



Western Seeds I

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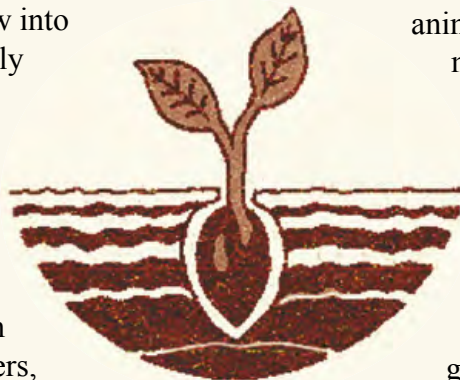
Introduction

Welcome to Seeds and to the 41st product in the new line by Expeditious Retreat Press. Seeds are story ideas, plot ideas, creature ideas, adventure hooks, anything that can grow into an enjoyable gaming experience. Each seed is small (only a paragraph or two at most) and each Seed product will be small as well (only four to five pages), but just like their namesakes, they have great potential when provided with the right environment.

We're pleased to introduce Western I to our line of Seeds products and are happy to announce we're accepting submissions for additional western seeds as well as seeds for the other genres (horror, supers, fantasy, sci-fi, modern, pulp, and post-apocalyptic). Western Seeds I is four pages packed with adventure ideas suitable for western gaming. We received this bunch from an open call at ENworld and RPGnet and we hope that you'll be inclined to send us your seed ideas for perusal and possible inclusion in future Seeds products. We'd love a continual series of Seeds created by the very people who enjoy reading them the most.

So drop by the Expeditious Retreat website, check out our submission guidelines to find out more about the process, and then send us your seeds. Hopefully you'll soon be reading the latest Seed containing your successful seeds. Whew! Enough with the alliteration already, on to the fun!

Joseph Browning & Suzi Yee



A local landowner is looking to build a ranch on his property. He has posted signs all through town looking to hire individuals to help him clear land, build a home, barn, and stables, and care for his animals and fields. It is hard work, but the wage is fair and it may be a good way to pass a season if the characters find themselves short on cash and far from home.

*T*he town's new sheriff is corrupt and actually allows crime to run rampant in the town he's charged to protect as he gets a "kickback" from several local gangs based on the valuables they steal, crooked card games they win, and the rustled cattle they sell. The sheriff's deputy is a well-meaning, but not very bright, young man who will not believe any of the accusations made against the sheriff unless he is presented with irrefutable proof of his partner's abuse of power. If presented with such proof, he insists on confronting the sheriff, who everyone in the town knows is much better at handling a gun than his deputy is.

A well-known preacher from the east coast has traveled out to the frontier for a religious revival. The townsfolk are all excited about his upcoming visit and the town has a carnival-like atmosphere the week before hand, with many supplementary community events such as bake sales, farmer's markets, breakfasts, and livestock shows scheduled for the week before the event. Unfortunately, on the day of the event, a pair

of unscrupulous individuals stole all the donations that came in during the revival. When news of the theft spreads around town the following day, the townsfolk are at first shocked and depressed, then driven to ferret out those responsible for this crime.

A dusty drifter strolls into town one day and stops at the local saloon asking where he might be able to get a room. As this is a relatively small town where everyone knows each other, news of the strange drifter spreads rapidly. The individual doesn't seem to have a job, is never seen without a six-shot pistol holstered to his belt, and doesn't seem to speak or socialize much, even though others in the town have tried engaging him in conversation when they see him about. However, he always pays his room bill and food and bar tab on time, and acts like a respectful, albeit aloof, gentleman in front of ladies and children. Most in the town just don't know what to make of him.

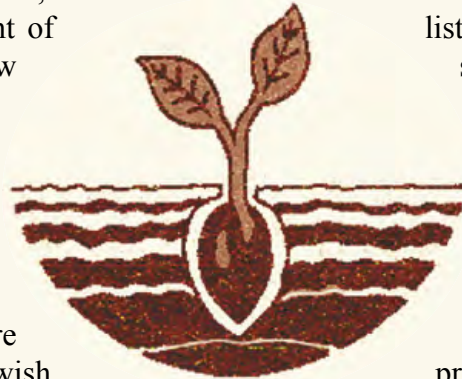
During construction of a new town in the great frontier, a delegation of Native Americans arrives asking to talk to the leaders of the settlement. The Indians inform the settlers that the valley they are currently in is a rich hunting area for them and they wish to know the settlers intent for this area. The delegation is neutral and non-threatening, but wants to understand if this settlement is to be a permanent one or not. Either way, they want to be assured that these new settlers do not over harvest the wildlife and other natural resources, such as lumber, of the region. As long as they agree to this, the delegation leaves on good terms. The Indians will then monitor the situation to make sure the settlers keep their word. If they do not, it will be brought to the settlers' attention in hopes of getting them to rectify the situation. If the delegation is treated harshly, or their terms are not accepted, the settlers have gained themselves an enemy for a neighbor.

A local, well respected, church-going family has recently stopped

attending church services and family members are only rarely seen about town any more. When they are, they act cold and distant, never taking the time to talk with old friends who might show concern for them. In actuality, a famous outlaw, currently on the run after being shot during a successful heist, is holed up on their ranch outside of town. He has intimidated the family members with threats of violence if they do anything to reveal his presence on their ranch while he rests and recovers there. The family members are terrified that he may attack those close to them if they do anything to cross him.

A slick politician name Zebedia "Zeb" Lyndon moves into town several months before the next election for mayor. The man is quite an orator and can easily fire up any crowd that takes the time to listen to him. He talks against the town's current mayor, speaking of his shortcomings and inadequacies, as well as calling his integrity and character into question. The current mayor is actually an honest gentleman, although nowhere near as well spoken or educated as this new upstart, Lyndon, seems to be. Zeb plans to slander the town mayor and run against him in the next election. If he wins, Zeb plans to profit from the crime in the town by allowing it to occur for a cut of the proceeds. Cattle rustling, claim stealing, armed robbery, blackmail, and extortion will only be the beginning if "Zeb" gets into office. If the characters discover his plans and try to fix the election results in any way, the current mayor will try to stop them. He is, after all, an honest man.

An infamous gang of train robbers has planned another heist. This time, the prize is a shipment of gold headed for the US Treasury back east. The robbers plan to hit the train along a secluded and uninhabited stretch of desert near the foothills of a local mountain range. Unfortunately for them, they did all their planning from an out of date set of maps. The region is no longer uninhabited since a group of prospectors settled there several months back. Since that time, a town has sprung up around



their settlement. Little do the townsfolk realize that when the next train goes by, they are going to see one heck of a show. Little do the bandits realize, there'll be an entire town on hand to witness their next caper.

The characters receive evidence that the town sheriff is actually corrupt and getting a kick back from local gangs. If the characters try to expose him, the sheriff's naïve, honest, and well-meaning deputy will arrest the characters for trying to besmirch the sheriff's good name as he doesn't believe a word of it.

A shipment of diamonds is due to pass through the character's small town in a few days, but only the sheriff and his deputy are aware of it, as the shippers figure the less people who know, the less likely they are to find trouble along the way. Word has found its way, however, from the shipping office to the ears of a local gang who figure the haul on this job might be too good to pass up. The plan on blowing into town a few days before the shipment arrives and seizing control of the town... through any means necessary.

A tall, dark, and quiet lone stranger drifts into town and decides to stay in a local boarding home. Although he doesn't cause any trouble or even socialize much, people get a bad feeling about this drifter, despite the fact that his constant companion is a copy of the Good Book, which he always keeps under his arm or in his hands. One of the characters notices him sitting alone, having a drink in the local saloon. While he thinks no one is looking, he quickly opens the Bible, places something in it, and closes it again. The character notices that book seemed to be hollowed out. What was that that was in there? A bag of gold dust? Currency? A pistol?

A local gang has hired legendary sharpshooter and master criminal

Johnny Ringo to assassinate the town sheriff. When news of this reaches the characters and they try to warn the sheriff, the tables are suddenly turned on them and they are arrested and thrown in jail. It seems someone tipped off the sheriff that the characters were the actual assassins and the sheriff was just about to go round them up when they conveniently sauntered into his office and made the job easy for him. Now the characters have to find a way to bust out of prison, clear their names, and save the sheriff.

The workers of the gold mine near Central City have suddenly, and adamantly, refused to go to work because they claim the mine is haunted. When the characters talk to the workers, they will tell of strange sounds and glowing figures in the mine. Upon investigation, it is discovered that a group of men who want the mine for themselves have been using tricks such as rattling chains, trapped phosphorous gas in bottles, and creative sounds to make the mine seem haunted. When these men are found and stopped the mine will go back to work.

A poor family that runs a small farm outside of town are being threatened by a group of masked men. These men claim that if the family does not leave its farm in the next week they will all be killed. When this matter is investigated, it is discovered that a nearby railroad baron wants to continue to build his railway through the families farm. Because the man has already built most of his railroad, it is too late for him to select a different sight. Also because he is now on the verge of bankruptcy he can not afford to offer the family any money for their farm. Can the characters find a way to stop the railroad man, or will yet another family fall to greed?

A group of bandits attempted to rob a bank but it went bad, and now the bandits are holding everyone inside the bank hostage. The bandits are demanding to be let go but will not release any hostages until they



have gotten away. What can the party do to stop the innocent people in the bank from being killed?

A local judge's daughter has been kidnapped. The reason she has been kidnapped is because one of the men currently being held in the local jail is part of a nearby gang of bandits. They are holding her captive until the judge releases their friend, and they are threatening to kill her if he does not release their partner within a week. The judge has already tried to send the sheriff after them but he refuses to go. Why? Could he be in league with the bandits as well? If so will that make it harder for the players to rescue the judge's daughter?

The PCs are traveling through some isolated area when they encounter two very aggressive people. A father and son who want nothing to do with the PCs and threaten them to get out of the area. The father is quite distinctive with a large birthmark on his cheek. Later, when the PCs reach a nearby town, they hear that several bounty hunters are seeking the man they saw with the birthmark. Will the PCs tell them? Will they try to get the reward themselves? Do they care what the man was supposed to have done?

The PCs are hired by a priest to transport supplies to an Indian community some distance away. The priest warns them that the people in the nearby town don't like the Indians and are likely to try to stop them. Indeed, a number of the local men, covering their faces to not be recognized, will attack the PCs with the wagon. However, the PCs will eventually discover that hidden within the wagon and supplies are a large quantity of rifles and ammunition.

A photographer by the name of David Barry wants to travel from Bismarck, Dakota Territory into Wyoming and Montana to photograph

Indians in their own villages, but he knows not all tribes will be friendly. He needs people who can protect him, and possibly help convince unfriendly tribes to accept him and let him photograph them.

A Pony Express rider is more than 48 hours overdue, something that never happens. What happened to him to make him so late, and will he ever turn up?

Sir St. George Gore, an Irish Nobleman, is marauding his way through the West, killing buffalo, deer, elk, pronghorn and birds indiscriminately. Indian tribes, the US Army, and fur traders all want Gore gone, and rumors abound of promised rewards from all three if Gore is forced from the country, or killed.



The Mandan chief Big Weapon and Plains Ojibwa war leader Badger have both brought their bands to a trading post to trade buffalo robes, but the small post is nearly out of supplies for the season. How will the two react when they find out that only one of them will be able to trade?

It is 1864 and the American Civil War has come to the West. 'Galvanized Yankees' – former Confederate prisoners of war released after swearing allegiance to the USA and joining the Union Army – are sent to garrison the forts of the West, many of them fur trade establishments. How will the Sioux, Assiniboine, Crow and Cheyenne react?

Several Mandan led by Chief Crow-Flies-High have left Fort Berthold Reservation and traveled up the Missouri River, building a new village of earthlodges near the US Army's Fort Buford. The Army doesn't want the Mandan so close, but the Mandan refuse to leave for fear of

being attacked by the Lakota. The Army, unable to spare the men at the moment, needs someone to convince Crow-Flies-High to take his people back to the reservation and to guard them from Sioux attack along the way.

The PCs winter with a village of River Crow led by Chief Split Lip as they camp along the Tongue River in Wyoming Territory. During the middle of winter Split Lip invites them to go with him and some of his warriors on a horse raid against the Blackfoot.

A tenderfoot from back East by the name of Theodore Roosevelt needs several strong, rugged individuals to help him round up his free range cattle in the Dakota Badlands. Anyone helping out the hyperactive Roosevelt is immediately on the bad side of the Marquis de Mores, a Frenchman and rival cattleman.

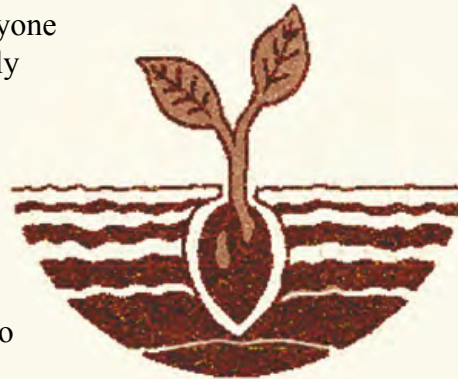
Buffalo Bill Cody needs 'authentic' cowboys, Indians and Indian fighters to be a part of his show as it travels to London and Paris, bringing the Old West to paying European customers.

Buffalo are getting harder and harder to find and the tribes of the Northern Plains are increasingly concerned. Rumors come in of one last great herd of buffalo in the Judith Basin of central Montana and the Lakota honor the PCs by asking them to go along. But the Lakota are not the only ones on their way there; the Blackfoot have also heard about the herd, and so have ruthless White buffalo hunters.

Someone is stealing dynamite and blasting caps from the Union Pacific Railroad in Utah and Wyoming. Who are the thieves and what are they doing with all that dynamite?

Virginia City, Montana Territory is a rough and tumble town. Bandits and highwaymen ply the roads to the east and the west, making travel to either Bozeman or Butte extremely dangerous. A local merchant, seeking to clean up the town and make getting news and supplies back and forth to the larger cities easier, is looking to hire a group of 'regulators' to take care of the outlaws any way possible.

No one really believes stories about ghosts and Indian magic, but when strange things start to happen after a Southern Cheyenne burial platform is plundered people begin to wonder if maybe there isn't really something to all that stuff after all.



A stagecoach full of 'soiled doves' breaks an axle on a rocky road in southern Colorado. The girls, all far more beautiful than the average hog ranch girl, would be ever so grateful to anyone who fixes the coach and sees them on to their destination in Arizona.

A strange man, half Chinese and half American, is wandering the towns of the American West fighting outlaws and corruption. A US Marshal, tired of vigilantes that work outside the law, needs several folks to become sworn deputies and track down the martial arts vigilante.

An earthquake has shaken San Francisco to its very foundations and there is no communications in or out of the city. Can someone fight their way through raging fires, looters, and frightened mobs and then keep them from looting the US Mint?

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