

# WILD HORSE

This is a short adventure hook for the Morrow Project RPG. It's based vaguely on Paul Garrison's novel *Rough Beast*, with the setting and details changed considerably. The book was set in Massachusetts in the 1990s, but this work is set in northern [Nevada](#) in the 2130s. As with all my MP stuff, this is linked directly to my on-going **Morrow Project Travel Guide**, and in particular adds onto another of my adventure modules, [The Coast Road](#).

This is a "disease adventure", a test for Science Teams mostly, but really for any team if you like. Basically, the team comes across a situation that is outside their realm of experience and they must use their skill and science gear to find the cause and the cure.

Step One: Get the team to Mountain City, [Nevada](#) by hook or by crook. Most probably, teams will be to the south, perhaps in the Oasis area or Ely. Maybe a Mountain City trader comes to town looking for medical help, maybe they just hear about some trouble while at the market. To get to Mountain City, the best way is to take old State Route 225 (the "Mountain City Highway") northwest from Elko, about an 85 mile drive. Along the way you will pass by the old Wild Horse Reservoir, which still holds water, and then through the Humboldt National Forest before you get to Mountain City.

Once near Mountain City, the team needs to stop and rest before entering the town. While stopped they meet what can be best described as a "werewolf child" in the woods near the road, either alive or recently dead. How you want to play this is up to you, but in the end, the team needs to have a chance to examine this thing. They can then head into Mountain City.

Mountain City is thriving trade town downstream from the Wild Horse Reservoir, along the Owyhee River. About 250 people of various classes, some small cottage industries and general technology at about a 1850 level. Mountain City, however, has a growing "problem".

It seems that in the last 10 years, about one in three babies born have turned into those werewolf beasts by age six or so. The other two in three grow up normally. For the unlucky third, no symptoms show until about six years old, give or take a year or so, but then they come on very rapidly, usually within a few weeks. By the time the "transformation" takes place, the victim shows all-body rapid hair growth which covers everything but the genitals, eyes, palms and soles. They also develop extraordinary dog-like night vision, increased painful sensitivity to daylight, the hearing acuity of a bat, suffer from fits of uncontrolled violent rage, precipitous drop in production of sexual hormones, massive headaches, increased muscle mass, extraordinary strength and agility, unpredictable mood swings, convulsions, a heightened sense of smell with the ability to "read pheromones" in the air, higher than thought possible levels of adrenalin, gonadotropins and other visceral stimulants in the blood, and most amazingly, a sort of hazy animal telepathy that allows them to communicate mentally with certain animal species, mostly canines.

When a child "turns werewolf", the community banishes him or her into the woods to die. What the team found back in the woods was one of these banished children. It's not that the town is uncaring, but they just don't have the ability to deal with the werewolf kids, especailly as they can be quite violent and uncontrollable.

Any well-equipped Science Team can get blood and tissue samples from either the dead werewolf from before or from another one they encounter. The results will show that their blood contains a lipophilic substance, an organic synthetic compound with the molecular structure of human hormones that was purposefully manufactured. The only people who seem to be effected are pregnant mothers and it only takes a few micrograms to start the process, which scrambles the genetic codes in an unborn fetus, producing werewolves by age six.

A simple check of the water in the Owyhee River, the town's only water source, shows high levels of this substance. The obvious clues point back upstream towards the old reservoir that the team passed on the way here. Clearly, they have to investigate the source.

The Wild Horse Reservoir is the source of the Owyhee River, which runs to the northwest from the dam, eventually emptying into the Snake. The original dam was built in 1938, and a newer structure was built in 1971. The dam is still standing, though the water levels are about half what they were pre-war, the river is also just a seasonal stream now, though it can get quite rapid during the spring melts. The water in the reservoir is NOT contaminated with the mystery substance, though the water leading out of the dam is, suggesting that whatever is causing it is in the dam and not in the reservoir itself.

The dam itself, however, is empty of clues. There's nothing there but an old crumbling concrete structure, filled with cobwebs and dust. There is no sign of the mystery substance to be found here.

Up on the south bank of the river, however, is the intact remains of Dunn's Wild Horse Restaurant and Resort. This largish inn was owned since 1974 by an ex-Nazi who paid his way from Argentina to [Nevada](#) in the 1970s with looted Nazi gold. He was in Europe during the War and never made it back. The resort's guests and staff stayed for a while but then left when the food ran out. A back room is filled with old Nazi-era relics and the like, of value to no one but a historian.

In the inn the team finds evidence of a group of Breeders who set up shop here many, many years ago. These were a small group of Breeders from northern Colorado (see [Colorado entry](#)) who came here 100+ years ago, tried some experiments on the local survivors for about five years, but eventually left for Austin to the south about 95 years ago. They dumped their waste in Owyhee River near the dam as they left, sealed in metal caskets. It has taken this long for the caskets to begin to leak and the substance to escape and mutate into something deadly.

The Breeders were working on old biochemical warfare stuff from the 1970s, a one-time Top Secret government project codenamed Black Flag. Using old formulas, they synthesized a viral compound designed to make men sterile and passed through water supply. It turned out not to work as intended and they decided to move south to a better location. The team should have some reference to the Black Flag program in their science computers.

Once the team realizes what they are dealing with, they can work to negate the substance. The toxic organics can be sterilized, neutralized by excessive heat and that alone. An infected kid can be cured by a battery of intravenous neuropharmacological compounds, targeting the elevated hormones in the system. It takes about six weeks of steady treatment but a victim can become nearly 100% normal again.