depict some vast, impossible edifice. Success on the Smarts roll means a viewer understands the design cannot be built, and must roll a Fear test to cope with the maddening knowledge. With a raise, a reader is able to discern the location of the house's keystone support—note this for later on, Marshal.

The photographs show the construction of Harrigan house, the greenhouse, and the observatory in stages, with a smiling man, woman, and boy (presumably the Harrigan family). A sodbuster who saw the ghostly

vision outside Brass Spur and looks at these photos recognizes the woman as Emeline Harrigan. All the pictures' backgrounds contain some barely perceptible, lurking threat or unnerving, unnatural shape.

Wardrobe: Opening the wardrobe releases a wafting, rotten stench that provokes a Fear/Nausea test. Inside the closet hang several human skins, male and female, all of them steadily dripping blood. If anyone takes time to inspect the skins more closely and succeeds on a Notice roll, he or she is reasonably sure they belong to the house's former tenants. With a raise, it's clear Emeline Harrigan's skin is not among them. Abysselfa and its manitou sidekicks use the skins to appear as the house's ex-residents.

In the Bed: The quivering, rail-thin man under the covers is a manitou in Robert Houck's skin—looking nearly dead from cholera. He is pale as a sheet and sweating profusely. He seems to stare straight through the heroes as he asks breathlessly,

"Where's Sarah? Where's my Sarah at?"

Manitou-Houck is no better than Brüdorf for conversation. He asks for Sarah again and again. The heroes can't actually get sick from coming in contact with manitou-Houck, but don't tell them that. Let them fret while you describe Houck's rattling, deathly cough and the hot flecks of spittle he spews.

Automaton: This automaton is an older model, looking quite like the potbellied stove it replaced. Its Gatling gun and pincer arm belie that notion. The automaton needs to be fired with ghost rock before it functions, but it is not completely inert. The manitou Abysselfa is coiled inside the machine's braincase, silently observing the posse as they explore their new surroundings.

Abysselfa's goal is to discern the heroes' skills and determine whether they're a threat to the Blue Jakes. Once the posse leaves the main room, Abysselfa enters Ghost Mansion to warn the gang. If the manitou can't determine the posse's capabilities through observation, it mentally directs the manitous to attack so as to better assess them.

An hour's work, success on a Weird Science or Repair (–2) roll, and loading and firing the automaton's ghost rock boiler restores it to proper function. There's about 30 lbs of ghost rock in the pile. If the automaton "wakes up" without Abysselfa present, it imprints on the first hero it sees – like a newly hatched duckling. It follows only that cowpoke's orders, and no one else's, unless Abysselfa again possesses it with an opposed Spirit roll.

Abysselfa's doesn't want to start a fight or harm the cowpokes – yet. As always, he's interested in spreading fear and trapping more hapless souls for eventual consumption by the ancient manitou trapped in Ghost Mansion. If visitors attack the automaton while Abysselfa resides within it, the manitou sneaks away – or flees outright if Stealth isn't possible – to warn the Blue Jakes.

Footlocker: Where the wooden dowry chest sits in the sunlit world, here there is a ghost steel footlocker (Toughness 17), about three feet by four feet, and 12 inches deep. It is locked (Lockpicking –2); Diamond Jake McDaniel wears the only key on a leather thong around his neck.

The gang uses this spot to store their excess munitions. The footlocker contains a pair of Hellstromme Industries Gatling pistols, wooden cases containing 100 rounds each of .36, .41, .44, .45, and .44–40 ammunition, and 100 shotgun shells.

The Mahogany Door: The spirit-world back door is far more ornate and expensive than its real-world

counterpart. Its frame is carved into unsettling shapes, sometimes wave-like and at others like unnatural limbs, all of it studded with eyeballs that seem to follow an observer's gaze. At the frame's apex is a leering, mask-like face with merry eyes.

If anyone moves to open the door, manitou-Houck sits up in bed wide-eyed, shivering, and whispers,

"I wouldn't go in there if'n I was you. The Explorer never came back."

Houck doesn't elaborate on his warning; he only stares at the door in terror. Go to **Ghost Mansion** (page 15) if the posse ignores manitou-Houck's advice.

If any hombres attempt to harm manitou-Brüdorf or Houck, the manitous defend themselves. When they take a wound their bodies burst like bloody skin-balloons, releasing the dark cloud of the manitou from within. The shredded skin goes splat on the floor in a puddle of blood and mucus. This trick sparks a Fear test.

• **Abysselfa:** See page 17.

• **Automaton (1):** See the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

• **Manitous (2):** See page 19.

Greenhouse—Revolved

Near the Hunting Grounds, closer to the nature spirits' domain, the greenhouse is far more alive than in the real world. It's also more dangerous. Read the following when your group explores the place:

The topiary is riotously alive with greenery and blooming fruit trees. A heady yet pleasant perfume fills the moist air. Orchids, daffodils, and a hundred varieties of prairie wildflower spread their petals in row upon row of soil-filled clay pots. Creeping ivy covers the interior walls and ceiling. But at the center of the greenhouse, you find a familiar pair of headstones. In fact, they're identical to their real-world counterparts, both reading HARRIGAN.

The gravesite acts as an anchor for Emeline Harrigan's ghost, which cannot pass on to her eternal reward any more than the other poor souls trapped here. But because Emeline was an honest-to-goodness blessed in life, the nasty old manitou can't feed on her soul either. So she languishes here, and as far afield as she can wander.

There are a few ways to get the ghost's attention in the greenhouse. An arcane caster could use the *contact spirit world* power to summon Emeline by name. If a cowpoke carries Emeline's Bible (found in

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the real-world dowry chest), she notices its presence and appears. Finally, at the Marshal's discretion Emeline Harrigan's shade could appear if her name is spoken aloud over her grave.

When Emeline's ghost appears, characters recognize her as the woman they saw outside Brass Spur. Her presence brings a perceptible calming

sensation rather than fear. With a wan smile and a faraway voice, Emeline's ghost says,

"Good things come in threes."

If a hero holds Emeline's Bible, she looks at the old book while she says this. Otherwise she just utters it calmly and fades away.

There are no other exits from the greenhouse; outside the dusty glass panes nothing can be seen but swirling, purplish-black fog and far-off drifting lights. A posse that lingers too long here is bound for trouble. About five minutes after Emeline's ghost departs, call for a Notice roll and read this to the group:

A leafy shiver passes through the ivy vines. From the corner of your eye you catch sight of snapdragons nipping at the air with petal-jaws...only to return to normal when you stare at them. No – just your imagination. It seems this place might be getting to you. After all, you think, it's only a greenhouse. And that's when the biggest fruit tree in the bunch uproots itself with a tearing sound and starts to scream. And it's screamin' loud!

Time for a Fear test, Marshal, before you deal out them Action Cards! The tree-spirit has a thick, powerful trunk and a swarming mass of leafy, mossy tentacles where its branches should be. Oh, and Marshal? It ain't too happy about being woken up. It's willing to settle for an impromptu breakfast composed of cowpokes.

- **Emeline's Ghost:** The specter is essentially good-natured but unable to affect or in any way be affected by the physical world. Therefore she has no profile. The Marshal can use Emeline's ghost to impart clues and other information as necessary, but always cryptically.

- **Hungry Tree (1):** See page 18.



GHOST MANSION

Harrigan house only gets weirder the farther a group travels from the orrery. From the house's rear a vast mansion stretches into the Hunting Grounds. At its center is the very spot where Bloody Elk trapped that ancient, nameless manitou so long ago.

The old beast resides there still, pinned under the mansion's keystone support, marshaling its strength for the inevitable day of freedom. And the Blue Jakes are there too, waiting to bushwhack anybody foolish enough to follow them.

Beyond the mahogany door, curious cowpokes see a long corridor with black, polished, wood-paneled walls and tiled floors. No sound, smell, or air current is detectable. Ghost Mansion is lit throughout by guttering, red-tinged gaslight. Anyone who enters the mansion is immediately struck by a profound and unexplainable feeling of dread.

Navigating the Mansion

There's no map of the mansion. For one thing the place is far too large for a map to be practical, and for another its layout tends to spontaneously rearrange itself. Think M.C. Escher and Salvador Dali, Marshal, as you describe the corridors, ballrooms, libraries, balconies, and staircases that double impossibly upon themselves.

Traveling through the place is a **Dramatic Task** (see *Savage Worlds*), using Spirit (–2) to make progress toward a stated goal: for example, “the exit,” “the keystone support we saw on the blueprint,” or “where the Blue Jakes are.” Each roll assumes one hour of in-game exploration. Complications include dead ends, circular travel, or the posse accidentally splitting up. If the posse gathers five successes, they reach their stated goal. If they fail, they meet 1d6+1 manitous face-to-face. They can try again if they live!

Manitous: Members of Abysselfa's spirit-gang wander the mansion, acting as guardians and primary boogeymen. During any hour the posse's Action Card is a Club, 1d6 manitous catch their scent and pursue them doggedly. Use the manitous' Worst Nightmare ability to strike fear into your cowpokes' hearts. A failure on that hour's Spirit roll means the things catch up to the posse.

The Explorer: The first time the posse's Action Card is a Heart, they meet the Explorer during that hour. The first sign of him is flickering candlelight from up ahead. When the heroes find the disheveled Explorer, he says,

“Who? Who can you be? Didn't realize I wasn't alone. There's only supposed to be me, you see, and – them. They're here, too. Have you seen them? For the love of all that's holy, don't let them catch me.”

Esswick rambles on in a similarly unhinged manner until someone compels his silence. Being lost in the Ghost Mansion for months has left him quite mad, totally amnesiac and unsure of his own name. The Explorer's guttering candle drips wax all over his hand. Set into its side are gold letters: **E.H.** – for Emeline Harrigan.

As with Emeline's Bible, a character with the Faith skill feels the candle's importance. And use of the *detect arcana* power reveals an identical golden aura.

The Explorer has a journal in his pocket, which he's forgotten about and has not updated in quite some time. His name is written inside the front cover. If a cowpoke takes an hour to read it all and makes a Smarts roll, she discovers this telling passage:

I have become convinced this mansion's ghost legion is not real, but rather a host of evil spirits wearing the poor folks' visages like masks. And one of them stands alone, all by himself above the rest. This one, the taunter, is called Abysselfa. And it serves an even more diabolical master, who remains hidden somewhere within this impossible place.

- **The Explorer:** See page 18. He has a level of Fatigue from having his soul drained.
- **Manitous (1d6+1, or 1d6):** See page 19.

Against the Blue Jakes

Whether explorers search for the keystone or the Blue Jakes, they're headed for the same place – the grand ballroom. When the group succeeds at the Dramatic Task they arrive at the hall's arched entryway. Consult the map at right for the Blue Jakes' locations, and read the following to your players:

Finally – you found it. You look through an archway at a huge ballroom with polished parquet floors and dark-paneled walls, gleaming chandeliers, flickering gaslights and blood-red tapestries.

To your right and left, flying balustrade staircases lead up to a railed balcony. At the far end of the room, up on the balcony, you see a huge, ornate door with weird symbols scrawled all over it – but you can't get a clear look.

A number of round wooden posts hold up the ceiling, but the thick granite pillar at the ballroom's dead center is the key support. Its base is sculpted from dark gray marble, and fashioned to appear like a writhing dragon or serpent – impaled by

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the pillar itself. The marble surface seems oily and unwholesome.

Indistinct shapes scratch and titter in the shadows under the stairs. What do you do?

Deal out the Action Cards, Marshal, and let the players run the Explorer as an allied Extra.

Those sounds under the stairs are a couple manitous serving as a distraction (M). Diamond Jake (A), Jake Storms (B) and the Blue Jakes (X), having received prior warning from Abysselfa, hide behind the tapestries on the balcony. After the manitous leap out to frighten and mutilate the posse, the Blue Jakes spring from hiding and open fire from the balcony. They use furniture for Medium Cover. With the manitous removing all barriers to Diamond Jake's hexes, he and his crew are risky to tussle with.



As the fight begins, Diamond Jake tinkles a little silver bell in one hand and sneers,

"I reckon you sumbitches are lookin' for this. Think I'll keep it for a spell."

Abysselfa hides out on the ground floor to keep watch over the proceedings, only interfering if the posse threatens its old manitou master trapped in marble. Successful use of *banish* or *exorcism* are really the only ways to harm the ancient, calcified beast, but as long as it remains trapped by the stone plinth that impales it, its threat is lessened greatly. Abysselfa is selfish at heart, abandoning the scene rather than risking its existence—and if it has to leave the master behind, so be it.

The Arcane Door: The weird door on the balcony with esoteric symbols carved and painted all over it is what has allowed the Blue Jakes to rob Brass Spur blind. In effect, the door supercharges Diamond Jake's *shadow walk* power (known in common parlance as *teleport*) so he can link it to any portal within 15 or 20 miles. He can even maintain the link for as long as he pleases, or cut it short on a whim. To observers at the other end, the gang appears and vanishes into thin air.

Should the fight turn against the bandits, Diamond Jake and Jake Storms don't hesitate to abandon their associates to the posse's tender mercies. In that case, they might flee into the mazelike mansion and lead a merry chase back to the Flower House, or even use their hopped-up hex to vamoose through the doorway to Brass Spur. Alternately, they could *shadow walk* to the Harrigan barn, where their horses may still be tied up. In any case, their immediate goal is a quick getaway.

- **Abysselfa:** See page 17.
- **Diamond Jake:** See page 17.
- **Jacob Storms:** See page 18.

- **Blue Jakes Gang (1 per hero):** See page 18.
- **Marble Serpent (1):** The ancient spirit under the pillar is trapped in marble and can't move or speak, but once per round it can attempt to drain the lifeforce from a target within range of its Spirit d12 in inches. Make an opposed Spirit roll. If the manitou succeeds, the target gains a level of Fatigue. This Fatigue can kill; dead victims' souls are eaten by the manitou. With 2d8 hours' rest, all Fatigue levels are recovered.
- **Manitous (1 per hero):** See page 19.

After the Dust Settles

Almost all the cash the gang stole from Brass Spur is in a bunch of gunney sacks hidden behind a bench in the ballroom, or spread between the gang members' purses. All told, the posse can recover about \$8,500 in cash and coin.


What happens afterward really depends whether Abysselfa and the old manitou still lurk in the ruins of Harrigan house. If the posse is content to return the money and the Blue Jakes (dead or alive) to Brass Spur and claim the reward, folks are satisfied. Note that a failure to return stolen currency causes the townsfolk to call in a higher authority—likely a posse of U.S. Marshals. How this turns out is up to the GM.

Tale-spinners can (and should!) tell how they caught the outlaws to lower the local Fear Level by 1.

If they leave Abysselfa to its evil deeds, Harrigan house continues to eat tenants and passers-by over the years. Should the greater manitou consume 13 more souls, it breaks free of its prison to eventually corrupt all of Brass Spur. Only a successful *exorcism* or *banish* cast on the marble manitou can destroy it. If that's done, the entire Ghost Mansion and "revolved" Harrigan house fade to nothingness in the Hunting Grounds, and the posse is returned to the real world. In the sunlit lands, the Flower House curse is lifted.

If the heroes go so far as to *exorcise* the evil stain at the edge o' nowhere, their orator can lower the local Fear Level by 1, or a maximum of 2 with a raise on the Persuasion roll. It pays to be thorough.

RASCALS, VARMINTS, AND CRITTERS

Here we present the Blue Jakes' profiles, along with Abysselfa and the other nasties your group might face. Wild Cards are preceded by a marshal's badge, like so: 

Abysselfa

This manitou wandered aimlessly for years, avoiding the Harrowed or huckster life, until it discovered the old, nameless spirit still trapped by Bloody Elk's stone spear. Helping the old creature has provided Abysselfa with so much tasty fear, the manitou has begun to withhold souls. It's got a good thing going here, and wants to make it last. Abysselfa is a cunning foe, preferring to stick to the shadows

and let foolish heroes believe the Blue Jakes are the real threat. After all, there are always more saps in the world...but there's only one place to go for a destroyed manitou. That's Hell, also known as the Deadlands. Abysselfa might appear in the form of Nate Harrigan or some other person known to the group in an attempt to mislead them. One caveat: Abysselfa isn't able to take Emeline Harrigan's form.

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d10, Persuasion d10, Stealth d8, Taunt d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d6.
- **Camouflage:** Manitou have the ability to blend into their surroundings—literally. Anyone encountering a manitou must succeed on a Smarts roll opposed by the manitou's Stealth or be surprised (see *Savage Worlds*).
- **Fear (-1):** The sight of a manitou provokes a Fear test (-1).
- **Impersonate:** Inside Ghost Mansion, Abysselfa uses the previous inhabitants' skins to appear as they did in life. If the manitou takes a wound, instead the skin suffers the damage, bursts, and releases the spirit. This trick sparks a Fear test, as above. Abysselfa may bestow this effect on other manitous as needed, but they can't do it on their own.
- **Size +2:** Manitous stand about eight feet tall when in humanoid shape.

The Blue Jakes

These no-good so-and-sos are wanted for a number of crimes all over the High Plains. Gang members wear blue kerchiefs around their necks, pulling them up over the face to protect their identities during raids. Diamond Jake McDaniel is too stylish for a kerchief, and too full of himself to hide his purty mug. He wears an embroidered cerulean waistcoat that's as high-toned as his Back-East suit and bowler hat.

Diamond Jake McDaniel

Gang leader Diamond Jake could talk a jackalope into giving up its horns. That's probably why this silver-tongued devil's chin music has gotten him out of so many scrapes. And we do mean devil. Although he finds it slightly distasteful, once a robbery is done he overlooks any atrocities his band of outlaws cares to commit. Utterly amoral, Diamond Jake is only interested in the next score.

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

Skills: Fighting d4, Gambling d10, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Occult) d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d4, Spellcasting d12, Taunt d6

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

Hindrances: Big Mouth, Wanted (Major)

Edges: Arcane Background (Magic), Attractive, Combat Reflexes, Dealer's Choice, High Roller (Improved), Power Points, Snakeoil Salesman, True Grit

Powers: *Boost/lower Trait, deflection* (missed me!), *teleport* (shadow walk). **Power Points:** 20

Gear: Colt Navy (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 1), Bowie knife (Str+d4+1, AP 1), deck of cards, Emeline's bell (see below), fancy clothes, silver observatory key, footlocker key.

Special Abilities:

- **Emeline's Bell:** Using this relic as a totem, the manitous "cheat" to aid Diamond Jake's Spellcasting attempts. While he has Emeline's bell on his person, Jake receives a +2 bonus to Spellcasting rolls, has unlimited Power Points, and does not suffer Backlash or Backfire. These benefits vanish whenever Jake leaves the mansion and return as soon as he comes back.



Jacob Storms

A couple years back, the Blue Jakes were forced to flee Dead End, Arizona, after a botched heist left half their number shot dead in the street—including Jacob Storms. A few days later he caught up to them at their campsite with his clothes covered with dirt and claimed, "Them bastards only delayed me." Since then Storms has had only two things on his mind: death and killin'. Unbeknownst to the rest of the gang, while inside Ghost Mansion Jake's manitou enjoys full Dominion. Storms allows Diamond Jake to think he's in command, for now.

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Occult) d6, Riding d8, Shooting d12, Stealth d8

Cha: -4; **Grit:** 6; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Grim Servant o' Death

Edges: Ambidextrous, Combat Reflexes, Duelist, Marksman, Pistolero, Quick Draw, Rock and Roll!, Stitchin', Supernatural Attribute (Vigor), Two-Fisted, Two-Gun Kid

Gear: Colt Peacemaker (DA) (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1), Gatling pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 2, AP 1), Bowie knife (Str+d4+1, AP 1), bottle of whiskey.

Special Abilities:

- **Harrowed:** Grit +1, Toughness +2, needs 1d6 hours of sleep per night, only a head-shot can kill, "death" only lasts 1d6 days.

Blue Jakes Gang

These men and women are mean, cruel, and collectively about as smart as a box o' rocks.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d8

Cha: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Mean, Wanted (Major)

Edges: Hip Shooting, Quick Draw

Gear: Bowie knife (Str+d4+1, AP 1), plus each outlaw packs a Colt Peacemaker (SA) (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 6, AP 1) or double-barrel shotgun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 1-2). One outlaw has a lit cigar and three sticks of dynamite stuck in her belt.

"The Explorer"

A few years back the Twilight Legion—in its guise as the Explorer's Society—sent surveyor and adventurer Carlton Esswick III to Brass Spur to investigate rumors of spiritual activity. He became lost in Ghost Mansion and has been trapped there ever since. Abysselfa torments the amnesiac Esswick while the old master slowly siphons away his soul.

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

Skills: Boating d6, Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Knowledge (History) d10, Knowledge (Occult) d10, Knowledge (Surveying) d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Survival d6, Throwing d4

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Bad Dreams, Code of Honor

Edges: Alertness, Dodge (Improved), Rich, Scholar (History, Occult)

Gear: Emeline's candle, journal.

Hungry Tree

This abomination only superficially resembles a tree, but the effect allows it to hide in plain sight when motionless. Once the gray, trunk-like body and whiplike, moss-crusted tentacles start swingin', it's clear that thang ain't no conventional shrub. It sports a pair of malevolent yellow eyes in its trunk, and a huge screaming maw in the spot from which its tentacle-branches grow.

RASCALS, VARMINTS, AND CRITTERS

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d8, Stealth d8

Pace: 2; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 16 (2)

Edges: Frenzy (Improved), Level Headed (Improved)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor (+2):** The tree has barklike skin.
- **Bite:** Str+d10.
- **Coup:** A deader who absorbs the hungry tree's essence gains the Level Headed Edge. She also grows unsightly clumps of green moss all over her body, which return in 24 hours if removed.
- **Fear (-2):** The tree sparks a Fear test at -2 when it reveals its true nature.
- **Hide in Plain Sight:** While motionless, the tree adds +2 to Stealth rolls to appear mundane.
- **Large:** Attackers add +2 to attempts to hit.
- **Size +6:** You've seen a tree, right, Marshal?
- **Tentacles:** Str+d6. The tree's 12 tentacles are 10" long. If they grapple a target, they drag them toward the maw. Each success and raise on an opposed Strength roll drags the victim 1d6" closer to the tree's mouth. Each tentacle can take a single wound (Toughness 8). Bullets and impaling weapons cause half damage, and blunt attacks inflict no damage. Wounded tentacles do not harm the tree.
- **Weakness (Water):** Unlike a real tree, this one is highly allergic to water. Each bucket's worth splashed on the critter causes 2d8 acid damage.

Manitou

These evil spirits are extremely creative in their cruelty.

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

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

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d6.
- **Camouflage:** Anyone encountering a manitou must succeed on a Smarts roll opposed by the manitou's Stealth or be surprised (see *Savage Worlds*).
- **Fear (-1):** The sight of a manitou provokes a Fear test (-1).
- **Rend:** If two manitous successfully grapple a single foe, they can act in concert to tear him apart. The manitous make a single cooperative Strength roll, opposed by the victim's Strength. If they're successful the manitous do Str+2d6, or Str+3d6 with a raise. An Incapacitating wound delivered in this fashion tears a limb from its socket.
- **Size +2:** Manitous stand about eight feet tall when in humanoid shape.
- **Worst Nightmare:** A manitou can give a cowpoke a momentary glimpse of their worst fear. This causes a Fear check at -2.

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TRITON INDUSTRIES CATALOG

AQUATIC RANGED WEAPONS: PERSONAL

BLUE-GREEN LASERS

The demand for laser weapons that function on land and underwater has skyrocketed. To meet customer demand, Triton Industries has expanded its line of blue-green lasers. They function as normal lasers on land, but in the water, targets are also scalded by superheated water. All blue-green lasers do an additional +2 to damage when striking underwater targets.

MICRO-TORPEDO WEAPONS

Though harpoons are considered the standard personal weapon for underwater combat, Triton Industries has sought other weapons with greater stopping power and range. Micro-Torpedo guns use self-propelled ordinance to grant them greater speed and accuracy and a charge that packs a powerful punch. Just like their bigger cousins, micro-torpedoes only function underwater.

NON-AQUATIC WEAPONS

Ranged weapons not adapted for underwater use are much less effective. Whenever firing, or throwing, a weapon while submerged, the weapon's range categories are halved, and the AP value is eliminated. These same rules apply when firing into water.

VIBRO-HARPOON LAUNCHER

Utilizing gas propulsion and vibro-tech, Triton Industries has created the ultimate underwater personal weapon. The Vibro-Harpoon Launcher is ideal for defending against underwater monstrosities or more human foes. In addition, the launcher is a perfectly serviceable dry land weapon.



HEAVY AND VEHICULAR AQUATIC WEAPONS

BLUE-GREEN LASERS

These weapons use the same stats as the vehicular lasers found in The Tomorrow Legion Player's Guide, with the following exceptions: Reduce all range categories by 20, and add +2 to damage when striking underwater targets.



AQUATIC RANGED WEAPONS: PERSONAL

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	ROF	AP	SHOTS	MIN STR	WEIGHT	COST
TI Blue-Green Laser Pistol	15/30/60	2d6 (+2)*	1	2	12	—	5	22,000
<i>Notes: Semi-Auto</i>								
TI Blue-Green Laser Carbine	25/50/100	3d6 (+2)*	1	3	30	—	6	
<i>Notes: Semi-Auto</i>								
TI Blue-Green Pulse Rifle	25/50/100	3d6 (+2)*	3	2	36	—	10	45,000
<i>Notes: Semi-Auto, 3RB</i>								
Micro-Torpedo Pistol	20/40/80	3d8	1	8	8	—	10	36,000
Micro-Torpedo Rifle	40/80/160	3d8	1	8	24	—	18	50,000
Vibro-Harpoon Launcher	15/30/60	2d10	1	4	10	d8	23	23,000

Notes: Mega Damage

* the +2 to Damage only applies when striking underwater targets.

TORPEDOES

Torpedoes function almost exactly the same as missiles and use the same statistics in *The Tomorrow Legion Player's Guide*. The only difference is that they can only be fired underwater and can only strike underwater targets.

AQUATIC ARMOR

BODY ARMOR

TRITON FROGMAN

While many armor suits on the market possess environmental systems that allow their wearers to survive under water. The Frogman is designed so that its wearers thrive. The armor is a polycarbonate wet suit with form fitting ceramic plates that grants +4 Armor, +1 Toughness and Full Environmental Systems. Its gloves and boots can reconfigure into flippers that grants the wearer a +2 to Swimming Pace. The helmet is equipped with thermal and lowlight vision to see in even the darkest depths. (15 lb, 22,000 credits)

TRITON HEAVY BARRACUDA

The Frogman's sturdier relative. The Barracuda possesses the same vision and swimming enhancements, but it is fitted with much heavier ceramic plates for greater protection. It gives +6 Armor, +1 Toughness, and Environmental Protection. The Barracuda requires a d8 Strength. (22lb, 30,000)



TRITON FROGMAN

POWER ARMOR

TRITON ELECTRO-EEL

The Electro-Eel possesses a unique electro-magnetic field, that when activated (a free action), discharges a powerful shock when it makes contact with another creature. This could be when the Electro-Eel strikes an opponent or when they are struck by a melee attack. The field then requires a round to recharge before it can be used again. (250 lb, 1.2 million credits)

Triton Electro-Eel: Size 1, +8 M.D.C. Armor, +3 Toughness, Strength: d12+2, Pace: 7

Notes: Amphibious; swim Pace: 18

Weapons:

- EM Field (Damage 3d8, AP 3, Mega Damage)
- Dual Linked Blue-Green Light Laser (shoulder)
- 2 × Vibro-Knife (forearm)

TRITON MK. 3 KAPPA

Beloved by treasure hunters and navies alike, the Kappa is an extremely fast and maneuverable Power Armor favored by those who seek total command of the water. This third iteration of the beloved suit possesses the best water jet technology on the market. Its Vibro-Harpoon launcher is deadly enough to deal with most aquatic predators and its torpedoes pack enough of a punch to combat military grade vehicles. When on land, the Kappa is still a formidable threat, especially when armed with a handheld heavy weapon suitable for dry land combat. (380 lb, 1.5 million credits)

Triton Mk. 3 Kappa: Size 2, +10 M.D.C. Armor, +3 Toughness, Strength: d12+3, Pace: 7

Notes: Amphibious; swim Pace: 20

Weapons:

- 2 × Mini Torpedo Tubes (shoulder)
- 2 × Vibro-Harpoon Launcher (forearm)

TRITON HAMMERHEAD

The heaviest power armor that Triton Industries has for sale. The Hammerhead is the least maneuverable aquatic armor but its weapons systems make it a solid combatant in any engagement. A heavy weapon can be held in the suit's left hand with appropriate penalties. (520 lb, 1.2 million)

Triton Hammerhead: Size 3, +12 M.D.C. Armor, +3 Toughness, Strength: d12+4, Pace: 10 (Run d10)

Notes: Amphibious; swim Pace: 16

Weapons:

- Heavy Blue-Green Laser
- 2 × Micro-Torpedo Rifle (forearm)
- Vibro-Harpoon Launcher (shoulder)

ROBOT ARMOR

TRITON KING CRAB

In basic shape, this hulking robot armor is reminiscent of the CSA's Spider-Skull Walker. Its six legs grant it excellent ground speed on land or on the ocean floor. And the addition of a powerful claw allows the King Crab to smash through most armor. A favored tactic for the King Crab is to dig into an area for an ambush and simply wait for the target to pass in range then shred them with a barrage of torpedo fire and laser fire. (56 million credits)

Triton King Crab: Size 8, Crew 2+2, Strength d12+6, Toughness 40 (22), Pace 12

Notes: Amphibious; swim Pace 8, M.D.C. Armor

Weapons:

- Dual linked Blue-Green Light Laser (left arm)
- Heavy Blue-Green Laser (head)
- 2 × Medium Torpedo Tubes (turrets)
- 2 × Light Torpedo Tubes (front legs)
- Vibro-Claw. The King Crab has a massive claw for tearing through enemies (Damage Str+d12+1, AP 4, Mega Damage)

TRITON KRAKEN

This triumph of engineering was Triton Industries' first foray into Robot Armor manufacturing. The Kraken is a primarily amphibious Robot Armor with six powerful tentacles designed to encircle boats and sea monsters with equal ease granting a +2 to grappling rolls. After the Kraken has successfully grappled a target, then, on its next turn, it can engage its powerful laser torch to cut the target to pieces. On land, it gets around by walking on four of its tentacles, leaving the other two free for combat. (42 million credits)

Triton Kraken: Size 6, Crew 2, Strength d12+6, Toughness 34 (16), Pace 6

Notes: Amphibious; swim Pace 12, M.D.C. Armor

Weapons:

- 2 × Heavy Torpedo Tubes (fixed, head).
- Blue-Green Laser Torch (mouth). Can only be used after grappling an opponent. (Damage 4d10, AP 10, RoF 1, Mega Damage)
- Mechanical Tentacles, the Kraken's tentacles are equipped with impact plates for devastating blows. (Str+d8+d6 Mega Damage, Reach 1)
- 2 × Blue-Green Medium Lasers (eyes)
- 2 × Medium Torpedo Tubes (turrets)

AQUATIC VEHICLES

TRITON HOMESTEAD

Some don't just wish to just traverse the sea; there are those who would prefer to avoid the dangers on land by simply shoving off and sailing away. The Homestead is a self-contained domicile with all the necessities and

space for eight occupants. It comes with solar, wind, and hydroelectric systems giving it a nearly limitless range. The exterior of the boat has a spacious deck for a small garden and recreational activities. By halving the crew size, the Homestead can also come equipped with a field lab, making it ideal for scientific exploration. Triton Industries is proud to say that there are already several thriving nomadic communities with dozens of Homesteads forming the core of their fleets. (80,000 credits)

Triton Homestead: Size 5, Acc/TS 5/25, Toughness 13 (3), Crew 1+7, Remaining Mods: 3

Notes: Environmental Systems, Sensor Suite

TRITON MANTA RAY

A full sized submersible perfect for military engagements. The Manta Ray is a sleek vehicle with excellent maneuverability and a formidable weapons platform. (600,000 credits)

Triton Manta Ray: Size 5, Acc/TS 8/35, Toughness 25 (10), Crew 1+5

Notes: Environmental Systems, Handling 1, M.D.C. Armor, Sensor Suite, Submersible

Weapons:

- Dual Linked Light Blue-Green Lasers
- Medium Blue-Green Laser
- Medium Torpedo Tubes (fixed)
- 2 × Mini Torpedo Tubes (fixed)

TRITON MARINER

Long sea voyages have many dangers: poor weather, pirates, sea monsters, and dismal accommodations. The Mariner is Triton Industries' best-selling item because it handles these problems with ease. The top of the line environmental systems allow the crew to weather the worst of storms. Its armor and onboard weapons systems make it easily defensible from most monsters or raiders. Best of all, the Mariner boasts cozy living quarters for the full crew and enough supplies for 90 days at sea. (450,000 credits)

Triton Mariner: Size 5, Acc/TS 5/30, Toughness 28 (13), Crew 1+6, Remaining Mods: 1

Notes: Environmental Systems, Handling 1, M.D.C. Armor, Sensor Suite

Weapons:

- Medium Blue-Green Laser
- Medium Torpedo Tubes (fixed)

TRITON SEA WRAITH

The Sea Wraith is considered to be one of the safest crafts in the water, mostly due to its ability to avoid detection. The Wraith's small size, submersible capabilities, and advanced stealth systems allow it to easily slip by enemies. Any attempts to spot it suffer -4 so long as it has not fired a weapon or emitted any radio waves within range. (700,000 credits)

VEHICLE QUALITIES

RANGED WEAPONS

Ranged weapons not adapted for underwater use are much less effective. Whenever firing, or throwing, a weapon while submerged, the weapon's range categories are halved, and the AP value is eliminated. These same rules apply when firing into water.

SUBMERSIBLES

These crafts can function while fully submerged in water. Most can go as deep as a hundred fathoms.

Triton Sea Wraith: Size 2, Acc/TS 6/40, Toughness 17 (6), Crew 1+1

Notes: Environmental Systems, M.D.C. Armor, Stealth System, Submersible

Weapons:

- Dual Linked Light Blue-Green Lasers
- 2 × Light Torpedo Tube (fixed)

TRITON WAVE RUNNER

The Wave Runner resembles a surfboard with a pair of powerful water jets on the back. Its impressive speed and handling makes it a favorite among thrill seekers. The electric engine has a range of 600 miles before requiring four hours to recharge. (23,000 credits)

Triton Wave Runner: Size 0, Acc/TS 10/60, Toughness 10 (1), Crew 1

Notes: Exposed Crew, Handling 3

AQUATIC GEAR

TRITON PISCES PROPULSION PACK

Designed similarly to a jet pack, the Pisces is a set of water jets that can be mounted on any suit of armor. So long as the suit is environmentally sealed, the pack's wearer can travel under water indefinitely. Though more than four hours of continuous use will require 1d6 hours to cool and recharge. The Pisces grant an Amphibious Pace of 15. (40 lb, 400,000 credits)

AQUATIC LANDING GEAR

These unusual pods can be attached to any hover vehicle to make it capable of landing on water. They attach on the bottom with a Repair roll and an hour's labor. (The cost is 20,000 credits × the Size of the vehicle)

THE RED BAND CONGLOMERATE

During the early exploration of the Known Worlds, JumpCorp survey teams color-coded bands of expansion. For several decades, the “red band” proved the most dangerous — and the most profitable. Eventually, several of these trailblazing charters joined together to form the “Red Band Conglomerate.”

Red Band is so large it defies any simple description, much like JumpCorp itself. Its charters participate in everything from galactic defense to the usual gamut of exploration, shipping, and R&D.

TALES OF THE RED BAND

Savage Tales of the Red Band is an ongoing serial for *The Last Parsec*, the parts of which can be assembled to form a loose Plot Point Campaign. The GM needs access to the *Science Fiction Companion* and *The Last Parsec: Core*.

The heroes serve as licensed members of Quixotic-Red-6, a top-secret exploration charter and subsidiary of the Red Band Conglomerate. Their motto: *We make the impossible probable.*

WHEN WE LAST SAW OUR HEROES...

In part two, the crew of the *Indomitable* visited the surface of Kalran-3 and made first contact with the planet’s inhabitants, the chraf. They learned that the chraf have warred among themselves for centuries. The more advanced, city-dwelling chraf wage battles against their primitive cousins, who sometimes raid settlements.

Finally, the heroes searched for an ancient repository of knowledge, which revealed that the chraf are preyed by an older, progenitor species — now long extinct. But the group may also have gleaned hints that the progenitors left behind a power source more advanced than anything the Red Band has encountered.

WHEELS WITHIN WHEELS

In fact, the Collectors and their insectoid servants (whose ship, the GM should recall, is in hiding among Kalran-4’s 47 moons) are seeking the very power source hinted at in the ancient records. Their desire to secure it is the reason they infiltrated Quixotic-Red-6 in the first place.

About 24 years ago, a chraf scientific expedition discovered the power source, hidden in an underground complex in the great faultline that splits the planet’s eastern continent. They have studied and protected it ever since. Unknown to the chraf, the machinery began transmitting a beacon as soon as its environment was unsealed. That signal was received by Red Band scientist Astrol Kalran. The Collectors learned of the signal during Red Band’s decades-long preparation for a manned mission to the Triangulum Galaxy.

What few people realize yet is the “power source” is not what it seems. It is indeed a source of great power, but it isn’t one that can be harnessed for monetary gain. In fact, it’s the lifeform that wiped out the progenitors’ race and way of life. The beacon wasn’t a call. It was a warning to stay away.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

The next events depend on how your group finished up part two. If the team was captured by Commander Kellok-veit and his commando squad, run the section below titled **Escape from Kalran** first. If the group already fled or fought their way back to the *Indomitable* and begins this chapter in orbit, skip ahead to **The Surprise Guest**.

We’re leaving a few plot points unresolved — for example, whether medical android Rez was repaired, if the heroes managed to recover the lost part for their FTL drive, and so forth — so as not to hem in the GM. Part two contained encounter tables for the entire planet, and when such breadth of experience is available it’s best not to make too many assumptions about your group’s actions.

THE LAST
PARSEC

:PART III:

SAVAGE TALES OF THE RED BAND: ESCAPE FROM KALRAN

ESCAPE FROM KALRAN

As ruthless as Kellok-veit might be, he doesn't kill interplanetary visitors outright. Whether the team surrenders or is beaten in a fight, the commander strips them of weapons and gear and has them transported to a military outpost in the nearest chraf city (see part two in *Savage Worlds Explorer* #3). There they are placed in specially built cells equipped with oxygen and dry accommodations. Prisoners of the chraf are not entitled to legal representation or other similar recourse.

INSPECTING THE CELL

The entire team is placed in one cell, presumably because extensive air-filled quarters aren't available. The room is rough-walled and oddly shaped, seemingly constructed of an amalgam of sand, glass, rocks, and a calcified substance similar to coral. It measures roughly 10 meters across at its widest point. The wide, round doorway is protected by a clear, curved panel like glass that keeps water out and the explorers in.

Chraf soldiers patrol the facility in small groups, passing the cell once every three hours or so to check on the "guests." The heroes are fed nutritious meals and treated generally well, but if they decide to sit tight and wait they've got a rough road ahead. It takes Kellok-veit nearly two weeks to convince his superiors that the heroes are a threat to the entire planet, but once he does they act swiftly. The team is put to death and their ship confiscated by the chraf army.

Inspection of the cell walls reveals that if a hero can find or improvise a tool of some kind, it would be possible — with 2d6 hours' work and success on a Strength roll — to break through the inner wall to the locking mechanism. Once the lock's workings are exposed, a Repair or Knowledge (Electronics) roll at -4 allows a tech to short-circuit the lock and open the door panel. However, it's obvious to all that the cell would then flood, leaving them all at the bottom of an alien ocean with no rebreathers.

- **Echinoderm Soldiers (4 per patrol):** Use the Soldier (Grunt) profile in the *Science Fiction Companion*, and add the echinoderm racial profile in *Savage Worlds Explorer* #3.

SCIENTIFIC CURIOSITY

Luckily, the wheels of intrigue soon send a benefactor to the team's aid. At a secret facility hundreds of miles away, chraf scientists have been studying the planet's ancient power source for more than 20 years. A small but determined group of those scholars has come to suspect the power source is actually far more dangerous than government and military leaders can possibly imagine.

The scientists were flummoxed as to what they could do to prevent a disaster, given growing pressure from military commanders to activate the ancient power plant and put it to use. When they heard news reports of first contact with interplanetary — maybe even *interstellar* — visitors, they grew intrigued. With the subsequent discovery of a Hall of Knowledge that seemed to confirm the scientists' worst fears, they knew they had to act. They dispatched one of their number, Illithon, to the capital city with top-secret clearance in hand.

STAY ALERT!

After a few days in the cell, the team is awakened in the middle of the night by a soft yet insistent tapping on the curved surface of their cell door. They awaken to find an unfamiliar chraf trying to get their attention.

By this time the team's translators should have established a basic working knowledge of the chrafs' complex language. Assuming this is the case, the visitor says,

"Please listen. There is not much time before the guards return, and my clearance doesn't allow me to be here. My name is Illithon. I am a scientist. When we learned of your visit, and then your discovery of the ancient Hall of Knowledge, we knew right away —

"Ah. I have gotten tangled up in my own thoughts. All you need to know now is that we found the power source. We found it a long time ago. But if you do not help us, we fear it will destroy all life on this world. And not for the first time!"

"I can engineer your escape. But in return, you must help us. All the chraf, even the primitives, will die if we fail."

Presumably the team agrees for the time being, whether they plan to follow through or not. After all, their prospects for freedom look dim without Illithon's help. If they agree to the terms Illithon says,

"On behalf of my colleagues and myself, thank you. Now — stay alert! Soon I will see that your cell is opened and your personal effects returned, but you will have to swim first. Wait for the cell to fill with water, and then get out of this facility. I will find you."

With that, the chraf swims away into the tunnels, barely avoiding a patrol.

- ★ **Illithon:** Use the Scientist profile in the *Science Fiction Companion*. Add the echinoderm racial profile in *Savage Worlds Explorer* #3, Smarts d10, Persuasion d6.

THE GREAT ESCAPE

Several agonizing hours pass after Illithon departs. Guards pass by the cell a few times. Perhaps the travelers even begin to suspect Illithon was captured.



Call for Notice rolls from the group. Anyone who succeeds notes a sparking in the door's locking mechanism just before the cell door slides open, and gains +2 on the subsequent Agility roll. As water floods into the cell, all the heroes need to roll Agility at -2 or be knocked off their feet and suffer a level of Fatigue from bumps and bruises.

When the cell is entirely flooded, each prisoner needs to succeed on a Swimming roll to move into the corridor at a Pace equal to their Swimming die (minimum 2). See **Drowning** in *Savage Worlds* for more information.

Just outside the cell, the team finds their gear (in waterproof bags) and their rebreathers. Once they have the mouthpieces in place they can breathe. Suddenly a low, pulsing alarm cuts through the silence, along with flashing white lights.

Escaping a chraf military jail on high alert is a **Dramatic Task** (see *Savage Worlds*) using either Swimming or Stealth, player's choice, at -2. Other heroes can aid the leader, as usual, using either skill. Complications include getting lost in the maze-like passages, having to avoid a patrol,

or even a malfunctioning rebreather. If the group collects five successes, they slip free in the confusion. If they fail to collect five successes, or fail the roll when their Action Card is a Club, they have to fight their way past a chraf patrol with a Wild Card leader.

- ✦ **Echinoderm Captain:** Use the Soldier (Officer) profile in the *Science Fiction Companion*, and add the echinoderm racial profile in *Savage Worlds Explorer* #3.
- **Echinoderm Soldiers (1 per hero):** Use the Soldier (Grunt) profile in the *Science Fiction Companion*, and add the echinoderm racial profile in *Savage Worlds Explorer* #3.

LIFTOFF

Outside the reef-like building, the group finds Illithon waiting in a small, native craft. Clambering into the crab-shaped accretion of rocks and sand, the party is whisked away into the city as Illithon throws a pair of levers forward.

The scientist takes the group back to the *Indomitable* as he promised. The trip takes a few hours, during which time the characters may question the chraf. But he is reticent, saying only,

"I cannot tell you everything yet. It is too dangerous. We cannot allow the power source's location to become known. Await communication from us."

Back at the team's vessel, Illithon bids them good luck and flies away in his curious craft that operates equally well in water and air. Most likely, the heroes are eager to get offworld.

THE SURPRISE GUEST

Once the *Indomitable* is back in orbit around Kalran-3 and the team has had some time to compare notes and speculate on the next move, a proximity alarm sounds in the cockpit. Solution brings up a display that shows a man-sized object hurtling toward the *Indomitable*...with a warship in pursuit!

Magnification reveals the man-sized object to be an insectoid in a spacesuit, using some kind of souped-up jetpack for propulsion. The ship in pursuit is one the crew detected when it arrived in the system, but has not been seen since. In fact it is the Collectors' ship, forced into action by the betrayal of its own crewman.



NOT A FAIR FIGHT

The Collectors' ship, the Quell-rak, is attempting to run down the insectoid and blow her out of the sky before she can reach the heroes' ship. Treat this as an Extended **Chase** (see *Savage Worlds*) using the Piloting skill. The Quell-rak's captain has Piloting d10; let the players roll the insectoid's Piloting d8. The ship's Top Speed is more than twice the jetpack's.

The Quell-rak's captain has been ordered not to fire on the *Indomitable* under any circumstances, but the players don't know that. They have to act cautiously if they choose to get involved in the drama playing out before them.

- **Insectoid Pilot:** Use the Starship Crew (Pilot) profile in the *Science Fiction Companion*, adding the Insectoid Racial Traits.

THE QUELL-RAK

Medium Starship: Size 8, Acc/TS 50/650, Climb 2, Toughness 29 (10), Crew 13, Cost C\$23.67M, Remaining Mods 0

Notes: AMCM, Armor × 2, Crew Space × 2, Deflector Screens, Electromagnetic Shielding, FTL Drive, Sensor Suite (Planetary), Speed, Shields

Weapons:

- 2 × Auto-Cannons, Light
- 2 × Medium Lasers

TURNCOAT

If the insectoid manages to escape, the team can bring her onboard through an airlock. She (not that most humans can tell her gender on sight) introduces herself by means of a small translation screen that renders her clicks and pheromones into language. Her name is Sholv.

"I offer you thanks for saving my life. I took a great risk to come here from my vessel. You see, they were sent by the Red Band as well — but to make sure you never return."

"I see by your expressions you did not expect this. There is much you do not know. Much that was kept from you. Unfortunately, your superiors are no longer loyal to Red Band. Now they serve...the Collectors."

With a stinger of suspenseful music, end scene!

TO BE CONTINUED...

Tune in for future installments of *Savage Tales of the Red Band*, so your group can see this tale through to its thrilling end!

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