



THE WORMS' TURN





The Worms' Turn

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Teller's Dedication: Thanks to my own Wasteland Warriors—Amy, Hayden, and Kayleigh—for putting up with my absences as I explored the Wasted West.

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The Worms' Turn

The Worms' Turn is a Plot Point Campaign for *Hell on Earth Reloaded*, and details the effort to destroy Raven and his worm allies *after* the events of the Harvest discussed in *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Make sure to refresh your memory of that pivotal battle before proceeding.

The task that follows takes a posse of heroes across the wastelands, and one way or another, alters the Wasted West forever.

The Plot Point Campaign not only gives your posse a reason to stay together, it also lets you tell big stories in the background of your posse's more personal interests. The tale here is the fight against the last major servitor of the Reckoners and his demi-god allies, but your characters might be most interested in avenging themselves on the Combine, uniting the various survivor settlements of the wastes under the banner of the Iron Alliance, finding a lost loved one, or just filling their backpacks with loot. The campaign allows all those stories to be told as part of one epic saga, interweaving personal quests with the main story of *Hell on Earth*.

Just as importantly, it gives you, the Marshal, a ready-made campaign that you can run more or less on the fly. *Savage*

Worlds gives you Fast, Fun, and Furious rules, and our campaign systems aim to match that. You should never have any trouble figuring out what to do next, and there are also plenty of opportunities to insert your own adventures, or follow up on an adventure inspired by your player characters' own backstories or actions during the overarching campaign.



Between each Plot Point adventure, the heroes can always have other adventures as they work to expand the membership of the Iron Alliance (using the **Adventure Generator from the Hell on Earth Companion**, the Savage Tales in the next chapter, or your own devious imagination) or work to cleanse evil from the wastelands.

Here's a quick summary of the Plot Points and what happens in each. While they're structured to be played consecutively, it's not an absolute necessity in most cases. Most allow you to have however much time between Plot Points as you like. This gives you the maximum flexibility to work in your own stories or other Savage Tales (see page 51).

1: That Town Needs an Enemy!

When: The beginning of the Plot Point Campaign

The leadership of the Iron Alliance sends the heroes into the wastes to determine the fate of a Combine unit sent to flank Junkyard during the Harvest. If they complete the scouting mission, they stand to earn a coveted citizenship within the city.

2: A Blast from the Past

When: After **That Town Needs an Enemy!**

To bolster the sagging popularity of the Alliance, Ike Taylor asks the heroes to act on the Alliance's behalf as troubleshooters. Their first assignment takes them to Carson City where they find a serious threat to the existence of Junkyard: a potentially active nuclear device in the hands of the Cult of Doom!

3: Worm Food

When: After **A Blast from the Past** and before **Be Very Quiet...**

In the wake of the nuclear threat from Carson City, the Iron Alliance dispatches the posse to the former mining town of

Uravan. The Combine had once tried to set up uranium mining operations there, and the Alliance leadership wants to make sure Denver isn't back to its old shenanigans. The Combine is using the mine, but not for what Taylor and his associates fear. They're actually using it as a transfer point to ship slaves off to Raven and the rattlers who're dug into the bowels of the Rockies.

4: Be Very Quiet...

When: Any time after **Worm Food**

The posse is tasked by Doc Schwartz to place seismic sounding devices throughout the wastes to monitor the underground movement of wormlings and rattlers. This takes the heroes on a lengthy journey from Arizona all the way to Montana—and could result in a showdown or two with a full-grown rattler if they're not careful.

5: Ride the Worm(ing)

When: Any time after **Be Very Quiet...**

Doc Schwartz's thumpers have revealed several large caverns under the Rockies. To get a look inside those vast chambers, the junker sends the posse on a mission to tag a couple of wormlings with video cameras.

6: An Ancient Prophecy

When: Any time after the beginning of the Plot Point Campaign

A powerful Sioux shaman sends a summons to the posse from the Sioux Nations. He's had a vision of great importance, and one in which they feature prominently. Before they can meet with the shaman, the Cult of Worms takes him captive. It's up to the heroes to save him before he's sacrificed in Worm Canyon.

7: Monkey in the Wrench

When: Any time after **Worm Food**

With the prophecy largely decrypted, Taylor sends the posse to Denver to

establish contact with the remains of the Denver Resistance. He wants them to keep an eye on the Combine while the Iron Alliance prepares for Raven. When the heroes discover the Resistance is virtually crippled, they have to undertake a mission to sabotage Throckmorton's preparations.

8: Bad Day at Blackleaf

When: A few weeks or so after **Monkey in the Wrench**

A combination of massive subterranean movements and some input from the Librarians has led the Iron Alliance to decide the Combine and Raven are converging on an old US high-security prison, Blackleaf Correctional Facility. The heroes, along with a contingent of the Nauvoo Legion, are sent north to intercept them before they can achieve their as-yet unknown goal.

9: The Belly of the Beast

When: The end of the Plot Point Campaign

Prompted by the visions of an Indian shaman named White Cloud, the posse uses the Combine tunneler to transport an unexploded ghost rock bomb to intercept an ancient terror before it reaches Junkyard. Of course, piloting a ghost rock warhead deep into tunnels infested with wormlings, walkin' dead, and far, far worse is easier said than done. Getting out in one piece is even harder.

Laying the Groundwork

Following the events of the Battle of Worms and the disappearance of the Reckoners, Raven spent a month performing rituals to determine exactly where the Reckoners had disappeared to. He was finally rewarded when he contacted a powerful demon who pointed him in the direction of Banshee. Unfortunately for the shaman, a sort

of supernatural "static" that Banshee is emitting in its battle against the Reckoners has kept Raven from following his former masters to the purple planet.

So far, Raven hasn't found the portal in Devil's Tower. His biggest concern at the moment is his waning power. With the Reckoners gone, his ties to the Hunting Grounds are not as strong as they were at the height of his power. He now fears that if enough Deadlands are destroyed, he might lose his status as a servitor and die.

For the last six months he was content to rest and brood on his failure and what the future held for him, but now the crafty shaman has gone back to his old tricks and begun sending emissaries out into the world to sow dissension and confusion among the survivors.

The Worms

These nominal allies of Raven are unhappy, to say the least. Deep under the Rocky Mountains they have tunneled out a huge cavern complex, where the survivors of Raven's attempted coup retreated. These caverns currently house 27 large rattlers, 15,000 wormlings, and thousands of young rattlers.

Food deep below ground is non-existent, so the elder worms have dispatched raiding parties to the surface to bring back chow and raw materials (read humans) to make more wormling worshippers. For the last eight months the elder worms were content to lie near-dormant in their caves beneath the Rockies and heal the massive wounds suffered in the fighting at Denver, but now they have begun to stir and communicate a new plan to Raven.

The entities that humanity knows as the great worms were actually a race of evil cosmic beings that inhabited the Hunting Grounds. The Reckoners waged a fierce war against the most powerful elder worm who led their pantheon,

and although even they were unable to destroy this god, known simply as the “Old Worm,” they were able to defeat it and imprison it on Earth in a “null” cyst, a magical construct that absorbs supernatural energy, draining it off and dispersing it into the Hunting Grounds.

Robbed of the most powerful member of their pantheon, the lesser elder worm-gods had no choice but to submit to the Reckoners or face extinction. They offered their services to the Four Horsemen and were allowed to manifest themselves on Earth. Without the power of the Old Worm, and with the Reckoners

looming over everything, their plans for dominance of the Hunting Grounds were unable to come to fruition, but they never gave up entirely.

Failing to draw enough supplicants from humanity, the elder worms created the wormlings as servants and worshippers. After the Harvest, they discovered that the Four Horsemen are off the planet. The elder worms have decided now is the time to move to the next stage in their plan for resuming their place as gods on Earth—the release of the Old Worm.

An ancient prophecy says a great sacrifice of its followers is required to break the bonds holding their leader. While the elder worms know where their god is imprisoned, the sacrifice part has made them pause, until Raven’s cunning mind turned to the problem.

An Unholy Trinity

During the Harvest, Raven and his rattler allies didn’t differentiate between the Combine and the Iron Alliance when it came to killing. Later, Raven realized he, the elder worms, and the Denver AI all share a hobby—wiping out the human race. Once things settled down, he began sending emissaries to Denver to lay the groundwork for negotiations. Black Hats slaughtered the first few delegations without hesitation, but the undead are nothing if not persistent.

Now, less than a year after the Harvest, an unholy alliance has been formed between Raven, the worms, and the Artificial Intelligence of the Combine. Raven believes eliminating the rest of humanity will rob the Reckoners of their last vestiges of power, while the AI sees this as the beginning of a mechanical utopia devoid of the messy affairs of those pesky biological entities called people. The



worms just want their god freed from its prison under the soil of Montana.

All three parties agree that freeing the Old Worm is a step in the right direction. Everybody wins—except humanity, that is.

That Town Needs an Enema!

The following tale is intended to get your posse together and give them a reason to stay together for the rest of their adventures throughout the wastelands. If they're already established heroes, you can jump straight to the second Plot Point, **A Blast from the Past**.

The story starts sometime after the Harvest and before the anniversary of Judgment Day (September 23) in 2097, with the characters being inhabitants of the Displaced Persons camp outside of Junkyard.

Filling up the barren, lifeless ground outside the outer wall to a distance of a quarter mile is a stinking mass of tents, lean-tos, shacks, and shanties in which roughly 4,000 people live, sustained only by the daily dole of algae from Doc Schwartz's hydroponic gardens and water trucked in from the Iron Oasis. Food riots are becoming more and more common, and not a day passes that a waster isn't killed over a milrat or liter of clean water. Anyone with a supply of food can demand about any price, though those stuck out in the camps are typically those with nothing to their names. Prostitution is common, as is organ-legging and deathsports, as folks try to get by day to day.

Have each player make up a background for how they came to be there, and if you like, you can even let them experience the nasty, brutish life that is the DP camps a few months after the Harvest's end. It's fine if the characters haven't

met each other before the actual contest. They'll get to know each other quite well once things get rolling.

Each waster is approached by a representative of Ike Taylor, the leader of Junkyard. The heroes stand out from the average inhabitants of the camp—even if they've been trying to keep a low profile. Folks are just in that bad shape since the last big dust-up.

The rep has an offer for the wasters, and it's one that might be too good to refuse. Ike Taylor wants them to run a little reconnaissance mission for Junkyard. First up, he's offering two weeks of canned rations—the good stuff, not the recycled gunk served up in the camp food lines.

Second, and more importantly, if they complete the mission, he's putting Junkyard citizenship on the table. Since Junkyard citizens can freely come and go through both the inner and outer gates of the city pretty much at will, it's nothing to scoff at, especially with food and resources in the Displaced Person camps continually in such short supply.

If they accept, they're taken inside and introduced to Taylor, who explains the mission.

"During the Harvest the Combine burrowed in some enormous digging machine under the Rockies and tried to flank Junkyard from the north up around Logan. Fortunately, we were alerted to this in time to react. The Sky Pirates dropped a bomb Doc Schwartz had squirreled away on them once they had assembled in the open.

"After the Harvest, we're a little short-handed, particularly in folks that know their way around the wastes. We need you to go to the site of this tunnel and determine if they left the Hellbore tunneler there, and if so, was it damaged in the strike. If it's there, we need to know, just in case those ass hats in Denver get any more bright ideas.

"Here's a palmcorder complete with a map to where you need to go. Once there, use it to record the area, as well as get us some interior shots of the tunneler. Bring us back this proof and citizenship is all yours."

He's willing to negotiate that price if the posse seems reluctant. Each success and raise the heroes net on a Persuasion roll gets them an additional \$50 worth of widgets each, to a maximum of \$250. The hagglers can only make one attempt to Persuade him, but it is a cooperative roll. Taylor strongly encourages them to take no longer than a day or two to make any final arrangements before departing. He stresses that if nothing else, the amount of food they're carrying makes them a prime target for robbery. If you want to emphasize the poverty and desperation of the Displaced Persons camps, feel free to have a gang of thugs attempt to rob them of their supplies (use Raiders from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*).

Consulting their palmcorder, the posse sees that their destination, just north of the town of Logan, Deseret, is about 85 miles to the north. The easiest way would be to follow old Route D15. If the characters don't have any vehicles at their disposal, they have to ride LPCs—Leather Personnel Carriers (commonly known as shoes)—to their destination, which takes them roughly four days.

If you want to spice up the trip, you can always consult the **Encounter Table** from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. This is also a good time to use Interludes from *Savage Worlds* to let the heroes get to know each other.

Valley of the Dead

When the posse arrives at the turnoff from Highway D15 toward Logan, they can see a blasted area—obviously where the MOAB bomb used by the Iron Alliance detonated. A MOAB is officially called a Massive Ordinance Air Burst bomb, but off the record most flyboys

called it the Mother Of All Bombs. The MOAB is a thermobaric bomb, which basically means it throws a large amount of fuel into the surrounding atmosphere, then ignites it. It produces a much larger, longer-lasting explosion than other conventional bombs without the lasting radiation of a nuke.

The valley caused the explosive force to be reflected back on itself, making the devastation even greater. The blast area effectively swept the valley, leaving the center almost bare. Wreckage of Combine vehicles and equipment is scattered around the edge of the blast radius, but there is little of value left in the debris. What functional gear remains carries a Combine recognition chip. Any scav foolish enough to mess with it sets off an internal booby trap, doing 3d6 in a Medium Burst Template.

Once in the valley, they see the ruins of Logan, and with a successful Notice roll, they can make out the tunnel on the far side. Logan was spared during Judgment Day with the Deseret State University providing a focal point for knowledge even after the Mormons left the area. A branch office of the Librarians was founded there, and their folks alerted Junkyard when the Combine force emerged from under the Rockies. A fair-sized settlement eked out an existence here in Logan before the Harvest, centered around the university and its Librarians.

Unfortunately for them, stopping the Combine's flanking force was considered too important to spare the inhabitants of Logan, and just about everyone was killed when the MOAB went off.

Posse members who wish to dig through the homes of the dead can make a Notice roll at +1, but with a +2 on the Salvage Table due to the non-violent nature of the previous inhabitants.

Or maybe we should have said *previously* non-violent nature...

Debt Collection

As the Sky Pirates roared overhead, a few of the residents of Logan figured out they weren't going to drop care packages on the Combine troops sitting in their backyards. When a single bomb fell, they knew Junkyard had marked Logan down as "collateral damage." That profound sense of betrayal was the last emotion they felt—and in the Wasted West, that's almost like a magnet for bad things to happen.

Several of the (former) survivors of Logan didn't let a thing like being dead keep them down. They prowl the ruins, led by a Harrowed Librarian, Cheryl Bright, who's completely under the thumb of her manitou. They've been waiting for a chance to get some payback, and they just got an early Christmas present—a posse full of Junkyard flunkies!

Although the undead are relatively poorly armed, they're on home ground. On top of that, they're coordinated by a manitou with the resources of a Librarian's brain to play with. The walkin' dead strike from ambush initially, using Bright's Stealth roll to avoid detection. They stay in cover and don't succumb to the urge to try to snack on brains...at least until all the heroes are down, that is.

Needless to say, the monsters don't surrender. They gladly accept it, though, since it just stocks their larder with less effort.

•Walkin' Dead (4, plus 2 per hero):

Use the stats for walkin' dead in *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with hunting rifles (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2), pump shotguns (Range 12/24/48, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 1), or police pistols (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, AP 2). The undead have no spare ammo.



Cheryl Bright

Bright was a Librarian-in-training focused on military history, but the joint trauma of being bombed by Junkyard along with being brought back from the dead by a creature from Hell snapped her mind like a twig. The bomb shredded her flesh, and her death wounds make sure she'll never pass for human again. Her manitou is fully in control, but even if it wasn't, she's now consumed by a compulsion to strike back against Ike Taylor's Iron Alliance.

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

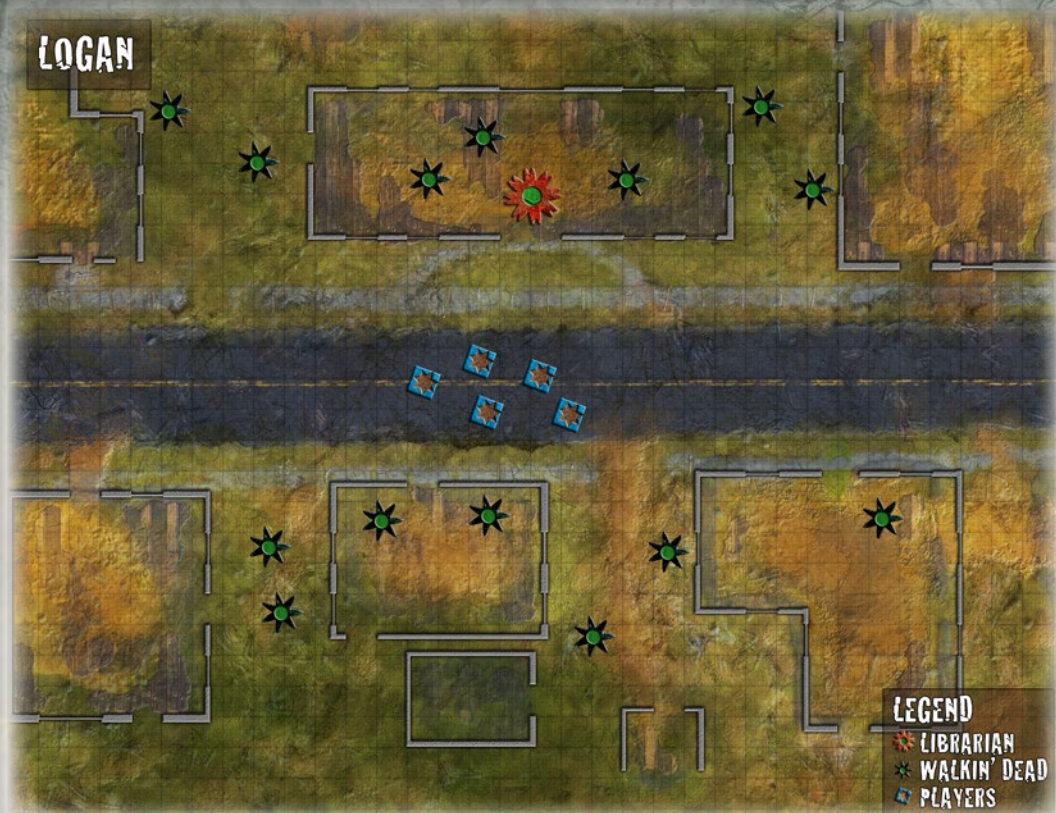
Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Battle) d10, Knowledge (History) d8, Notice d8, Repair d6, Shooting d8, Survival d4

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Degeneration, Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Harrowed, Nerves of Steel, Spook, Librarian, Scholar

Gear: Palmcorder, NA Sidearm (12/24/48, 2d6, RoF 1, Shots 15, AP 1, 3RB), civilian executive protection armor (+1, Notice -4), toolkit.



Tunnel of Hate

When the posse makes it to the opening in the mountainside, they can see the dull gleam of the tunneler. The strange vehicle pokes out of the flank of the mountains like the head of a spear thrust through a man's chest. Its nose is composed of huge grinding surfaces which gleam dully in the sunlight. Along the flanks of the huge cylinder, which measures at least 100 feet in diameter, are large tank-like tracks designed to drag it through the earth's crust.

The tunneler was far enough from ground zero that it is intact, although some of its more delicate systems were knocked offline. The tunneler consists of four levels, which are mostly open spaces for hauling Combine equipment, with large vehicular ramps that descend to the bottom level where the entrance door is located. The massive engines take up the rear third of the vehicle. The control room sits at the front on the highest level.

Once Bright and her minions have been dealt with, it's easy enough for the heroes to get the video they were sent after.

Home Sweet Home

When the heroes return to Junkyard with video of the tunneler, they are held at the gates until Taylor can be summoned. He arrives and takes the palmcorder, then studies the footage thoroughly. He and Doc Schwartz then ask numerous questions about the machine and its state—whether or not it's likely operable, for example.

If they don't have it, the posse has to do some real fast talking to get him to accept their story—or return to the site a second time with another recording device!

A day or so passes as Taylor and the rest of Junkyard's leadership review the heroes' data. Then Taylor returns and presents the posse with citizenship papers, along with any funds they may have negotiated for.

A Blast From the Past

This adventure should take place after That Town Needs an Enema!

Sometime not too long after completing the mission to Logan, one of Taylor's messengers approaches the heroes, summoning them to a meeting with the Iron Alliance's leader again. After a brief congratulatory period for their success up north, he gets down to business.

"OK folks, enough back patting. Things are getting serious around here, if you didn't notice from your time in the camps. The Iron Alliance is fraying at the edges because folks got it in their heads that everything would be wine and roses once the Four Horsemen headed back to Hell. We've got rabble-rousers getting the refugees all riled up about how they ain't being treated right, tale-spinners spouting all kinds of crap about the Templars ducking out of the fight, the Convoy's gone, and the Sky Pirates have started raiding settlements and merchants. Again.

"We need some folks to act as troubleshooters for the Iron Alliance, and I think you might be the crew for that job. Basically, that means if someone needs help, you go out there and shoot their problem with a bullet courtesy of the Iron Alliance. You know, let folks see the benefits of joining with Junkyard and its allies. 'Course, the Alliance doesn't expect these services for free."

Taylor says Junkyard will provide the heroes a three-bedroom apartment for as long as they're in the city's employ, as well as free water and electricity. As before, he's not above negotiating, with each success and raise on a cooperative Persuasion roll netting an additional \$50 a month as a stipend for the group. He won't go higher than \$200 a month though.

Ike Taylor's main concern is for the ongoing well-being of Iron Oasis and by

extension the Iron Alliance. To that end, he is more than willing to do whatever it takes to get the heroes to step up and work for him. If they choose not to, the wasters quickly find that life inside the walls of Junkyard is not as great as they thought it would be. Petty bureaucrats slow down their paperwork, there are problems with their utilities, they still have to earn a living, and such troubles crop up until they agree to his proposal.

Showing the Flag

Taylor doesn't wait long after getting the posse's agreement to sign on. Within less than a day, they get word Joan, leader of the heretic Doomsayers, wants the group to take a trip to Carson City, NV. Carson City is one of the few spots in the wastes where norms and mutants were able to coexist peacefully, which really stuck in the Mutant King's craw. It used to serve as her base of operations before the last big dust up. Since the Harvest, there's been precious little contact with the settlement, and recently, none at all.

Joan wants the heroes to take a trip to Carson City and make contact. If there appear to be any problems, she wants them to gather as much information as possible on the current situation so the Alliance can properly plan to deal with them.

It's roughly 530 miles from Junkyard to Carson City. That's about 21 days if the posse decides to hoof it, not counting all the encounters with horrors, road gangs, and other nasties that prey on footsore travelers. If the posse has access to vehicles, Taylor authorizes them 50 gallons of spook juice for the trip. It should only take them three days to get there, assuming they don't break down along the way (see **Vehicle Fatigue** in *Hell on Earth Reloaded* for more details).

If they don't have vehicles of their own and ask Ike about transport, he makes arrangements to get them a loaner. It's a battered mid-sized pickup with a full

tank of fuel and an additional 50 gallons of spook juice in jerry cans which is barely enough to get there and back.

There's nothing planned for the trip to Carson City, but feel free to make it as involved or as simple as you want, Marshal.

Carson City, NV

Fear Level 4

During the Last War the downtown area of Carson City was struck by a ghost rock bomb from a badly malfunctioning Northern Alliance MIRV (Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicle). Not only did it miss its intended target—Flagstaff, AZ—by an entire country, it crashed right through the dome of the State Capital building, landing in the rotunda without exploding. In the months after Judgment Day, a small group of people began to call the bomb a holy object, a miracle, and the savior of the city. Over the years a religion called the Fellowship of MIRV came into being, consisting of both norms and mutants.

A month or so ago, while the Iron Alliance was still licking its wounds after the Harvest, Silas the Mutant King figured it was as good a time as any to take another shot at Carson City. This time, the force he sent was successful. As Silas' raiders ransacked the town, they stumbled across the bomb.

These days, the Cult of Doom has checkpoints set up on all highway approaches to the city a mile or so outside the city limits. The checkpoints are manned by a pair of armed guards backed up by a few trogs. The guards question any travelers attempting to pass and attempt to capture or kill any norms they encounter. A short firefight won't attract too much attention, since the guards are frequently firing their weapons at just about anything that catches their fancy, but engaging in

more than five rounds of combat is sure to draw reinforcements from the city.

Groups on foot can easily avoid the checkpoints by going cross-country.

- **Guard (2):** Use the stats for Raiders from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*, each armed with a hunting rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2) and a knife (Str+d4).

- **Trog (1 per hero):** Use the stats for Trogs from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

The Mean Streets of Carson City

New Carson City was walled prior to the Cult of Doom's last assault, but the mutant horde brought down large sections of it when they attacked. Guards still man the city's gates, but once past the checkpoints, the heroes can slip into the city relatively easily enough through one of the many gaps in the walls.

Once a near-utopia of norm-mutant relations, Carson City is now a broken town occupied by Silas' oppressive troops. The Cult of Doom wasted no time in rounding up every norm they could find and shipping them off to Vegas or simply executing them on the spot. Roving bands of trogs led by a Doomsayer patrol the city looking for suspicious characters—defined as norms. Wasters who take the time to disguise themselves can talk their way past these patrols with a successful Persuasion versus Notice opposed roll, with a modifier to the Persuasion roll ranging from +2 to -2 based on how effective you think the disguise is, Marshal.

- **Doomsayer:** Use the stats for Doomsayers from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

- **Trog (1 per hero):** Use the stats for Trogs from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

Once in town, the heroes discover the resident mutants who survived the Cult's assault were allowed to remain. If the group can avoid the patrols, a

Streetwise roll finds that, while few of the remaining citizens harbor any love for the Mutant King, one in particular is more than willing to help the posse. Alexander Taylor is the last remaining non-mutant in the city. Although he's totally blind, his ability to compensate is nearly supernatural, leading the Cult to believe he's "one of them." It also means he's often overlooked or underestimated, making him an excellent intelligence source on the Cult's activity.

Once he learns the group represents Junkyard, he gives them the lowdown on the Cult's activities since they took over. He reveals the Cult took the city about a month ago, rounding up all the norms and either carting them off to Vegas or just outright executing them. More importantly, the characters learn about the existence of the MIRV and the fact the Cult not only has it in hand, but also that a specialist Silas sent from Vegas brought the MIRV back online.

Worse, a convoy is preparing to carry the bomb to Junkyard, where they plan to detonate it inside the shields.

♦ **Alexander Taylor:** See page 93.

Bombing Run

The posse learns the Cult of Doom is assembling the convoy in the ruins of old Carson City a short distance north of the survivor settlement. The mutants have acquired a tractor trailer to carry the warhead and a couple of vehicles to protect it on the road. It's highly unlikely the posse can get back to Junkyard in time to raise support to stop the bomb, so it's up to them to save the day.

Keep in mind that simply taking out the guard force isn't enough to ensure Junkyard's safety. There's still an active nuke in the back of the truck and leaving it laying around is just asking for trouble!

There are a number of routes available to the posse if they choose to derail the Cult of Doom's plans. They can attack

the convoy before it leaves Carson City, they can set an ambush outside, or they can try to tail the rig and waylay it in the wastes. These are only a few options, and a creative group may come up with many others.

The convoy consists of the semi and two pickups. There are two guards and a Doomsayer in the semi's cab and another Doomsayer in a fighting position on the rear of the trailer. Another ten guards ride in two SUVs.

♦ **Doomsayers (2):** Use the stats for Doomsayers from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

• **Guards (12):** Use the stats for Soldiers from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with SA Commando submachine guns (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, AP 2), two spare magazines.

• **Semi:** Use the stats for semis from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. There is a fighting position (provides Medium Cover, +2 bonus to retain footing) with an M2HB (Range 50/100/200, Damage 2d10, RoF 3, AP 3) mounted on the top of the trailer at the rear.

• **SUV (2):** Use the stats for an SUV from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Each is equipped with a SA SAW (Range 50/100/200, Damage 2d10, RoF 3, AP 3).



Snatch and Grab

The heroes can attack the convoy before it leaves the ruins, but if they do, they face not only the convoy guards from above, but also a large number of troops from the occupying force. On top of that, there are more than a few Cult minions on hand to send the suicide mission off in style. The mutants know the importance of the nuke and fight to the death to protect it.

Alternately, they can try a more stealthy approach to hijack the truck and make a run for it. This leads to a Chase (see *Savage Worlds*) as the mutants load up in the guard pickups and a pair of motorcycles and set off in pursuit. The mutants don't give up and stay on the heroes' tail until they recapture the truck or are killed.

- **Mutant (20):** Use the stats for Mutants from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

On the Road

Laying an ambush or simply running the convoy down is probably the easiest solution for the heroes. That way they only face the guard force itself. Also, they don't have to worry about reinforcements arriving from Carson City—at least not right away. The convoy won't stop to fight unless the heroes have put together a stout roadblock or get their hands on some anti-vehicular mines. If the fight becomes a run-and-gun, we recommend using the Chase rules from *Savage Worlds* to keep it fast and furious.

How I Learned to Love the Bomb

Once the heroes have their hands on the MIRV, well, they've got their hands on an active ghost rock nuke—which is seldom a good thing. Anyone examining the ominous, white nose cone can make a Repair -2 or Knowledge (Demolitions or Electronics) roll to determine that it is live, but not in a detonation mode.

In other words, if they leave it alone it *probably* won't go off...yet.

Actually, the bomb isn't quite functional at this point. Silas' technician wasn't quite as good as the Mutant King believed and only got some of the electronics restored. The bomb *looks* functional, but is still basically inert. But your heroes don't need to know that!

Feel free to mention in passing the device is actually a Northern missile, and any waster poking around inside the outer shell who makes a Notice roll finds confirmation of this in a manufacturing stamp from the Lake Erie Security Complex. If a waster has access to the Grand Library and researches it, she discovers only that it was a US weapons manufacturing complex in western New York. However, don't get too heavy-handed with the information—it plays a vital role later in the Plot Point Campaign (see **The Belly of the Beast**, page 43), and you don't want to spoil the fun!

The warhead weighs nearly four tons, meaning the group is likely to have to leave it on the rig to transport it back. If the posse successfully recovers the MIRV, the Iron Alliance Council is very interested in it. Once the MIRV is safely under the care of the Nauvoo Legion, the heroes are congratulated by the Iron Alliance Council.

If the posse failed to stop the convoy, the mutants manage to actually force their way into Outer Junkyard before they're stopped by the Nauvoo Legion. The nuke fails to detonate, and the mutant guard force is quickly defeated.

In either case, the Iron Alliance takes great interest in the heroes' report on the situation in Carson City and begins laying plans for a mission to liberate the remaining survivors from the Cult's grip.

Worm Food

This adventure should occur after **A Blast From the Past** and before **Be Very Quiet...**

After the near-miss with the Cult of Doom's warhead, worries about similar threats have been plaguing Taylor and the rest of the Alliance leadership. Years ago, the Combine reopened an old uranium mine in southwestern Colorado. Word from the Denver Resistance was Throckmorton had gotten his hands on the plans for a nuke. Junkyard spent considerable effort in harassing Combine efforts there, and eventually, the mining endeavor seemed to peter out.

With his defeat in the Harvest, the Alliance is concerned the not-so-good general may renew his efforts at becoming a nuclear power. Unfortunately, the Denver Resistance—Junkyard's main source of inside info on the Combine—suffered terribly in the Harvest. For all intents and purposes, they've gone silent.

Taylor sends the heroes on a recon mission to get eyes on Uravan, the site of the Combine's mining operations. He provides them with a fairly detailed topographical map of the area, with the location of the mine clearly marked. The map also depicts a staging area a short distance to the west of Uravan that Junkyard forces used in the past. Taylor tells the heroes that to the best of his knowledge, the Combine never located it. It should be safe to use as a base camp.

Uravan

Uravan is a mining ghost town about 325 miles southeast of Junkyard. During much of the last century, Uravan was the site of both vanadium and uranium mining—minerals that were also the source of the town's unusual name. Not counting the Combine's recent efforts, it has been mostly uninhabited since

Can You Hear Us Now?

Shortly after the events in **A Blast From the Past**, Taylor comes to the conclusion that the Alliance needs better methods of communicating with their long-range trouble-shooters. Only the heroes' fast action (or dumb luck) saved Junkyard from becoming a nuclear wasteland. He doesn't want to risk that again.

Taylor provides the posse with one of Junkyard's most treasured pieces of technology—a working satellite phone. Okay, "working" is a being a little generous. It does do exactly what it was originally designed to do, but Junkyard's the only other place with a working satellite phone, at least at the moment.

On top of that, there's only one functional communications satellite in orbit — ComSat, actually. ComSat will not reveal itself to be anything other than a communications relay unless a connection to the AI is made (see the *Hell on Earth Companion*).

It provides a way for the Alliance to get in contact with the characters and vice-versa that doesn't require traveling overland through hundreds of miles of post-apocalyptic wasteland.

the latter part of the last century. That's when a decline in military demand, an increase in low-cost, foreign uranium mining, and a lack of new nuclear plants sent the price of uranium into a spiral—and Uravan the way of the mining boomtowns of the Old West.

Prior to the Harvest, Throckmorton spread disinformation that he'd gotten his hands on the plans for a nuclear weapon. It was completely untrue, but it allowed him to distract Junkyard and keep its attention focused hundreds of miles away from Denver. For years, he used the fake mining operation like a meat grinder for Junkyard's forces, as Taylor sent mission after mission to keep him from stockpiling resources to build an imaginary superweapon.

Throckmorton has indeed reoccupied Uravan, but not because he's building a bomb—or even trying to make Taylor believe he is. In fact, he'd rather the

Alliance *not* know he's even back in the area. You see, the Combine is using the mines at Uravan to deliver slaves to the rattler dens under the Rockies.

Resistance is Futile

The town, which rested at the base of a sandstone ridge, was demolished over a century ago. Not even the foundations of the original buildings remain. The Combine has established a small camp along the banks of the San Miguel River in the bottom of a shallow valley. The reopened mine shaft sits atop the ridge to the north of the river bottom.

As long as the posse exercises minimal precautions, they can detect the Combine's base long before they run the risk of being spotted. A Survival or Notice roll easily locates the staging area Taylor told them about. True to his word, there is no sign the Combine has found it. A successful Tracking roll finds evidence of the hastily concealed ashes of a recent campfire, but no other tracks.

After the heroes have been in the area for a while, a waster approaches the camp from the west. She identifies herself as Sam Montgomery, a member of the Denver Resistance, who was hiding to make sure the characters weren't Combine troops.

The waster tells the group the Resistance took a serious beating during the Harvest. The last she heard, the Combine released all manner of horrors into the city to root out the resistance fighters, and most of the group perished in the fighting. While she has a scrambled radio for sending reports, she hasn't heard anything from Denver for months. Sam admits she would have left some time ago if she'd been able to come up with a coherent plan.

Before she gave in and pulled up stakes, however, the Combine reopened operations at Uravan. She watched a band of slaves arrive and be forced into



the mine at gunpoint, but they did not come out. The guards did emerge later, but she's not seen any supplies or food taken in, nor have the Combine troops brought anything out of the mine.

This pattern has been repeated twice and she has yet to see any captives come back out of the mine. Sam has decided to stay on site to figure out what's going on before she abandons this post, either to head back to Denver or find another home elsewhere.

• **Sam Montgomery:** See page 93.

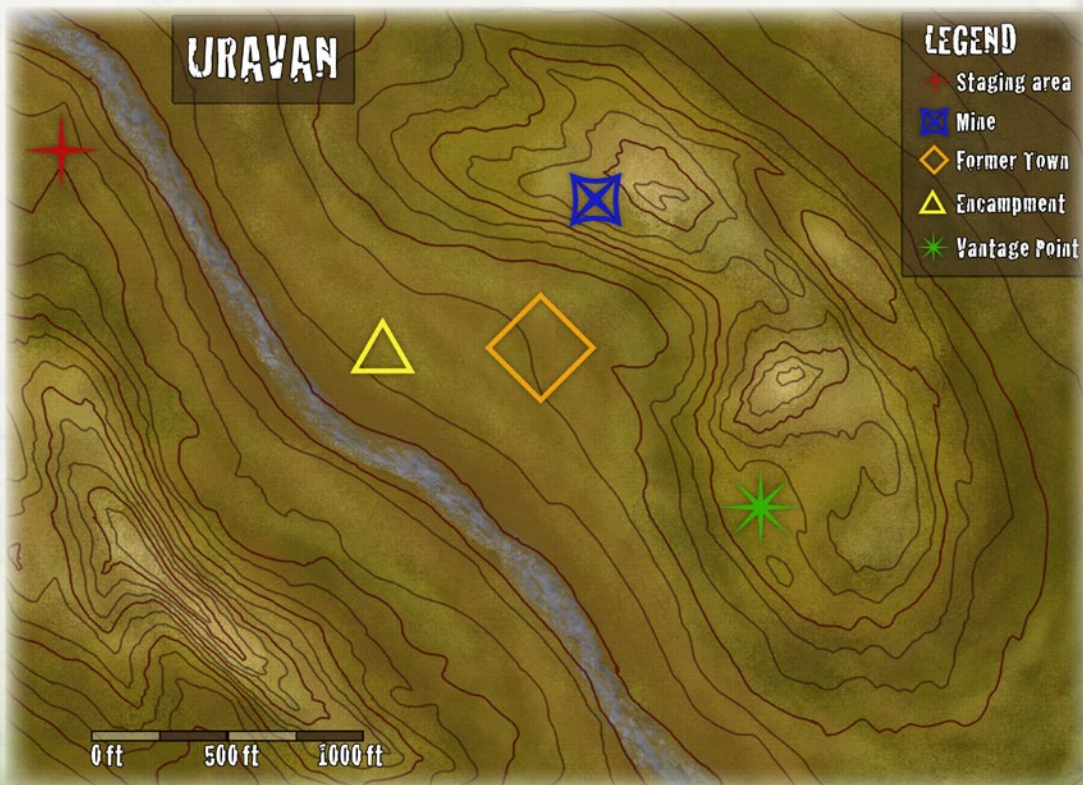
Hole in the Wall

Montgomery can lead the group to a safe spot from which to observe the Combine base. It's about 200 yards away on the opposite side of the valley, but it provides an excellent view of both the encampment and mine on the hill above it. Better yet, the observers are effectively shielded from detection by brush and terrain (provided they don't call attention to themselves).

There are no buildings at the Uravan site, but the Black Hats have erected a couple of tents to serve as shelter. After a day of watching the Black Hats in Uravan, the heroes can be pretty certain the Combine isn't actually mining. No one enters or leaves the mine and there's little more than a skeleton crew at the base.

If they seek further instructions from Junkyard, Taylor or another Alliance representative advises them to gather as much information on the Combine's activities at the site as possible. Junkyard isn't opposed to the heroes engaging the Black Hats in combat, but intel gathering is the primary goal of the posse's mission.

A little careful maneuvering gets the wasters to a vantage point where they can even get a look into the mine opening. Security is really lax at the site. Only a critical failure on a Stealth roll (a 1 on both the skill and Wild Die) results in the Combine guards spotting them. There is no activity at all in the mine.



If the posse takes out the Combine grunts or otherwise gets a closer look, they find little else of interest. The encampment has only enough food to sustain the guards for a week or so, and there are only accommodations for the same number. A Tracking roll (-4) inside the mine finds strange tracks, a raise reveals they are made by wormlings, left by the creatures the last time they took a shipment of slaves/food down into the mine.

- **Black Hats (5):** Use the stats for Black Hats from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

The Worms Crawl In

After checking in, Taylor tells them to stay on site until another convoy arrives to gather more intel with combat as a last resort—he doesn't want Throckmorton to know he's had visitors quite yet! A couple of days later, two trucks and two HMMWVs arrive (all Combine chipped). Each HMMWV has an HI Brimstone SAW (Range 30/60/120, Damage 2d8+1, RoF 4, AP 2) in a roof mount. The HMMWVs hold four Black Hats apiece, and each truck carries two more soldiers.

Riding in the back of each truck are 10 chained captives. There are another two weeks of supplies for the Uravan guards.

The posse can attack the convoy and free the captives immediately, or they can wait to see what is going on at the encampment. Montgomery agrees to provide covering fire, but won't expose herself to direct combat against a superior force. She's a guerilla fighter, not a commando.

If they wait, the slaves are unloaded and marched up the hill to the mine opening by a group of ten Black Hats. One of the Black Hats blows an air horn into the shaft. The group then enters the mine. The heroes can only see a few yards into the mine from their vantage point, so they have to find a way into the shaft if they want to continue surveillance at this point.

The Combine troops take their captives onto the elevator and down into the mine, stopping at the bottom where they wait for about half an hour. At that point, a group of wormlings arrive and take custody, leading the terrified captives into the bowels of the earth unless the posse intervenes.

- **Black Hats (10 or 12):** Use the stats for Black Hats from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.
- **Wormlings (5, plus 1 per 2 heroes):** Use the stats for Wormlings from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

Aftermath

A captured Black Hat can be coerced to reveal what is happening at Uravan with a raise on an opposed Persuasion or Intimidation roll. Of course, as soon as he begins to spill his guts, his headbanger chip goes off (see **Headbanger Chips**, in the *Hell on Earth Companion*), which greatly limits how much info the heroes can collect this way.

Montgomery asks the heroes if she can accompany the posse back to Junkyard. If the wasters want her to remain on site for some reason, one of the group must make a successful Persuasion roll. The guerrilla is tired and wants a break.

Taylor is distressed to hear the news about the Denver Resistance, admitting his own intel from Denver is spotty at best. If the heroes put eyes on the actual wormlings taking the Combine captives, he has the wasters tell the story again to Doc Schwartz. Schwartz takes great interest in their story, but won't make any guesses as to either why the Combine is cooperating with the wormlings or what the creatures are doing with the slaves.

Regardless, the Iron Alliance dispatches a strike team from the Nauvoo Legion to destroy the shaft. If the heroes didn't discover the presence of the wormlings themselves, the Junkyard soldiers do.

Be Very Quiet...

Once the Alliance leadership has had time to digest the posse's discovery at Uravan, they realize they have very little intel on the strange wormlings that seem to be allied with Denver. And even without the Combine's possible involvement, a race of carnivorous, subterranean creatures poses a significant threat on their own, especially since the Alliance has absolutely no information on how organized the creatures are—or even from where they originate.

...We're Hunting Wormlings

Taylor puts Doc Schwartz on the job, and the junker does not disappoint. Within a few weeks, he's cooked up a device, or rather a network of devices attuned to seismic disturbances. The only thing he needs is a bunch of saps... uh, technicians...to deploy the network across the region. Not surprisingly, Taylor turns to the posse to do the legwork.

The leader of the Alliance sends the group to see Doc Schwartz. His workshop is an eclectic mix of odd technological devices, blackboards covered with pseudo-scientific scrawls that would make Einstein's eyes bleed, and a wide range of odd paraphernalia left over from his alchemical days. At first, he's his usual scattered self, but once he gets rolling on his plan, the Doc settles into an almost laser-like focus on his task.

He briefly explains the basics of the seismic net to the heroes.

"These devices passively monitor seismic activity while using active sonar to map subterranean areas. They then transmit data packages back to Junkyard through an integral burst transmitter. I'm calling them 'thumpers.' Saw that in a movie once.

Each transmitter has an individual range of only about fifty miles, but it also

serves as a repeater for other thumpers further down the chain. This allows us to establish a fairly extensive network of monitoring stations without the benefit of long-lost tech like cellphones or a working fiber-optic network.

Once it arrives here, a complicated algorithm compiles the input and filters for local above-ground clutter like nearby vehicle movement, which is then cross-referenced to identify recurring patterns of subterranean activity. I believe triangulating data sets will allow me to pinpoint locations of wormling nests as well as areas of high activity.

Your task is to deploy the individual monitors at the coordinates I'll be providing you."

Doc gives the group a data slug containing a map marked with the location of each site. The network spans an area that runs northeast from Flagstaff to the edge of the Rockies in Colorado, then north to Billings, Montana. All told, the line runs around 1,000 miles, with a monitor every 50 miles or so. In other words, this isn't an afternoon's work.

The Long Haul

This is a fairly serious undertaking for the heroes. It's likely to eat up weeks—or even months—of the posse's lives as they pick their way across a significant portion of the Wasted West.

The journey ranges from the Wild Southwest across the Great Basin and into the High Plains. The trip provides plenty of opportunity for you to slip in your own adventures or individual Savage Tales from this book. You can also fall back on the **Encounter Tables** from *Hell on Earth Reloaded* or use the **Adventure Generator** in the *Hell on Earth Companion*.

Exactly how time consuming a process this is in actual play time is up to you, Marshal. If it suits your purposes to fast-forward through most of the trip, by all

means do so, but keep in mind you're also passing up a chance to really show off the Wasted West to your heroes!

Knock-Knock

There's one flaw to the Doc's plan. The active sonar the thumpers use is like a homing beacon for rattlers. The subterranean abominations don't blindly attack the seismic monitors, but they do come see what all the ruckus is about. And if they find suitable prey...

Sometime early in the process of placing the thumpers, the heroes discover the hard way exactly how much the huge worms are drawn to the Doc's creations. This scene works best at a site where the posse decides to set camp near one of the devices, when the sonar has had a little time to rattle the rattler, so to speak.

Give each waster a Notice roll to detect the slight tremors marking the beast's approach. Those who succeed have a round to act. Those who fail don't know

what's up (or down, as the case may be) until the rattler bursts out of the ground near the seismic monitor.

The monster fights until it takes two or more wounds, at which point it attempts to dig back into the ground. Otherwise, it attacks until it Incapacitates and/or routs the heroes.

If the posse doesn't figure out the sonar is drawing the creatures to the sensors after the first attack, the scenario repeats every third or fourth time they activate one until they get a clue. Should they notify Doc, he instructs them to implant the devices, but not activate them. He explains he can remotely turn them on once the remainder of the line back to him is in place. It will slow the inflow of data until the characters complete the entire route, but better that than Junkyard losing their favorite errand boys!

✦ **Rattler:** Use the stats for Rattlers from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

Ride the Worm(ling)

This adventure should take place after **Be Very Quiet...** Sometime after the heroes return to Junkyard after installing the thumpers, Doc Schwartz sends them on a new, but related, errand.

What's Up, Doc?

The doc calls the heroes to his lab to review the data he's compiled from the thumpers so far. He shows them a fairly complicated map showing an amazingly intricate web of underground tunnels crisscrossing much of the Rockies. However, there's a limit to how much information he's been able to glean from the thumpers.

"The data seems to indicate the wormlings are clustering in a series of large caverns under the central Rockies. Each of these chambers is enormous, often ranging from a half-mile to a mile in diameter. Beyond the fact that there is

a large amount of movement to and from these caverns, we're almost completely in the dark as to what is going on inside them.

"Our intelligence so far seems to indicate some cooperation between these strange creatures and the Combine, but we don't know how far that goes. It is very possible Denver has found a way to subjugate them and is using them to prepare subterranean staging areas. We need to get a look inside those chambers."

Although they're likely to assume otherwise, Doc Schwartz has no intention of asking them to go walking down wormling tunnels into the bowels of the earth. Even he knows that's flat-out suicide. Instead, he has a different plan.

The junker has adapted some old forest service animal-tracking devices to carry low-light cameras. He further modified them to use the thumpers' active sonar as a carrier wave to transmit data back to Junkyard. It's all very technical and more than a little out there, but the long and short of it is if the heroes can tag a wormling or three with the gadgets, they should be able to see what's going on down in the caverns.

Here's the Catch

Normally, finding the nasty critters would be a formidable task in and of itself, given that they usually travel underground. Thankfully, the thumper net can help narrow the search down considerably. In fact, the junker has been able to refine the data from the thumpers to the degree he can determine when the creatures are digging a new tunnel. By correlating the data on tunnel size with reports of wormling attacks, Junkyard is now able to predict attacks on survivor settlements by as much as two days.

Doc Schwartz tells the posse there is a relatively nearby settlement in the ruins of Kamas that he believes to have a 90% probability of experiencing a

wormling raid within the next 48 hours. He wants them to travel there both to tag a few wormlings as well as protect the citizens from an attack. However, both he and Taylor fear sending a unit from the Nauvoo Legion might scare off the wormlings from attacking in the first place, so the heroes are flying solo on this one.

The doc reminds them that they have to make sure the tagged wormlings survive to get away. After all, it doesn't do much good to get a video feed from a rotting corpse.

Digging up Trouble

Kamas is about 30 miles east of Junkyard. By road, it's closer to 40 miles, but at least near to the city, the roads have been somewhat cleared of the worst blockages. If the group leaves immediately, they can make it in about a day's travel.

The survivor settlement is in the remains of a small town that was once home to a little more than a thousand souls. Kamas was primarily a cattle and lumber town, so it wasn't on anyone's hit list when Judgment Day came. As a result, its buildings are mostly intact, but the years following the Last War were rough and reduced the already tiny population to nearly nothing. Now, the residents are trying to restart a couple of cattle herds in the hopes of providing food for nearby Junkyard.

The presence of the cattle, along with a relatively small and isolated population, makes the town a perfect target for wormlings looking to fill rattler bellies.

Local Resistance

The first obstacle the heroes face is what to do with the citizens of Kamas. They've spent a good amount of time rebuilding their community and are reluctant to simply evacuate because a bunch of strangers come in ranting about

Worm Tag

Doc Schwartz's device uses an air rifle to propel the tagging dart at the prospective target. It's a relatively short-range weapon, so the user has to get fairly close for it to be effective. If the shooter scores a hit with the rifle, the tracker attaches to the target on any damage result other than a 1 on the die.

However, the anchoring dart is painful. Worker wormlings immediately notice the dart and dislodge it unless the hero shoots them in the back. The thick armor on warrior wormlings provides a perfect target. If the dart doesn't penetrate the monster's armor, the warrior doesn't even notice it.

The junker was only able to fabricate one rifle and five of the tagging gizmos. If the heroes fail to score a solid hit with five shots, the darts can be recovered and fired again. Spotting one of the darts on the battlefield takes a Notice roll.

Dart Rifle (Range 5/10/20, Damage 1d6, RoF 1, Shots 1). Reloading a dart requires an action.

worm-men from beneath the earth. If anything, they want to fight to protect what's theirs.

If the posse agrees, they do get a few more guns to help fight off the wormlings—but the citizens of Kamas aren't hardened fighters by any stretch. While there are 25 folks in Kamas, only 10 are actually able to fight.

If the wasters try to convince them to leave, it takes a Social Conflict (see

Savage Worlds) to convince them. It's not an opposed roll; the settlers don't have a compelling argument beyond "No." With one to two total successes, the townsfolk agree that only the able-bodied should remain behind, while children, the old, and infirm head for Junkyard to wait it out. Three or four successes convince them to all pack up, but the settlers insist on taking their cattle with them. With five or more successes, they agree to anything the posse suggests, up to and including leaving some cows behind as bait for the wormlings.

Best Laid Plans

Regardless of whether the townsfolk stay or leave, the heroes have a pretty free hand in preparing defenses. Obviously, the settlers don't stand for them tearing down buildings or engaging in large-scale demolitions, but as long as they respect the citizens' property, they can set up where and how they like in or around the town.

The posse can pick a central spot and wait for the abominations to come to them or they can try to lay an ambush at a site of their choosing. If they do nothing, the wormlings attack the center of town. If they attempt to lay an ambush elsewhere, allow them a Smarts roll (-2) to devise a lure to draw the wormlings away from the town, or a Smarts roll with no penalty if they convinced the townsfolk to allow them to employ cattle as bait.

Should the posse use the citizens as militia, allow the players to control the Extras.

The wormlings burst from the ground in an area roughly 20' across. They don't emerge inside any structures or vehicles. The wormlings aren't expecting an armed welcoming party, so every hero who makes a Stealth roll begins the combat on Hold. The wormlings fight until over half their total number is slain,

then they retreat back into the tunnels to look for easier pickings.

Hopefully, the posse managed to tag at least one survivor with Doc's gizmo. Otherwise, they have to wait 1d6 weeks for another attack to occur near enough to intercept.

• **Kamas Survivors, if present (10):**

Use the stats for Townsfolk from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with lever-action rifles (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2) and knives (Str+d4).

• **Wormling Workers (10, plus 2 per hero):** Use the stats for Wormling (worker) from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

• **Wormling Warriors (2, plus 1 per hero):** Use the stats for Wormling (warrior) from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

Found Footage

Once they've successfully tagged a wormling, it takes the disgusting thing a week or two to slog its way through the tunnels back to the central chambers Doc Schwartz is interested in. Once it gets

there, the transmitted footage shows him far more than he bargained for.

The next time they're in Junkyard, Taylor calls the posse in for a briefing. Doc Schwartz is there as well. The junker sets up a monitor and runs a recording of the footage. Initially, the video is a mish-mash of shaky-cam video that is almost nausea-inducing in its chaos. Then he begins to pull enhanced stills from the images.

The first shows a vast number of wormlings, all engaged in caring for a number of enormous, tentacled rattlers. Further stills reveal that wormlings aren't the only bipedal creatures in the caverns. Large numbers of walkin' dead appear to be milling about the subterranean chambers as well.

The last image has obviously been enhanced heavily, leaving many details vague and hazy. Schwartz says, "We almost missed this. It's nearly a half-mile away, and there's no telescoping capability on the camera."



Even with the distortion, the image is unmistakable. A large flatbed trailer sits near the far wall of the cavern, surrounded by a swirling mass of undead. A throne, comprised of bones and corpses, rests on the center of the trailer. On that throne sits a hideously burned, but still somehow apparently alive, figure.

"Folks," Taylor says, "It seems we've found Raven."

Taylor and Schwartz fill the posse in on any details about the ancient shaman and his role in the Reckoning. They're not sure what their discovery means—or what Raven is planning—but they know it means nothing good for what's left of humanity!

An Ancient Prophecy

This adventure can take place at virtually any point in the campaign. We recommend you stage it after the heroes have gained some experience. It doesn't hurt if they've had a chance to make a name for themselves with Taylor and the rest of the Alliance either, but it's not a necessity.

The Sioux Chieftain White Cloud is the oldest of the wicasas and a powerful shaman. He has experienced a vision showing the end of the world as a dark bird leads smaller birds to a tree, which cracks open to release evil. This event can only be prevented by the sacrifice of a white buffalo.

Also contained in the vision were the clear images of the heroes...

I've Got a Message for You

At some point while the heroes are away from what passes for civilization now, a lone Old Ways warrior approaches the party. The man can either appear suddenly as the group sits around a campfire at night or jog toward them out of the wastes almost effortlessly.

In accented English, he hails the posse, referring to them by name. The warrior tells them he bears a message from White Cloud, of the Oglala Sioux.

"White Cloud has seen your faces in a vision from the spirits. He has matters of great weight to impart upon you. He asks you to make haste and seek him in the Nations."

The messenger hands each of the heroes a hand-crafted talisman on a leather thong.

"These will grant you passage among the tribes of the Nations. Be warned, your trinkets of the white man's technology will fail you in the Nations. Do not rely on them once you cross into our lands."

The warrior then turns and disappears back into the wastes. Should the group ask to travel with him, he refuses, saying the journey is part of their trials, and he cannot aid them further. Also, he doesn't really want to be burdened with a bunch of tenderfoot scavs as he makes his way back home.

Into the Nations

As soon as the posse reaches the edge of the former Dakotas, it's obvious the Sioux Nations are unlike anywhere else in the Wasted West. The first clue is a line of markers stretching as far as the eye can see across the plains. Each bears a warning that beyond them is the sovereign territory of the Sioux tribes and that technological devices will not function there.

Beyond the border, the land is virtually pristine, and we're not just talking about free of the ravages of the Last War. Thanks to the Great Summoning, this portion of the High Plains remains completely undeveloped. There are no roads, no communications towers, no telephone poles—nothing. The Sioux Nations stand almost exactly as they did before the coming in the White Man.

The other big clue something's different is that all technological devices cease to function reliably, from the most sophisticated junker creation to the simplest zipper. The full details are found in **The Sioux Nations** in *Hell on Earth Reloaded*, but the short version is that anything not made by hand from all natural materials is utterly useless here.

The tribes have stationed extra eyes all around the border to the Nations to await the arrival of the posse. Not long after they cross the border, the heroes find themselves suddenly surrounded by a scouting party of Sioux warriors that seems to appear from the very grass around them. After one look at the talismans provided by White Cloud's messenger, a warrior who speaks a smattering of English steps forward.

The scout says White Cloud awaits them at a sacred site in the Black Hills, near the entrance to Wind Cave. How long of a journey it is from where the posse encounters the scouting party depends on where they entered the Sioux Nations. The cave lies about 40 miles south of Deadwood and 60 miles or so west of the Badlands.

- **Sioux Scout (5, plus 1 per hero):** Use the stats for Indian Brave from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

The Cult of Worms

The heroes' arrival in the Nations has been anticipated by more than just the *wicasas*. The Worm Cult is watching for them as well. The purple-eyed crazies from Worm Canyon learned of White Cloud's vision after torturing it out of one of the Sioux sent to locate the wasters. They're not sure exactly what role the characters are to play in the chief's prophecy, but they're figuring to earn some points with their giant legless masters by ending it prematurely.

As soon as she learned of the posse's entry into the Nations, the current

Cyborgs in the Nations

Being composed of a mix of technology and (dead) flesh, cyborgs face a major obstacle entering the Sioux Nations. Unlike junkers, the manitou provides a direct conduit to the Hunting Grounds. Thanks to the unique bond between a Harrowed and the manitou, it is able to use its connection to counteract the anti-technology effect of the Great Summoning, but only to a degree.

For the most part, the manitou has its hands full just keeping the cyborg's tech from deteriorating. Worse, without the spirit fetter, the manitou can't power any enhancements as effectively. The metalhead loses the basic cyborg bonus to Strength, Toughness, and any Armor.

The cyborg does continue to function at a basic level. Cyber limbs work, but only at a level equal to a normal human's appendage. Cyber eyes and ears still provide input, but apply a -2 modifier to any Notice rolls relying on them.

In an extreme circumstance, the cyborg can try to force the manitou to divert power to a Cyborg Edge, bringing it up to full power. This requires an opposed Spirit test, modified by Dominion. If the deader wins, he brow-beats the manitou into powering up the Edge for a number of rounds equal to his Spirit die type. This comes at a cost though,

as it weakens the manitou and saddles the cyborg with a Fatigue level that lasts 24 hours.

This extra effort doesn't work so well with mounted firearms. The gun functions fine, but the manitou can't do anything about the necessary chemical reaction in the ammunition. In effect, the cyborg gets a gun that works perfectly well...that's loaded with all duds.

Now for the bad news. Yep, it gets worse.

The cyborg's AI is completely non-functional as long as he remains in the Nations. While that means he doesn't have to worry about those pesky Directives, it also means he's not getting any help on Dominion rolls—and the manitou is well aware of this.

Also, the can's Self Repair Unit is useless in the Nations. Even if the manitou powers it up, the anti-tech field means there aren't any Components to be found. Those already in the deader's possession are rendered worthless as well. Only the Healing (or Repair) skill, *healing*, and *greater healing* powers can heal damage.

Ursula put in motion a plan to eliminate any potential threat to the rattlers herself (see *Deadlands: The Last Sons*). Of the most immediate importance to the heroes is a group of cultists she dispatched to kill them—or at least delay them until she has time to complete the second part of her scheme. At some point after the wasters

enter the Black Hills, but before they reach the Sioux's sacred site, a band of cultists and wormlings attack.

If at all possible, the cultists attack at night, when most of the party is asleep. The wormlings start the attack by bursting up from the ground beneath the heroes' feet. Unless the characters have taken special precautions against this sort of attack, the abominations are likely to get The Drop on them.

Any heroes on watch may make an opposed roll of their Notice (-2) vs. the wormlings' Stealth. Failure indicates the monsters have gotten The Drop. A success means the posse is only surprised, while a raise on the roll lets the guards awaken their comrades and draw Action Cards normally.

One round after the wormlings attack, the cultists fire a round of arrows. Half of them then close to melee while the rest take potshots with their bows. Both the cultists and wormlings fight fanatically to the death.

- **Cultists (2 per hero):** Use the stats from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with bows (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1), and either spears (Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 Hands) or axes (Str+d6), as well as 15 arrows.
- **Wormlings (1 per hero):** Use the stats for Wormlings (worker) from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

Wind Cave's Dying Breath

After they defeat the Cult of Worms ambush, it's a pretty straightforward hike to the sacred site which sits on a bare hilltop not far from the cave's entrance. Wind Cave gets its name from the fact that the cave "breathes" as air moves in and out to equalize the pressure. The Lakota revere this spot

as where man first emerged from the underworld.

The cave itself is very extensive—over 140 miles of passages lie beyond the entrance—but the Sioux do not enter it. It is nearly untouched by the hand of man.

The location of White Cloud's camp isn't difficult to spot, as the heroes can see a small plume of smoke from a nearby hilltop from the cave's entrance. Sadly, Ursula's minions have already come and gone by the time the heroes arrive. All that remains in their wake is death and destruction.

The meadow is strewn with the dead bodies of dozens of Sioux warriors and nearly twice as many cultists. There are even a few wormlings, including a couple of the warrior caste. A sweat lodge at the highest point in the meadow has collapsed and burned. Smoke still rises from the smoldering ruin. However, a quick search finds no sign of anyone likely to be a *wicasa* of White Cloud's importance.

A Tracking roll finds the tracks of a large number of humans leading to the east—toward the Badlands. The trail is a little over a day old. A raise lets the sharp-eyed woodsman find several drag marks indicating the raiders also took some captives.

Shortly after the posse has time to take in what befell White Cloud and his warriors, a small band of Sioux warriors arrives. They were patrolling the area and were away at the time of the attack. They immediately recognize the heroes by the talismans White Cloud sent them.

Through broken English, they tell the group the cultists obviously took the shaman and

the other survivors captive, no doubt intending to sacrifice them at Worm Canyon. The *wicasa*'s soul would be a major victory for the Cult of Worms. The warriors urge the heroes to pursue the raiders and pledge their assistance in the coming fight.

- **Sioux Braves (2 per hero):** Use the stats for Indian Brave from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

De-Worming a Cult

The trip to Worm Canyon would normally take more than three days, but the Sioux warriors set a blistering pace in pursuit of their leader. Each day, the heroes must make a Vigor roll or suffer a level of Fatigue. These levels are recovered at a rate of one per day of rest.

However, the Cult of Worms isn't exactly strolling leisurely through the Badlands



Prophetic Insight

So what if you've got a posse gifted with an unusual amount of allegorical insight, and the players decipher White Cloud's vision? Don't worry—for the most part, it's no big deal. Besides, if they do figure out some of the pieces by themselves, the players are probably going to feel a little bit of self-satisfaction when they find out they were right!

An experienced group is likely to guess the big bird is Raven, and it's possible they make the leap to the smaller ones being Black Hats. That's absolutely fine. It's not *who* they are so much as what they're *doing* that matters. The same thing applies to Blackleaf Correctional Facility. They might know Raven wants something at Blackleaf, but they don't know what, how he's going to get it, or when.

Guessing that the MIRV from **A Blast From the Past** is the "white buffalo" is a little bigger, but until the time comes, it's unlikely the heroes are going to know how or where to best use the ghost rock nuke. After all, the Old Worm is virtually unheard of in human knowledge. Add to that the fact that Taylor and Doc Schwartz aren't likely to turn over one of the last remaining doomsday weapons in existence, no matter how much they've come to rely on the heroes.

If they try to jump the gun and detonate it at Blackleaf to stall the whole shebang, the null field

either. On top of that, the Badlands are a full-blown Deadland with all that entails. Even the experienced plains warriors are occasionally disoriented by the effects of the nightmarish canyons and hills. As a result, the posse doesn't catch up to the cultists before they reach their destination—Worm Canyon.

Once in the canyon, the party runs the risk of encountering one of the many cult patrols or rattler young that prowl the area. The trip through Worm Canyon takes four hours and every hour the heroes must make a group Stealth roll. If they fail, they've drawn the attention of one of the canyon's inhabitants. Roll 1d6: on a 1–2, they meet a patrol of cultists; 3–4, devil bats; 5–6, rattler young.

- **Cultists (5):** Use the stats for Cultists from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with bows (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1), and axes (Str+d6).
- **Devil Bats (d6):** See *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.
- **Rattler Young (1d4+1):** Use the stats for Rattler Young on page 92.

End of the Trail

The trail ends at the Cult of Worms' most holy place—a sacrificial site at the northern rim of the canyon. Here, the cultists toss their captives from a cliff into a squirming mass of rattler young to be devoured. And that's exactly what they have in mind for White Cloud and his followers.

The posse arrives just as Ursula, the hereditary leader of the cult, is beginning her unholy ceremony. A large portion of the cult's membership is present, along with some wormling warriors. As you've probably guessed, Marshal, they don't take kindly to a bunch of interlopers spoiling their plans.

This is probably going to be a tough fight for the heroes. They're facing superior numbers and can't rely on firearms or other technological weaponry to give them an advantage. Give the players

control of their Sioux ally Extras. And, if the group comes up with a clever plan of attack or manages to surprise the cultists, give them a chance to press the advantage.

The cultists and wormlings fight to the death. They're on their home turf—and likely literally have their backs against a cliff, to boot. Both the cultists and abominations immediately try to close and overwhelm the heroes and their allies with sheer numbers.

Ursula begins the fight by casting *deflection* on herself, then uses her *summon ally* to call an earth elemental to defend her against anyone foolish enough to try to force her into melee. Then she uses *bolt* and *stun* as appropriate, engaging in physical combat only if there is no other choice.

White Cloud and any other surviving captives are of no help in the fight. They've been battered and beaten to nearly the point of unconsciousness. The good news is that the cultists don't attempt to resume their ritual while the heroes are attacking, so unless the posse is defeated or retreats, the shaman is safe.

Finally, if things go really badly and you're feeling kind-hearted, there's always the possibility that a larger Sioux war party arrives in the nick of time to save the day.

- ♦ **Ursula:** Use the stats for Cult Leader from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. She has the listed powers plus *summon ally* (at Veteran level). She is armed with a flint ritual knife (Str+d4+3, AP 1) that works as a Bowie knife (Str+d4+1, AP 1) in the hands of anyone else.
- **Cultists (4 per hero):** Use the stats for Cultist from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.
- **Wormlings (1, plus 1 per hero):** Use the stats for Wormling (warrior) from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

that's keeping the Old Worm trapped keeps the bomb from detonating—just like it did to the four that the Confederacy fired at it during the Last War.

Finally, should they decode the prophecy, actually get the MIRV, take it to Blackleaf, hold it until the Old Worm is released, and detonate the bomb at the precise moment the monster exposes itself on the surface—well, tell 'em "Job well done!"

White Cloud's Vision

If the posse rescues White Cloud, the shaman takes a day or two to recover before he's able to tell them his vision. Although still obviously weak from the strain of the cult's abuse, he insists on speaking with them as soon as he is able. His voice is barely more than a whisper as he speaks to them, but his eyes clearly convey the importance he believes his vision holds.

"I saw a great, black bird descend from the sky. With it were dozens of smaller gray birds with black heads. It led the smaller birds to a large tree—a tree with dead, black leaves. The great bird suddenly turned on the lesser ones and slew them all with its beak and talons, spilling their blood onto the roots of the tree. The tree shriveled and split, and from beneath its roots crawled an evil older than the Reckoners themselves, devouring all the peoples.

My spirit guide then showed me that the evil can be stopped only if the white buffalo that lost its way is sacrificed beneath the tree with blackened leaves,

and he said that you are the ones who must find it and lead it there."

Although White Cloud doesn't understand his vision, it contains a warning about Raven's plan and how to stop it. The black bird is Raven and the smaller birds represent the Combine Black Hats. Raven plans to lead the elements of the Combine to Blackleaf Correctional Facility and sacrifice them in a ritual to free the Great Worm. The white buffalo is the ghost rock MIRV the heroes discovered in Carson City (it is white and was manufactured in Buffalo, NY), and it is one of the few weapons remaining capable of destroying the massive abomination.

Now, should things have gone badly at Worm Canyon, and White Cloud took the fast route to the bottom of Worm Canyon (and into the bellies of the young rattlers), all is not lost. The *wicasa* shared his vision with the other leaders of the Sioux Nations. Before the posse leaves the borders of the Nations, a large war band led by one of them intercepts the group and passes along the shaman's vision.

Monkey in the Wrench

This adventure should take place after the heroes have a chance to hear White Cloud's vision in **An Ancient Prophecy** and after discovering the Combine's apparent alliance with the wormlings in **Worm Food**.

Ike Taylor dispatches the heroes to Denver to help coordinate a raid on the Combine.

Marching Orders

The heroes are called to a meeting in Junkyard. Taylor and his brain trust have been plugging away at White Cloud's prophecy. If the posse hasn't made any major progress themselves, they are able to fill in a few of the holes.

He tells them the following:

"I'm not usually into astrology and that sort of thing, but those Sioux have some powerful mojo on their side and we'd be fools to ignore it. My folks think the big black bird is probably Raven. The smaller ones, well, we're guessing those are the Combine—black heads, black hats.

We're still figuring out the rest of it, but until we do, we need to slow things down a little. Since the Harvoest, we've been unable to restore reliable comms with the Denver Resistance. I need their help to throw a monkey wrench or two into the Combine works for now, but we've got no way to pass the plans securely.

Well, none 'cept you folks."

In short, Taylor wants the posse to travel to Denver, meet with the Resistance, and convince them to perform a mission for the Iron Alliance.

Bang Their Heads

Taylor trusts the heroes enough at this point to let them in on the specifics of the mission. Doc Schwartz believes he's found a way to turn the Combine's tech against them. To do so, he needs to get his hands on an uninstalled headbanger chip to study its operation and broadcast frequencies.

He's had this on the drawing board for some time, but to date, the Alliance has had little luck securing even a single chip. The pesky things have a habit of exploding when anyone tries to remove them from a Black Hat—dead or alive. The junker believes the devices are largely inert before they're installed in a Combine goon and would be safe to tinker with. Unfortunately, there's only one place on earth where uninstalled headbanger chips can be found—in Throckmorton's armed camp.

Taylor is hoping the Resistance has an inside connection or can at least infiltrate the Combine's compound long enough to secure a few for him.

Making Contact

Taylor suggests the group head to Uravan and meet up with Sam Montgomery. The resistance fighter briefly visited Junkyard after the Combine's operation there was destroyed (either by the posse or Iron Alliance troops), but returned to her post to await word from Denver.

Should they propose giving a sat phone to the Resistance, Taylor says they had given them one before the Harvest, but it was apparently destroyed in the fighting. He's willing to commit another of Junkyard's quickly dwindling supply, but the heroes still have to deliver it. Either way, they have a trip to Denver on the itinerary.

Go East, Young Heroes!

Montgomery is easily located at Uravan and readily agrees to accompany the group back to Denver. It's been many months since she heard from her old comrades-in-arms and she's tired of sitting on her hands. She was reluctant to make the trip across the Rockies alone, and the heroes look more than capable of handling themselves to her.

The journey is more than 325 miles through rough terrain and on roads that haven't been repaired in over a decade and a half. Depending on their mode of transportation, it could take anywhere from several days to a few weeks, and far, far longer if the posse is trying to cross the mountains in the winter!

As with previous installments, you can make the journey as difficult or as easy on the group as you wish, Marshal. There's plenty of time to throw in a sidetrack or two along the way, or you can get right to the next bit of action.

Combine Patrols

Once the group gets within 60 miles of Denver, they run the risk of encountering some of Throckmorton's patrols. Each

day inside that perimeter, if the posse has a scout out front of the group, she can make a single Notice roll. With a success, the hero catches sight of a patrol in time to allow the party a group Stealth roll to hide before the Combine soldiers get in sight. Give them a +2 to the roll if the sharp-eyed waster got a raise on the Notice roll.

If the Stealth roll was successful, the heroes can ambush the Black Hats, starting the first round with surprise. Otherwise, the patrol passes by, oblivious of the posse's presence.

If the Notice or Stealth roll failed, the Combine troops attack. They fight until more than half their number is Incapacitated before trying to retreat. If any do escape, the Combine is alerted to the presence of an armed group. Treat further patrols as *active* guards should the heroes try to ambush again.

- **Black Hats (20):** Use the stats for Black Hats from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.
- **Red Hat:** Use the stats for Red Hats from the *Hell on Earth Companion*.

Urban Blight

Once they reach Denver, the heroes may be startled to discover the city is largely intact. A single ghost rock bomb was dropped on the Hellstromme Industries compound to the north, but a shield similar to the one that protected Junkyard saved it from destruction. So, the Confederacy resorted to old-fashioned neutron bombs and biological agents to eradicate the populace. Most of the buildings still stand today, even though the vast majority is completely unoccupied.

Montgomery explains that Throckmorton's army controls the area north of old Interstate 70. The Combine has effectively turned the highway corridor into a demilitarized zone, complete with razor wire, mine fields, and guard posts. The rest of the

Denver Encounters

While the city center is a scavenger's dream—treat it as “unlikely to have been picked over” for any scavenging attempts—it's also crawling with Combine forces. If you want to drive that fact home to your players, roll on this table about every half-hour the posse spends either traveling the streets or scrounging through the ruins. Black Hats can be fast-talked on a successful Persuasion roll, while scavs can be cowed with Intimidation.

d20 Result

1–4	No encounter.
5–9	d10+10 Black Hats on foot.
10–11	1d4 Vengeance Brigade automatons.
12	Raptor.
13	1d8 scavs. Use the stats for Raiders from <i>Hell on Earth Reloaded</i> .
14–16	2d10 Walkin' Wead.
17–18	1d10 Veteran Walkin' Dead.
19	Reckoner's minion. Pick any Wild Card abomination from <i>Hell on Earth Reloaded</i> or the <i>Companion</i> , or this book that tickles your fancy!
20	Resistance scouting party*. Requires a Notice roll (–2) to spot. Use the stats for Soldiers from <i>Hell on Earth Reloaded</i> .

*If Montgomery is with the group, the Resistance party recognizes her and initiates contact.

Combine dislikes the rank-and-file Black Hats almost as much as everyone else, so the organization's grunts are quartered south of I-70, in the downtown area. A settlement of camp followers depraved and despicable enough to do business

with the Black Hats grew up in the old downtown area surrounding it.

The downtown slum also provided the Resistance a way to stay close to the Black Hats and even engage in black market trade. Montgomery's initial plan is to link up with contacts there. As they make their way into the downtown area, they discover her plan is doomed to failure. When Raven moved through the city with his army of the dead, most of the citizens of the area were massacred—including the Resistance contacts.

Not to be thwarted so easily, the guerilla leads them through the city to Resistance safehouses, hoping to find some sign of her friends. Finally, as they approach the steps of an old elementary school in southeast Denver, allow each hero a Notice roll to spot red dots suddenly appearing on their chests—laser targeting sights!

Change of Plan

The group is confronted by Resistance sentries, who relax immediately upon recognizing Montgomery. While it looks unimposing on the exterior, the building has been heavily fortified on the inside with sandbags, metal plating, and even thermal shielding.

The heroes are led to a man in a surprisingly well-maintained US Army uniform. He introduces himself as Major Andrew DeLaski. DeLaski is a Project Damocles soldier (see *Hell on Earth Reloaded*), and he and a few other men under his command reactivated not long before the Harvest. They initially served only as cadre and trainers for the Resistance.

Prior to the Harvest, the Combine was deliberately allowing the Resistance to not only exist, but also win an occasional victory. Throckmorton used them as a “training tool” to provide his own soldiers with combat experience. When the Harvest began, the Denver AI determined the Resistance was no longer necessary and pulled out the stops to eliminate them.

The previous leader of the resistance, along with the rest of the Damocles detachment, was slain in the fighting with Raven’s horde and the purge that followed. Major DeLaski doesn’t know about the change in Combine strategy, though, and takes the recent downturn as a reflection of a failing on his part.

Not Gonna Do It

DeLaski is grateful to get firsthand news from Junkyard, and if they brought him a sat phone, he’s downright ecstatic. He brings the posse up to speed on things in Denver to the best of his ability. He’s interested in Doc Schwartz’s plan, but puts a damper on the party’s hopes.

The major informs them that, while Black Hat patrols basically squat in any empty building they can find downtown, all new recruits are housed in the old Denver Mint in the heart of downtown. It’s also where Combine doctors do the implantation surgery and is heavily fortified.

All entrances are heavily guarded and any assault is going to bring hordes of Black Hats, automatons, and worse down on any attackers’ heads. The Mint withstood Raven’s horde. The major won’t risk his few remaining people on what might turn out to be a fool’s errand.

The major knows the chips are manufactured in the former Hellstromme Industries complex north of the city and breaking into that nightmare isn’t a sane proposition. However, the Combine does have to get the headbanger chips

from the complex to the Mint building somehow.

While most supplies are delivered via trucks, the Resistance believes they use a raptor to fly in the chips. The guerillas have observed an airborne automaton making a weekly visit to the top of the building and unloads a single, small crate. DeLaski suspects this is how the Combine gets the valuable devices safely across the city.

However, the major says taking down a raptor is no easy task—particularly in the heart of Denver. While he’s willing to turn over a couple of Project Damocles rocket launchers to the heroes, he won’t throw his fighters into harm’s way.

Aerial Ambush

Major DeLaski provides the posse with all the information he has on the raptor drops, including when it occurs, as well as the route the aircraft follows. Although its flight path varies after leaving the HI complex, once across the I-70 DMZ its approach follows a consistent pattern over old Interstate 25 and then east to the Mint. DeLaski suggests the best point for an ambush is the Auraria Campus, which lies several blocks west of the Black Hat barracks.

The campus housed three different higher learning institutions before the war and offers good fields of fire from facility rooftops. It also contains considerable stretches of open ground to allow the heroes easier access to the wreckage should they manage to bring it down. The downside is its relative nearness to the Black Hat stronghold, which lies barely seven blocks to the east along a wide avenue.

The “when” of the weekly supply flight is up to you, Marshal. It can be the very next day or nearly a week away, if you want the posse to spend some time mixing it up with Black Hats and automatons.

Thirty Seconds Over Denver

On the scheduled day, Montgomery volunteers to lead the posse through Denver to the Auraria Campus. The major warns that the Combine sent all manner of mechanical death into the underground to smoke out the rebels after the Harvest. Traveling through the extensive sewer system is no longer any safer than sneaking above ground—in other words, use the **Denver Encounters Table** on page 32 regardless of the route they take if you want to complicate the journey!

The Auraria Campus is a rough triangle about half a mile long on each side. Within its boundaries are academic and administrative buildings, sporting facilities, a massive library, and even a block of Victorian houses preserved as a historical park. There are also, as promised, huge parking lots and grassy areas perfect for crashing a raptor into.

Allow the heroes to set up their ambush however they like. At the appointed time, the raptor appears. Undead robot killing

machines are nothing if not prompt. If the party's plan is sound, allow them to attack from surprise on the first round.

Once attacked, the raptor engages in combat with surprising zeal. While taking down the armored flying deathbot might prove a challenge, it does its part to help by refusing to retreat. Programmed to kill and driven by a zombie brain, the raptor has chafed at being delegated to supply runs. It relishes the chance to slaughter some humans and does not retreat until it suffers three wounds.

Like all automatons, the raptor does self-destruct if the characters manage to bring it down. Luckily for them, the crate carrying the headbanger chips is fairly sturdy. Although it is destroyed in the explosion, some of the chips survived. A scav picking through the wreckage can make a Notice roll (-2) each round to spot one of the intact implants.

However, that doesn't mean everything is coming up roses for the wasters. At the beginning of each round starting five rounds after the first shot, roll on the



Denver Encounters Table on page 32 to represent the arrival of reinforcements from nearby. Treat all rolls of 12–20 as “No Encounter.” The Combine forces continue to converge on the area until the posse escapes the campus, either into the ruins or through the sewers.

♦ **Raptor:** Use the stats for Raptor from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

After-Action Report

Assuming they manage to get their hands on a headbanger chip and out of the city, Doc Schwartz thanks them profusely. He vows to get to work on deciphering it as soon as possible, but isn’t particularly clear on what he hopes to accomplish should he be successful.

If they don’t come home with a chip, a week or two after they return to Junkyard, Taylor manages to convince Major DeLaski to dispatch a mission of Resistance troops. It takes a good deal of cajoling and no small amount of bribery with supplies and weaponry to sway the guerilla leader, but the junker does eventually get his toy.

Bad Day at Blackleaf

This adventure should occur at least a week after the posse returns to Junkyard from **Monkey in the Wrench**. If the heroes were not successful in recovering a headbanger chip, then extend this another month to allow time for the Resistance to snag one and deliver it to Doc Schwartz.

An Enigma Partially Unwrapped

As Taylor’s top troubleshooters, the posse is called to a high-level meeting of the leaders of the Iron Alliance. Not only are Ike Taylor, Doc Schwartz, and Joan present, but also on hand are several high-ranking officers of the Nauvoo Legion and another man the heroes are unlikely to recognize. Taylor starts by introducing the posse to the other Alliance bigwigs and tells the council

about the group’s recent endeavor in Denver.

He then recounts the details of White Cloud’s prophecy, before turning the floor over to Doc Schwartz. The junker pulls out a ream of papers and says the following:

“As most of you know, we’ve been monitoring the underground movements of the so-called ‘rattlers’ and their humanoid minions for a while now. Recent seismic readings indicate considerable activity along a north-by-northwesterly line from their primary concentration in the central Rockies.

Correlating the sensor reports over the last few days, I’ve come to the conclusion a large contingent of the creatures are moving toward Idaho or western Montana.”

Taylor takes over at this point, saying, “Our first concern, of course, was a possible assault against Boise, but new details have come to light. The Resistance has sent word that the Combine has also mobilized a sizeable force headed north as well. I’m going to turn the floor over to Ty Jackson, our resident Librarian, so he can explain.”

Jackson, the previously unidentified man, speaks.

“Ike came to me with the Sioux prophecy several weeks ago, hoping the Grand Library’s archives might shed some light on the meaning. After conferring with Sacramento, the Librarians are in agreement with the interpretation that the larger black bird is probably representative of the entity known as Raven. Furthermore, we also agree the smaller birds likely symbolize elements of the Combine.

The identity of the tree, though, seems to be central to proper interpretation of the vision. While there have been numerous theories and considerable debate, the recent sensor data Doc

Schwartz mentioned has swayed most of the scholars to arrive at a consensus.

We believe the tree referenced is actually Blackleaf Correctional Facility in northwestern Montana."

Hard Time

Jackson gives the group a short briefing on the prison.

Blackleaf was a special prison built by the Agency to hold supernatural offenders—in other words, not just the worst of the worst, but the magically empowered worst of the worst. It was built in an area where the division between the Earth and the Hunting Grounds was particularly dense. Hucksters, sykers, and other types manifesting supernatural powers found it nearly impossible to activate them within the prison, and Harrowed found themselves unable to do more than maintain their undead existence.

Although the science on why the area was so resistant to cross-dimensional contact was never settled, occult researchers had identified the presence of a unique ore under the prison. Some theorists suggested the ore might have been of extraterrestrial origin, possibly even from the alien planet Banshee, but geological surveys did not support the asteroid-strike hypothesis. Regardless, the area was under a damping field that effectively blocked nearly all access to the Hunting Grounds.

The Confederacy directed no less than four ghost rock bombs at Blackleaf, but the damping field prevented their detonation. And although the human guards appear to have either deserted their posts or simply died, the automated defense systems remain functional and include sentry guns, automaton patrols, and minefields.

After Jackson finishes providing that bit of history, Doc Schwartz volunteers the following:

"The data provided by these seismic sensors is consistent with the subterranean creatures moving toward Blackleaf. Furthermore, all evidence suggests that the damping field surrounding Blackleaf will negatively impact any supernatural entity that enters it. Therefore, we believe Raven has struck some kind of deal with the Combine to use its troops to breach the facility."

Ike Taylor concludes the presentation by saying, "We don't know who—or what—Raven, the rattlers, and their Combine buddies are trying to free there. We do know he's probably not expending this much effort to release Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny."

Marching Orders

The Iron Alliance wants the posse to accompany an intercepting force north to attempt to prevent whatever Raven and the Combine are planning at Blackleaf. The force consists of a battalion of Nauvoo Legionnaires and the vehicles to transport them. In addition to the Junkyard troops, it's possible the heroes may have gathered other allies across the Wasted West who come to their aid. See the **Friends in High Places and Low** sidebar on page 39 for details.

Estimates put the Combine force alone at nearly 1,000 Black Hats, at least two dozen automatons, and support units. The seismic sensors aren't able to provide an accurate count of the rattlers, wormlings, and any other...things Raven may have with him, but the sheer volume of readings is daunting.

However, it's not entirely hopeless. Although Doc Schwartz was not able to use the headbanger chip to crack the Combine's weapon booby traps, he did manage to go that idea one better. The junker concocted a transmitter that *should* cause all headbanger chips and Combine equipment to detonate!

The device is roughly the size of a field radio and weighs 20 lbs. He's not had time to craft more than a single transmitter, and the device is limited to 30 yards and line of sight. Nonetheless, if it is effective, it will provide an enormous advantage to the Junkyard forces when they engage Throckmorton's forces.

Overland

The Legion troops are ready to move out within a day or so. Junkyard has ponied up enough trucks to transport the entire battalion, but they are all soft-skinned vehicles or tractor trailers. It's not just that the Iron Alliance doesn't have enough armored vehicles to deploy; in the wake of the Harvest, it doesn't have *any* capable of making the trip to northwestern Montana. All told, there are over a dozen SUVs, trucks, and semis in the convoy, not counting any of the heroes' personal vehicles.

Blackleaf lies about 650 miles from Junkyard, making for a fair jaunt, even with vehicles. The plus side of traveling with a large group of armed individuals is that almost nothing wants to tangle with it. If you choose to roll on the **Encounter Tables** for the appropriate regions in *Hell on Earth Reloaded* during the four day trip, ignore any result that isn't a natural phenomenon. Everything else—even trader caravans—cuts and run at the first sight of an armed column.

Blackleaf Correctional Facility

Fear Level 4

At the end of the journey, the posse and Legionnaires arrive at the edge of the grounds of Blackleaf Correctional. The facility occupies an area about four miles in diameter, which is clearly defined by a pair of chain-link fences running around the entire perimeter. Every 50 yards or so, a faded sign is posted on the fence announcing the

property to be a federal correctional facility. The sign also notifies the reader that the area is under constant video and drone surveillance, and that lethal force is not only authorized against any and all trespassers, but actually required by law.

There is very little of the facility visible from the fence line. First, it's nearly two miles away and hidden by terrain and vegetation. Second, the vast majority of the prison is actually underground, supported by its own fusion plant.

A triple-stack of razor wire fills the space between the chain-link fences. A single gate—closed, locked, and rusted shut—used to allow entrance to the facility. However, the active sentry guns covering the gate and the rusted hulks of a variety of vehicles make it clear visitors are not welcome.

While the fencing has been breached in a few places over the years, sun-whitened skeletons on the ground not far from the breaks are clear testament to the end result of entering the facilities. Any waster who spends a moment or two scanning the area behind the fences can make a Notice roll. With a success, he spots another sentry gun or two concealed inside the perimeter. On a raise, he picks out a drone aircraft buzzing high overhead.

Visiting Hours

If the visual warnings aren't enough and some fool scavenger tries to enter the grounds, the prison responds in force. While the human administrators are long gone, the Warden—the AI designed to monitor and control the prison's automated defenses—is not only active, but also thoroughly enjoying its job. In addition to ground sensors and video surveillance, drone aircraft constantly fly over the facility, using infrared and thermographic sensors to monitor for breaches. Upon detection of any such

Sentry Gun

In addition to the guns, the entire perimeter is surrounded by anti-personnel mine fields two hundred yards thick. See the rules for these in **Battlefield Hazards** (see *Hell on Earth Companion*). However, these are densely packed, and a trespasser encounters a mine on a roll of 1 or 2. The road is mined with a mix of both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle in a similar fashion. The Warden can deactivate these for authorized visitors—but there are no such things as authorized visitors anymore!

Finally, the Warden routes automaton guards to the site of the breach, to engage any trespassers or escapees directly. The automatons are affixed with friend-or-foe identifiers that prevent them from triggering the mines or sentry guns. Although the prison doesn't have an endless supply of the cybernetic death machines, it does have several squads of them active at any given time.

Blackleaf Automatons: Use the stats for Standard Automaton from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

Sentry Guns: Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, Shots 250, AP 2, No penalty from full auto. Notice d10 to detect targets. The guns are in armored turrets and have Toughness 14 (5).

violation, the Warden immediately takes action.

The first line of defense is the prison's stationary sentry guns. All the sentry guns have overlapping fields of fire with at least one other emplacement and usually two others. See the **Sentry Gun** sidebar on page 38 for their stats.

Dead Zone

Jackson's briefing should have alerted the heroes to the dangers of the prison's defenses. He also told them about the magic-nullifying field. However, some stubborn wasters have to learn things the hard way.

Within the perimeter of the prison, the skill roll to activate any Power is at a -6 penalty. On top of that, the Power Point cost is doubled. That multiplier is applied after any other modifications to the cost are calculated, so a three-missile *bolt* costs base 6 Power Points to cast.

Harrowed and Cyborg Edges simply don't work at all once the deader is inside the fence line. The manitou can generate enough juice to keep the vulture bait up and walking, but even it can't manage a strong enough connection to the Hunting Grounds to power up the really fun stuff.

In short, not only would most people not choose to live there, but Blackleaf Correctional Facility is very unpleasant to even visit.

Throwdown at High Noon

Neither the Combine nor Raven realized they were in a footrace with the Iron Alliance to reach Blackleaf, so even with their head start, the heroes and their troops reach the prison a day or so ahead of the bad guys. What they do with that is up to them, Marshal, but a wise group would begin preparing for the coming fight.

The leader of the Nauvoo Legion, Colonel Kale, is a savvy veteran, but

he's open to any ideas the heroes may put on the table. If any waster has Knowledge (Battle) d10 or higher, he's willing to turn over the planning and command to her. The colonel has been around long enough to know winning is more important than taking credit.

The Battle

The next day, the Combine forces roll up the valley toward Blackleaf and the two forces engage. We recommend you use the Mass Battle rules from *Savage Worlds* to play out the battle.

The Combine has a little over 650 Black Hats, 24 Vengeance Brigade automatons, and a few lightly-armored fighting vehicles. The Denver AI didn't send any heavy armor or air support with the contingent as it doesn't completely trust Raven after the stunt he pulled during the Harvest. Still, they have a sizable numeric advantage. Opposing them are the Legion's 400 soldiers and the posse.

For game purposes, the Combine receives 10 tokens due to their superior equipment and the automatons, and the Legion gets 5 tokens. On the surface, it looks like a pretty one-sided battle. If none of the heroes are leading the Legion forces, Colonel Kale is a Veteran Soldier (see *Hell on Earth Companion*) with Knowledge (Battle) d8. Even if the colonel is in charge, allow the players to make all the relevant rolls for the battle.

If the heroes made reasonable preparations, such as having the Legion prepare fighting positions or the like, give them a slight advantage in terrain—in other words a -1 penalty to the Combine's Knowledge (Battle) roll. Allow the heroes to participate in the battle firsthand if they're so inclined as well, with their actions directly affecting the Knowledge (Battle) roll as described in *Savage Worlds*.

Friends in High Places and Low

Over the course of the campaign, the posse may have had a chance to interact with various groups across the Wasted West through some of the Savage Tales found in **Chapter 2**. If they were successful, they find their actions paying off in the fight at Blackleaf.

Wormwood (see page 71): Should the posse have succeeded in defeating One and his cyborgs, the Wyoming survivors are able to engage in a few ambushes against the Combine forces as they move through their territory. The Combine begins the battle with only nine tokens instead of ten.

Sky Raider Down (see page 79): If the wasters saved the Sky Pirates' bacon in Albuquerque, the airborne raiders return the favor. Their own scouts caught sight of the Combine column and a detachment arrives at Blackleaf just in time to lend a hand. The Legion commander gains a +1 bonus to Knowledge (Battle) rolls thanks to their light air support.

Knights of the Old Republic (see page 61): If the posse was successful in thwarting the Butcher in Boise, a Templar and his Squire meet up with the Legion as it is making its way to Blackleaf. The Legion commander (whether it's Colonel Kale or a hero) receives a +1 bonus to all morale checks.

The Legion, with its back against Blackleaf Correctional Facility, doesn't really have a route of retreat. Its leader gets a +2 bonus to all morale rolls as a result.

The Combine leader is a battle-hardened Red Hat with Knowledge (Battle) d8. Not surprisingly, the Black Hats don't have any heroes on their side.

Doc's Gizmo

It's likely the posse has high hopes for Doc Schwartz's device, but Colonel Kale is skeptical about the contraption and won't detail one of his soldiers to deploy it. One of the wasters is welcome to put his own neck on the line, though.

If one of the heroes does use it, he can't otherwise affect the battle individually. His entire effort is expended staying alive and getting the gizmo into the best spot to trigger it each round. Each round, he must make a Fighting, Shooting, or arcane skill roll like any other individual character in the battle,

but only to determine what damage, if any he suffers. In other words, with a failure, he takes 4d6 damage, a success gets him 3d6, a raise 2d6, and two raises none. There is no effect, other than the gizmo's effect, of his roll.

For once, a mad science invention works almost exactly as advertised. When activated, every headbanger chip and piece of Combine equipment within 30 yards (15") immediately detonates. While it is enormously effective, it still has less range than a bullet—or even a thrown grenade—so the character deploying it can't just run wily-nily around the battlefield blowing up Combine troops.

At the end of each round of combat in which a character deployed Doc's gizmo, the Combine automatically loses a token regardless of the outcome of the Knowledge (Battle) rolls. This also means the Combine leader has to make a morale roll at the end of the round as well.



Raven's Sudden, Inevitable Betrayal

Before the battle gets rolling, the heroes may wonder where their least favorite undead Indian shaman is. Raven has positioned himself behind the Combine troops, not as a reserve, but as a blocking force. He has no intention of letting the Black Hats out alive. While the fighting is taking place at the gates to Blackleaf, he's been invoking the ritual to release the Old Worm. All he needs is enough blood on the ground.

When either the Legion is facing unavoidable defeat or they've managed to turn the tide and put the Combine on the retreat, Raven strikes. Five massive rattlers erupt around the Combine forces. Seen from above, the great beasts are positioned to form a five-pointed star. From the ground around them, hordes of wormlings pour onto the battlefield and tear into the Black Hats with no regard for their own losses. Two of the worms burst forth on the edges of the battle lines between the Combine and the Legion, but the wormlings and rattlers seem focused on the Black Hats...for now.

Raven's magic requires the sacrifice of the blood of allies, a fact he conveniently left out when negotiating with the Denver AI. For now, he's only concerned with slaughtering the Combine troops. The wormlings and their masters only take note of the posse and Legion if they try to intervene—which is a lucky thing for the wasters, since Raven's forces outnumber the Combine and Legionnaires combined several times over!

The massacre continues for a couple of minutes, giving the posse and surviving Legionnaires time to fall back and find a route of retreat. If they don't think of it, Colonel Kale makes a strong recommendation that the Iron Alliance contingent practice the better part of

valor—or at least rally at a fall-back position and reassess the situation.

Daddy's Home!

After about five minutes, the worst of the slaughter abates, even though a few Black Hats survive in a knot on the center of the battlefield. Any waster who makes a Notice roll including any hearing-based modifiers picks out the sound of a strange chanting carrying over the crisp, Montana air. There's a strange, song-like quality to it, and it is no language any posse member (or human for that matter) has ever heard.

The chanting comes to a crescendo, then abruptly halts. The entire battlefield goes still, and the wormlings and rattlers freeze in place. Even from a distance, the heroes can see the few remaining Black Hats seem to relax, believing the worst to be over.

That's about the time the earth begins to shake and roll violently in an earthquake greater than any since possibly the Great Maze was formed. The worst of it seems to be focused in the area between the great worms, and the trapped Black Hats are shaken from their feet. The dirt around them starts to roil, and enormous rocks burst out of the ground, pushed upward by some tremendous force.

Then a vast column erupts beneath the Combine troops, carrying them upward at a dizzying pace. As dirt falls from the column, it becomes obvious the "column" is actually a vast rattler—the Old Worm. The elder god dwarfs its lesser cousins and is nearly one hundred yards in diameter, with tentacles as thick as a tractor trailer. A few of the luckiest Black Hats fall to their death in the avalanche of rock and soil, but most are devoured as it rises hundreds of feet out of the earth.

The entire scene is horrifying on a level the heroes are unlikely to have ever witnessed. Anyone seeing the terrible

spectacle must make an immediate Fear check at -6, plus the modifier for Blackleaf's Fear Level (-4). Honestly, running in a panic is probably a reasonable response.



The Old Worm

This creature once fought the Reckoners to a near-standstill by itself. Calling it an abomination is like calling the Mississippi a creek. The monster, if fully exposed, is about as long as the Empire State Building was tall—approximately a quarter-mile—and nearly a hundred yards across. Full-grown rattlers beside it look like minnows swimming next to a Great White.

Just in case it's not clear from the stats below, this is not an entity that characters, even Legendary ones, are meant to have a snowball's chance in Hell taking down in a straight fight. But hey, if they insist...

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d12, Spirit d12+4, Strength d12+12, Vigor d12+4

Skills: Fighting d12+4, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Shooting d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 10; **Toughness:** 52 (12)

Special Abilities:

- **Alien Mind:** Its alien mind cannot conceive of fear as humans understand

it, and it does not communicate on any level a mortal mind can comprehend. It is immune to Fear, Intimidation, and Taunt.

- **Armor +12:** The Old Worm is covered in incredibly thick, scaly skin.
- **Arcane Discharge:** Instead of grappling, Old Worm may release a stream of pure arcane energy, siphoned directly from the Hunting Grounds. This affects a Large Burst Template and is treated as a Heavy Weapon. Range 100/200/400, Damage 5d8, AP 40.
- **Bite:** Str+2d12. In addition, if the creature scores a raise on its Fighting roll to bite an opponent of Size +4 or smaller, it has swallowed its prey whole. Located at the back of its mouth are several sets of powerful secondary jaws, which act as a grinder. The victim suffers Str+d4 damage each round until it is pulverized or the creature is killed and the victim cut free.
- **Burrowing:** 30".
- **Fear -6:** The sight of an elder god made manifest on Earth is a mind-shattering sight.
- **Gargantuan:** Heavy Armor. Attacks from any creature man-sized or smaller are at +4 due to the beast's immense size. Using its massive bulk,



the Old Worm can slam itself down on a foe or obstacle of Size 15 or less, for a stomp attack that deals d12+22 damage, less its target's Size. This is treated as a Heavy Weapon.

- **Invulnerability:** The Old Worm can be Shaken, but not wounded by any weapon not originating in the Hunting Grounds. Magical attacks can cause it wounds as usual.
- **Size +30:** The elder god measures over 1000' in length.
- **Tentacles:** The Old Worm's tentacles are over 200" long. It simply smashes targets larger than Size 5 for Str+d8 damage. This is treated as a Heavy Weapon. It pulls smaller victims (including vehicles smaller than a tractor trailer) toward its maw. Each success and raise on an opposed Strength roll drags the victim 2d6" closer to the elder god's mouth. Vehicles use the driver's Driving skill instead. Each tentacle can take only a single wound, but has a Toughness 20. Bullets and impaling weapons cause only half damage, and blunt weapons cause no damage. Wounds inflicted on the tentacles cause the Old Worm itself no harm.
- **Weakness (Hunting Grounds):** The Old Worm takes normal damage from weapons created entirely in the Hunting Grounds.
- **Coup:** Anyone formidable enough to count coup on this creature gains +2 Toughness and a boost of two die types to Strength (no max).

Aftermath

The Old Worm remains above ground for a minute or two, flexing its tentacles and bellowing a bone-rattling roar that's a combination of rage and exhilaration at its freedom after a millennium of imprisonment. The other rattlers and their wormling minions worship their risen deity in awe and reverence. Unless the heroes do something *extremely* foolish like attack the Old Worm, they have time

to fade into the Montana wilderness with the rest of the Legion survivors.

If they insist on attacking the Old Worm, you can find its stats on page 41. (We'd also recommend they have replacement characters on hand...)

Once it's had a little time to stretch its tentacles, the enormous abomination retreats into the ground, followed by the other rattlers and wormlings. Raven is nowhere to be seen once the subterranean creatures sink beneath the surface again.

A tremblor that gradually fades in intensity heralds the monster's departure from the area, leaving the posse and their shell-shocked allies to contemplate what they've seen.

Belly of the Beast

This installment takes place the day following the battle with the Combine and the subsequent release of the Old Worm from underneath Blackleaf.

Collect Call

As soon as the satellite can complete the relay, the wasters' phone begins ringing. It doesn't stop until someone answers it. Ike Taylor is on the other end. He's got his end set up on a speaker, and the rest of the Iron Alliance council is on hand.

Assuming the posse has already sent an update on the battle, he jumps right in with his news. If this is the first contact they've had since Raven released the Old Worm, he gets the run-down from the heroes, confers for a moment with Doc Schwartz and Librarian Jackson, then gives them the story below.

"We've got a big problem headed our way down here. Doc says his seismic sensors are systematically going down in a direct line between your location and Junkyard. The only thing that could do that is a rattler the size of what you described."

"If it continues its current route, it will be here in less than three days. Jackson is conferring with the Grand Library, but there's nothing on record that he's aware of that matches that monster's description beyond a few whispered legends referenced in ancient works. Their best guess is that thing may predate humanity."

"We've got no idea how to stop it, and if that thing comes up in Junkyard...well, we think that's pretty much game over."

Give the players a chance to brainstorm and suggest the MIRV. If they don't, someone on the other end does.

"That's probably the only thing we've got on hand with the punch to hurt something of the size you described."

There's a brief pause, and then if the heroes haven't pieced it together, he continues.

"Doc and Jackson think it might be what White Cloud was talking about—turns out it was manufactured in Buffalo, NY. And it is white. So...I'm willing to try anything at this point."

There's more discussion and ideas are tossed about, but the Alliance leaders keep coming up against the fact the Old Worm is over a quarter of a mile beneath the ground. The MIRV won't penetrate that distance effectively, and waiting for the monster to surface means Junkyard gets destroyed anyway.

Again, allow the players a chance to come up with the solution—the Hellbore tunneler. If they don't, one of the council members remembers it. Doc Schwartz believes with a team of junkers and mechanics he can get the vehicle up and running, at least temporarily, within a day, which is conveniently a little less time than it takes the posse to make it back to Logan, where the Hellbore sits.

Taylor ends the call with an appeal to the wasters' better natures.

"I know driving a drilling machine a quarter-mile below the earth to deliver a ghost rock bomb into the gut of a monster the size of a skyscraper is probably a suicide mission, but I'm asking you folks to give it a shot. So far, the shaman's prophecy has been right on the money, and according to him, you're the only ones who can do this."

"If he's right, this isn't just about saving Junkyard, but possibly what's left of humanity. There's nothing we can offer that is comparable to what we're asking you to risk. The best I can do is say we'll raise a glass for you."

Backtracking

The trip back to Logan, assuming the wasters still have access to at least one Legion vehicle, takes about three days. If any of the Legionnaires survived the battle, they can provide escorts for the group. Each token lost in the battle represents 80 members of the Junkyard force for purposes of calculating survivors. As long as there are more than 100 in the caravan, ignore any encounter that isn't weather-related if you choose to use the **Encounter Tables** in *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

If the posse's earned the trust of the Sky Pirates, they can instead hitch a lift from them. This greatly cuts down on the travel time and also avoids any worries about encounters on the road.

Finally, if the group is out of luck and friends, Taylor sends one of the Iron Alliance's handful of aircraft north to pick up the scav. This takes two days to coordinate and execute, although it does avoid any potential ground encounters.

Hellbound and Down

Doc and his repair crew are as good as their word and get the Hellbore back in a functional state within a day and a half. The junker also brought the MIRV on a tractor trailer, which easily fits aboard the Combine's tunneler.

Junkyard's favorite mad scientist has one other bit of news for the posse: He's going with them. There's not enough time to give the wasters a crash-course in driving the Hellbore *and* arming the MIRV. To make sure the job gets done right, he's going to do it himself. There's too much at risk otherwise.

A small detachment of ten Legionnaires is also tasked with accompanying the posse. Colonel Kale or, if he fell in battle, his successor, explains the small chance of survival as well as what's at stake before asking for volunteers. He gets so many the troops have to draw lots to see who gets to go.

In addition to the tractor trailer holding the MIRV, the Junkyard force loads a motley mix of HMMWVs, ATVs, and a few dirt bikes in the faint hope there might be time to make an escape back along the Hellbore's path prior to detonation.

Once everything is on board, Doc tells the group there's little time for goodbyes or other preparations. To make the intersection point, they need to leave immediately.

The Plan

Doc briefs the heroes on the fine points of the Alliance's plan while the Hellbore burrows beneath the Wasatch Mountains en route to its rendezvous. The grinding sound of the drill and treads makes communication inside the tunneler an exercise in shouting.

"After conferring with the experts at the Grand Library, we have come to suspect that even a ghost rock nuke might not be enough to destroy the huge worm. Reports from the fall of Lost Angels claimed Famine survived a blast of comparable injury. The hasty research the Librarians were able to complete on short notice leads them to believe the creature Junkyard is facing predates even the Reckoners and is likely on a similar power level—or greater.

Overdue Fees

If the posse didn't put a bullet in Librarian Bright's noggin in **That Town Needs an Enema!**, they face an added complication to the plan to thwart the Old Worm. The Harrowed Librarian sneaks aboard the Hellbore sometime before its departure. She waits until the tunneler gets well underway and then does her best to disable it, trapping the heroes and dooming the hated Junkyard to a trip down the elder god's gullet.

Her first act is to sabotage the Hellbore's engine. Doc dispatches the most tech-savvy heroes to try to jury-rig it back online. Once they leave the bridge, the Harrowed moves in to kill Doc Schwartz. She holds him personally responsible for the daisy-cutter that took out Logan and killing him, while simultaneously preventing Junkyard's rescue, would go a long way toward sating her thirst for vengeance.

"While en route from Junkyard, I modified the MIRV to detonate its warheads in a manner that I hope will focus the energies released by the ghost rock in such a way as to actually generate a brief rip in the fabric separating our world and the so-called "Hunting Grounds." It's my hope that a combination of the blast and dimensional tear will, if not outright destroy the creature, at least banish it from this plane."

He adds, as an afterthought,

"In theory, of course. Nothing like this has ever been attempted for obvious reasons."

If asked what those reasons are, he answers matter-of-factly,

"Because it's absolutely insane, of course."

Underground Zero

After a few hours of travel (and possibly an attack by a long-forgotten enemy—see the **Overdue Fees** sidebar on page 45), Doc powers down the Hellbore's engine. He tells the wasters and Legionnaires that they've reached the likely intersect point. Although he believes the tunneler's own digging vibrations were enough to draw the Old Worm's attention, he has the heroes and soldiers get out to deploy a dozen of the seismic thumpers used in his sensor web to ensure the monster rattler comes their way.

The bomb is outfitted with a seismic detonator that he emphasizes *should* trigger when the huge rattler is within the effective blast radius. Unfortunately, to be certain the Hellbore itself doesn't cause the device to go off prematurely, he can't arm it until the vehicle is stopped—and the rear door down, if the posse wants to try to escape.

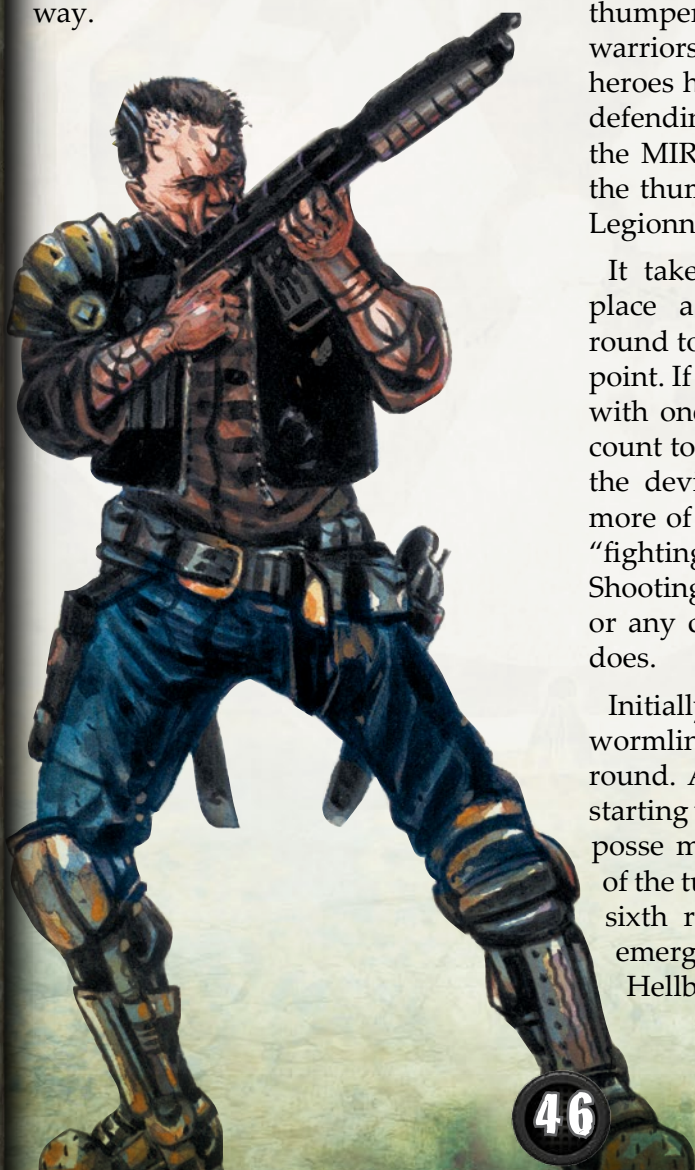
Arming the MIRV at the likely intersect point requires about a minute, which he can do while the group places the thumpers.

Early Arrivals

The Hellbore did indeed attract attention, although it's from the Old Worm's smaller minions. On the third round after the group begins setting the thumpers, an advance force of wormling warriors bursts from the tunnel walls. The heroes have to split their focus between defending Doc Schwartz while he arms the MIRV and finishing deployment of the thumpers. Let the posse control the Legionnaires as Allies during the fight.

It takes one character one round to place a seismic device and another round to travel to the next emplacement point. If the bearer stops to actually fight with one of the wormlings, it does not count toward the time needed to deploy the devices. Being attacked by one or more of the creatures does not count as "fighting" with them, but using Fighting, Shooting, Throwing, an arcane skill, or any combat maneuver (like Defend) does.

Initially, there are only a few of the wormlings, but their numbers grow each round. At the beginning of each round starting with the third, one wormling per posse member emerges from the walls of the tunnel to attack. Beginning on the sixth round, an additional wormling emerges and attempts to enter the Hellbore to engage the junker.



- **Legionnaires (10):** Use the stats for Soldiers from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with an NA M-21 assault rifle (Range 20/40/80, Damage 2d8, RoF 4, AP 2), two spare magazines, knife (Str+d4), improvised armor (+2).

- **Wormlings:** Use the stats for Wormlings (warrior) from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

We Are Leaving!

At the end of the tenth round, Doc Schwartz finishes arming the MIRV's detonator. He yells out to the heroes and surviving Legionnaires that it's time to go.

Ground-sensing sonar indicates the Old Worm is indeed on course for the Hellbore and will be within close enough range to trigger the detonator in about ten minutes. The junker suggests it would be good if they were not there at that time.

The Hellbore's tunnel is open enough to allow a vehicle up to and including the size of one of the HMMWV's to drive through. Debris and broken ground prohibit anything larger from passing easily. The heroes need to cover about five miles of tunnel in the next ten minutes to be safely out of the danger zone from both the blast and tunnel collapse, which means they need to average about 30 miles an hour. That's no mean feat in a rough-hewn tunnel, even when they're not being chased by wormlings!

Pulling this off is a Dramatic Task as detailed in *Savage Worlds*.

The heroes have five actions, each of which represents about two minutes of game time. Each hero who's driving a vehicle must make a Driving roll (-2) on each action. Five successes before the time runs out gets the driver and his vehicle to a reasonably safe distance before the detonation.

Passengers may assist with cooperative rolls (see *Savage Worlds*), using either Driving (to help navigate), or a Fighting, Shooting, or an arcane skill to represent holding off the hordes of wormlings that are swarming into the Hellbore's tunnel by this time.

Those using any skill other than Driving roll at -4. If using Shooting or an arcane skill, the heroes also expend 2d6 rounds of ammunition (or bursts) or 1d6 Power Points. Once the character is out of ammunition or Power Points, they must switch to another skill.

Any character who draws a Club for an Action Card during the Dramatic Task and fails his skill roll that action suffers 2d8 damage from a wormling attack.

Boom Goes the MIRV

At the end of the fifth action, the Old Worm reaches the Hellbore and the MIRV detonates. What this means for the characters depends on how good a driver was behind the wheel of the group's getaway vehicle(s).

If the driver got five or more successes, she got her vehicle to the fringes of the concussive wave. Those onboard suffer only 2d6 damage as the vehicle is tossed about roughly. As long as she doesn't dally in the tunnel, she and her passengers can drive the remaining 30 miles or so to the surface.

If the driver managed four successes, his vehicle is caught at the edge of the tunnel collapse. Passengers take 4d6 damage from the concussion, and another 2d8 from falling rock. Those who survive are trapped in the tunnel cave-in for 1d10 days until they can dig their way out. Halve that time if someone is digging from the other side of the cave-in.

If the driver managed only three successes, she only got to the edge of the actual blast. Everyone on board takes 5d10 damage from concussion and

another 3d10 from heat. Roll a d6. On a 4–6, a victim's clothing, hair, etc. are ignited by the heat. The tunnel collapses as above, causing a final 3d8 damage, and if the wasters survive that, they are effectively entombed until they find a way out, possibly through wormling tunnels, as the Hellbore tunnel effectively no longer exists in their vicinity.

On the sad occasion the driver couldn't manage even three successes, he and anyone on his vehicle are caught well within the blast and consumed...maybe. See the sidebar **Complications** on page 49 for a possible option to outright death.

Aftermath

The fact the Old Worm doesn't show up for the party is only one way Junkyard is assured it is no longer a threat—the underground explosion also created a huge crater two miles wide a day's ride away from the sudden lack of, well, earth.

If the posse managed to defeat the Old Worm with the MIRV, they're welcomed back to Junkyard as living legends. Henceforth, they enjoy Charisma +2 to any member of the Iron Alliance, including Joan's followers and the Templars. Any requests from them in the future are always viewed in the most favorable light by Taylor and his fellow councilors. After all, the wasters have certainly earned the benefit of the doubt!

Any who fell in battle are immortalized in tales and with memorial statues. If one of the wasters voluntarily remained behind to detonate MIRV, feel free to make the brave soul a Templar Saint.

This doesn't mean it's smooth sailing for the posse from here on out. While they've defeated an enormous threat, the Wasted West is still a long way from the return of civilization, and the Iron Alliance has an endless supply of tasks toward that end.

When the Dust Settles

Weeks turn into months and no sign of Raven is seen. Eventually, the Iron Alliance comes to the conclusion he was probably caught in the MIRV's blast and either incinerated or hurled into the Hunting Grounds. Either way, he's no longer a pressing concern.

The rattlers and their minions have been dealt a crushing blow. Many of the eldest of their kind died in the same blast that banished the Old Worm. The survivors lose their organization and scatter to the wastes. While some of the larger abominations may have survived, they've lost their last hope at regaining demigod status. Now they're nothing more than monsters to be hunted down by hated humanity.

The Combine suffered a moderate defeat at Blackleaf, but the Denver AI was canny enough to not fully commit to Raven's alliance. As a result, the Combine continues to remain a thorn in the side of the Iron Alliance. Doc's headbanger gizmo gives the Alliance an overwhelming advantage for a while, but the AI eventually catches on and modifies the chips to operate on a variable and encrypted frequency, nullifying the junker's invention.

Silas and the Cult of Doom were left out of the rattlers' scheme and escaped virtually unharmed. While the Harbinger's arrival during the Harvest set back the Mutant King's plans, he's been laying low gathering his forces for a new purge sometime in the future. In fact, the Cult of Doom is probably the Iron Alliance's most powerful foe at the end of **The Worms' Turn**.

Oops...

If the heroes fail to detonate the MIRV, the Old Worm reaches Junkyard in another day or so. The leaders of the Iron Alliance manage to evacuate the majority of the population, but even so, hundreds die as the elder god razes the city. When the creature finishes, it is unfit for human population.

Rattler and wormling attacks increase over the following weeks, while the Old Worm itself travels from settlement to settlement, unleashing millennias' worth of unnatural rage. The elder god begins with the larger towns like Oil Town, Corvallis, and Las Vegas, leaving the smaller settlements to rattlers and wormlings. Eventually, any gathering of more than a couple hundred humans becomes a worm buffet!

All hope isn't lost, but it certainly feels misplaced. The only way to rid the world of the Old Worm is to banish it to the Hunting Grounds, and the quickest way to do that was the MIRV. However, that doesn't mean there aren't other solutions. The second end of the world might just mark the beginning of an entire new campaign for your scavs, Marshal!

The posse could begin a new quest to locate a similar nuclear device for Doc Schwartz or the Chamber to modify. The greatest mad scientist of all, Hellstromme, might be able to design a gizmo capable of opening a dimensional rip...once they find him. The shamans in the Sioux Nations may be able to concoct a ritual to send it back—requiring suitably hard-to-obtain ingredients. Or perhaps the answer lies hidden in a secret Agency or Ranger cache of powerful artifacts—behind powerful wards and maybe a hellish entity or two.

Complications

There are plenty of ways the final encounter can go awry for the players, but two of them in particular deserve attention.

The first is if Doc Schwartz is killed, either by wormlings or Librarian Bright. In that case, one of the posse can figure out a way to jury-rig the detonator, but not the proximity device. Someone has to remain behind to trigger the MIRV when the Old Worm arrives. Make no mistake—this is a true suicide mission, but it's also what heroes are made of.

The second is if one or more of the characters is caught in the actual blast from the MIRV.

In both instances, Marshal, you can certainly just rule the poor waster has passed on, hopefully to a better place. After all, not many folks can shrug off a nuke at ground zero. However, if you're feeling generous, the heroic character(s) might instead be thrown across the dimensional barrier by the Doc's gizmo.

In that case, they're somewhere in the Hunting Grounds—which is no walk in the park, even on the best day—but they're not outright dead yet. And if comic books and movies have taught us anything, it's that a real hero is never truly dead...



Savage Tales

When the Marshal needs a quick convention or home game, or is looking to add a side trek to her posse's campaign, Savage Tales are where she turns.

Using the **Adventure Generator** (see *Hell on Earth Companion*) you can create pretty much any scenario you might need to play a long-running *Hell on Earth: Reloaded* campaign. This chapter contains many ready-made Savage Tales for you to run.

Most of these are tied to a specific location or region corresponding to those present in *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. This is listed at the beginning of the tale, after the **Hook** heading. Don't feel restricted by that, as most can be inserted just about anywhere with a little bit of retooling on your part, Marshal.

Additionally, if there are any triggering events or special circumstances, you'll find them listed at the beginning of the Savage Tale so you'll know if you need to wait before running it. However, most can be inserted into your campaign at any point.

O'Shea's Eleven

Hook: Great Basin (Junkyard)

This Savage Tale should not be run until the posse has completed the Plot

Point **A Blast From the Past** (page 11) or better yet **Worm Food** (page 14). Ike Taylor tasks the group with providing extra security for a vital shipment to Boise to resupply the Templars.

To Catch a Thief

Actually, Ike is laying a trap to draw out raiders that have been plaguing Junkyard convoys lately. He thinks they may have a spy on the inside of the city, but for now he's more concerned with stopping the raiders. With that in mind, he's let slip that the Alliance is sending a big, juicy truckload of supplies to their allies, the Templars.

Taylor doesn't suspect the convoy leader, Daniel O'Shea, or his men, but everyone else is fair game. Depending on how the posse has acquitted itself, Taylor may have an eye on them as well, or he may have no doubt about their allegiance and only include them as extra guns once the raiders attack.

Everyone involved with the convoy—including the heroes—is led to believe they're transporting a truckload of much-needed weapons and ammunition north. The "shipment" is actually just a bunch of crates full of useless rocks, but only Taylor and his most trusted associates know this. The entire operation is supposedly cloaked in secrecy.

In addition to the tractor trailer, there are two SUVs (see *Hell on Earth Reloaded*) providing security. The wasters are to be part of the guard force. In addition to the posse, there are a total of 10 other members in the convoy, not including O'Shea.

If they have their own vehicles, they're to drive with the tractor trailer and given enough fuel for the journey. If not, a third SUV is provided for their use. Each of the SUVs is equipped with a roof-mounted NA SAW (Range 30/60/120, Damage 2d8, RoF 5, AP 2).

Roll Out

The route winds north through Deseret on secondary roads. O'Shea is open to any posse suggestions for security. He also takes the time to review the route with the convoy members as a precaution against the vehicles becoming separated.

If you want to keep the heroes on their toes, you can roll for encounters as usual on the first day. Toward the end of the day, allow any posse members watching the rear of the convoy to make a Notice roll (-2). On a success, the sharp-eyed scav spots a distant cloud of dust behind them, but whatever is causing it never gets close enough to the vehicles to determine its origin.

Once night falls, O'Shea calls a halt. He takes reasonable precautions and sets a guard schedule. Regardless, the night passes peacefully enough (with no signs of whatever made the dust, if the heroes were aware of it).

Twist!

About midday, the convoy is passing through the ruins of a one-stoplight town near the Deseret-Idaho border. The road is blocked by a pile of wrecked vehicles. Any waster who examines the wreckage can make a Notice roll. On a success, she sees signs the vehicles were recently moved into their positions. If the heroes don't identify the road block

for what it is, they lose the first round to surprise as the Combine troops spring their ambush.

An automaton steps out behind the last vehicle in the convoy, blocking the road behind the vehicles. Then, Black Hats concealed in the ruins on one side open fire, trapping the convoy in the kill zone!

- **Automaton:** Use the stats for Automatons (standard), from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.
- **Black Hats (10):** Use the stats for Black Hats from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Each is armed with an HI Thunderer (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d8+1, RoF 3, AP 2), two spare magazines, Kevlar (+2/+4 vs. bullets), and a knife (Str+d4). Additionally, one is armed with a Hammer rocket launcher (Range 30/60/120, Damage 4d8+2, RoF 1, AP 3, LBT), and two spare HEDP rockets.

After the first round of combat, give each of the wasters a Notice roll. Any who succeed with a raise notice the raiders' shots aren't coming anywhere near any of the other convoy guards and vice-versa. The bushwhackers don't seem to be having the same problem with the posse, though. Each round afterward, all it takes is a success to figure out something hinky's going on.

Should any of the characters reveal what they've seen, the other convoy guards immediately turn their weapons on them. Otherwise, the traitors turn on them after the third round of combat. It seems that *everyone* else on the convoy is in cahoots with the bandits, all part of a gang led by O'Shea.

- **Convoy Guards (10):** Use the stats for Black Hats from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with NA M-21 assault rifles (Range 20/40/80, Damage 2d8, RoF 4, AP 2), one spare magazine, a knife (Str+d4), and improvised armor (+2).
- **Daniel O'Shea:** Use the stats for Gray Hat (*Hell on Earth Companion*), but make him a Wild Card. Armed

ONE-STOPLIGHT TOWN



ONE SQUARE = 6 FEET

LEGEND

- WRECKED CARS
- CONVOY
- PLAYERS
- ★ BLACK HATS
- AUTOMATON

with a NA M-21 assault rifle (Range 20/40/80, Damage 2d8, RoF 4, AP 2), one spare magazine, a knife (Str+d4), and improvised armor (+2).

Twist...Again!

The posse members have found themselves in a very bad spot. The numbers are stacked heavily against them, and now they discover their supposed allies are actually out to kill them.

Let the combat go a few rounds after the backstabbers are revealed, or until the heroes are really up against it. Suddenly, a force of Nauvoo Legionnaires roars in on ATVs and a HMMWV (see *Hell on Earth Reloaded*). On Taylor's orders, they've been tailing the convoy since yesterday afternoon, waiting for the Black Hats to strike—and the traitor to reveal himself. Even Taylor himself had no idea that *all* of his suspects were in on it!

Once the raiders and O'Shea's cell are defeated, the Legionnaires escort the heroes and any survivors back to

Junkyard. Taylor explains his plan to them at that point, but admits he only suspected one or two of the members of the convoy. However, the posse has proven its trustworthiness beyond a doubt in his eyes at this point.

- **Nauvoo Legionnaire (20):** Use the stats for Soldiers in *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with a NA M-21 assault rifle (Range 20/40/80, Damage 2d8, RoF 4, AP 2), two spare magazines, a knife (Str+d4), and improvised armor (+2).

The Shape of Things A'Comin'

Hook: Great Basin or the Wild Southwest

About two years ago, a renegade green-robed Doomsayer brought a small group of followers to the ruins of an isolated prison. The group also had in its possession a ghost rock bomb, which the Doomsayer intended to use in a ritual to advance him and his flock to the next stage of evolution. The ritual instead

stripped the flesh from their bones, combining it into a single, amorphous mass. Their minds also merged and immediately went insane from the experience. The Shape now slithers around the ruins of the prison, driven to devour any creature that stumbles onto its lair.

Any Port in a Storm

As the posse is traveling through a particularly barren patch of desert, they spot a radstorm rushing toward them from the east. Give the poor scavs time to make some Survival rolls to find shelter as normal. The waster who rolls highest spots what appears to be a few badly weathered buildings in a low spot of ground a short distance to the north.

Assuming the characters make a run for the structures, they get there just ahead of the storm. If they lollygag, the storm overtakes them before they get there and they have to make Vigor rolls as detailed in *Hell on Earth Reloaded* until they can make it to shelter.

Caged Hell

If they reach the buildings before the storm hits, the heroes have just enough time for a brief look at the exterior. The place is—or more accurately was—surrounded by a pair of chain link fences with razor wire filling the space between. The ravages of time and Judgment Day have brought the fences down in most places, allowing the posse to pick its way across the wire easily enough.

There are four buildings arranged in a diamond shape. The buildings are connected by fully enclosed concrete walkways, which also create an inner courtyard that's inaccessible from the outside. Any character making a Common Knowledge roll is pretty sure the complex is probably a governmental facility. With a raise, he knows without a doubt it was a prison of some sort.

Only one building, identified as "Administration," has any exterior doors. All are closed and secured by electrically triggered locks. There hasn't been power to the prison in years and there is no way to open the doors without power.

A sloppily-painted green school bus has been rammed into one wall, breaking the safety glass in a window there. The posse can climb through the broken window and into the interior, entering into the two-story Administration Building, in the prison cafeteria. A waster who examines the bus and makes a Notice roll sees "Las Vegas County Schools" still visible under the green paint.

The four buildings and their contents are listed below.

Administration Building: In addition to the cafeteria, this building also holds the administrative offices, armory, and a combination chapel/theater. Scavengers long ago stripped the armory of anything of use. Files in the offices identify the prisoners once held here as the worst of the worst: murderers, rapists, and the like.

The chapel was the site of the Domsayer's ritual. A ghost rock bomb sits on the stage, but both the ghost rock and nuclear material have been utterly drained of all energy. There is a substantial amount of explosive still in the bomb. A waster who makes a Knowledge (Demolitions) or Repair -2 roll can cobble together the remaining explosives into the equivalent of four frag grenades (Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d6, MBT). These explosives are the most effective method of defeating the Shape.

A pile of bones lies at the rear of the room. A careful count reveals about 30 human skulls and skeletons. A Notice roll tells anyone poking through the remains that none of the skulls has any teeth remaining. (They were absorbed into the Shape.)

Cell Block A: The cell block is three stories tall, with interior balconies overlooking an atrium that runs the length of the building. All of the cell doors are open.

Any character exploring the cells may make a Notice roll. A success finds many of the cells on the first and second floor to be almost spartan inside, with little more than the cots and sheets on them. A few hold textbooks on physics and nuclear engineering that have been annotated with cryptic, quasi-spiritual notes. A raise on the roll reveals that the grates have been removed from all the ventilation ducts. (If they check, the heroes find this is the case throughout the prison.)

The cells on the third floor are in general disarray and most have photographs, newspaper clippings, or centerfolds taped to the walls. The cultists only occupied the first two floors and left the top floor cells untouched.

Cell Block B: This building mirrors Cell Block A, but none of the cells have been stripped. The cultists didn't bother with this building.

Facilities: The last building houses the furnace, water supply, laundry and workshops. Looters never reached this part of the prison, so characters get a +2 bonus to any Notice rolls to scavenge here.

The Shape often rests in the water tanks in the basement of this building.

Unwanted Guests

After the wasters have been in the complex for a little while, allow them occasional Notice rolls to hear indistinct noises under the sounds of the radstorm outside—clangs, pipes expanding, and the like—echoing through the prison. While the heroes don't know it, this is the sound of the Shape moving through the air vents and drain pipes.

Give the group time to do a little exploring—and hopefully get an inkling something isn't quite right in the prison—before they discover they aren't the only wasters who took shelter in the complex. A band of raiders also found their way into the buildings and apparently never learned to share.

The scum do their best to catch the heroes off guard, so check for surprise as usual. Regardless of whether their ambush is successful, the raiders attack without any warning. Although the posse is badly outnumbered, the sound of the battle quickly draws the attention of the Shape. The monster begins picking off the raiders during the fight, preferring to snatch its victims unseen when possible. The creature's ability to fit into water pipes and ventilation ducts allows it to move about easily without revealing itself.

The Shape doesn't attack the heroes at this point. Once the raiders are defeated,





The Shape

The Shape is an enormous blob of warped flesh. The abomination is made up of the soft tissues of the bodies of the Chosen. It's capable of assuming almost any form, although because its surface is a swirling mass of flesh, it's not very a convincing mimic up close. Over 60 different shapes and colors of eyes blink over the monster's body. Most of the time, the Shape is a formless mass of near-protoplasm.

The Shape can compress itself through spaces as small as 1 foot in diameter. Its total mass is about 1000 cubic feet, or about 10'×10'×10', but usually it lies in a blob on the floor about 20' across and 5 feet thick.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d12+4

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d12, Stealth d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10

Special Abilities:

- **Fear (-4):** The Shape causes Fear checks at -4 in all who see it.
- **Invulnerability:** The Shape can be Shaken by any attack, but it can only be wounded or killed by its Weaknesses. Its nearly liquid form allows it to absorb all other forms of damage with little lasting effect.
- **Multiple Attacks:** The Shape can form up to 30 different pseudopods with which to attack. However, it can only attack a given character once per round. Therefore, the Shape has as many attacks per round as there are opponents—up to 30!
- **Pseudopods:** Str+d4. The Shape can form large projections with horrible, teeth-filled maws at will. These pseudopods flow over and around a victim seeking weak points. With a raise on its Fighting roll, it hits its victim's least armored location.
- **Weakness (Fire/Acid):** Fire- and acid-based attacks destroy the flesh of the Shape and can kill it if they cause a single wound.
- **Weakness (Magic):** Magical attacks do normal damage to the creature. However, the Doomsayer power *mutate* actually increases the creature's Vigor by a die type each time it is used against it.
- **Weakness (Ghost Rock Bomb):** If the Shape is exposed to a blast from the explosives found in the ghost rock bomb that helped create it and suffers even a Shaken result, it melts into a disgusting puddle of semi-liquid flesh.

it retreats into the walls to digest its victims.

- **Raiders (3 per hero):** Use the stats for Raiders from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with various firearms.

The Devil in the Dark

The radstorm continues to rage, keeping the posse trapped in the building. Allow them to further explore or formulate a plan, but give them time to prepare before the final battle. Whether they eventually hunt the Shape down or it comes after them depends on how aggressive a strategy they pursue. If they go looking for the monster, it's resting in the water tanks under the Facilities building. Otherwise, it comes for them—probably after they've settled in to wait out the storm.

- ♦ **The Shape:** See sidebar on page 56.

The Final Cut

Hook: The Great Maze (Movie Town)

Some of the Director's most vocal detractors have been turning up dead, often brutally butchered. Even more disconcerting, the method behind each murder mimics one from one of the slasher films that were popular around the turn of the century. Rumors are beginning to circulate that the Director himself may have a hand in eliminating his critics, and it's beginning to impact film production.

Hoping to put an end to the negative publicity, the Director is offering a reward of \$500—or a complete slug collection of his films—to anyone who can bring an end to the deaths. Film couriers are carrying word of the murders and the reward across the Wasted West, so a posse could catch wind of it nearly anywhere.

Critical Deception

Before the War, Jean Girard was a snooty film student from Texas. After the bombs

stopped falling, he gravitated to Movie Town where he discovered the Director was getting show biz back on its feet. He joined up immediately and quickly rose to become the Director's personal assistant and has been instrumental in the production of most of his work.

He's even figured out the Director's true identity, but Girard's got a secret of his own. He *hates* the Director's films with an unbridled passion. Part of it is due to the fact that as a Southerner, he blames the former President for the end of the world. However, the real reason is he is the world's greatest movie snob. He finds the films simplistic, juvenile, and low-brow.

Also, Girard is more than a little nuts.

Movie Town is probably the only place in the Wasted West—and maybe the world—where a film critic can still practice his craft. Girard started offing the most outspoken of the Director's disparagers, using methods from old horror movies, in the hopes of pinning the blame on his boss.

Creative evil like that was guaranteed to draw some boon from the Reckoners (at least before they got shipped off-planet), and Girard soon discovered that if he takes the time to put on the makeup for one of the old serial killer icons, he effectively becomes the monster. When he's not in costume, treat Girard as a typical Townsfolk (see *Hell on Earth Reloaded*).



The Slasher

Jean Girard, in monster makeup, becomes the Slasher, complete with hockey mask, black cowl, or peeling facial skin.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Stealth d8, Tracking d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10 (2)

Gear: Machete (Str+d6).

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** Thick hide, hockey mask, or the like.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Inescapable:** No matter how much faster a victim is than the Slasher, the monster can keep up by making a Tracking roll. The target may manage to lose sight of the Slasher occasionally, but he soon reappears, apparently trudging along at his normal walking pace.
- **Nigh Invulnerability:** The Slasher can be Shaken and even wounded by normal weapons and magic. It heals one wound level per round from these attacks. If Incapacitated this way, the abomination rises in 2d6 rounds, its wound levels completely healed.
- **No Pain:** The Slasher does not suffer wound penalties.
- **Weakness (Makeup):** Once his makeup is removed, Girard reverts to his normal form. This takes five rounds and a rag or solvent of some sort, but can only be done while the Slasher is Incapacitated.

Playing Detective

If they choose to play detective, a Streetwise roll finds a number of witnesses, if not to the actual murders, then to events immediately before or after. Each describes a different killer who eerily matches an old horror movie villain. Examining the scene of the last murder allows them to make a Notice roll to find a smudge of theatrical makeup. Checking the other scenes finds similar clues, such as more makeup or perhaps a scrap of costume.

Following up on these leads reveals that other than the Director, Girard is the only person who has unfettered access to the studio lots when there are no shoots scheduled. The Director has a pair of toughs who keep an eye on the lots after dark. A Persuasion roll (or a bribe of at least \$100) gets the thugs to spill that

Girard was on the lots after hours on the nights of the murders. In fact, Girard uses this as an alibi if questioned directly.

Confronting Girard or the Director with an accusation at this point is a dead end. The victims were all killed in fashions that only a physical juggernaut could have accomplished. Girard, without his makeup, is a bit of a milquetoast.

To Catch a Psycho

The wasters' best option is to try to set a trap for the killer. The Director has a new picture debuting shortly after the heroes arrive. They can either put the most vocal critic, Lane Stacey, under surveillance, if they've got the acting bug, pose as newly-arrived movie critics themselves (if Girard has met them, it takes a Persuasion roll to pull off a disguise). In either case, the Slasher takes the bait and attacks the night of the debut.

It's unlikely the posse is prepared to take advantage of the Slasher's weakness when they first encounter him. However, Girard doesn't want to risk tipping his hand, so if the heroes manage to wound him in combat, he retreats to the studio lots to remove his makeup—which is where the wasters have the best chance of catching him.

Cattle Call

Hook: The Great Maze (Movie Town)

The posse catches word that Movie Town is looking for extras for the Director's next film. Wouldn't you know it? There's a catch.

Extreme Method Acting

The Director doesn't actually need actors, not living ones anyway. The next film calls for a whole mess of zombies, and the Pits are almost empty. Movie Town is offering a bounty of \$50 a head—assuming it's got at least *most* of an undead body attached to it.

Besides not shooting the talent in the head, the Movie Town casting crew has one other stipulation—no faminites! Those abominations are too infectious to risk having around, and they won't accept any deaders if there is even one faminite in the bunch.

The studio's zombie wranglers have stripped all the nearby ruins of walkin' dead over the last few years. The casting office tells them any scouts interested in auditioning new "talent" have to travel at least a day into the wastes to find a suitable pool.

Dead Quiet

Let the posse wander about the area in any direction you'd like. Oddly though, they find a distinct shortage of deaders outside the nearby area. If you want to make your group's life more difficult, you can always roll on the **Great Maze Encounter Table** from *Hell on Earth*

Reloaded, but ignore any results for walkin' dead.

Rounding up the deaders isn't all that difficult. The walkin' dead eventually recover from most Incapacitating wounds as long as they're not in the head, so the heroes can just mow 'em down. However, if they go that route, they've got to make sure there's transportation available to haul the zombies back to Movie Town. Of course, if they don't have a way to haul undead carcasses back, they're going to have their hands full whether they plug the zombies or not!

The real trick turns out to be finding the graveyard rejects. Each day searching manages to turn up only one or two undead. Accounting for food, fuel, and other supplies, it should become pretty obvious after a few days this isn't the money machine it might have sounded like at first.



Cornered Market

After they've spent a couple of days picking over empty ruins, give the wasters a Tracking roll. With a success, the heroes begin to notice recent vehicle tracks around every site they've visited. A large number of shuffling footprints lead to the rear of the vehicle then disappear. With a raise, the tracker not only identifies the tracks as being from the same vehicle, but can tell it's a medium-sized vehicle, probably a panel truck.

Obviously, someone else is rounding up walkin' dead in the area as well.

Once they've spotted the tracks, the heroes can start making Notice rolls at future locations. With a success, the posse spots a napkin or paper wrapper on the ground. The litter usually carries the "Burger Lord" logo—a once-popular Lost Angels' burger franchise that, like everything else, was destroyed in the Last War. The litter is invariably soiled with grease or batter crumbs.

A Modest Proposal

The primary food vendor to the Movie Town studios is Brian McKay, the owner and sole operator of Swift Foods. His chuck wagon is found at every major shoot and usually at premieres as well. McKay is famous for his fried and batter-dipped meats, but never, ever serves vegetables. He jokingly says it's because he has a reputation to maintain, but the truth is a little less...appetizing.

McKay, like nearly everyone in the Great Maze, found a reliable food supplier is basically impossible to locate in the area. On the other hand, he discovered that most of his scavenging runs into the ruins were plagued by walkin' dead attacks. Always one to think on his feet, McKay came up with a solution that took care of both problems in a single, batter-dipped package.

Now, Swift Foods is the only consistent caterer available to provide meals to the Director's crew when they're making a shoot. Obviously, no one else knows that when he serves up "chicken fingers" only half of the name is correct—and here's a clue: It's the part that doesn't cluck.

Batter-Fried Soylent

It's likely the heroes return to Movie Town with at best a handful of deaders. Even if they somehow managed to find a way to scrounge a decent number of zombies, give them a Notice roll after they collect their cash from the casting department. Those who succeed notice a couple of Burger Lord drink cups in a trashcan or a Burger Lord napkin blowing down the street.

If they follow up on the bit of trash, any of the Director's crew identifies the litter as coming from the Swift Food truck. McKay happened on an old warehouse for the corporation and used the supplies there to start his own business.

If one of the posse made a successful Tracking roll at one of the ruins, she



can match the tires on McKay's truck to those tracks with another Tracking roll. Observing McKay's operation is likely to give the heroes a queasy feeling—especially if any of the wasters grabbed a bite from the vendor in the past. However, nothing about his operation on the Movie Town lots reveals what the posse probably suspects—that the corndogs are made from people.

Confronting him is a waste of time. McKay is known to—and liked by—nearly everyone on the lot. They readily take his word over the heroes'. Worse, it tips him off to the posse's attention.

Red-Handed

The only way to expose Swift Foods for its atrocities is to follow McKay back to his base of operations, out in a largely abandoned suburb in an old Burger Lord warehouse. That takes a Stealth roll to accomplish. If McKay is suspicious of the heroes, the Stealth roll is opposed by his Notice. They can also scout out old Burger Lord facilities, assuming they have some way to identify them—a data slug, for example.

McKay is the only living person at the warehouse. However, he has half a dozen pens filled with "livestock" awaiting processing. We'll leave the details of exactly what that entails up to you, but in addition to old Burger Lord supplies, the food vendor has also procured sausage-making equipment, meat grinders and the like, along with a generator to power them.

If the posse confronts him, his first act is to trigger the release to the livestock cages, flooding the area with walkin' dead (That's a big part of his escape plan should he ever be discovered, so he's got them all over the warehouse). While the heroes are tied up with a small horde of undead, he tries to slip away into the wastes—to hopefully start up his 'business' again elsewhere.

★ **Brian McKay:** Use the stats for Veteran Gunman from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Add Knowledge (Cooking) d10. Armed with a S&W 683 pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d8+1, RoF 1, AP 2), 20 spare rounds, a Bowie knife (Str+d4+1, AP 1).

• **Walkin' Dead (20):** Use the stats for Walkin' Dead from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

Knights of the Old Republic

Hook: The Great Northwest (Boise)

While visiting Boise, the heroes are approached by a representative of the Templars and asked to help find a murderer. Alternately, the Templars can send a request for aid to Junkyard, leading Ike to dispatch the posse.

Horror Rerun

In the years before the Harvest, Boise was plagued by an entity known as the Boise Horror. The first Grand Master of the order, Simon Mercer, even died fighting the abomination. The Templars believed his sacrifice had defeated the monster for good, but now a rash of murders in Boise is making them doubt their certainty.

Roughly every month or so, something is slaughtering survivors. Like the Horror's victims, the new ones are often torn to pieces. The Templars are doing their best to keep a lid on the crimes, but word is starting to leak out. And with the current Grand Master, Jo Wales, going walkabout, the knights are becoming more than a little concerned for the reputation and integrity of their order.

The Templars explain their concerns about the Horror resurfacing and share the biggest bombshell—one they're trying desperately to keep secret. The original Boise Horror was believed to be able to possess the minds of others, forcing them to do its bidding.

Relic: The Butcher's Scalpel

This cursed weapon (Str+d8) transforms its wielder into a murderer capable of the most horrific deeds.

When the blade is in control, it demands midnight killings for three days in a row before letting the host resume control of his body. If possible, the wielder also makes off with the victim's head and extremities, which she uses to create walkin' heads. Once done with a killing spree, the scalpel does not usually demand another for a month.

The artifact knows it isn't invincible. In the past, it kept its owner moving to prevent capture, but the depraved pleasure it is drawing from wreaking havoc in the Templars' home keeps it tied to Boise.

Powers: While transformed into the Butcher (which happens only at night), the user has a Pace of 10 and rolls a d8 for Running. He gains two steps to each of his Attribute dice, as well as 3 steps to Fighting and Stealth. Plus, he can only be harmed by bladed weapons. Additionally, the user gains the following Special Abilities: Fear (-2), Fearless, Improved Frenzy, Size (+1), and Wall Walker (Pace 6).

The scalpel can make and give orders to any walkin' heads (see page 66) it has created. If the

This is why the order asked for the heroes' help. They no longer even trust their own membership. The Templars believe the characters, as outsiders, are less likely to be under the Horror's sway.

The last attack was just about a month ago, so the killer is due to strike again soon. What no one in Boise knows is that this isn't the Boise Horror back for revenge, but an even older evil that's found its way to the settlement.

The Butcher's Bill

The very first night of the Reckoning in 1863, a Confederate surgeon fell under the sway of a cursed scalpel. The man, who became known as the Butcher, went on a killing spree in a Gettysburg field hospital. Dozens died or were maimed by his blade, which drove him with an unquenchable lust for blood.

The scalpel occasionally reemerged over the following decades to drive a new owner to commit similar murders. More than once, the Rangers got their hands on the blade, but somehow it always managed to find its way free. Even the Apocalypse only slowed it down a little.

A few months ago, a Templar, Rod Yates, and his squire, Oren Michaels, were traveling through Texas aiding survivor settlements—well, at least those they found worthy. While passing through the ruins of an old government installation, they did a little scrounging for bullets. Yates stumbled onto the Butcher's scalpel in a broken vault. Not realizing what it was, he figured it was a historical piece and picked it up as a gift for his fiancé, Dr. Amanda Renton, Boise's resident sawbones.

That night, the blade began to transform him into the Butcher, seeking to sate its bloodlust. Sadly for

it, at nearly the same time a small pack of Texas razors tried to sate their own. A bite from one of the creatures' metal-toothed mouths took Yates' arm right off, forestalling the curse. The Templar and his squire made short work of the monsters, but Yates' wound was too severe for him to recover from and he died not long afterward.

Michaels did retrieve Yates' gift, but was spared the curse himself. Ironically, it wasn't his faith, but rather bad luck and a little bit of technology. Michaels lost his own hand years ago, but had it replaced with a bionic one by a shady doc in Junkyard, preventing his own flesh from ever coming in contact with the blade.

Murder Investigation

The Templars grant the wasters a relatively free hand in conducting their investigation as they see fit—they need outsiders to allay suspicions. The only restriction they place is that the posse is not to suggest that the murders may be the result of the Boise Horror in any way. They also ask that the group not place undue suspicion on the order itself, as the people's confidence in the Templars is already taxed to the breaking point.

Any wasters who sift the locals for rumors learns there appears to be no common thread linking the victims other than the fact that all were alone at the time of the attacks. Each successful use of Streetwise reveals one of the following:

- The bodies were found with deep slashing wounds.
- The killings seem to occur in sprees that run for a few nights and then end for about a month.
- At least one person is murdered each night of the spree, but it's not unheard of for two or even more to fall victim to the killer.

wielder loses the weapon, the blade can control them on its own.

Taint: Each night of its killing spree, the scalpel psychically compels its owner to pick it up. To resist, the owner must roll Spirit opposed by the scalpel's Spirit d10. If he fails, he picks up the blade. Each time a target holds the scalpel's bare handle at night, he gains all the powers of the weapon and falls under its control. If he wins this opposed roll, he resists the pull and nothing happens.

Each failed struggle for control gives the wielder a cumulative -1 to any future attempts to fend off the scalpel's attempts at control, up to a maximum penalty of -6.

The blade is dormant in the daytime and during the time between sprees, but not powerless. Once picked up, it cannot be put down voluntarily or disposed of without succeeding on an opposed Spirit roll. Even then, once night falls, it tries for dominance again.

If the scalpel is taken from its owner, his transformation into the Butcher fades. This isn't as easy as it might sound. The Butcher is strong and doesn't willingly release the blade. Disarm attempts work as usual, though.

The scalpel itself has a Toughness of 12—anything that snaps the blade destroys it forever. Melting it down does not fulfill this requirement!

Beyond that, the Templars have been keeping a pretty tight lid on the murders, so there's not much new information to be gleaned. However, a second Streetwise roll points them to the town's only non-magical healer, Dr. Amanda Renton.

Dr. Renton

Amanda Renton was a young intern when the bombs fell and completed her studies on her own, largely using the Grand Libraries' resources. She runs a one-woman medical facility out of an old doctor's office. She's also the person the Templars look to for handling more mundane health issues and is the de facto coroner for Boise.

She is upfront with the posse once she knows they have the Templars' blessing. She confirms any rumors they may have gathered, and adds the killer often severs the heads and hands of the victims, apparently taking them as trophies of some sort. Beyond that, she has little to add to the investigation.

Actually, Dr. Renton is the guilty party. She was possessed by the Butcher's scalpel almost immediately after Oren Michaels gave it to her as a memento of her deceased lover. She's now completely in its thrall and uses her position to further hide her crimes.

The New Librarian

The heroes are eventually introduced to Maren Kuether-Ulberg, the Librarian stationed in Boise. She recently replaced Fred Biletnikoff, who retired after years of chronicling the efforts of the Templars. He's been with the order for more years than any but the eldest Templars and is of the opinion the knights represent the greatest force for Good in the Wasted West. He's also the single best source of information the characters could want in researching the history of the Boise Horror. That's unfortunate, because Biletnikoff had the most experience with

the Boise Horror of any living person. He was also one of the few people who knows that Simon Mercer himself was possessed by the Boise Horror at his death. The former Grand Master sacrificed himself to keep the demonic entity trapped in his body, allowing a group of intrepid wasters to bring an end to the menace once and for all.

To preserve the good name of the Templars, Biletnikoff shared the information with no one, not even with his replacement. Maren is a thorough chronicler of the events on her watch and has ready access to detailed records of the first appearance of the Horror. This makes her one of the best sources the heroes have in solving the mystery. If asked, she notes a few important differences between the recent murders and those of the Horror that led her to conclude a different culprit is responsible:

- The recent victims show evidence of violent, maiming attacks. The Boise Horror forced its victims to kill themselves, and while a person can inflict terrible damage on themselves, it's usually difficult to chop off one's own limbs, particularly an arm or head.
- The recent victims are usually found missing body parts. These range from an arm or two to a head or even torso. The Boise Horror, although it mauled its victims terribly, did not make off with "trophies" for obvious reasons.

Maren is very thorough about her job. She's able to provide nearly any piece of information the posse may have missed, so feel free to use her to fill in any holes in the heroes' investigation.

The Templars

The order is very cooperative and forthcoming with answers. They're quite aware the murderer may well be within their own ranks. Nonetheless, they hold nothing back from the posse (note that

only Biletznikoff and a few elder Templars are aware of Simon's part in the original Boise Horror deaths).

A clever hero who thinks to narrow down possible suspects finds the order keeps fairly good records on the comings and goings of Templars in Boise. An Investigation reveals the following:

- Several operate in the Pacific Northwest and come back to the settlement to resupply. The records quickly eliminate any of the wandering knights from suspicion, as all were absent during one or more of the attacks.
- Only two Templars live in Boise year-round. Walter Stilson and James Kaiser serve as trainers to new squires and oversee the barracks. Each has an alibi for one or more nights of the killer's spree—they were ministering to squires undergoing various training ordeals.

A raise on the roll (or just asking the right question) turns up the fact the Templars don't carefully track the squires and new applicants. There is a fairly high turnover rate amongst those, so the order generally only takes note once a supplicant gains his tabard. A waster who canvasses the ranks of the squires—there are currently five in Boise—discovers only Oren Michaels has been there for the entirety of the murder spree.

Michaels' Tale

A hero who digs into the squires finds the attacks began shortly after Michaels' return. The squire is waiting in Boise for another Templar to take him into service again.

If approached, he relates the story of Yates' death at the hands of the Texas razors. He embellishes his master's role, praising his bravery for defending them armed initially with only a small knife. He plays up the chivalric angle, claiming

that Yates intended the knife as a gift for "his lady."

If the group delves into the details, it becomes clear the knife in question was actually a scalpel he'd intended to give Dr. Renton. Michaels was forced to bury Yates in Texas, but he did bring the scalpel back and present it to her as a keepsake.

To Catch a Killer

After exhausting all their leads, the posse may well have exonerated the Templars from suspicion. They also may be fairly convinced that the murderer isn't the reincarnation of the Boise Horror back for a second round. Still, they may or may not have an inkling as to who the real killer is.

If they haven't put their finger on Renton yet, they can set up surveillance to catch the fiend at work. Or, if they're true heroes, they can even set one of their own up as bait. It's fairly well-established the Butcher prefers lone targets, after all! Since the Butcher's timetable isn't an exact thing, feel free to begin the next spree whenever you feel it adds the most tension to the adventure, Marshal.

If the posse puts together enough clues to lead them to Renton, an investigation of her office finds a horde of walkin' heads infesting a back room. Likewise, should they follow the Butcher or somehow track her to the location, they face not only the Butcher, but her Hellish creations as well.

Confronting the Butcher on the streets saves them the extra horrors initially, but she attempts to flee to her office. Handle this as a Chase (see *Savage Worlds*) of standard length. At the end of the five rounds, the Butcher reaches her lair unless the heroes manage to stop her before then. If she does, the posse also has to face her patchwork horrors. Of course, if she doesn't, that means there's



a nasty surprise awaiting some poor scav later on!

• **Walkin' Heads (2, plus 1 per hero):**
See below.

✦ **The Butcher:** Use the stats for Townsfolk from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*, modified by the Butcher's scalpel (see page 62).

Walkin' Head

These little guys would be sorta cute if it weren't for their undead *wrongness*. You're lookin' at a zombie head that's attached itself to arms for mobility. They might be a little clumsy, but their teeth and razor sharp claws keep you on your toes, waster.

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

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claw:** Str+d4
- **Fear:** Anyone seeing one of these disgusting creations must make a Fear check

- **Size -2:** These creatures are, not surprisingly, about the size of a human head.
- **Small:** Attackers subtract 2 from attempts to hit.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from Shaken; doesn't breathe; immune to disease & poison; no additional damage from called shots; ignore 1 level of wound penalties.
- **Weakness (Head):** Called shots to the abomination's head are +2 damage for a total of +6.

Not All It's Cracked Up to Be

Hook: The Great Northwest (Leavenworth)

The people of Leavenworth send a plea to the Iron Alliance for help against the wendigos. Alternately, if the posse's in the area, a representative of the town can approach them directly for help.

Lately, it seems the wendigos that prowl the deep woods are becoming

more aggressive. The abominations have been making forays into the town itself recently, and several citizens have been found chewed to pieces in their homes.

Actually, the wendigos are innocent. Okay, maybe not innocent—they still eat people whenever they get the chance—but they're not behind the latest attacks. The true culprit lies in the Nutcracker Museum; a cursed nutcracker that comes to life at night. And yes, it is every bit as painful to be killed by the Hellish device as one would imagine.

Investigation

Checking around town finds that while the hairy eating machines have always plagued the town, the recent behavior is unusual even for them. It used to be that the ferocious creatures would only occasionally attack a homestead, and then only the more remote ones. In the past two weeks or so, three townsfolk have been found mangled and half-eaten in their homes near the center of town.

All of the previous victims have already been buried, so direct observation of the bodies isn't possible. A Streetwise roll gets the posse a rough description of the victims. The corpses were mangled and more gnawed on than actually eaten, which the townsfolk agree is also unusual for the monsters. The wendigos usually devour nearly all the flesh of their victims—sometimes even some of the bones.

A raise on the Streetwise roll reveals the bodies were pocked with numerous small wounds about the size of a man's thumb. While many assumed these were tooth marks from a wendigo, folks familiar with the cannibalistic horrors claim they're something else.

Any waster who wants to look at the victims' residences is given complete access. Each house is located nearly at the center of the town, near Leavenworth's claim to fame, the Nutcracker Museum.

In fact, one of the first victims was the curator, Oscar Wall. A Smarts roll tells the heroes a wendigo would have passed up a number of other targets on the way in from the edge of town.

Like most of Leavenworth, the victims' homes are in surprisingly good shape considering the whole Apocalypse thing. The interiors show no signs of major disturbance or even any obvious way a big abomination could have entered. A Notice roll at each location does spot a single pane of glass broken from the outside in each house.

A raise on the Notice roll discovers that all knives and similar cutting instruments are missing from the houses in question.

Cracking the Case

More than two centuries ago, a doll maker in New Orleans created 'living dolls' using clockwork parts and more than a little of the supernatural. Unbeknownst to him, the dolls were actually minikins, clockwork automatons animated by manitous that existed only to murder—and multiply. The miniature horrors were able to convert other dolls into more minikins using simple household items and outfitting them with teeth made of razors, claws from fish hooks, and so forth.

One of the "nutcrackers" recently obtained by Wall was actually one of the few remaining minikins. It quickly set to converting other nutcrackers of suitable size and shape into more of its kind. Now, nearly a dozen of the tiny abominations reside in the museum. During the day, they play the role of inanimate display objects, but at night they move off to search for new victims.

Any hero visiting the museum may make a Notice roll (-2) to notice a blood stain on one of the nutcrackers. If the scav is specifically looking for such evidence, give her a +2 to the roll instead of a penalty.

Once exposed, the abominations attack, using surprise and/or Gang Up bonuses whenever possible. The original minikin (the Wild Card) tries to remain undetected if possible, so that it can escape to rebuild its numbers somewhere else. One of the townsfolk can identify it as the newest addition if the heroes think to ask, though. In that case, it attempts to flee, but fights to the death if cornered.

- **Minikin (10):** See below. One is a Wild Card.



Minikin

These nutcrackers are motionless and innocent...until they decide to get crackin'! At cursory glance, minikins appear like normal nutcrackers, although somewhat heavier than one might expect. They stand between eight inches and one foot in height and weigh about 3 to 5 lb. The minikins come in all manners of designs and styles, from Russian dancers to Union soldiers. Unfortunately, they appear to exist solely to torment and kill. Once the demonic contraptions are revealed, there is no mistaking the evil intent they hold. Their coal black eyes fly open, their jaws drop to reveal teeth of razors or broken glass (and sometimes dentures), and their tiny hands hold weapons cannibalized from knives, knitting needles, and the like. The constructs move hideously fast for their size and are fiendishly clever about laying ambushes and setting booby traps for their prey.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

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

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 3

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Improvised Weapons:** Str+d4
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison; ignores one level of wound penalties.

- **Conversion:** These devilish creations can convert normal dolls into animated killing machines like themselves. This process takes 1d4 hours and the resulting creation becomes a minikin itself, identical in all ways except that it is only an Extra and does not gain this ability.
- **Fear:** Once revealed as "alive", any character viewing one of these contraptions must make a Fear check.
- **Fearless:** Minikins are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Fleet-Footed:** Minikins roll a d8 when running instead of a d6.
- **Size -2:** Minikins are the size of a small cat.
- **Small:** Attacks against minikin receive a -2 penalty due to their small size.

The Tenors

Hook: High Plains (Mall of America)

Ike Taylor contacts the posse with a mission. A delegation from Junkyard has gone missing. They were tasked to make contact with a rumored survivor settlement at the Mall of America, in what used to be St. Paul, Minnesota. They are over two weeks late reporting in, and the Alliance wants the posse to look for them.

What Junkyard doesn't know is the delegation reached the Mall and tried to open negotiations with the survivors there. Fat Tony Mulachi decided the Alliance was trying to muscle in on his territory. Being the kind of guy who doesn't like competition, Fat Tony put the grab on the delegates. He's holding them as insurance, planning to use them to cut a favorable deal with the folks in Junkyard.

Hardcases

For posses that haven't been there before, the Mall is quite a sight. Big enough to hold seven Yankee Stadiums inside, it is one of the largest buildings

still standing in either the US or CSA. Surrounded by acres of parking lots and flanked by two seven-story parking garages, the scrap metal from abandoned vehicles alone would be worth a fortune in Junkyard.

Hidden among those vehicles, however, are numerous sentry guns (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, AP 2, no penalty from full auto) built with junker technology. The guns are usually targeted by Fat Tony's hoods inside the mall, but can also be set to trigger from motion detectors. Treat the weapons as having a Notice d10 when using the motion detector. The guns are in armored turrets and have Toughness 14 (5).

There are defensive emplacements on the roof. Each is manned by three guards at all times and contains a M2HB heavy machinegun mounted on a tripod (Range 50/100/200, Damage 2d10, RoF 3, AP 3, no full-auto penalty).

• **Guards (3):** Use the stats for Soldiers from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed

with NA M-21 assault rifles (Range 20/40/80, Damage 2d8, RoF 4, AP 2), 2 fragmentation grenades.

Meet and Greet

In spite of the formidable defenses, the heroes have no trouble entering the mall—provided they don't try to go in guns blazing. Only one entrance to the shopping center is open, but it is clearly marked. In fact, several signs all around the building point visitors to the correct entrance.

Normally, anyone trying to gain entry has to pay the \$20 entry fee, but if the heroes mention they're from Junkyard or looking for the missing Alliance representatives, they're told to wait outside. A good-sized contingent of Fat Tony's muscle arrives shortly to escort them to speak with the boss—after disarming them, of course.

If they instead opt to pay the fee and keep things quiet, they can enter and take advantage of the Mall's stores and services (see *Hell on Earth Reloaded*). Asking about the Junkyard visitors



allows the wasters a Streetwise roll. With a success they learn that the delegation was taken to speak to Fat Tony and hasn't been seen since. A failure on the roll, on the other hand, alerts the gangsters to the heroes' questions, and a group of toughs shows up to take the posse to see Fat Tony.

- **Gangsters (2, plus 1 per hero):** Use the stats for Gunmen from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Each is armed with an NA sidearm (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 1) and a switchblade (Str+d4, -1 to Notice rolls to find).

An Offer They Can't Refuse

Any group taken to see Fat Tony is searched and disarmed. Fat Tony might be nearly unkillable, but he's not stupid!

The gangster sees Junkyard as a potential competitor, and he's not a fan of competition. The original delegation of four is still alive, but being held prisoner. He's just been waiting for a second delegation to come looking for them. He knows if he kills them he's liable to make a powerful enemy, but he also wants to make sure he has the edge in any negotiations.

In exchange for his hostages, Fat Tony wants guarantees and a good deal of firepower. He starts off asking for 100 assault rifles, 100 pistols, 5 grenade launchers, 5 machineguns, and 2 rocket launchers, along with a sizable amount of ammunition. He's no fool; even if the heroes agree to his demands, he won't release the others until he takes delivery of the weapons.

The posse can try to negotiate better terms by entering a Social Conflict (see *Savage Worlds*), using either Persuasion if they try to reason with him or Intimidation if they're going for strong-arm tactics. Fat Tony uses his not inconsiderable Intimidation skill.

With a margin of victory of one or two successes, he agrees to let one of the

hostages go, while three or four gets him to concede to half the delegation. It takes five or more raises to get him to release all the Junkyard representatives before he takes delivery. Alternately, the posse can reduce his demands by half for each level of their margin of victory.

Whether Ike Taylor agrees to the deal or not is another matter—and depends largely on whether Fat Tony still has leverage. If he does, he tasks the posse to deliver the goods. If he doesn't, the heroes would be advised to steer clear of St. Paul in the future. Fat Tony has a long memory...

- ♦ **Fat Tony:** See *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

- **Gangsters (2, plus 1 per hero):** Use the stats for Gunmen from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with NA sidearms (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 1), switchblades (Str+d4, -1 to Notice rolls to find).

Run and Gun

The posse may instead decide to try to free the hostages by force or stealth. Hostages are held in detention cells in the Mall's security office, requiring Lockpicking (-2) to open without a key. There are four goons guarding the prisoners at all times and gunfire quickly attracts the attention of the other gangsters in the mall. Once (or if) they get out of the building, they've still got the sentry guns and roof defenses to face!

- **Guards (4):** Use the stats for Gunmen from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with pump shotguns (Range 12/24/48, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 1), night sticks (Str+d4), and Kevlar vests (+2/+4 vs bullets).

Wormwood

Hook: High Plains (Wyoming)

The heroes are approached by survivors who need their help against a band of military-grade deaders who've been plundering the High Plains.

Alternately, the Iron Alliance can send them to forge ties with the wasters on the Combine's north flank—and guess what the price of their allegiance is?

The Legion of Doom

The Wyoming wasters have quite the problem. A small group of heavily-armed cyborgs has set up a base in the mountains east of Yellowstone, near the ruins of a small tourist town called Cody. They used to just prey on the settlements nearby, but over the years, they've wiped most of those out and are now ranging further and further afield. Obviously, they don't enter the Sioux Nations further to the east, but everything else within a few day's travel seems to be fair game.

The gang, which refers to itself as the Death's Head Legion, appeared not long after Judgment Day. Many believe the Death's Head Legion to be of supernatural origin—well, *more* supernatural anyway—claiming their arrival was even marked by a falling star. Some of the most superstitious even claim that the leader of the Legion can't be harmed by any weapon of this world.

In reality, the cyborgs in question were members of 2nd platoon, B Company, 3rd Cy-SOG Battalion, assigned to General Warfield's command on Banshee. There, they were used in some of the most brutal missions against the planet's indigenous population, until the killing became too much for even their AI-controlled consciences. They became insubordinate and unpredictable, so Warfield had the unit sent back to Earth for reprogramming.

Arriving after Judgment Day, their small freighter, the *Wormwood*, tried to land without guidance, but ended up in a barely controlled crash near the ruins of Cody, Wyoming. The experience was too much for the already erratic cyborgs that survived, and they reverted back to their Directives from Banshee. Every

waster they encountered was treated as an enemy sympathizer and executed.

Over time, the entire unit became loyal servants of Death. Their leader and one of the first Army cyborgs, Sergeant First Class Juan Riviera, became a full-blown servitor of the Reckoners. He refers to himself only in the third-person and has changed his name to One.

Members of the Legion are easily recognizable. Not only are they all heavy cans, but the unit has developed a skull fetish. The symbol is painted on their armor and they frequently adorn themselves with actual skulls—as well as other “trophies” cut from their victims.

Death of the Death's Head

The Wyoming survivors tell the posse that every couple of weeks or so, the Legion sends out a raiding party of four cyborgs to look for new captives/victims. Waylaying such a group would reduce the total number the heroes face at the Death's Head stronghold. Past experience leads the survivors to believe the cyborgs' radios only have an effective range of about 10 miles, so any attack outside of that distance is unlikely to draw the attention of the rest of the deaders.

If the posse waits for one of these groups to depart, they can tail the patrol for a day or so with either a successful Tracking roll or an opposed roll of Stealth versus the 'borgs' Notice. Failure leads to an immediate battle with the cans. Fortunately, unless the heroes try to pick up the raiders at the very doorstep of the Death's Head's lair, reinforcements don't arrive until after the battle is long over.

If, on the other hand, they're successful, the characters are free to lay an ambush or trap for the raiders. How effective it turns out to be is, of course, up to you Marshal, but we recommend rewarding the group for planning ahead!



One

Sergeant First Class Juan Riviera was one of the first cyborgs employed by the US Army. He had his share of rough spots and was reprogrammed at least twice before Banshee. After the *Wormwood's* crash, he spiraled further into madness than the cans under his command and eventually became a full-fledged servitor of Death.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d12+4, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Repair d8, Shooting d8

Charisma: -8; **Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12 (4)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean Edges: Cyborg (Heavy), Harrowed, Nerves of Steel

Cyborg Edges: Armor Plating, Cybernetic Eye (Telescopic), Cybernetic Eye (Thermal Imaging), Hercules, Targeting Computer, Weapon Implant, Plasma Cutter, Weapon Mount.

Rules of Engagement: Core, No Prisoners, Search & Destroy, Still at War.

Gear: One's mounted weapon is an NA SAW (Range 30/60/120, Damage 2d8, RoF 5, Shots 100, AP2, 3RB). He carries a modified

their Weapon Mounts and the others have NA M-720 grenade launchers (Range 50/100/200, Damage (Special), RoF 1, loaded with alternating Inferno (Damage 3d8, MBT, see *Hell on Earth Reloaded*) and frag grenades (Damage 3d6, MBT). In addition, each carries a NA M-21 assault rifle (Range 20/40/80, Damage 2d8, RoF 4, AP 2) and two spare magazines.

Death's Door

The deaders have set up a base in the wreckage of their old ship, which lies about two miles west of the ruins of Cody, Wyoming. One of the first things they did after their arrival was to blow the old Buffalo Bill dam, flooding the tourist town which had, up until then, escaped the worst of the war. After the water subsided, they swept the town for survivors, killing all they found, either quickly or slowly depending on their mood.

Few buildings remain in the ruined town and those that are still standing are mired in several feet of dried mud. The town is ringed with severed heads mounted on stakes and posts to mark the Legion's territory.

The Legion has set up an observation post in an old church steeple. There are always two metal heads watching the approach to the *Wormwood*. Treat them as Active guards at all times, but they try to remain hidden, reporting any potential threats. The cyborg guards only engage any intruders if they're attacked first.

Should the heroes spot the observation post, they can use it to draw out some of the Legion cans and trim down their enemies' numbers a little. If they attack the lookouts or just loiter in the area, One dispatches a quick reaction force of three cyborgs to either kill or capture them.

• **Legion 'Borgs (2+, see above):** Use the stats for Heavy Cyborg (*Hell on Earth Companion*), but make the deaders Extras instead of Wild Cards. Half

• **Legion Raiding Party (4):** Use the stats for Heavy Cyborgs (*Hell on Earth Companion*), but make the deaders Extras instead of Wild Cards. Half the 'borgs have NA SAWs (Range 30/60/120, Damage 2d8, RoF 5) on

the 'borgs have NA SAWs (Range 30/60/120, Damage 2d8, RoF 5) on their Weapon Mounts and the others have NA M-720 grenade launchers (Range 50/100/200, Damage (Special), RoF 1), loaded with alternating Inferno (Damage 3d8, MBT, see *Hell on Earth Reloaded*) and frag grenades (Damage 3d6, MBT). In addition, each carries a NA M-21 assault rifle (Range 20/40/80, Damage 2d8, RoF 4, AP 2) and two spare magazines.

Wreckage of the Wormwood

Fear Level 5

Near the shores of the now drained reservoir rests the wreckage of the freighter *Wormwood*. The Legion has stripped it of nearly everything but its superstructure to use for repair materials and fortifications. The area immediately around the grounded spaceship is well-protected by anti-vehicular obstacles, anti-personnel mines, fighting positions, and even a few trenches (see the map on page 74). Characters in fighting positions or trenches receive Heavy Cover against attackers outside that fortification.

The vessel's reactor ruptured in the crash and has been polluting the area with low-level radiation for years. The reactor melted into the ground long ago, so the direct effects of its radioactivity are somewhat muted. Breathers in the area only need to make a Vigor roll every 24 hours or suffer a Fatigue level, while undead (and cyborgs) are basically immune to its effects.

Otherwise, the entirety of the gang is present (minus the two guards at the observation post, minus any others they drew off and handled already)—usually with a few captives they're torturing.

- **Legion 'Borgs (9):** Use the stats for Heavy Cyborgs (*Hell on Earth Companion*), but make the deaders Extras instead of Wild Cards. Half the 'borgs have NA SAWs (Range 30/60/120, Damage 2d8, RoF 5) on their

plasma cutter (Damage 2d6, AP 4, HW) that he uses like a knife.

Special Abilities:

- **Immunity:** One can be Shaken by normal and magical attacks, but can only be wounded (or killed) by his Weakness.
- **Weakness (Plasma Blade):** One takes damage normally only from weapons not crafted on Earth. His plasma cutter, the weapon he prefers to use to dispatch his victims, was actually cobbled together on Banshee and does hurt him.
- **Coup:** The waster who absorbs One's essence can ignore one level of wound modifiers. This ability stacks with Nerves of Steel.

Weapon Mounts and the others have NA M-720 grenade launchers (Range 50/100/200, Damage (Special), RoF 1), loaded with alternating Inferno (Damage 3d8, MBT, see *Hell on Earth Reloaded*) and frag grenades (Damage 3d6, MBT). In addition, each carries a NA M-21 assault rifle (Range 20/40/80, Damage 2d8, RoF 4, AP 2) and two spare magazines.

- ✦ **One:** See sidebar, page 72.

A Black River Runs Through It

Hook: Lower Mississippi and Delta

At some point after the heroes have aided a mutant band or Joan's heretics in a significant manner, they are contacted by none other than the Harbinger himself—Darius Hellstromme. With the Reckoners banished (at least from Earth),

BLACK BAYOU



ONE SQUARE = 10 FEET

LEGEND



GENETECH



POST OFFICE

the doctor has returned to laboring to return his wife's soul from Hell. One of the things he needs to do so are gather the materials to create a suitable vessel for her—and coincidentally the same materials to replace his current robotic body (He's fairly certain his wife would find his current state more than a little unsettling).

Hellstromme wants the posse to travel to an old Genetech facility in Louisiana to recover some samples of a biological compound. Before the Last War, his corporate spies had learned the Pentacorp subsidiary was making astounding progress in the field of human cloning. One of the routes they were pursuing was a modified stem cell that was able to more quickly replicate and specialize. He believes this might be helpful to his current research.

Even now, the doctor has considerable resources at hand to entice the heroes' cooperation. Tailor his reward to your campaign's wealth and power level, but keep in mind Hellstromme can offer more than simple material goods. For example, as the most skilled engineer and scientist on the planet, he's easily capable of the operation necessary to turn a normal Harrowed into a cyborg. Or perhaps he can provide a vital piece of information the heroes have been unable to uncover—he is nearly 300 years old, after all!

Black Bayou

The doctor sends the group to Black Bayou, a small community in central Louisiana. Black Bayou takes its appellation from a nearby swamp of the same name. The Genetech facility is located not far from the town.

The area is heavily overgrown, but appears to have been largely overlooked in the battles of the Last War. Upon arrival, the posse discovers a small survivor population of about 50 in the town itself. While the buildings are

worse for wear and the pavement is spiderwebbed with grass-filled cracks, the residents seem to enjoy a relatively peaceful life.

Unlike many survivor settlements, the townsfolk of Black Bayou don't keep weapons trained on the wasters. In fact, they're almost welcoming in their behavior toward the posse. The mayor, Greg Peters, eventually greets the posse and explains that the town was indeed sheltered from the worst of the Apocalypse by its location deep in the sticks. That same remoteness has protected it from the attention of bandits, outlaws, and mutants. In fact, most of the town's current population was living in Black Bayou before the Last War.

The residents, as a result, haven't developed the same mistrust of strangers that other survivors in the wastes have. In fact, they're just glad to get news of the outside world. Black Bayou doesn't have much in the way to offer travelers, but Peters finds accommodations and food in exchange for a few hours of tales about goings-on in the rest of the country.

In short, Black Bayou seems to be one of the rare safe havens left in the Wasted West.

The Doughboys

Actually, the town is anything but safe. The massive EMP bursts from Judgment Day fried most of the lab equipment—including the containment protocols on the experimental cells. One of the scientists was inadvertently exposed to the material, which reacted in a manner no one suspected. The cells not only replicated a near-perfect clone of the researcher, it killed her and assumed her identity.

The creature then lured more and more of the staff to their doom, with the biological horror spawning duplicants each time. Eventually, the plague

expanded outside the facility and overwhelmed the tiny burg of Black Bayou.

The clones are virtually indistinguishable from whatever they have copied, at least until they are injured or damaged. The strange organism mimics the outward appearance of its victims, but beneath the surface it remains an undifferentiated substance that resembles a spongy, pinkish dough.

The replicants in Black Bayou aren't friendly—they're actually just evaluating the danger of trying to absorb the posse into their ranks.

Genetech

Peters or virtually any other resident is more than happy to point the heroes to the Genetech facility, but subtly tries to steer them away from there. They're quick to point out that the Genetech scientists left shortly after Judgment Day. The residents explain researchers said their equipment was irreparably damaged by EMPs or something like that. The townsfolk have already removed virtually anything of value over the intervening years.

Persistent heroes find the old facility about a mile out of Black Bayou. The old Genetech sign is pretty heavily faded, but still identifiable. The single large building is surrounded by a chain-link fence topped by razor wire, but several gaps have been torn in it over the years. To make entry even easier, the gate stands wide open.

The lab building is fairly large and a thorough scouring of it takes most of day. The townsfolk weren't lying when they said the facility had been largely picked over. The posse can make scavenging rolls at the end of the day, but with a -1 bonus to their Notice rolls.

Regardless of their success on scavenging attempts, the characters do take note of the fact that there are a lot of

files, both paper and on some undamaged data slugs remaining in the building. While nearly all worthwhile equipment has been stripped from the labs, it looks as though much of the actual research documents were left behind.

The texts are all highly technical and specialized, making interpretation—at least on short notice—nearly impossible. However, a hero with a scientific background can roll Common Knowledge to determine that the documents do seem to deal largely with the sort of experiments Hellstromme was interested in.

Grave Discovery

Regardless of how long the posse remains at the site, whenever they are ready to depart, allow the wasters to make Notice rolls or Tracking rolls (+2). The character scoring highest finds an old trail leading into the swamp behind the facility. The trail leads through a break in the fence and to a grisly scene.

In a shallow inlet, someone has dumped dozens of bodies to rot. They've obviously accumulated over the years, as many are little more than soggy skeletons at this point. Mixed in with human remains are the corpses of animals of all shapes and sizes. The sight of the big soup of decomposing flesh—along with the stench—is enough to require a Fear check against nausea.

After the wasters have had a little time to take in what they've found, a wave of small forest creatures—snakes, birds, squirrels, rats, etc.—pour out of the swamp around them. The animals are actually doughboy replicants, and they're intent on adding the posse to the dead pool.

•Doughboy Swarm (1 per 2 heroes):

Use the stats for Swarms from *Savage Worlds*. These swarms can split.

Welcome Back

The swamp surrounds the Genetech facility, and the only route out is back through Black Bayou. The replicant townsfolk are waiting in ambush for the posse when they return. Depending on the heroes' strength and abilities, the doughboys can attack in one big group or come at them in waves.

The creatures fight until three-quarters of their number are Incapacitated. At that point, the survivors fall back to a building in the center of the small town, a long-defunct post office. The replicants have hidden several pieces of equipment from the Genetech labs there and are using it to create more of the experimental biological material. The abominations try to salvage what they can and escape into the wilderness.

The heroes can also secure a sample from the post office to take back to Hellstromme. Even if they don't manage to put their hands on some of the stem cells, the research materials are sufficient for the doctor to provide whatever reward he promised.

- **Doughboys (30):** Use the stats for doughboys (see below). Two-thirds are armed with various tools and hand weapons (Str+d6), while the rest carry hunting rifles (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2).

Doughboy

These normal-looking townsfolk walk, talk, cry, and cuss just like any other waster you've seen. But after they've decided you look good enough to copy, a feral look comes over their features and they attack with lethal force. It's only when you strike back that you see the proof of their pudding: under the skin there are no blood vessels, organs, or lumps of fat—just a spongy pinkish dough.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities:

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison; ignores one level of wound penalties.
- **Fearless:** Doughboys are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Hardy:** A second Shaken result does not cause a doughboy a wound.

For Whom the Air Horn Blows

Hook: The Wild Southwest or High Plains

A raider gang calling themselves the Renfields wrangled up a few nosferatu a while back. They loaded them in the back of tractor trailers and use them to soften up—or just clear out—small settlements. The Renfields pull into a town and open the doors. The nosferatu do the rest of



the work, leaving the raiders free to loot the town in the morning's light. Between the blood suckers and the bandits, one way or another, no survivors are left alive to warn others.

The posse is unlucky enough to reach a settlement just a few hours before the night convoy pulls into town! *This is a particularly tough Savage Tale, Marshal, and likely unsuitable for Novice characters. Read it carefully before you send your heroes into it.*

The Night Convoy

This tale takes place once the posse has settled in for the night at a survivor settlement. About midnight, a semi pulls up at either end of the main drag. If the wasters maintain a guard, they can easily hear the arrival of the two trucks. If they assumed they were in for a peaceful night's rest now that they were back in what passes for civilization, that's okay. They're in no risk of sleeping through what's coming.

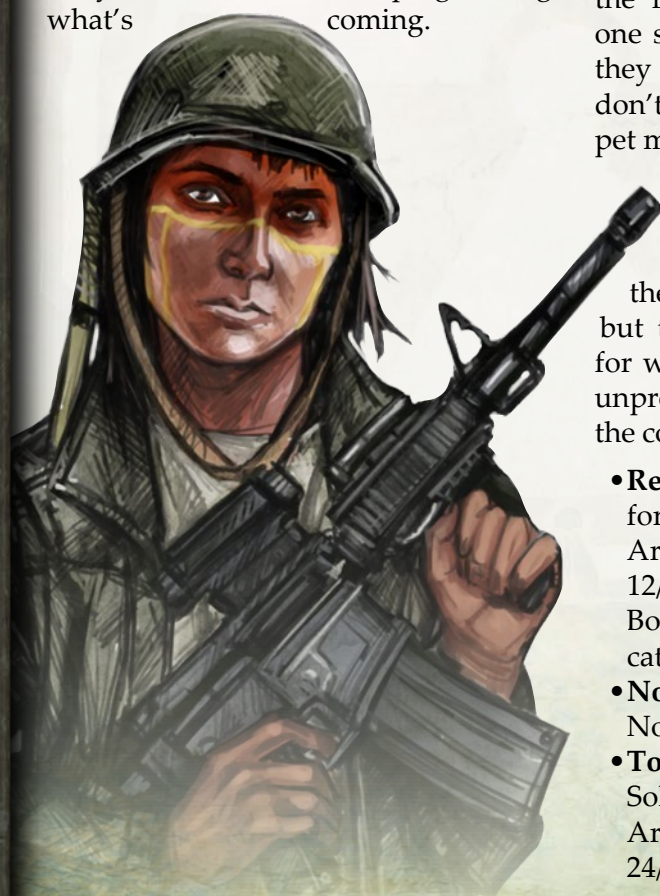
Within less than a minute of their arrival, the drivers lay onto their air horns, letting their counterparts know they're in place. The horns are more than just signaling mechanisms. They've been altered to emit a particularly unnerving screech which Shakes any character who fails a Fear check.

The round after the horns blow, the doors on the back of the trailers open. Inside each trailer are ten nosferatu who pour out into the night in search of victims. The undead abominations rush into the settlement, tearing open residences, tents, and vehicles looking for prey. Their blood thirst is insatiable, and they go into a frenzy whenever they see, smell, hear, or otherwise detect a new victim.

The drivers of the semis drive out of town after dropping their unholy cargo, if possible. The nosferatu are largely on board with the plan as they've learned the raiders basically drive them from one smorgasbord to another as long as they behave. However, the Renfields don't take any chances, either with their pet monsters or scrappy townsfolk.

In addition to a handful of town guards, there are a few other survivors in town who can help the heroes fight off the monsters, but the Renfields' attack is on a scale for which the homesteaders are wholly unprepared. The posse quickly becomes the core of any defense in the settlement.

- **Renfield Drivers (2):** Use the stats for Raiders in *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with Ruger Redhawks (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, AP 1), Bowie knife (Str+d4+1, AP 1), and a catch pole (see sidebar).
- **Nosferatu (20):** Use the stats for Nosferatu (see page 91).
- **Town Guards (5):** Use the stats for Soldiers from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with SK Sporters (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP



2), one spare magazine, and a club (Str+d4).

- **Townsfolk (15):** Use the stats for Townsfolk from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with pump shotguns (Range 12/24/48, Damage 1–3d6, RoF 1) or hunting rifles (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2).

Clean-Up Crew

Shortly before dawn, the semis return to the edge of town to load up the nosferatu. It's become standard practice for the undead to try to cart off as many living survivors as they can "for the road." Of course, it's very possible many of the victims rise as spawn, but the Renfields aren't concerned with any leftovers still in town.

Once the vampires are loaded, or if the heroes attack the tractor trailers, the rest of the Renfields ride into town on an assortment of SUVs, cars, and motorcycles to finish off anyone who survived the attack and loot the settlement. If the posse's still among the living, they have a chance for some payback.

The Renfields aren't fanatics. If they run into too stiff of opposition and lose more than half their number, they attempt to turn tail and run. They're not above abandoning the big rigs to distract any pursuers—the nosferatu make for pretty easy pickings in the daytime.

- **Renfield Gang Members (6, plus 2 per hero):** Use the stats for Raiders from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with a variety of rifles, submachine guns, and shotguns they've looted from previous raids.

- ♦ **Minda Levin, Renfield leader:** Use the stats for Witch (*Hell on Earth Companion*). Add the Devlin Blood Edge and the Bloodthirsty Hindrance.

Sky Raider Down

Hook: The Wild Southwest (Albuquerque, NM)

The posse witnesses a giant airship engaged in a battle with Combine forces go down inside the Albuquerque maelstrom. Alternately, if the posse has received a sat phone from Ike Taylor and are nearby, they're dispatched to rescue some downed Sky Pirates before the Combine can lay its hands on them.

The Sky is Falling!

While traveling near Albuquerque, New Mexico, the heroes observe a pitched battle in the distance. The majority of the fight seems to be taking place in the air, as a ragtag squadron of aircraft dogfight with Combine raptors. The aircraft seem to be trying to defend a large airship—probably the largest flying object most of the wasters have ever seen—but the flying automatons are taking a terrible toll. Then an armored vehicle on the ground lets loose a volley of surface-to-air missiles, some of which hit home on the huge blimp.

The airship rolls to one side out of control and begins descending precipitously toward the ground. Before it crashes though, it disappears inside the ghost storm surrounding downtown Albuquerque. The wasters note none of the other aircraft brave the swirling winds of the maelstrom.

Rescue Mission

Now, the sight of a huge airship crashing might be enough of an enticement alone to draw the group into the ghost storm. After all, there's bound to be some amazing salvage to be had!

If the heroes are equipped with radios, they receive an all-channel SOS from the aircraft as it goes down. The radio operator identifies the aircraft as *Sky Raider I*—the flagship of the Sky Pirates!

A few minutes later, the posse receives a targeted message from a Sky Pirate aircraft flying overhead. The speaker identifies himself as Snake, the leader of the Sky Pirates. His pilots can't safely fly through the ghost storm, and he asks the group to move in, evac any survivors, and destroy any navigational gear left on *Sky Raider I*. He's adamant about the last part of the mission.

In return, Snake offers a future service from the Sky Pirates. This is a pretty valuable offer, as his gang can serve as rapid transport across the Wasted West. A character who gets a raise on a Persuasion roll can even convince Snake to rejoin the Iron Alliance. That accomplishment garners more accolades back in Junkyard—and a reward of \$500 per posse member from Ike Taylor.

If they're not carrying comm devices, a low-flying Sky Raider VTOL (Vertical Take Off and Landing) ground attack fighter circles their location shortly after the airship disappears into the maelstrom and lands. The pilot conveys the same offer from Snake.

Into the Breach

Assuming the heroes go after the downed airship, the first obstacle is making it through the ghost storm. This entails the standard Vigor roll (-4) and consequences for failure as detailed in *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

Once they're through the storm, finding the crashed airship isn't that difficult. *Sky Raider I* was an enormous rigid airship nearly 170 yards in length, at least before it crashed. Even grounded amidst the shattered ruins of Albuquerque, it's pretty hard to miss. Allow the heroes a Notice roll every few minutes to spot the wrecked aircraft.

It's less than a mile from the inner edge of the maelstrom, but there are precious few avenues that still pass as streets thanks to the ghost rock bomb

that leveled the downtown area. The entire area inside the maelstrom counts as difficult terrain, and it takes the better part of half an hour to reach the wreck.

Along the way, they attract the attention of the remaining residents of Albuquerque—a band of savage trogs who see the party as a combination of salvageable equipment and food all wrapped up in one neat little package. The mutants never attack en masse, but instead snipe at the posse from ruins. The bad news is there is effectively an unlimited number of the trogs, so no matter how many the wasters put down, there are always more crawling out of the woodwork to hound them as they pick their way toward the crash site.

Handle this as a standard length Chase (on foot) from *Savage Worlds*. Each round, the trogs replenish their numbers to match the size of the posse. Due to their sheer numbers and familiarity with the terrain, the trogs get a +2 bonus on their Agility rolls. At the end of the fifth round, the intrepid band reaches *Sky Raider I*.

•**Trogs (1 per hero):** Use the stats for Trogs from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

Welcoming Party

Once the group reaches the Sky Raider, the trogs withdraw—for a moment. The heroes find the once massive aircraft has crumpled, its frame failing under the combined stresses of combat, passing through the ghost storm, and finally its barely controlled crash landing. However, the large cabin—itsself nearly 40 yards long—has survived largely intact.

A few Sky Pirate survivors are milling about the wreckage when the posse arrives. If the heroes attempt to make peaceful contact, the surviving crew is relieved to find friendly faces. The captain and command staff died in the crash, leaving a ragtag band of gunners, mechanics, and other support personnel.

Even as they're speaking, both the wasters and the Sky Pirates make note of signs of movement in the surrounding ruins. The mutants have returned.

The crew tells the posse they can't abandon the wreckage. The ship contains a veritable cornucopia of information the Combine would love to get its collective hands on—not the least of which are the coordinates of the Pirates' hidden airfield. They fear if they abandon the wreck to the mutants, the Black Hats will eventually get their hands on the data.

Destroying the data is a Dramatic Task (see *Savage Worlds*) using either Knowledge (Demolitions), Knowledge (Computers), or Smarts. The task requires five successes on the appropriate roll with a -2 penalty (-4 if using Smarts). Unlike most Dramatic Tasks, there is no specific time limit on the heroes' attempts, but there is another incentive to move quickly.

The mutants begin to gather their forces and attempt to overrun the wreck's defenders. The first round, ten attack and that amount increases by another ten each round thereafter. Eventually, the posse and Sky Pirates are going to be overwhelmed by sheer numbers!

Fortunately for the rescue party, the mutants are more interested in the *Sky Raider I* right now than the survivors. If the characters and crew retreat, the mutants do not immediately pursue.

- **Sky Raiders (10):** Use the stats for Raiders from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Armed with police pistols (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, AP 2) and one spare magazine each. Allow the players to control these as Allies.
- **Trogs (10 per round):** Use the stats for Trogs from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

Wrong Turn in Albuquerque

Once the group evacuates the crash site, the Albuquerque mutants largely ignore them as long as they don't loiter too long in one spot. However, their

troubles are far from over. Within ten minutes after leaving *Sky Raider I*, they find the Combine hasn't forgotten about the Sky Pirates' command ship.

A pack of Combine battle hounds has been sent into the ghost storm to look for the wreckage. Their search pattern has intersected with the posse, and they attempt to ambush the rescue party. Have the heroes make a cooperative Notice roll versus the battle hounds' Stealth. If the automatons win, they start the battle on hold.

The battle hounds fight to the death.

- **Battle Hounds (1, plus 1 per 2 heroes):** Use the stats for the Battle Hound Patrol model from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Half the automatons are armed with chain guns (round up), and the remainder are armed with plasma rifles.

The Home Stretch

After they defeat the robotic canines, the group faces another trip through the maelstrom, along with the usual Vigor rolls (-4). As they emerge from the ghost storm, they discover the battle hounds managed to alert the Black Hat ground forces to their presence. An entire platoon of Combine soldiers awaits them, along with a pair of automatons for heavy weapons support!

The wasters and their Allies are probably much worse for wear by this time. At the least, most of the Sky Pirates are likely to be running low on ammunition at this point. The mass of Denver gun thugs awaiting them should feel overwhelming.

If the posse is filled with nail eaters who can face down everything they've fought so far and still slug it out with the best, feel free to let the heroes catch sight of a Combine raptor or even a widowmaker approaching in the distance. Just when all hope seems lost, a flight of Sky Pirate ground attack craft zoom in and saturate

the Black Hat ranks with a rain of bombs and napalm. The Black Hats break under the assault and rout.

Snake holds up his end of any agreement the group made, or offers it if the posse went into Albuquerque of their own accord. The Sky Pirates also give the wasters a couple of cases of milrats (12 in each) and 4d10 rounds of any Common or Uncommon caliber.

- **Black Hats (30):** Use the stats for Black Hats from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.
- **Automatons (2):** Use the stats for Vengeance Brigade Automaton from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

Hunters' Moon

Hook: Any small survivor settlement.

The posse finds itself in a settlement with one of the last surviving members of the Whateley family—and a pair of hunters intent on putting an end to the bloodline at any cost!

Settling the Score

Scott and Steven Harris are monster hunters who've killed more strange creatures, cultists, and apparitions than most people have even heard stories about. Part of that is because they're *really* dedicated to their craft, but another part is that the two have been around for centuries.

Also, they've never read Nietzsche.

The brothers lost the other members of their families over two hundred years ago in a small California town called Gomorrah. There, members of the corrupted Whateley family released a powerful demon into the world. The demon—and many of the Whateleys—were eventually thwarted by the combined efforts of Agency members and Texas Rangers, along with a veritable mob of mad scientists, Old Ways Indians, and even a few Maze Pirates.

That day, the Harris boys swore a blood oath to hunt down every last member of the Whateley line and send them screaming to Hell. Their hatred eventually drove them to commit acts every bit as heinous as those they held the Whateleys accountable for, but the two justified it as part of their crusade.

And that's the kind of thing the Reckoners just gobble up with a spoon. One of those big ones like you see at soup kitchens.

The two look exactly the same as they did on that fateful day, but now are little more than monsters wearing the skins of the Harris brothers. The two travel the Wasted West tracking down the few remaining Whateley descendants and killing them and anyone who gets in the way—or sometimes anyone who just happens to be nearby.

Peddlers of Death

The heroes arrive in a settlement just after the Harris brothers roll in with a hand cart. Alternately, if the posse is resting in an outpost after a recent adventure, the pair can come to them instead. If the group isn't in a settlement you've already detailed, you can fall back on the handy **Survivor Settlements** (see *Hell on Earth Companion*). We recommend you take a moment to sketch a brief map as well, if you don't already have one.

Steven poses as a peddler and Scott a tinkerer. They actually have an eclectic mix of goods on their cart as a result of their unusual profession. Any hero making a Streetwise roll to find a specific item takes no population size modifier (see *Hell on Earth Reloaded*) until one item of its scarcity has been "found" on the cart (but not necessarily bought). Once it has, the regular population modifier for the locale applies to any Streetwise roll afterward for an item of that scarcity (see **Scrounging** in *Hell on Earth Reloaded*).

Scott can't patch up really high-tech gear like cybernetics, but he is otherwise a passable repairman. He charges \$10 per hour required to make a repair.

Hidden in a secret compartment on the wagon are the hunters' weapons, as well as an ancient photograph of their family in Gomorrah. In the same compartment is also a journal detailing many of their hunts over the centuries. The book adds a +2 to any Knowledge (Occult) rolls to identify the weaknesses of supernaturally evil creatures.

In short, the two should ingratiate themselves with the heroes pretty quickly.

Night of the Hunters

Once night falls, the two wait for the settlement to bed down before beginning their hunt. The Harris brothers don't know exactly *who* in the town is a Whateley descendent, but they aren't going to let that slow them down.

Steven uses his talents to raise a dense fog to conceal their actions and to give Scott an extra edge using his Shadow Walking ability. Scott begins slaughtering lone townsfolk as quickly as he can, while Steven raises the corpses of the slain to provide them with more firepower.

The brothers' actions have an additional effect. Every ten minutes, the Fear Level in the settlement rises by one. If the adventure is taking place in an established location, use the normal Fear Level as the starting point. Otherwise, the average settlement has either a level 2 or 3 (otherwise they're at full blown Deadland in about 20–30 minutes!)

Once it reaches the level of a Deadland, the area begins to display the horrors of the brothers' past hunts. The bodies of their previous victims begin appearing, impaled on tall stakes, hung from trees, or even crucified upside down. Also at this point, anyone attempting to leave the

area of fog finds herself inexorably led back into the center of the village. These effects end when either the hunters or their prey are slain.

Ending the Hunt

As the Harrises move through the town, the heroes initially encounter one or two zombies roaming the fog-shrouded streets. As the night (and hunt) progresses the numbers of undead increase until the abominations appear in equal numbers to the wasters. The posse may also run across small groups of townsfolk fighting against the horror that's descended on them.

The two steer clear of the heroes initially, as they know the posse is new in town and not likely to be their target. Also, they may have sized the wasters up as serious opposition and are waiting until they've better set the stage. Steven may even try to enlist the heroes on their side at first, claiming the zombies he raised as "proof" that they are actually the result of sorceries practiced by the Whateley descendent. Scott is covered in blood from his own efforts and stays clear of the group as long as possible.

Eventually—once you're done toying with the posse, Marshal—the group runs across Scott Harris as he is attacking another townsfolk. Scott is covered in gore and completely consumed by his bloodthirst at this point. Unless the posse turns a blind eye to his murderous rampage, the hunter turns his blades on them.

- **Walkin' Dead:** Use the stats for Walkin' Dead from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.
- **Townsfolk:** Use the stats for Townsfolk from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. These hapless victims are armed only with simple hand weapons (Str+d4) or tools they were able to find when the hunters' attack began.
- ♦ **Scott Harris:** See page 85.

Judgment

Once the heroes dispatch Scott, they probably have an idea that something is amiss with the Harrises. However, Steven is a little more calculating than his younger brother. He approaches the wasters and attempts to convince them to help him eliminate his intended prey. By this point, he has finally identified his target, and while he doesn't need the posse's assistance, he also doesn't want to face them in a stand-up fight unless absolutely necessary.

The final decision on exactly who the Whateley descendant is ultimately rests with you, Marshal. If this is a settlement the posse has visited before, perhaps it's a trusted friend—or if you want to add some moral conflict, maybe it's a rival. The victim might be a faceless townspeople, an orphaned child, a vicious raider, or even a Templar. She may not even be aware of her identity,

or she may embrace it and be a witch, or she may be trying to redeem herself for her family's awful past.

This is a chance to make the posse's decision easy, a heart-wrenching conflict, or even to tempt them to side with Harris. If the characters try to stop him, Steven first tries to elude the group and finish off his victim without a fight. However, if they corner him or prevent him from reaching his intended prey, he uses his *Summon the Slain* ability and *summon ally* power (elementals, see *Savage Worlds*), and attacks the group.

If the group thwarts him but fails to put both the brothers down, they've earned a powerful pair of enemies that are *very* experienced at holding grudges and extracting revenge!

Should they put both down for a dirt nap, they can pick over the brothers' wagon. In addition to the hidden journal, the cart is filled with an eclectic mix of odds and ends. Allow each of the wasters a scavenging attempt with a +4 bonus on the Notice roll (see *Hell on Earth Reloaded*).



Scott Harris

Scott normally appears as an average-sized young man. However, over the years, he has absorbed countless coup powers, making him a terrible foe. Once the hunt begins, he swells to a massive, murderous humanoid wielding an axe in one hand and a machete in the other.

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

Skills: Fighting d12, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d10

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 10/12 (2/4 vs. bullets)

Hindrances: Vow, Vengeful

Edges: Fleet-Footed

Gear: Battle axe (Str+d8), machete (Str+d6), Kevlar vest (+2/+4 vs. bullets).

Special Abilities:

- **Bloodlust:** Scott does not suffer wound modifiers to Trait rolls or his Pace. Instead, he gains a bonus to his Fighting rolls and melee damage equal to the penalty.
- **Fear:** Scott's hunting form is of a hulking brute projecting a palpable air of menace. His face distorts into a perpetual snarl, and his eyes are blood red.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Hulking Death:** The hunter swells in both height and musculature, increasing his Size by 1.
- **Improved Frenzy:** Scott can make two Fighting attacks a turn at no penalty.
- **Invulnerability:** If slain, Scott rises again at the next nightfall unless Steven is also killed before then.
- **Piercing Vision:** The hunter does not suffer any penalties for Dim or Dark lighting. Additionally, he can see normally through the fog produced by Steven's special ability.
- **Shadow Walk:** Scott can *teleport* up to his Smarts die type in inches as long as he is not observed by any other character other than his brother. This does not require Power Points or a skill roll, but he must be able to see his destination.
- **Coup Power:** Anytime the hero is within range of a dying abomination that grants a coup power, she automatically gains a copy of the coup power without rolling Spirit. This does not prevent another character from gaining the power in the normal manner.



Steven Harris

Like his younger brother, Steven appears to be a young man perhaps in his mid-20s. Where Scott dedicated himself to facing the hunters' foes in combat, Steven focused on the arcane, turning the magic of their enemies against them.

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Spellcasting d10, Stealth d10

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7/9 (2/4 vs. bullets)

Hindrances: Vow, Vengeful

Edges: Arcane Background (Black Magic), Extra Power Points (×2)

Powers: *Bolt, damage field, deflection, summon ally* (up to Veteran level)

Power Points: 20

Gear: Colt Peacemaker (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, AP 1), Kevlar vest (+2/+4 vs. bullets).

Special Abilities:

- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Fog:** Steven can summon a thick, supernatural fog that settles over an area a half-mile in diameter. Vision of all sorts within the area is reduced to 30 feet.
- **Invulnerability:** If slain, Steven rises again at the next nightfall unless Scott is also killed before then.
- **Piercing Vision:** The hunter does not suffer any penalties for Dim or Dark lighting. Additionally, he can see normally through the fog produced by his special ability.
- **Summon the Slain:** Any Extra slain by either brother within Steven's fog rises the next turn as a zombie under his control. Use the stats for walkin' dead from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.
- **Coup Power:** The character can spend a Benny to raise an Extra they've slain as a zombie under their control for the scene. Use the stats for walkin' dead from *Hell on Earth Reloaded*.

Hit and Run

Hook: Great Basin

The posse arrives in a small community to surprising (and misplaced) fanfare and welcoming hospitality. Although this *Savage Tale* is set in the Great Basin by default, it is relatively easy to place



Night Runner

Blackwood had a thing for old muscle cars, so all night runners are big, intimidating sports cars about a century out-of-date in appearance, but with factory-fresh satin paint—either black or metallic. The windows are heavily tinted, giving a -2 penalty to any attempt to target the driver (on top of any other appropriate penalties).

Anyone who gets a look inside the cockpit has to make a Fear check (-1). The undead driver is melded into the driver's seat, and arcane runes cover the steering wheel and safety harness. Tubes feed directly into the corpse's torso, pumping oil, blood, and other less identifiable fluids through the driver. The hellish car can also extend arms with hoses, straps, and chains to retrieve materials—or bodies—to “feed”.

Use the statistics for the vehicle in question. All the night runners are equipped with a front-mounted, heavy machine gun to help them hunt. To the additional Special Abilities below, add Smarts d8 and Spirit d10 to represent the evil spirit inside, as well as Shooting d8 and Driving d10. The car suffers wounds just like any other non-homicidally-possessed vehicle. If it's “wrecked”, treat it as if it were Incapacitated.

Acc/TS: 30/56, **Toughness:** 12 (3), **Crew:** 1

virtually anywhere in the Wasted West, Marshal.

Not-So Warm Welcome

As the heroes are traveling through the desert, allow them Notice rolls. Those who succeed spot what looks like an old-model muscle car parked on a stretch of high ground around a third of a mile away. If they move to investigate, the vehicle starts up with a rumble and roars off into the wastes.

Not long after encountering the elusive vehicle, the group reaches the tiny burg of Smyrna. During the Last War, no one considered this small collection of buildings in the middle of nowhere worth wasting a bullet on, much less a ghost rock one. As a result, Smyrna stands pretty much as it did before Judgment Day—a couple of small buildings surrounded by less than a half-dozen homes.

When the posse enters the town, people begin to trickle out of the homes and buildings to welcome them. It's not exactly a parade, as there aren't enough folks in town to even properly fill a phone booth, but the fifteen or so residents make up for their numbers with exuberant greetings.

Within moments, the greetings cool off as it becomes obvious the citizens of Smyrna had taken the group to be a small trading caravan they'd been expecting for days. Supplies in the town are just about depleted and starvation is becoming a genuine concern. Worse, anyone who's left town to scavenge or look for help has disappeared! They've lost nearly ten of their number this way.

The townsfolk are pretty certain they've been targeted by a gang of road bandits. One or two have even seen some cars prowling the wilderness outside town. However, no one's made any contact with the suspected outlaws.

Heroes for Hire

Once the townsfolk come around to the idea the posse isn't carrying large quantities of food and other vital supplies in their belongings, it's not long before one of the citizens asks the group for help with the raiders. Since the bravest and most capable members of the settlement were among the first to venture out to look for help, there aren't any folks left in town who are able to put up much of a defense against raiders.

Unfortunately, as we've noted, the town is running short on most everything. While they're happy to trade, treat *everything* as if it had a scarcity of Very Rare. There is one thing Smyrna has in enough abundance to offer as an enticement to any wasters who hesitate to help out of the goodness of their hearts: books.

One of the two non-residential buildings in town is the former library for the surrounding county. The other is a combination general store and community gathering spot. The residents have been using their undamaged supply of books as trade goods for years, but a Librarian can find a text from his organization's want list on a successful Investigation roll, or Notice (-2). Alternately, a waster can locate a copy of *How to Serve Your Man*, or another work of similar rarity of the Marshal's choice.

The townsfolk agree to part with one such book, or two with a raise on a Persuasion roll, if the characters eliminate the raider threat.

The Night Runners

Unknown to the residents of Smyrna, the area around their settlement has become a hunting ground for a group of strange abominations known as night runners. The night runners are twisted creations of one Devan Blackwood, a junker who worked out of the old

Weapons: M2HB machinegun (Range 50/100/200, Damage 2d10, RoF 3, Shots 250(B), AP 3, HW, Snapfire)

Special Abilities:

- **Adaptive:** Despite its appearance, a night runner is able to handle most off-road terrain, due both to its unique design and the fact its "driver" is plugged directly into the vehicle. It still suffers normal penalties for Driving rolls on difficult ground.
- **Armor:** The car's Toughness applies to every part of the vehicle, even the windows.
- **Fearless:** Not surprisingly, night runners are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Regenerate (Slow):** A night runner makes a natural healing roll every hour. Dents straighten themselves, tires reinflate, bumpers reattach, and so forth. It must have access to spare materials to "heal."
- **Spikes:** The night runners have retractable spikes and razors in various locations on their exteriors. These add an additional d8 to any normal collision damage, but only against soft targets, like pedestrians.
- **Weakness (Driver):** Removing the driver from the vehicle causes it to "die," crumbling into an aged rust bucket within moments. An Incapacitating head wound also destroys the driver and night runner. Treat the driver as a standard walkin'

dead from *Hell on Earth Reloaded* for those purposes; otherwise, he's considered simply part of the vehicle.

- **Weapon Mounts:** Each vehicle has a pair of front-mounted machine guns (Range 50/100/200, Damage 2d10, RoF 3, Shots 100, AP 2, 3RB). The night runners cannibalize their own materials to create the ammunition, but this takes an hour to accomplish. The machine guns are completely useless if detached from a night runner.

Deseret Motorworks factory. Once a tiny cog relegated to drudge work in the automobile industry, he took advantage of the Apocalypse to delve into areas of man-machine interfaces that no sane person would even consider. Using a device that merged black magic and technology, he found a way to meld a human being directly into a car, creating an unholy hybrid of flesh and steel.

The first models—which he called Speed Demons—proved flawed, causing the human element to waste away and die within a few months. Eventually, he replaced the living “drivers” with undead ones, hoping to create a more lasting model that would allow him to study the interface more thoroughly. These he dubbed Night Runners.

Now, if you've been paying attention to the goings-on in the Wasted West, you probably can already guess how that turned out. And if you guessed his mad creations murdered him and broke free to roam the wastes, you win!

The night runners aren't just undead killer cars—they're *cannibalistic* undead killer cars. The abominations regenerate damage, whether to themselves or their undead pilot, but they require “spare parts” and vital fluids (be they flesh or mechanical) to do so, not unlike a Harrowed needs meat to mend her wounds. However, the night runners also feed just because they like to eat. A lot.

Leftovers

The first clue the heroes discover that something's amiss is the remains of the trade caravan Smyrna was expecting. A group of four mangled vehicles lies about an hour or so out of town. Strewn around the wreckage are several dead bodies.

There is a single cargo truck, a van, and two off-road vehicles. All are beyond repair. A Notice roll tells the posse the vehicles were hit by bullets, but they also show signs of being rammed repeatedly. A raise on the roll tells the mechanical prodigy that the collisions appeared to have involved relatively low-riding cars.

Anyone who checks the corpses finds that calling them bodies is being generous. Nearly all the flesh has been stripped from the skeletons. However, a Healing or Knowledge (Medicine) roll reveals the victims aren't likely to have been dead more than a couple of days—far too short a time for the usual scavengers to so thoroughly work the bodies over. Most of the bodies have badly broken bones, with some being almost crushed to pieces.

Like the victims, the vehicles have been stripped as well. Most vital parts have been plucked off them and no fluids of any sort remain. Oddly, although the doors to the truck's cargo compartment are open, a number of items remain inside. A variety of common clothing, dried fruit and vegetables, and a milrat or two are scattered about the interior,

but a waster can make a Notice roll (-2) to find any single, specific item from either the clothing, food & drink, or general equipment sections of the Gear List found in *Hell on Earth Reloaded*. Each hero can only make this roll once.

Also, searching the other wrecks and surrounding area allows another Notice roll. Each success finds a pair of NA assault rifles with empty magazines, a pump shotgun with two shells in it, and one police pistol with five rounds remaining. The fact weapons were left alone, regardless of what—if anything—the scavs find in the truck, should make it obvious this wasn't an attack by a run-of-the-mill bandit gang.

Drive By

Getting the night runners to attack is pretty simple. Once the heroes find the wrecked caravan, the vehicular abominations go after any relatively small group that gets more than two miles from Smyrna.

The undead car lot rejects are fairly cunning. They know they are more than a match for any civilian vehicle. If they can't take it out in a single attack, their regenerative abilities give them the edge in future battles. They use their machine guns to immobilize any vehicles, but the four-wheeled monsters prefer to run down anyone unlucky enough to be caught on foot.

Faced with a heavily-armored military vehicle though, they invariably choose retreat. Even if it's unlikely the fighting vehicle can take them out permanently, the night runners know their own weapons are effectively useless, and it's not often a Camaro wins a head-on collision with a tank! Instead, they either wait the crew out—they can run for days without "refueling" and they don't have to worry about water, bathroom breaks,

or sleeping—or move on to find easier prey.

The night runners never get closer than a mile to Smyrna itself, but they attack anyone who tries to leave. The posse is effectively trapped in Smyrna until they destroy the night runners or chase the abominations from the area. The technological monstrosities finally give up if the heroes Incapacitate one or more of their number on three separate occasions, even if the wasters don't manage to permanently send one of them to the scrap heap.

In any given combat, the night runners fight until more than half their number has taken two or more wounds, then retreat to regenerate. There is a total of one night runner in the pack for each hero, although seldom do all attack at once.

- **Night Runners (1 per hero vehicle, or 1 per two heroes afoot):** See sidebar on page 86.





Monsters, Muties, & Misfits

Nosferatu

These are the most infamous bloodsuckers of the Wasted West, and they ain't your grandad's vampires. They don't wear capes, sleep in coffins, seduce their victims, or sparkle. Nosferatu are what you get when you cross a leech with a rabid badger and stick them into an undead chassis.

An old Rail Baron dug them up somewhere in the Southwest back in the early days of the Reckoning. Rather than taking a sensible approach and burning the nasty biters, he stuck them on trains and set them loose on his rival's rail lines. The Agency and Texas Rangers were eventually able to hunt down these 'night trains', but spawn of the creatures persisted, often trapped in isolated towns and way stations.

Like cockroaches, they managed to survive the Last War—and often show up in large numbers looking for food after the lights go out.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Stealth d12

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claw:** Str+d4.

- **Fear (-1):** Nosferatu are frightening creatures, requiring a Fear check (-1) from any who see them.
- **Fearless:** These bloodsuckers are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Grapple:** A nosferatu may attempt to grapple as normal. It automatically inflicts bite damage each round the grapple is maintained.
- **Improved Frenzy:** These creatures can make two Fighting attacks per action at no penalty.
- **Infection:** Anyone slain by a nosferatu rises as one of the abominations in 1d6 hours.
- **Invulnerability:** Nosferatu can be Shaken by normal weapons, but only wounded (or destroyed) by their Weaknesses.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from Shaken; doesn't breathe; immune to disease & poison; no additional damage from called shots; ignore 1 level of wound penalties.
- **Weakness (Heart):** A called shot to the heart (-6) ignores the rule about no extra damage. Best of all, no stake is needed to take advantage of this Weakness—bullets do the job just fine!
- **Weakness (Sunlight):** Nosferatu suffer a Fatigue level every round they're exposed to sunlight. Fatigue levels suffered this way are recovered

only after the abominations are able to consume at least one pint of fresh blood. Once Incapacitated, another round of exposure kills the monsters, turning them to foul-smelling ash.

Rattler Young

Rattler larvae were once restricted to the Badlands, but since the Harvest, the great worms have become more aggressive, and now these critters can be encountered throughout the High Plains, Great Basin, and Wild Southwest. All the baby rattlers encountered are about three feet in length.

Those wasters fortunate enough to have encountered them and survive long enough to concoct a theory believe the creatures remain underground until they reach this size. They crawl around the surface until they hit another growth spurt at which point they retreat back into the ground for the next phase of their development.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d8, Stealth d6

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

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d4
- **Blizzard of Tentacles:** Young rattlers aren't big enough to hunt like the larger versions, but they do use their tentacles to distract their prey. A lone rattler young 'un gains an automatic +1 Gang-Up bonus on its prey.
- **Burrow:** 15".
- **Quick:** Rattler young discard action cards of 5 or lower.
- **Size -1:** These monsters are about three feet in length.

Personalities

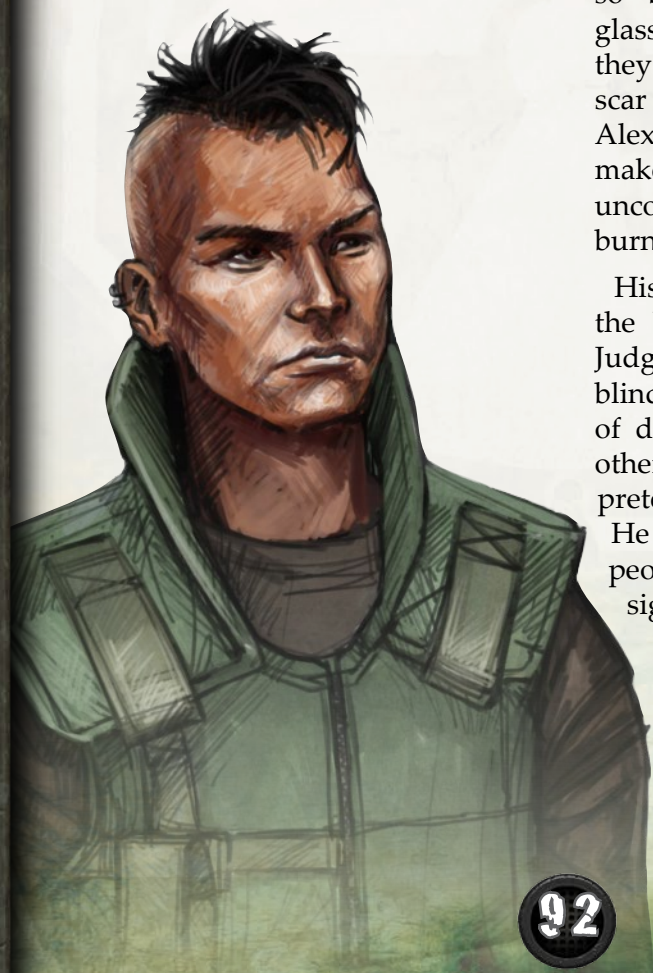


Alexander Taylor

Alex is a young man in his mid-20s. He wears a beat-up hoodie he scavenged years ago and wears a pair of sunglasses so black they appear opaque. The glasses almost never leave his face, as they hide the fact he has only blackened scar tissue where his eyes should be. Alex learned long ago his disfigurement makes most folks, particularly norms, uncomfortable, so he generally keeps the burns hidden.

His eyes were literally burned out by the blast from a ghostrock bomb on Judgement day, leaving him totally blind. However nearly two decades of discipline, training, and honing his other senses have given him a nearly preternatural sense of his surroundings. He is able to interact with nearby people and objects almost as well as a sighted person.

This unusual awareness, combined with his scars, has convinced the Cult of Doom in New Carson City that Alex is a mutant. He's not, but he knows all too well how the Cult treated the norms when they seized control.



Using the fact that many, even among those who believe him to be a mutant, tend to underestimate him due to his disability, Alex has been able to garner a tremendous amount of knowledge about the Cult of Doom's activities in New Carson City.

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

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d8, Survival d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Blind, Outsider (his scars make most people uncomfortable)

Edges: Alertness, Danger Sense, Quick-Draw

Gear: Sword (Str+d8), sunglasses.

Special Abilities:

- **Blindsight:** Within 5", Alex's Blind Hindrance is largely offset by his other senses, although he cannot perform tasks that rely entirely on sight, such as reading. He receives a -2 penalty to all other Trait rolls that normally involve sight, instead of the usual -6. He takes no modifiers for lighting, doesn't suffer the usual penalties to social rolls for Blind, and is immune to effects and attacks that target a subject's vision.



Maren Kuether-Ulberg

Maren is the Librarian for the Templars, having replaced the only other Librarian to ever serve in Boise, Fred Biletnikoff. Librarian Biletnikoff held his position with the Templars since the Grand Library's first contact with the order. As Biletnikoff chronicled the Templars' history through such milestone periods like the hunt for the Boise Horror and the Harvest, her assumption of the position is one of both high honor and even higher expectations.

She spends a good deal of her time perusing the Templars archives for hidden gems of knowledge to send back

to Sacramento. She's hardly a desk-bound academician, however, and often latches onto a Templar or Squire who's headed out on a potentially important quest. Although the Templars were at first skeptical of her inclusion in field missions—Biletnikoff left Boise only on rare occasions—over time she proved herself a more-than-capable companion. Now, members of the order welcome her company on quests as she is not only a font of useful knowledge, but also a competent fighter as well.

Maren has long collected sharp instruments of all sorts, and her familiarity with blades was a major factor in the Grand Library's decision to assign her to Boise upon Biletnikoff's retirement. She brought several of her favorites with her and is seldom without at least one, and usually two. She keeps a custom, hand-crafted axe (Str+d8) wrapped and in a foot locker in her quarters due to the unfortunate association that weapon holds with the Anti-Templars for many in the order.

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

Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Science) d8, Knowledge (History) d8, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Notice d8, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Survival d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Curious

Edges: Librarian

Gear: Machete (Str+d6), Bowie knife (Str+d4+1, AP 1), palmcorder, flashlight. When on field missions, she often carries a sword (Str+d8) and occasionally a police pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1) with two spare magazines.



Sam Montgomery

Sam was about 14 when the bombs fell, and like nearly everyone else, lost most of her past life in a flash of nuclear fury. Always a survivor, she dug her way

through the ruins of the West, eventually ending up in Denver. Dodging Black Hat patrols and raptors as she picked through the abandoned houses, she made two important discoveries.

The first was a dog-eared original copy of *How to Serve Your Man*, which she first nabbed for mainly ironic reasons. After a few nights huddled in an empty building with nothing to do but read Devlin's treatise, Sam began to figure out there was more to the recipes than just a dash of salt and a hint of lime. She eventually broke the flimsy code and began mastering the fine art of witchcraft. After mystical flames engulfed her arm during

one of her first attempts at a spell, she had a brief panic attack. Sam now wears a massive leather gauntlet on her casting hand.

The second big find was the Denver Resistance. Sam's not a "joiner" by any stretch of the definition, but she'd seen enough atrocities from Throckmorton's army of thugs and killer robots to be willing to throw in with any group that were trying to take them down a notch. The leadership of the Resistance quickly came to recognize that her independence and unique abilities made her perfect for longer missions where she would have to function with little support or supervision.

Sam favors military surplus clothing, not as a fashion statement, but simply because it tends to be more durable than anything she might scavenge from a mall clothing store. Although she has a look that might have been called "Goth" before the Last War, she gravitates to it more because that's her favorite music than for any stereotypical bleak outlook.

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Occult) d4, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d8, Witchcraft d8

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Overconfident, Quirk (wears leather gauntlet when casting spells),

Edges: Arcane Background (Witch), Scrounger, Very Attractive

Powers: Bolt, elemental manipulation, healing, slumber; **Power Points:** 10

Gear: Machete (Str+1d6), heavy leather gauntlet (Armor 2, right hand only) 1d6 Ingredients.



Appendix: Judgment Day

To the Librarians and those interested in the past, Judgment Day is the name given to that awful day ghost rock bombs rained death upon the world and the very gates of Hell opened, ushering in the era of the Reckoners.

To the average Joe on the rubbled streets of the wasteland, Judgment Day is the one major holiday of the Wasted West universally celebrated throughout the radlands. No one is sure where the idea originated for this festival, but in the thirteen years since the fall of civilization, it has been embraced from the Combine to the Cult of Doom to the Iron Alliance and everyone in between.

Everyone loves Judgment Day. What other day does everyone forget their inhibitions the night before and party like there's no tomorrow? What other day do the sins of the past year get blown to atoms in an orgy of alcohol (and other intoxicant)-fueled celebrations?

The festivities of Judgment Day start at dawn on the 23rd of September. Tradition since that tragic date has evolved to eat and drink heartily as a reminder of how plentiful these things used to be before the end of the world and the coming of the Reckoners.

Everyone parties all day until 6:17 pm or as close as anyone can figure to that time, since timekeeping with any precision is a thing of the past for most villes. When the moment arrives that the ghost rock bombs began to detonate, fireworks and other explosives are set off, along with celebratory gunfire in those settlements rich enough to have ammo to burn.

As the fireworks and explosions blossom overhead, everyone runs into whatever shelter they can find. Those lucky enough to have a partner attempt to increase the population of the wastelands while everyone else continues the party.

In the weeks leading up to Judgment Day more traders than usual move across the wastes, stocking up settlements in their area with the necessary food, drink, and fireworks. Scavs and other loners also rift into town to celebrate this riotous occasion in the company of their fellow wasters.

Of course, with all these strangers and goods in the settlements, Judgment Day is often a time of mischief. Petty theft and robberies occur in town, as well as barroom brawls and killings. Despite the fact that most villes are full of wasted wasters on September 24th, few if any large scale attacks have been documented in the years this holiday has been in existence. Legend has it that anyone who tries to take advantage of the post-festivity inebriation will receive a special visit from the Reckoners. Whether this is a true story or not is unknown, but apparently in the last 13 years few have tried their luck with the Horsemen.



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SOMETHING LURKS BENEATH THE IRRADIATED SOIL. SOMETHING ANCIENT AND EVIL.

The Worms' Turn is a full-length Plot Point Campaign featuring the aftermath of the climactic battle called "The Harvest." The Reckoners have been banished to the distant living planet of Banshee, but there's no time for celebration. The Iron Alliance has learned a terrifying secret—the Reckoners were keeping other, even older terrors in check.

The Worms' Turn contains a full-length campaign, updates on the events of the Wasted West, and numerous Savage Tales that can be inserted into your own tales of wasteland woe.

The Worms' Turn requires Hell on Earth for Savage Worlds and the Savage Worlds core book to play. The Hell on Earth Companion is highly recommended as well.



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