



# DEAD LANDS

Stone and a Hard Place



Player's Guide





# DEADLANDS

## STONE AND A HARD PLACE

BY MATTHEW CUTTER

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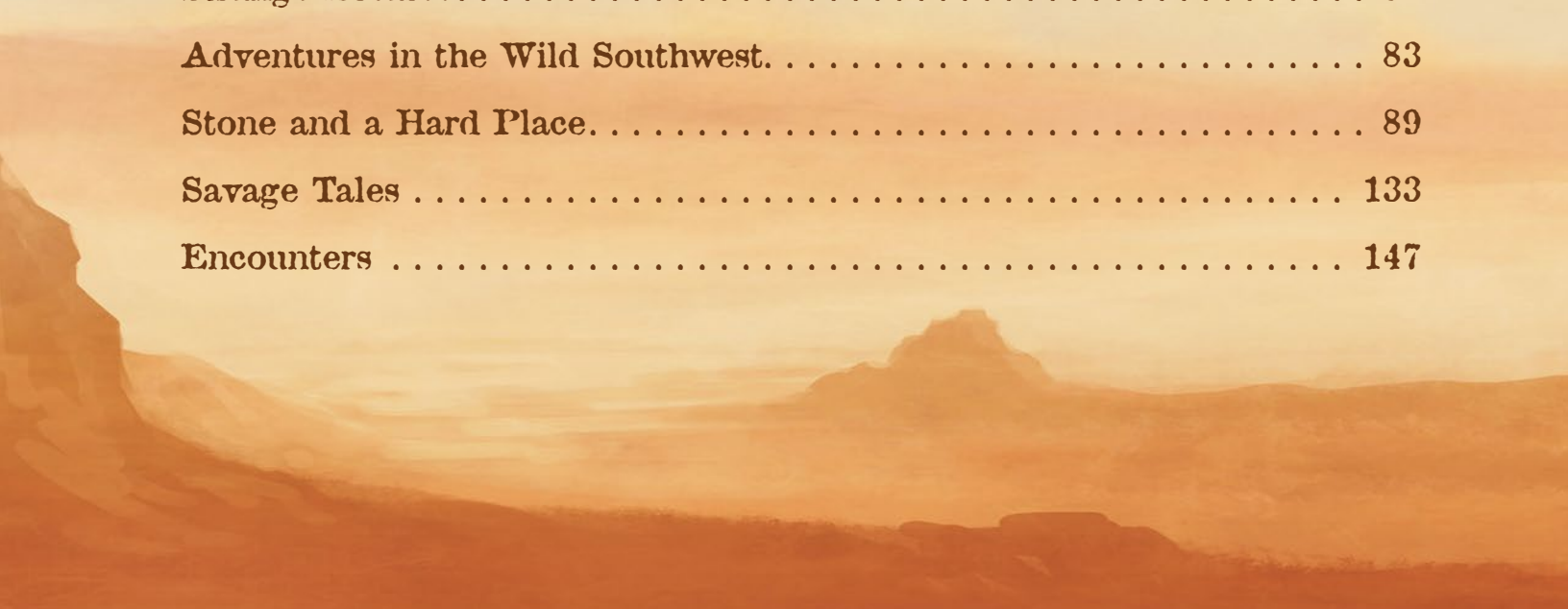
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# THE TOMBSTONE EPITAPH

Volume 6

Tombstone, Arizona - Sunday, October 9, 1881

No. 20

## Letter From the Editor

Welcome to the latest edition of the *Tombstone Epitaph*, Loyal Readers. No doubt you have followed keenly our many editions of the past few years, which illuminated some of the Weird West's darkest, most far-flung corners and brought to you news of world-shaking catastrophes, bloodsoaked battlefields teeming with steam-powered war machines, and seemingly miraculous events beyond mankind's ken.

With this edition, we return to the *Epitaph's* heartland, as it were—the silver-, gold-, and ghost-rock-rich mountains and canyons surrounding

Tombstone, in the Arizona Territory. But our Territory, and especially Cochise County itself, is threatened with destruction at the hands of homegrown Vandals and Goths, intent on tearing down laws and civilized society for their own enrichment.

Let us call it what it is—anarchy. For neither local, territorial, nor Confederate law has so far curtailed the robbery, murder, and heinous depredations against the citizens of this fair county and others like it. Nor are they likely to in the near future! Gangs of thieves ride free and clear while ordinary citizens can do naught

but pray for mercy from the Grim Reaper. Surely the honest citizens of this Territory deserve better.

We at the *Epitaph* state our opinion on the matter in a succinct and direct fashion: If the officers of the law cannot enforce the law, they should turn over the responsibility to more willing hands. Until then, Lincoln County's ruffraff shall run roughshod over Cochise County's citizens, and true justice will remain tantalizingly out of reach.

—John Clum

Editor, *Tombstone Epitaph*



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## THE DEATHLY DRIFTER RIDES!

➤ A rash of robberies and murder has broken out across the Southwest Territories, spreading faster and meaner than a case of the Texas tummy twisters. And as Tombstone's undaunted mayor and our editor-in-chief alluded to, few are willing to take up the star and gun, and ride in the face of adversity.

As always, we here at the *Epitaph* prefer to light a flame than to impotently curse the dark...and with any luck, light your way through troubled lands.

Take care if you find yourself in the lands around Tombstone. We are in the midst of a rail, stage, and highway robbery epidemic. Outlaws ride unchecked, attacking ranches and settlements to drive off and steal livestock. Certain gangs in Cochise County and the New Mexico Bootheel—the Cowboy Gang chief offender among them—have taken to “treeing” towns. That is, they ride through a settlement firing pistols and trampling citizens until everyone still able flees indoors or even into the trees. This is how they prefer their amusement: bloody and savage.

At the proverbial head of this infernal army rides a lone killer. He's a tall man with a permanent scowl, known only as the Deathly Drifter. Some say he's from Back East, others that he came up from Mexico in the years after Gettysburg. Some believe the drifter is Death personified, an idea that ought to give one pause. It is well-established that the Deathly Drifter rides alone and should be considered armed and extremely dangerous—he kills at a whim, without mercy or remorse. The Drifter is wanted dead or alive, with a standing bounty of \$10,000!



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The past few years have seen grand events and ruinous disasters strike the Weird West, but the darkness we have so often reported on has not gone to ground. It refuses to be held at bay by any sword. So remain vigilant, and consider the true facts contained in this guidebook a torch and sextant to light your twisted trail. Most of all... good luck!

Your Chronicler,  
Lacy O'Malley

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## Tombstone's Trials

Only five years ago, Tombstone was Ed Schieffelin's newly minted silver boomtown, as rough as they come, soon known far and wide as the "Gateway to the Maze." That's because the California ghost rock miners and their mule trains made Tombstone—and the Bayou Vermilion railhead located there—the ultimate destination of their money-making journeys. Flush with fundaments, they looked to ship their wares Back East. And once they sold off their precious cargo, they found Tombstone a rough-and-tumble, but ultimately satisfying locale in which to spend those hard-earned wages.

A lot has changed since 1876. Now Bayou Vermilion's western line runs all the way to Railhead in California, rendering the mules largely moot—although a few still make the trek. But few would describe Tombstone as any less rough and wide-open than it's ever been, and Geronimo's Apaches are still the masters of Arizona's wilds. Even so, the boomtown has burgeoned swiftly into a metropolis of the West, with most of the luxuries and amenities one would expect from larger cities.

Yet danger still lurks around every corner, in the form of the infamous Cowboy Gang and other, less-well-

known characters. The Confederate soldiers at Fort Huachuca, while willing, are powerless to stop them, as they are stretched to the limit fighting Apaches. Although Bayou Vermilion has only increased its influence in and around town, the rail company seems to turn a blind eye to all but the Cowboys' most bloodthirsty crimes.

That is, it did until the Earps arrived.

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## The Lawbringers

By various accounts, Wyatt Berry Stapp Earp has been a teamster, rail warrior, buffalo hunter, and stage driver. Some have accused him of less-savory occupations, such as armed robbery and running a brothel. But despite hearsay and tall tales of his early years' indiscretions, most agree that Wyatt Earp finally took a cotton to the law in 1875. That's when he joined the noble "Bat" Masterson in Dodge City, and helped him bring the wild town to heel. By late 1879, Wyatt was ready to move on. He made plans to rendezvous with his brothers in Tombstone, where they would carve a peaceful and prosperous new life from a dry, saguaro-studded wilderness.

In Tombstone, Wyatt—along with his brothers Virgil and Morgan, and their wives—set about buying up stakes in local businesses. In short order, Wyatt Earp had a half-stake in the Oriental Saloon and ran its faro table. Morgan Earp worked security, eventually settling in as shotgun man on the Wells Fargo stage from Tucson to Tombstone. Eldest brother Virgil Earp made his own wise investments, but unlike Wyatt he could not turn a blind eye to the lawlessness that so plagued the boomtown's residents. And that lawlessness, more often than not, was represented by the Cowboy Gang.

Tensions neared the boiling point in October 1880, when notorious Cowboy "Curly" Bill Brocius gunned down Marshal Fred White in the street. A lawfully appointed jury of Judge Wells Spicer's court deemed the shooting accidental for lack of evidence. But the event opened a door, and Virgil Earp stepped through—becoming town marshal and implementing the "no guns" statute that remains in force today. All visitors must check their lethal weapons at a saloon or livery, or risk a \$25 fine and jail. Soon Wyatt and Morgan joined their brother as duly appointed deputies.

In the year since they've taken the oath, the Earps have restored a modicum of order to Tombstone's streets. As we all know, Wyatt Earp even hunted down the "Accordion Fiend" who disrupted so many citizens' slumber with his cacophonous wailing!

However, Bayou Vermilion's recent hiring of the Cowboy Gang as freelance rail warriors has given the outlaws even more license for mayhem, and another excuse for the company's employees to ignore their rampages. At the time of this writing, tensions between the Cowboys and Earps are at an all-time high, and County Sheriff John Behan seems unable or unwilling to exert his influence in the matter.

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## Tombstone in Flames!

A blaze believed to have sparked in Alexander and Thompson's Arcade Saloon raged through Tombstone's east end on the afternoon of June 22, 1881. By several eyewitness accounts, an employee lit a cigar in the presence of several barrels of condemned whiskey—one of which exploded, killing the workers instantly. The ensuing fire spread quickly.

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Valiant citizens formed bucket brigades, with the Tombstone Hose Company's firefighters leading the charge. When dawn came, they had saved most of the town. But the flames consumed the red light district whole, taking with it many innocent souls. Industrious residents are hard at work rebuilding what was lost, but some report a cold, lurking presence that fills them with dread. Take care, Readers!

## Valley of Riches

Ever since the Battle of Lost Angels ended the Rail Barons' transcontinental race, the major rail companies have consolidated their holdings and diversified within those boundaries. Bayou Vermilion is no exception. In the wake of the rolling town Railhead's destruction by saboteurs and heavy losses at Lost Angels in 1879, LaCroix's minions expanded into the San Pedro River valley north and south of

Tombstone. There they established numerous towns, mines, stamp mills, and company stores—looking to become the “only game in town.”

Bayou Vermilion's relentless march north, through Contention, Canisteo, and Benson, was finally halted in January 1881 by an alliance of concerned citizens out of Potential. Miners had found a substantial ghost rock deposit—perhaps the largest to date in the American Southwest—under Whistling Rock, just east of Potential in the Galiuro Range. When Bayou Vermilion set its sights on running a line into Potential, a small posse of guerilla fighters dynamited their trestles. LaCroix's men responded with legions of walking cadavers—as we at the *Epitaph* have previously, strenuously reported—and lethal force.

On the evening of January 21, 1881, Potential's troubleshooters crashed a nitro-laden locomotive into Bayou

Vermilion's fortified roundhouse at Benson, Arizona, killing most of its personnel in the explosion. In effect, the matter was settled; Lone Star rail workers completed their own line into Potential only a week later. But Bayou Vermilion retains control of their San Pedro line linking Tucson in the north with Bisbee in the south—one of the Weir West's most profitable rail spurs.

Meanwhile, the Potential Miners' Coalition runs things in their neck of the woods, having gratefully granted Lone Star the right of way for their new railhead. By several accounts, Lone Star has been financing most, if not all, of their company's resuscitation with the tons of ghost rock being hauled out of Potential. Besides the PMC, other major players include Mayor “Handsome” Dan Deeds, mine owner and former *Epitaph* correspondent Phineas P. Gage, and the scientists in charge of the newly established



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Hellstromme Industries research facility—Dr. Winthrop St.—John Wilkes and Dr. Troy Frampton.

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## Ranger Hank Ketchum—Missing!

Now, Dear Reader, we bring you frightening news of the unexplained. Captain Hank "One-Eye" Ketchum of the Texas Rangers and his posse have gone missing somewhere in the hills east of Tombstone. Worse, ranchers report unnerving encounters with what they call "insect men."

Rancher Harlan Stanton encountered the mysterious beings on a hunting expedition. "They was all black, from head to toe, with smooth, shiny black eyes as big as tea saucers," Stanton said. "They drove a swarm—more like a river—of insects and vermin before them. Spurred them on by spitting long gouts of liquid flame! Looked to me like they had hard shells, but it was hard to tell on account of all the fire and smoke. I lit out fast, mister!"

Until recently, Captain Ketchum was a stalwart protector of Tombstone and ally of the Earps in their struggles against the Cowboys. The Texas Rangers have sent another soldier to take up the banner, Sgt. Elijah Clay.

Although he is no doubt as competent as his brethren, Clay is quite a bit more reticent than the garrulous Capt. Ketchum—he declined to be interviewed for this story. At last report, Clay has been combing the Dragoon Mountains' foothills in search of his missing predecessor.

## An (Un)friendly Game of Poker

An entirely different sort of conflict has been brewing for several months at Tombstone's poker tables and in its gaming rooms. The town's long-standing population of California gamblers—generally known as "Mazers"—have engaged in a sometimes-friendly but more often hostile competition with newcomers from Eastern parts, former riverboat gamblers known as "Easterners," (naturally).

For the most part, the competition has played out in the form of extremely cutthroat poker games. In a few instances, a gloating cardsharp flush with winnings has simply vanished from his room in the morning's wee hours. Although unnamed sources insist the Mazers and Easterners have, at times, resorted to murder, this reporter was unable to uncover solid evidence of such dark deeds.

Rumors abound that an organization in Shan Fan, California known as the Lady Luck Society will soon host a poker tourney—the "Tombstone Bonanza"—in our fair city. Society representatives did not respond to a request for comment by press time, but rest assured, Dear Reader, we shall report as soon as word arrives from Shan Fan!

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## Conquistadors on the Loose?

For several years, travelers near Tombstone have reported encounters with Spanish Conquistadors, as the *Epitaph* has reported previously. The anachronistic soldiers demanded silver. A few more hot-tempered individuals sprayed them with lead, but it didn't seem to have much effect. And in most of these cases, the strange

Conquistadors responded with lethal force of their own...charging into battle on terrifying steeds and impaling their victims on needle-sharp lances.

In those cases where folks lived to tell the tale, once the traveler got the point across that he or she had no silver, the horsemen simply turned and rode off. For all its strangeness, this is a tale that has persisted almost since Tombstone's founding, with no end to the mystery in sight. Readers with any information about the truth of the matter should contact the *Tombstone Epitaph* offices posthaste!

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## Around Arizona Territory

☛ Ghost rock claims are on the rise all across Arizona and New Mexico, bringing much-needed wealth and stature to the Southwest Territories. But with new wealth comes bandits and outlaws intent on taking it, and—as the *Epitaph* has so carefully stressed in the past—living in the unbroken wilderness often puts settlers at odds with threats of a wholly different kind...the kind that lurk in the night's shadows.

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## Dead End Poverty

When Dixie Rails' westward push finally heaved, shuddered, and collapsed under a withering rain of Apache ambushes and all-out attacks, it did so at the aptly named Dead End. From that valley's bloodsoaked, forsaken sand the ragtag rail warriors raised a town and set about the grim



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business of survival. Meanwhile, the Rail Wars took their toll on Dixie Rails, which was dismantled and sold off to a consortium of wealthy Texas ranchers.

With Dixie Rails' reconstitution as the Lone Star Rail Co., Dead End has seen somewhat of a resurgence in fortunes—for some. In March 1881 the Southwestern Ghost Rock Co., a nascent concern out of New Orleans, set up shop in Dead End and built a large, walled compound for their employees.

Surveyors found the salt flats north of town—actually dried-up, shallow prehistoric seas, as any paleontologist can inform you—to be rich in *diatomaceous earth*, a vital ingredient in the production of dynamite. Soon SGR owned everything of note in Dead End, staked more than 20 new ghost rock claims across western Arizona, and built a massive dynamite factory. By most estimations, prosperity should have followed.

Not so, for most of Dead End's inhabitants. They say the company's wages barely cover their living expenses...those who can get jobs, that is. A high percentage of the town's citizens live outside the SGR compound walls, eking out a life patched together from odd jobs and scavenging. Although SGR is the only law in town, their marshal rarely ventures outside the compound. This makes for theft, violent crime, and rampant hunger amongst Dead End's poorest citizens.

Most frightening, some report in hushed tones that the town actively enforces its own destitution. "Paper and coin just seemed to vanish," said one witness who escaped Dead End's borders but wished to remain unnamed. "Weren't no work to be found, neither. For them what can't get a company job, like me, prospects were bleak." When this reporter suggested perhaps intemperate drink, illness, or other

stupor had facilitated the loss of ready cash, the witness insisted he'd been assiduous in his bookkeeping—"T'was that infernal town what made me poor," he said. The *Epitaph* awaits a corroborating account.

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## Terror in Tucson

At the northern end of Bayou Vermilion's San Pedro line sits Tucson, Tombstone's closest neighbor of note and thriving desert metropolis in its own right. The town derives its name from an Indian word, "Stjukshon," meaning "spring at the foot of a black mountain." After the Spanish took up residence, the word was bastardized into its present form of Tucson.

The first Spanish settlers were missionaries and surveyors in service to the crown. They built the mission of San Augustin del Tucson, along with a tall wall of stone and adobe. The town of Tucson became part of Mexico when the country gained its independence in 1821 from Spain, and it remained a Mexican holding until 1854. That year it was sold to the US as part of the Gadsden Purchase. It would remain as such until 1863, when Arizona was proclaimed a territory.

During the upheavals brought on by the events in 1868 and the subsequent discovery of ghost rock, miners unearthed vast deposits of mineral wealth—including gold, silver, and small veins of ghost rock—in the mountains surrounding Tucson. The discoveries attracted folks from all over, hoping to get rich.

Of course, with all the fundament being taken from the surrounding mountains, scoundrels, con men, and opportunists were not far behind. The worst kinds of folk were drawn to Tucson like flies to a corpse, and in the intervening years the fortress town of

Tucson changed. The presidio wall was dismantled, and the boundaries of the town swelled. Homes and businesses sprung up here and there, and new faces arrived by stage daily.

These days Tucson is first and foremost a Bayou Vermilion company town, meaning LaCroix's local administrator Adame LeChetelier is ultimately in charge—despite who's currently wearing the marshal's star or the mayor's hat.

It also means visitors to Tucson should take care not to wander the streets at night. Numerous eyewitnesses have described nocturnal attacks by vicious, unknown predators "far more savage and cunning than coyotes." Reports of Bayou Vermilion "soldiers"—actually the risen dead—engaged in military exercises near a certain line of buttes about 20 miles outside town have yet to be confirmed.

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## New Mexican Travails

Southwest New Mexico—better known as the Bootheel—is as lawless a region as one can find anywhere in the Weird West. A preponderance of murdering gangs and solitary killers wander these reaches. In the interest of keeping readers safe and informed, we present here the recent exploits of just a few of these nefarious characters.

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## Wearers of the Red Sash

The *Epitaph* has reported on the Cowboy Gang's depredations here

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and elsewhere in bloody detail. Of most recent note: The Tucson-Bisbee stage was held up by masked men on September 8, who were later revealed to include Frank Stilwell, Pete Spence, and the Brimstone Kid, all known members the Cowboy Gang. They murdered the shotgun man and wounded the driver, and escaped with more than \$4,000 in gold dust, ghost rock nuggets, and coin.

Marshal Earp quickly raised a posse and ran Stilwell and his accomplice Pete Spence to ground. On Stilwell's testimony, Earp's posse was able to recover most of the stolen money and nearly all Stilwell's confederates—except for the elusive Brimstone Kid—over the following weeks. But Ike Clanton paid Stilwell and Spence's bail, and subsequently the evidence against them was found to be "insufficient." Ike Clanton and the Cowboy Gang remain on Bayou Vermilion's pay ledger.

## Laughing Men

On September 16, eight masked men robbed the Fort Huachuca payroll train from Tombstone. They shot down the conductor and blew up the rail agent guarding the safe, and according to eyewitnesses rode away laughing their heads off. As most of our loyal readers know, they could have been none other than the nefarious Laughing Men.

A posse out of Bisbee—said to have included hero of the Battle of Lost Angels Lucas Pitt—tracked down the Laughing Men...to the searchers' regret. The outlaws got the drop on their erstwhile hunters and murdered them in a canyon near the town of Packard on September 20. The criminals remain at large.

For those of you who have been languishing in a cave far from civilization, the Laughing Men are a band of cruel, ruthless outlaws that plagues Arizona from the Grand Canyon to the Mexican border. The

bloodthirsty "Chuckles" Ryan leads them, and according to some witnesses he's got over 200 men working for him!

## Red Lanterns of the Dead

More news of the morbid and unexplained! Just after midnight on September 23, the driver of the westbound Bayou Vermilion train out of Animas, New Mexico saw a red lantern swaying on the tracks up ahead—the signal to stop. He did so despite the strange time and remote location, and was shocked when the lantern-wielder turned out to be a walking corpse!

"I nearly wet myself in terror, I'm not ashamed to say," remarked BV train driver William Amargosa. "And I know what I saw, despite what anybody else tells you. Those robbers were dead men, fresh out of their graves, driven by some hellish urge to steal and kill." The thieves—now known throughout New Mexico as the Red Lantern Gang—killed a train conductor and one passenger who tried to resist. They remain at large, and are believed to be hiding out in the Bootheel.

## Across the West

☛ We'd be remiss, Dear Reader, if we failed to enlighten you as to momentous events all around the West, now that we've covered the Southwest.

## Rail Barons

In August 1881, the tattered remnants of the Great Rail Wars faced off east of Dodge City for one last conflagration—a clash that was dubbed the Battle of Peacetown.

In the aftermath, two new rail companies sprang into being. A number of anonymous investors in New York took control of Union Blue's faltering stock, rebranding the concern as Empire Rails. With the help of Smith & Robards and an enduring deal with the Denver-Pacific railroad, Empire Rails is nearly solvent and gaining value at the New York Stock Exchange...or so say the tin horns Back East.

Meanwhile, a consortium of Texas ranchers acquired Dixie Rails and renamed it Lone Star, and have been busily rebuilding. As noted earlier in this account, the steady stream of mineral wealth from Potential, Arizona and elsewhere in the San Pedro River Valley is fueling that renewal. Although Lone Star has already found itself in financial competition with Bayou Vermilion, for the time being neither company has initiated any military attacks on the other.

## Vanishing Rock!

We close this *Epitaph* installment with one of the stranger stories that's come in over the wire in the past few weeks. The unexplained robbery in the Maze of an enormous ghost rock crystal—a "diamond" in terms of hardness and purity—has investigators utterly flummoxed.

Shannonsburg, California officials can't explain how a half-pound ghost rock diamond vanished from a sealed, locked vault in a subterranean facility guarded by a dozen hardened veterans. There were no witnesses, nor were alarms tripped.

The ghost rock diamond's value, based on weight and purity, is estimated at \$25,000. Confederate Admiral Allen Birmingham has offered a \$5,000 reward for information leading to the diamond's recovery.



# Makin' Heroes

*In the early 1880s, the southwest is one of the most lawless and hazardous expanses in the Wild West.*

*Arizona and New Mexico remain mere territories of the Confederacy, and the ability to vanish across the southern border into Mexico makes the entire region—specifically the so-called “Bootheel” of New Mexico—a ripe fruit in the eyes of outlaws, fugitives, and ne'er-do-wells of all stripes.*

In this land of steely-eyed gunslingers, ruthless outlaws, and insidious evil, heroes have a tough row to hoe. We wouldn't be so cruel as to leave them to their fate. This chapter gives characters the ammunition they need to load up, ride out, and bring justice to the gritty, sun-baked anvil of the Wild Southwest.

## NEW HINDRANCES

### Focus (Minor/Major)

Only characters with the Arcane Background Edge can take this Hindrance. It represents a mental dependence on a physical item to use their powers.

It could be a deck of cards for a huckster, a holy item for a blessed, or a specific weapon for a chi master.

Whatever the item, the character suffers a -1 penalty to all arcane skill rolls if he does not have it. As a Major Hindrance, he suffers a -2 without the item. Anyone who sees the item used to enact a power can tell it's real important.

If a Focus item is lost, the hero can replace it, but it takes two game weeks for the hero to acclimate to the replacement, during which time she suffers the appropriate penalties.

Note that hexslingers (described on page 23) and mad scientists already need a chosen weapon or gizmo to enact powers—an actual dependence rather than a mental one. Therefore, hexslingers and mad scientists aren't eligible for this Hindrance...and it's best not to saddle your hero with such an onerous disadvantage from the get-go, amigo.

## NEW EDGES

### Combat Edges

#### Don't Get 'im Riled!

**Requirements:** Novice, Wild Card

The hero with this Edge can be a real curly wolf when he gets roughed up. When causing melee damage, he adds his wound penalties to the roll. A hero with a -3 wound penalty, for instance, adds +3 to his melee damage rolls!

#### Pistolero

**Requirements:** Veteran, Marksman, Two-Fisted, Shooting d10+

The gunslinger with this Edge can fire two weapons with accuracy or speed. He can use Marksman against two separate targets or he can fire double-action pistols as if they had RoF 2. All Automatic Fire rules are applied (-2 to Shooting and uses two bullets per attack).

### Professional Edges

#### Born in the Saddle

**Requirements:** Novice, Agility d8+, Riding d6+

Some folks have spent so much time on horseback it's become second nature to them. In fact, there's no place else they'd rather be. Heroes who were Born in the Saddle add +2 to Riding rolls. This bonus also applies to long-distance travel; see **Saddle Sore** in the *Deadlands Player's Guide*.

The caballero may also spend Bennies to make Soak rolls for any horse he happens to be riding, but only when he's in the saddle. This is a Riding roll at -2 (cancelling the usual +2). Each success and raise negates a wound to the mount.

### Weird Edges

#### Harrowed

**Requirements:** Wild Card, Novice, Spirit d6+

Some shootists are just too tough to lie down and stay dead when they get beefed. The price

they pay is an eternal battle for their own soul with the demonic "manitous" that provide their unnatural vitality.

The Harrowed Edge may only be selected at character creation. To get it later requires shedding the mortal coil and a whole lot of luck (the Marshal has information on how this occurs in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*).

If you take this Edge, your character has been reborn into unlife and you can read up on the grisly details on the next page. Otherwise, vamoose and show some respect for the dead.

## NO MAN'S LAND

In the *Deadlands Player's Guide*, we stipulated hucksters, hexslingers, wizards, warlocks, and spellslingers as interchangeable terms. We also restricted Harrowed to those heroes who died during the course of their adventures and had the sand—and luck o' the draw—to crawl back out of the grave.

But now, amigo, we've decided to switch up a few of those things, officially speaking.

It's true, "hexslinger" is often used as a general term for hucksters. But true hexslingers are a very specialized form of arcane caster, one we've revamped to give these Reckoning-fueled gunslingers their own Arcane Background and distinctive flavor. We also pull back the curtain on the art's origins and history...up until Doc Holliday rediscovered its secrets and unleashed them on an unsuspecting West.

Where the Harrowed are concerned, now you can choose—with your Marshal's consent—to have your hombre or chica begin play as a deader. Consider that choice carefully, though, because we've made some important changes to how Harrowed work to give undeath a fiercer bite. Then again, we also cooked up a whole passel of new Hindrances and Edges to sweeten the deal!



## HARROWED

**Edge:** Harrowed

**Requirements:** Wild Card, Novice, Spirit d6+

**Arcane Skill:** None

**Power Points:** None

**Starting Powers:** None

**Backlash:** None

**Special Rules:**

- **Coup:** When the deader defeats an abomination with the Coup Special Ability, he can “count coup” on it and absorb its essence. Harrowed can gain bizarre powers by this means—see each abomination’s description—but some powers come with a curse as well. If more than one Harrowed is present when a beast expires in their sight, whoever’s closer has the first option to count coup.
- **Dominion:** A Harrowed’s starting Dominion score is 0. When circumstances dictate a Dominion roll (the Marshal has more information on when this occurs), roll Spirit—opposed by the manitou—in order to keep your hero in control of his mind and actions. See below for details.
- **Undeath:** Being undead grants the wily Harrowed several benefits: Toughness +2; Grit +1; +2 on Fear checks; needs only 1d6 hours of sleep per night; immune to nonlethal damage; “death” only puts the Harrowed out of commission for 1d6 days, only an Incapacitating head-shot can kill the hero for good; and immune to poison and disease.

### The Unlife of a Harrowed

As we know, amigo, the dead don’t always stay dearly departed in *Deadlands*. They’re even more restless in the Wild Southwest! And some of the toughest, most fearsome, and strong-willed individuals actually return from the grave. These cowpokes are possessed by a manitou, an evil spirit who uses the host’s mind and body to affect the physical world.

The poor stiff’s are called Harrowed, which means, “dragged forth from the earth.”

Most of the rules for Harrowed haven’t changed (consult the *Deadlands Player’s Guide* to read up on those). But we’re replacing two important sections—Dominion and Undeath—with the versions presented below. Read on, amigos, and see what lies beyond the pale...

### Dominion

When your hero first returns from the grave, she probably remembers suffering through her Worst Nightmare. Well, guess what, hombre: The manitou puts its host through her own little corner of Hell every night, hoping to weaken her resolve. We represent this struggle for control as Dominion.

Recently deceased characters who return as Harrowed, as well as those who begin the game with the Harrowed Edge, start with a Dominion of 0. This means the host and the manitou are roughly on equal footing.



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When the Marshal calls for a Dominion roll, make a Spirit roll—opposed by the manitou—to keep the demonic worm out of your hero's head. This Spirit roll is modified by current Dominion score. Dominion can never go below -4 or above +4.

## Dominion Table

**Success:** The Harrowed retains control and gains 1 point of Dominion, or 2 points with a raise.

**Failure:** The manitou takes over, and no doubt gets up to some evil shenanigans. Your hero loses 1 Dominion point, or 2 if the manitou scored a raise.

**Tie:** The manitou doesn't get control, but the fight leaves your Harrowed Shaken.

## Undeath

Harrowed are a pretty sturdy bunch. They don't suffer Fatigue from mundane sources, and nonlethal damage has about as much effect on them as a mosquito does on a steer—they just shrug it off.

Harrowed suffer wounds normally—if an attack penetrates their +2 Toughness—but they can't be killed except by destroying the brain. The only way a result on the Incapacitation Table (see *Savage Worlds*) can snuff a Harrowed is if a Called Shot to the noggin sent him there, or if a roll on the Injury Table indicates a head shot. If the brain is mush, the manitou can't control the corpse's functions and is ejected. The Harrowed is now actually dead, as in, "not getting back up again."

A Harrowed can still take a beating fierce enough to take him out of action even without a hit to the noggin. If he's Incapacitated, he rolls Vigor and consults the Incapacitation Table as normal. However, if he "dies" due to anything other than a head shot, he's only put down for 1d6 days, after which he wakes up with three wounds.

In either of the above cases, Harrowed don't really bleed out. If the hero fails (or even critically fails) his Vigor roll, just assume he's suffered enough physical punishment to put him out of

action as discussed above, with no Spirit roll required.

Although Harrowed don't feel pain—nor do they really bleed either—they still suffer wound penalties as normal. These penalties reflect damage to the Harrowed's muscles and bones, making movement and action more difficult. It's also distracting having one's stinking, rotted guts spilling all over one's boots.

But undeath isn't all posies and ice cream, hombre. First, and most important, by their very existence Harrowed are abominations and affronts to life. Any Harrowed that wants to persist in its undead state is forced to hide that status from most of the people they encounter. Ordinary folk who discover your hero's true nature aren't likely to settle in for a drawn-out explanation of how all this strangeness came to pass. Odds are they shoot first, hang second, dismember third, burn fourth—and forget to ask questions! Moreover, powerful organizations—the Agency, Texas Rangers, and the Order of St. George among them—habitually hunt down and destroy any Harrowed they learn about.

Second, although undeath makes a body resistant to damage, it also renders it fairly resistant to outside sources of healing. Provided he eats a pound of meat—cooked or otherwise—the Harrowed can make a Natural Healing roll (see *Savage Worlds*) every five days. The Stitchin' and Improved Stitchin' Edges (in the *Deadlands Player's Guide*) improve this rate to every day and every hour, respectively. But most healing magics have no effect on a Harrowed (although a mad scientist's healing gizmo might work, at the Marshal's discretion, if the Trappings are specific and appropriate).

No beneficial miracles or tribal medicine powers can affect Harrowed, only the detrimental ones. It doesn't matter whether the hero's currently in the saddle or not; neither the powers of good nor nature spirits are willing to ignore the Harrowed's demonic house guest. Chi masters, hucksters, hexslingers, and mad scientists affect Harrowed with their powers as usual—with the same limitation on healing as noted above. Regardless of the host's nature or Dominion score, Harrowed always count as supernaturally evil due to the manitou inside them.

## HARROWED HINDRANCES

With the Harrowed Edge an option at character creation, there's also the potential to saddle your revenant hero with a deader-specific Hindrance. Here are a few to help chill the bones of passers-by.

### Aura o' Death (Minor)

Some Harrowed characters wear their undeath like a shroud. People around them instinctively know there's something disturbing about these folks, though they can't quite put their finger on exactly what it is. It's much harder for them to form relationships, get information, and ask for help. Harrowed with an Aura o' Death suffer a Charisma penalty of -2. Worse, their presence causes living plants and flowers to wilt. Given 10 minutes or so, fruits and vegetables spoil in the deader's presence. Animals recoil at the macabre dude. The Harrowed suffers an additional -2 to Riding rolls, and must make a Riding roll to get on a horse or other mount.

### Degeneration (Minor/Major)

Typically, a Harrowed's manitou provides supernatural energy to make the body resistant to damage, and to quickly regenerate any wounds. Still, undead meat can't help but stink, and every Harrowed has pale, sallow skin. In some cases, the manitou either can't or doesn't bother to keep the body from wasting away – those poor devils get the Degeneration Hindrance.

For the Minor version, the deader's flesh exudes a slimy film and his eyes are slightly milky. He also stinks to high heaven. Folks nearby receive a +2 bonus on Notice rolls to catch his stench, and even if he pickles himself with alcohol they may smell him with a Notice check (no bonus). The hero suffers a -4 on Riding rolls, or any other rolls that require an animal's cooperation, rather than the usual -2.

With the Major version, concealing the deader's true nature is near impossible. The poor sod's either bloated and distended with gas and pestilent fluids, or tattered and losing strips of ragged flesh right off the bones. Nearby people receive a +4 bonus on Notice rolls to detect the

hero's atrocious reek (+2 if pickled with alcohol), and no animal will have anything to do with him. Folks who see the deader revealed in all his undead glory must make a Fear check.

Whether Minor or Major, Degeneration's worst effect is the crushing sense of alienation the Harrowed experiences. No matter how noble or infamous they were in life, no buckaroo wants to feel his body rot away, and few can endure the horror and revulsion their appearance causes in the living. In fact, being near living people causes them physical pain. For every hour a Harrowed with this Hindrance spends among typical folks, roll his Spirit at -2; on a failure, the deader is Fatigued, and on snake eyes the hero is Exhausted.

## MINDIN' THE TONE

The Reckoners' plans thrive on subtlety, so perceptibly dead Harrowed walking amongst the living have the potential to derail those plans – and your game. Using these Hindrances can greatly alter your game's tone, so make sure you talk it over with your Marshal first to make sure this is something everyone's prepared for.

These Hindrances inject a healthy dose of the macabre into your game. In the Degeneration Hindrance's case, one look at the deader is sure to whip God-fearin' townfolk into a pitchfork-and torch-wielding mob. Agents and Texas Rangers may follow hard on their heels, causing a deader no end of consternation – and possibly another, more permanent death.

Put simply, being Harrowed is something to keep hidden if a cowpoke wants to persist in his undead state. Harrowed with Degeneration ought to at least use the Death Mask Edge (see page 16) to go among the living, or the Marshal risks having her game shift abruptly from weird horror to something more farcical.



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The presence of characters with Arcane Backgrounds doesn't cause Fatigue, nor do other Wild Cards and allied Extras who spend enough time with the deader to become accustomed to his appearance—a process that takes about two in-game weeks. This means the hero can at least get along with his posse, even if he's not welcome anywhere else.

### Haunted (Minor/Major)

Every Harrowed lives through her Worst Nightmare before she drags herself from the grave. Some manitous consider the pastime too amusing to give up. The soul of a Haunted hero is dragged kicking and screaming into the Hunting Grounds every time she shuts down for the night. There the cruel parasite subjects her to horrible nightmares. Over time, this erodes the hero's will and gives the demon a better chance to gain control of its host.

For the Minor version of this Hindrance, the hero suffers a -1 penalty when rolling Spirit to check for Dominion. The Major version inflicts a -2 penalty.

### Mark o' the Devil (Minor)

Some Harrowed wear their damnation like a shiny tin star—at least to people who know what they're looking for. When a Harrowed has the Mark o' the Devil, any character with the Arcane Background Edge—or d10+ in Knowledge (Occult)—has a chance to see the evil demon wriggling around inside your hero, in spite of appearances or a disguise.

Whenever a character with one of the above qualifications gets within a few feet of your hero, she can make a Notice roll opposed by the manitou's Spirit (which is always one die type higher than the hero). With a success, the viewer sees some sign of the manitou in your hero—perhaps the Harrowed's eyes glow red or the watcher can see the manitou's hideous face peeking out at her.

Eggheads with Arcane Background (Weird Science) are the exception. To be able to see the manitou, they have to have the Arcane Background *and* Knowledge (Occult) d10+. Scientific types just don't tend to see these things unless they've researched them on their own.

### Unnatural Appetite (Minor/Major)

For some inexplicable reason, a rare few Harrowed develop a craving for one thing or another that—while technically edible—thoroughly disgusts most people. Your character must eat the item he craves at least once a day. Here are a few examples: rotten food, mold, grave dirt, bugs, horse manure, living flesh, animal or human blood, or a specific internal organ.

For the Minor version, a Harrowed who doesn't slake his hunger must make a Vigor check every 24 hours thereafter or suffer a level of Fatigue persisting until the deader eats what he's craving. The first failed roll makes the character Fatigued, the next Exhausted. It won't Incapacitate or kill the hero, but he'll have the -2 Fatigue penalty until he chows down. For the Major version, the Vigor roll is at -2.

## HARROWED EDGES

To augment the powerful selection of Harrowed Edges in the *Deadlands Player's Guide*, here are a few more straight from Boot Hill. We've also made some important changes to the Ghost Edge, so be sure to use the version that appears in this book, Marshal.

### Burrow

**Requirements:** Novice, Harrowed

With this Edge, a Harrowed gains the ability to *burrow* through raw earth, per the power (see *Savage Worlds*). Although this makes him a very efficient traveler underground—the earth seems almost eager to get out of his way—he always finishes such a trip covered with soil, slime, millipedes, centipedes, and such subterranean accoutrements.

The Harrowed uses a Spirit roll to activate the *burrow* power, which cannot be maintained beyond its base duration and costs no Power Points. But it isn't easy. Immediately following each use of the Burrow Edge, the deader must succeed on a Vigor roll (-2) or suffer a level of Fatigue that fades after an hour's rest. Plus, the dirt, writhing worms, and general filth covering the Harrowed gives onlookers a +2 on Notice

rolls to mark him as one of the dearly departed for an hour after he uses this Edge, or at least until he washes up.

## Charnel Breath

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Harrowed

Charnel Breath is the ability to dredge up all the worst stench of decay in a Harrowed's body, supernaturally fester it even further, and blow it out all over an unsuspecting target within arm's reach. The corrosive gas produces watery eyes and violent retching.

The Harrowed rolls Spirit opposed by an adjacent target's Vigor. On a success the victim suffers a level of Fatigue, or two levels with a raise. Each level recovers after 1d6 rounds of breathing fresh air. This effect can't kill, but it can Incapacitate due to extreme nausea.

Beyond arm's reach, charnel breath does little more than offend. But everyone in the room likely wrinkles their noses and holds their breath until

a breeze clears the noxious fumes. Nonliving beings are immune to this particular power... although even they don't appreciate a ghastly belch in the face.

## Dead Man's Hand

**Requirements:** Legendary, Harrowed

Harrowed with this power can continue to control their own severed body parts—usually a hand or an eye—for short periods of time, even if they're out of sight. To use the Edge, the deader rolls Spirit and either slices off his own hand—with a Bowie knife or similar implement—or plucks out an eyeball.

With a success, the body part remains active and under its owner's mental control up to a Range of the dead man's Smarts x5, or Smarts x10 on a raise. On a failure, the deader suffers an automatic wound and an Injury (either Arm or Head, Blinded, as appropriate), which persists until the deader reattaches the body part and



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passes a Spirit test at -2, or until he succeeds on his next Natural Healing roll and grows it back.

The deader can maintain the Dead Man's Hand as long as he wishes, but while it's active it commands a portion of his attention, inflicting a -2 penalty on other Trait rolls. Additionally, the hero is assumed to have the One Arm or One Eye Hindrance until the body part is reattached.

Severed hands use the Animate Hand profile (see the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*). Although they're pretty tough, severed hands are much better at opening jail cells and causing distractions than beating the Hell out of someone. Or the deader could pluck out an eyeball and give it to a compadre—so the Harrowed can spy on the scene when he's not around.

## Dead Reckoning

**Requirements:** Novice, Harrowed

Dead Reckoning is the ability to sense the direction to the nearest human corpse. It may lead a cowpoke to the undertaker's shop, a cemetery, or the site of a recent bushwhacking—or it might lead to a *walking* corpse. It depends on whatever the Marshal decides is closest! It doesn't matter how far away that nearest corpse is, as long as it still has at least some flesh on its bones; Dead Reckoning can't lock onto a bare skeleton.

To use the Edge, the Harrowed spends a full round concentrating, and makes a Spirit roll at -2. With a success, the Edge points her toward the nearest cadaver. On a raise, the Harrowed also gains a vague sense of distance to the corpse (just around the bend, not very close, or miles away), and its general condition (buried, ambulatory).

Dead Reckoning can also recognize Harrowed posing as living, breathing folks—assuming the Harrowed is the only corpse nearby. All it takes is success on a Spirit roll (-2), as above. Picking a Harrowed out of a graveyard or similar collection of corpses, however, is very hard—apply an additional -4 penalty to the Spirit check (-6 total).

## Death Mask

**Requirements:** Novice, Harrowed, Persuasion d6+

Use of this Edge allows a Harrowed to appear as they did while drawing breath. Folks suffer a

-4 penalty to Notice to determine the deader isn't, well, dead. Keeping this power active requires concentration, so the Harrowed suffers a -2 penalty to all other Trait rolls while maintaining a death mask.

Additionally, if the Harrowed is Shaken or suffers one or more wounds, he must make a Spirit roll (at -2) to keep the disguise active. Detect arcana automatically sees through this effect.

## Improved Death Mask

**Requirements:** Veteran, Death Mask, Persuasion d8+

The Harrowed can now maintain Death Mask with minor concentration. He no longer suffers a -2 penalty while maintaining a death mask or to Spirit rolls if Shaken or wounded to keep the disguise active.

## Devil's Touch

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Harrowed

The Harrowed with this Edge can disrupt the workings of any mad scientist's gizmo or Infernal Device that runs on ghost rock with a simple touch, making the device more likely to Malfunction for a short time.

First, the Harrowed has to touch the gizmo or Infernal Device in question—a Fighting roll (+2) against opponents in melee—and make a Spirit roll as a free action. With a success, for the next 1d6 rounds the device Malfunctions on a roll of 1 or 2 on the Trait die (regardless of the Wild Die). On a raise, the device Malfunctions on a 1, 2, or 3. If the Harrowed rolls a 1 on the Spirit die, the device Malfunctions as soon as he touches it (use his Wild Die to determine severity if using the Malfunction rules from *The 1880 Smith & Robards Catalog*)—catching him in any resulting effect or explosion!

## Fast as Death

**Requirements:** Novice, Harrowed

Normally, dead bodies don't move very fast. But the Harrowed with this Edge can move with supernatural *speed*, per the power (see the *Deadlands Player's Guide*), when the need arises.

The Harrowed makes a Spirit roll to activate the *speed* power, which cannot be maintained beyond its base duration, costs no Power Points, and has a range of Self. This sort of treatment takes its toll on a corpse, though: Immediately following each use of the Fast as Death Edge, the deader must succeed on a Vigor roll (-2) or suffer a level of Fatigue that fades after an hour's rest.

## Ghost

**Requirements:** Heroic, Harrowed

As his first action during his turn, the Harrowed can become incorporeal with a successful Spirit roll (he can perform no actions, including free actions, before using Ghost). Once incorporeal, he must remain in that state until the beginning of his action on the next round (unless he suffers damage, see below). While ghosted, the Harrowed is intangible—unaffected by the physical world and unable to affect it—though he is still visible and magical attacks affect him normally.

The deader may remain ghosted as long as he wishes, but it requires concentration and inflicts a -2 penalty to all other Trait rolls while it is maintained. With a free action, the Harrowed can become tangible again at the beginning of his turn. If he somehow suffers damage (Shaken, or one or more wounds)—say, from a magical or supernatural attack—while in this state, he must make a Spirit roll at -2 or immediately become tangible.

## Mimic

**Requirements:** Legendary, Harrowed

Much supernatural power springs from the Hunting Grounds in one form or another. With the Mimic Edge, a Harrowed can force his manitou to duplicate a power he has just witnessed and recast it himself, as long as it's powered by another manitou. This includes hucksters' and hexslingers' hexes, other Harrowed Edges, coup powers, black magic, and even weird science gizmos—but not chi mastery, miracles, or tribal medicine.

To Mimic a supernatural ability, the Harrowed must beat the original caster—whom he has just seen employ the power—in an opposed Spirit roll. With a success, the Harrowed can

immediately cast the same power once, exactly as the original caster did. On a raise, the deader can cast the power once during the current battle or scene. But only once, pardner.

The Harrowed uses his new ability exactly as the being he stole it from. Even the Trait die used to activate the power—if there is one—is considered the same as that of the character with the original power. For example, if a cultist cast a black magic *bolt* with Spellcasting d6 and spent 3 Power Points, the Harrowed uses the same. Of course, if the ability has a chance of Backlash, such as a huckster's hex, the Harrowed may suffer Backlash as well.

Additionally, stealing someone else's thunder isn't without danger. If the deader fails the roll, the manitou channels the recoil from the Hunting Grounds directly into the Harrowed—a spiritual blast of 2d6 damage straight to the guts, ignoring armor.

One caveat: Certain powers come directly from the Reckoners—usually only granted to particular kinds of abominations—and cannot be Mimicked. The Marshal can outlaw stealing certain powers she doesn't want stolen at her discretion. Sorry, pardner!

## Nightmare

**Requirements:** Veteran, Harrowed

One of the manitous' duties in the spirit world is to torment dreamers. A Harrowed whose brain-worm gives him this power can trouble living minds with dark dreams.

To use the Edge, the undead locks eyes with the intended victim for a bare instant, and they roll an opposed Spirit test. With a success, the nightmare works and the target gains the Bad Dreams Hindrance (see the *Deadlands Player's Guide*) for 1d6 nights or 2d6 nights on a raise. If the deader fails to beat the target's roll, the Harrowed cannot attempt to use his power on that individual again until the victim has slept. The Edge can only be used once a day.

When the Edge works, the victim doesn't realize what has happened. There is just a moment of meeting a stranger's stare, an instant of strange uneasiness, and then things return to normal—until the night terrors start, that is.



### Improved Nightmare

**Requirements:** Heroic, Harrowed, Nightmare

As above, but the target loses a Benny immediately and gains the Bad Dreams Hindrance for 2d6+1 days on a success or 1d6+1 weeks on a raise.

Additionally, the Harrowed can deliver specific images to the victim, or appear in the sent nightmare or vision to deliver a message. The undead doesn't really join in the nightmare, though. The Marshal decides exactly how the Harrowed's message manifests in the dream and how the victim reacts, based upon the individual's personality and the image and message described.

In game terms, the Harrowed player describes to the Marshal how the undead's image appears in the dream, and explains the intended message. The message can include all sorts of special effects—certainly more than just a floating head spitting out some words. But an undead cowpoke

should be discreet with this Edge. If the locals start comparing notes and find that the same hombre is appearing in all their dreams, that Harrowed is liable to find a lynch mob looking for him.

### Possession

**Requirements:** Veteran, Harrowed

If a manitou's good at anything, it's taking control of someone else's body. This Edge grants a Harrowed the eerie ability to twist other people's minds per the *puppet* power (see the *Deadlands Player's Guide*). This costs no Power Points, and the Harrowed makes a Spirit roll opposed by the victim to enact it.

Maintaining Possession requires the Harrowed's concentration, so he suffers a -2 penalty to all other Trait rolls for the duration. Otherwise, the Edge functions just like *puppet*.

### Improved Possession

**Requirements:** Legendary, Harrowed, Possession

As above, but the Harrowed may use the *mind reading* power (see *Savage Worlds*) on a target under their control. The deader rolls Spirit +2 (negating the -2 from Possession) opposed by the target's Spirit as an action costing no Power Points, but otherwise working just like the power.

### Rigor Mortis

**Requirements:** Heroic, Harrowed

With this power, a deader can inflict terrible pain on a living victim, possibly resulting in death. The Harrowed has to grasp bare skin for the power to take effect, which requires a successful Fighting roll (Touch attack at +2) and a partially exposed target. With a successful touch, the Harrowed rolls Spirit opposed by the victim. If the Harrowed succeeds, the target suffers a level of Fatigue, or two levels on a raise.

If the Harrowed succeeds or scores a raise and the victim's Spirit die is a 1 (regardless of the Wild Die), not only is the yellow-bellied hombre Incapacitated, but his ticker is also about to give out—he suffers a heart attack, per the Fright Table (see *Savage Worlds*).

### Silent as a Corpse

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Harrowed, Stealth d8+

Moving silently is easy for a Harrowed with this Edge and as long as his feet are in contact with dirt, he can move without making a sound. This even works while he's wearing normal footwear such as boots. The Harrowed gains a +2 bonus to Stealth rolls in all situations, but if walking on bare earth the sneaky so-and-so gains a +4 Stealth bonus.

The bonus from Silent as a Corpse won't work on floors, wood, or even stone—only about an inch or more of dirt. Fortunately, in the Weird West, most everything that's not actually inside a building is covered in the stuff and even the interiors to some buildings have dirt floors, such as barns, stables, poor farmsteads, and the like.

### Sleep o' the Dead

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Harrowed

Manitous have something of a talent for getting mortals to sleep. Harrowed with this Edge can tap into the manitous' abilities to send a victim straight to the Land o' Nod with a single touch. Even Harrowed are affected.

This works much like the *slumber* power (see *Savage Worlds*), except it costs no Power Points, has a Range of Touch, and is enacted with an opposed Spirit roll against the target as an action. If the target resists being touched, the Harrowed must first make a successful Touch attack, Fighting with a +2 bonus but a separate action for a -2 multiaction penalty to both rolls. If the Harrowed succeeds on the opposed Spirit roll, the target falls asleep for one minute, or 1d6 hours with a raise.

### Speakin' With the Dead

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Harrowed

They say that after death a person's memories linger inside his carcass, slowly decaying along with the flesh. Harrowed with this Edge can speak with the truly dead by tapping into those residual recollections.

But questioning the dead is more like browsing through a book than actually talking with the person. The desired information may be in there somewhere, but who knows what page it's on? And considering the book is rotting away, who knows how much longer that page is going to be legible? When a Harrowed questions the dead, only another undead can hear the whispery, unimaginably melancholy replies.

Using this Edge takes considerable concentration. While questioning a corpse, a Harrowed can't take any other actions—including free actions. And in order to hear the corpse's answers, he needs silence in the area. (This means the Edge can't be used in a cemetery, because the rustling voices of the other dead make concentration impossible! The inquisitor has to dig up the body and cart it elsewhere.)

The first requirement to use this Edge is a corpse that's been dead for less than the Harrowed's Smarts die in months. The Harrowed makes an

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opposed Spirit roll against the Spirit the corpse had in life (if unknown, the Marshal decides).

Success means the questioner learns one piece of information or the answer to one specific question. Each raise on the Spirit roll garners one more piece of information. The Harrowed can try again but the maximum number of answers from any one corpse equals the deader's Spirit die type. Any failure costs the Harrowed 1d6 answers as part of the brain has rotted away.

On snake eyes, a manitou enters the body and pretends to be the person's memories. It likely lies, but then again it may tell the truth. It takes a Notice roll at -6 to avoid being fooled unless someone has a way to sense the evil worm's presence. Either way, all further answers are lost!

### Improved Speakin' With the Dead

**Requirements:** Heroic, Harrowed, Speakin' With the Dead

As above, except the Harrowed can speak with a corpse that's been dead for less than her Smarts x5 in years. A raise on the Spirit roll increases the time limit to the Harrowed's Smarts x100 in years—useful for interrogating mummies and such, should the Harrowed encounter some.

### Spider

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Harrowed

With this Edge, a Harrowed clings to surfaces like its namesake. This works like the *wall walker* power (see *Savage Worlds*), except the Harrowed activates the Edge with a Spirit roll, it costs no Power Points, and it cannot be used to affect additional targets.

It requires concentration to keep this Edge active, so the hero suffers a -2 penalty to all other Trait rolls while maintaining the Spider Edge.

### Spirit Sight

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Harrowed

To use this Edge, the Harrowed sits quietly and enters a deep trance. With a success on a Spirit roll, he peeks through his manitou's eyes at the surrounding spirit world. The deader maintains Spirit Sight as long as he concentrates, so it counts as an action for each round maintained. If he somehow suffers damage—Shaken, or one or more wounds—while in the trance, the vision ends immediately.

The Harrowed can view such things as manitous swirling around a powerful huckster, how dark a general location is (representing its Fear Level), magical effects on people or objects, or even whether or not a manitou is wriggling around inside of someone. In the latter case, the manitou's demeanor might even indicate whether it currently controls its Harrowed host. Objects in the real world are somewhat visible in the Hunting Grounds—walls block one's view, for example—so the deader isn't completely blind to real-world events while in the trance.

Additionally, any creature with the Fear Special Ability leaves a dark trail through the spirit world. Up to one hour after an abomination has moved through an area, it leaves a faintly glowing spoor of pure evil. A Harrowed with Dark Vision can use Tracking to follow such trails as long as he maintains his ability.

Staring into the maddening Hunting Grounds causes the Harrowed incredible mental strain. When the vision ends, the Harrowed must roll Vigor or suffer a level of Fatigue that persists for exactly as long as the deader spent viewing the spirit world.

### Spiritual Barbwire

**Requirements:** Veteran, Harrowed

This Edge allows a deader to create a barrier that keeps out ghosts, poltergeists, and other ethereal entities—it has no affect on physical entities. The Harrowed makes a Spirit roll and then places a Medium Burst Template centered on himself. The Spiritual Barbwire persists as long as the cowpoke concentrates on it, which inflicts a -2 penalty on other Trait rolls.

Entities wishing to enter the Template must make an opposed Spirit check against the deader's total. If they fail, they cannot pass the barrier while the Edge remains active. Spiritual Barbwire stops the entity from passing through, but does not prevent it from "normal" actions such as Intimidation or throwing physical objects. If any living creature of rat-size or larger that started inside the circle crosses to the outside, the Edge is negated and must be reactivated with another Spirit roll.

## Trackin' Teeth

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Harrowed

When you're dead, you tend to lose body parts here and there. A character with this Edge can keep track of those parts, whether they're attached to the rest of his cadaver or not.

This Edge allows a Harrowed to plant a single, substantial piece of himself in or on a thing or person and use this ability as a crude tracking

device. By "substantial," we mean a portion of the body that includes a chunk of bone, not something comparatively insubstantial like hair or a scrap of rotten flesh. The most accessible pieces of bone available to any Harrowed are teeth—hence the Edge's name.

As long as the Harrowed's piece—tooth or otherwise—is within 10 miles, as a free action she can automatically sense the direction and approximate distance. If the piece moves out of range, the Harrowed loses track of it, but she picks it up if the piece comes within range again.

## Improved Trackin' Teeth

**Requirements:** Heroic, Harrowed, Trackin' Teeth

As above, except the piece can be tracked as a free action as long as it remains within 1,000 miles. Additionally, the Harrowed can track a number of teeth—or other pieces—equal to his Spirit die.







## Undead Contortion

**Requirements:** Heroic, Harrowed

Sometimes heroes get caught in tight spots. At those times, flexibility is crucial to engineer an escape. The Undead Contortion Edge allows a Harrowed to dislocate pretty much any and every bone in her body—including shoulder blades, ribs, and pelvis. In a really tight spot, a Harrowed with this power can even break and crush her own skull.

To squeeze through a gap up to about the width of the Harrowed's skull, the deader rolls Spirit. With a successful roll, as an action the undead simply pops some bones out of their sockets and slips through the gap. This causes the cowpoke two automatic wounds, or one wound with a raise on the Spirit die, which cannot be Soaked.

If the Harrowed needs to get through a tighter spot, he has to crack his own noggin. When this situation arises, the contortionist can fit through incredibly tight spaces, down to about 3 inches in diameter (small enough to ooze down a drainpipe, by the way). But this is fairly dangerous, as the Harrowed suffers two automatic wounds—or one with a raise—plus an additional 2d6 damage

applied directly to the head. Again, Bennies cannot negate this damage.

One last note: Anyone who happens to stumble upon a Harrowed in his contorted, busted-up state must make a Fear check as soon as they realize he's actually "alive."

## Unholy Host

**Requirements:** Legendary, Harrowed

This Edge is the Harrowed's equivalent of the blessed's Flock—a group of five allied Extras that travel with the hero and aid him when he needs it. But in this case, the allies are all dead...well, *undead* to be exact.

To use the Edge, the Harrowed must have five or more corpses in the immediate vicinity, in reasonably complete shape. With a successful Spirit test (-2) the deader raises five Walkin' Dead (see the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*) to act as servants, bodyguards, or what-have-you. It takes about five minutes to get the corpses up and moving.

These walkin' dead are ruthless and unwavering allies. The hero doesn't have a mental link with his Unholy Host, but when he gives them orders, they are bound to follow them. But they're also evil incarnate, and clever in their interpretations. Give them an inch, and they'll leave a slew of bloody corpses for a mile. Think of them as devious children interpreting their orders in the most literal and harmful way possible.

Other than that, they're completely loyal, and they won't let their champion die if they can help it. They might let him suffer and may get a good laugh out of it, but if the hero ever dies, they die too—again. Only when all five members of an Unholy Host are destroyed can the Harrowed use this Edge to raise five more allies.

## HEXSLINGER

**Edge:** Arcane Background (Hexslinger)

**Requirements:** Wild Card, Novice, Shooting d8+

**Arcane Skill:** Hexslinging (Smarts)

**Power Points:** 10

**Starting Powers:** 3

**Backlash:** When a hexslinger rolls a 1 on his Hexslinging die (regardless of his Wild Die), he is automatically Shaken.

**Available Powers:** *Aim, armor, barrier, beast friend, blast, blind, boost/lower Trait, burst, confusion, deflection, detect/conceal arcana, dispel, elemental manipulation, entangle, environmental protection, fear, havoc, hunch, invisibility, light, mind rider, numb, obscure, pummel, puppet, quickness, shootist, slow, slumber, smite, speak language, speed, stun, telekinesis, teleport, trinkets, wilderness walk, windstorm.*

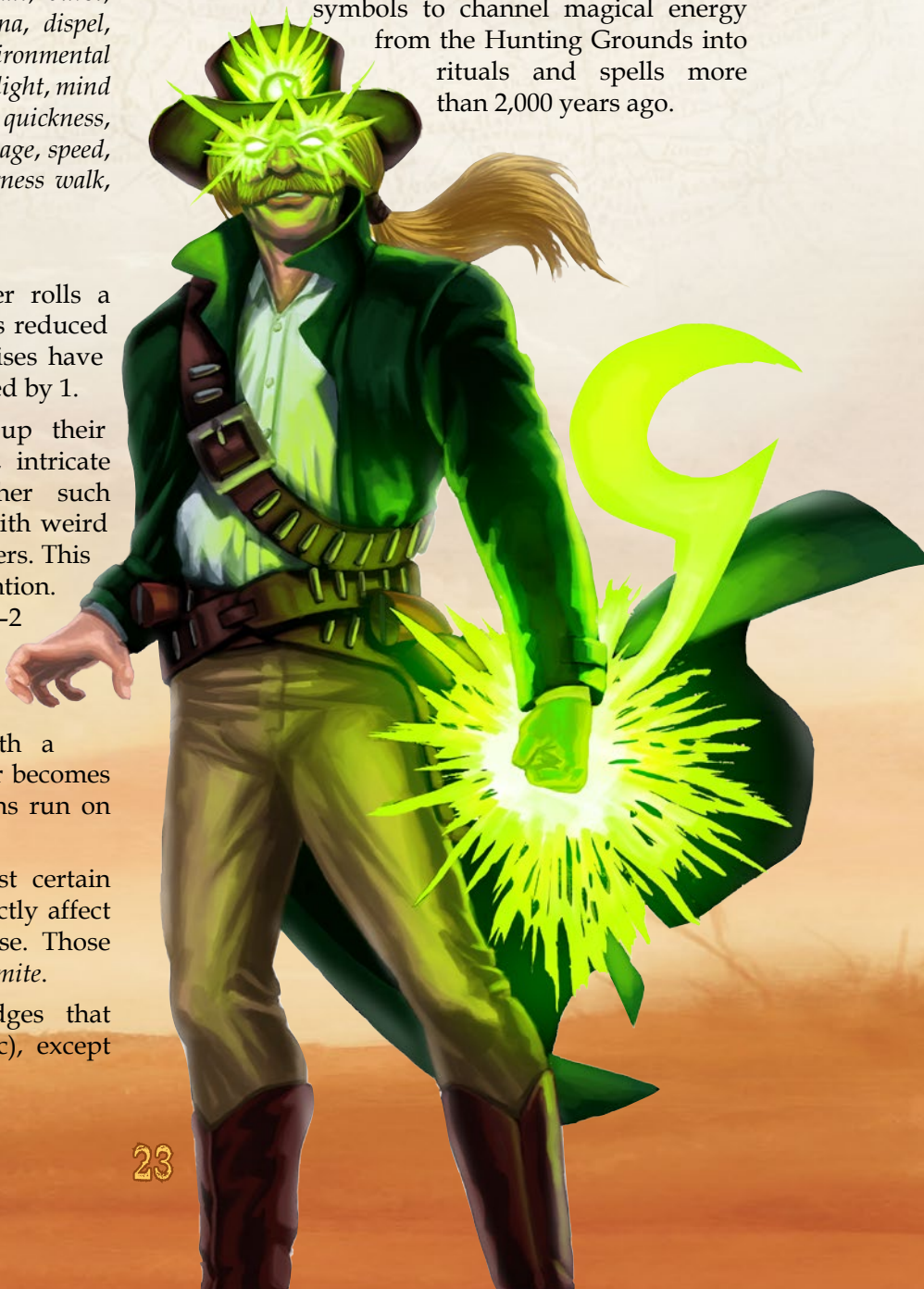
### Special Rules:

- **Deadeye:** Whenever the hexslinger rolls a raise to activate a power, the cost is reduced by one Power Point. Additional raises have no effect; the cost can only be reduced by 1.
- **Fancy Irons:** Hexslingers gussy up their chosen weapon with silver inlays, intricate designs, pearl handles, and other such accoutrements—and they crackle with weird energies when used to activate powers. This is bound to garner unwanted attention. For onlookers, a Notice roll at -2 reveals something “odd” about the gun, though a Persuasion roll may explain it away as New Science or some other mundane effect. With a raise on the Notice roll, an observer becomes convinced that the hexslinger’s guns run on black magic.
- **Hexslinging:** A hexslinger can cast certain powers as a free action if they directly affect the chosen item and its normal use. Those powers are *aim, boost Shooting, and smite*.
- **Magic:** Hexslingers may use Edges that require Arcane Background (Magic), except Wizard (see *Savage Worlds*).

- **Mystical Bond:** Every hexslinger has a single mystical item to which she’s tied, and depends on it to help channel the manitous’ mojo in an orderly fashion. The character must have the mystically engraved item—typically a pistol—in hand to activate powers. If the item is ever lost, it takes 2d6 days to engrave and bond to a new item. In a pinch, a hexslinger can enact powers with a substitute item, but this is extremely risky; see below.

### History

Hexslinging’s enigmatic origins lie in the runecasting traditions of Northern Europe, whose practitioners used intricate, carved symbols to channel magical energy from the Hunting Grounds into rituals and spells more than 2,000 years ago.



## DEADLANDS: STONE AND A HARD PLACE

The most ferocious warriors of one tribe—its name lost in the icy mists of time—enchanted their weapons permanently by carving runes of power into the hilts and blades. They wielded these weapons according to the shaman Vigmund's instructions, in a complex dance that mimicked a sorcerer's hand movements. Thus was a rune's war-magic unleashed upon unsuspecting foes.

After the Old Ones sealed the Hunting Grounds—and cut off magic's flow into the world—runecasting tribes lost influence and favor. Their enemies, formerly cowed by the runecasters' arcane might, now hunted and exterminated their rivals with impunity. Long, bloody years passed.

By the time the Reckoning began, the last runecaster was hiding out in a flyspeck New Mexico burg called Hangman's Flats. He was a Swedish gent in his late 60s, tall and broad-shouldered, with a head of wispy blond hair that long ago went white. He made a decent living as the town blacksmith, and everyone in town called him "Swede"—although his real name, shared with a certain ancestor, was Vigmund.

One day in 1878, John Henry "Doc" Holliday rode in to get his mount re-shod. Doc was well along the lonely, winding trail to his destination of Tombstone, Arizona Territory, and keen to begin the journey's final leg.

But sitting by as the Swede worked, Holliday—who for several years had delved into rumors of hucksterism and black magic's various applications—happened to notice a battered copy of *Hoyle's Book of Games* on the smithy's shelf.

"Interesting volume, that *Hoyle's*," said Holliday, staring blandly at his fingernails. "More to it than meets the eye. Or so I heard."

The Swede paused in his work for a long beat. "Hokum," he grunted. "Worse—evil hokum. Rot a man's mind, sure, he ain't careful." He started in to hammering again, the clangs drowning out Holliday's pointed, then heated, questions.

Doc lingered for several days after his horse was shod, splitting his time between gambling at the town's only saloon and making a royal pain in the ass of himself pestering the old Swede to explain his comments. Through it all the blacksmith refused to spill the beans.

Thoroughly frustrated and disgusted, at last Doc readied his mount for the ride to Tombstone. First he trotted over to the Swede's shack to tell him off one last time, only to find the situation considerably altered before he could raise his fist to knock. In the sun's rising rays, the silhouettes of gunmen lurked on the rise overlooking Hangman's Flats.

Before Doc could hail them, a bullet whizzed past and smacked into the doorjamb. Lead *vipped* on earth and *spanged* from an iron skillet, as Doc did a jig and kicked in the Swede's front door. The erstwhile dentist landed in a heap; Vigmund slammed the door behind him.

The old Swede's enemies had found him at last. Trapped together, Vigmund and Doc Holliday were pinned down by more than 20 professional killers—but willing to make a last stand, if need be.

Pretty soon the assassins sent in a half-dozen men to raid the place and put an end to the standoff. "Let them come," whispered the Swede. As they burst in guns blazing, Vigmund pulled a six-shooter and from its muzzle loosed a gout of hellfire 20 yards long. Three of the gunmen, shrieking and wreathed in flames, staggered off the porch to die.

Awed, Doc beat out the flames rising along the doorway's sides. The Swede leaned out the window, firing another round that passed clear through a pair of fleeing assassins—killing both as sure as it knocked them flat. The sixth killer high-tailed it up and over the rise. All through the display, the Swede's gun crackled with eldritch energies.

Doc started crowing about he just knew something was up...as old Vigmund fell back against the wall, slid to the floor, and left a dark blood smear on the wooden boards. The killers had been deadly accurate too.

"There's only one way we're gettin' out o' this alive," Doc hissed. "And that's for you to show me the trick of that...hexslingin' I just saw you do, old timer."

So it was that Doc Holliday got a crash course in runecasting—customized for modern firearms—and he and the old Swede shot their way out of Hangman's Flats, New Mexico. But

Vigmund's wounds had put him within Death's reach, and that most morbid Reckoner had no intention of letting go.

In his dying days in New Mexico's remote hills, the Swede taught Holliday everything he knew—the runes of power, how to choose a weapon suitable for slingin' hexes, and other tricks, like how to get along *without* the tools o' the trade. It was almost like the old Swede had kept on living only to pass on his secrets...and when he'd revealed the last, he smiled and let go of the ghost.

For his part, Doc Holliday continued on to Tombstone and took up residence. Hucksters tend to think him a part of their "club," due to his gambling proclivities, and Holliday does nothing to disabuse them of the notion. Secretly, Doc has taught several young hexslingers the trade, but by 1881 it yet remains largely a Southwestern phenomenon.

During 1879 and 1880, Doc Holliday wrote several dime novels about his exploits—and dictated dozens more to various authors and muckrakers—ostensibly to lampoon the Cowboy Gang and their Bayou Vermilion masters. In truth, these dime novels are encoded with the various runes of power and instructions for their use—if one knows precisely how to read between the lines.

### Playing a Hexslinger

Although it's understandable some people would use the terms "huckster" and "hexslinger" interchangeably, in truth these arcane styles are diametric opposites. For as much as the huckster depends on bluff, bravado, and sheer luck...the hexslinger instead relies on pragmatism and sheer preparedness to carry the day. (Hexslingers can't Deal With the Devil, for instance.)

As a practitioner of "triggernometry," if you will, the hexslinger must designate one shootin' iron (or other weapon) as her chosen weapon by inscribing it with a rune for every power she knows. These runes help the shooter to focus her spells and avoid manitou-spawned mishaps. The hero could conceivably use a rifle, shotgun, or other magazine-fed weapon.

Typically, the hexslinger has to have her mystical pistol or other item in hand to enact powers (although a caster who knows the *shootist* power could prepare bullets to skirt this restriction). But let's face it, hombre—sooner or later a gunman's going to lose his chosen item, temporarily or permanently. She can use a substitute, but this gives the manitous a greater chance to cause havoc. If she is forced to use a substitute weapon, she suffers a -2 Hexslinging penalty per Rank of the power, and a roll of 1 or less indicates **Backfire** (see the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*). The devil always gets his due, amigo.

You might consider hexslingers as gunmen who beef up their trade with a splash of arcane flair. In line with that thinking, they tend toward firearm-friendly Edges, such as Duelist, Hip Shootin', Quick Draw, Marksman, Steady Hands, and the like. And a wise hexslinger might carry a weapon in each holster: one smokewagon for typical shooting, and another for firing hexed bullets.

Finally, remember that even though hexslinging stems from the very old, established and reliable magic tradition of runecasting...the effects are still provided by manitous and the dark magic of the Reckoning. Townsfolk who clue in to a hexslinger's unnatural tendencies usually do their best to lynch the poor devil.

## NEW POWERS

### Numb

**Rank:** Novice

**Power Points:** 1

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** 10 minutes

*Numb* alleviates pain caused by injury. With a success on the Hexslinging roll, the power removes one point of wound penalties. With a raise, numb removes two points of penalties. The effect lasts for the duration, so it may shield a character from wound penalties acquired after the initial casting as well as those already suffered.

## DEADLANDS: STONE AND A HARD PLACE

*Numb* also nullifies any temporary Injury Table results for its duration. A character made *Lame* by a hit to the leg, for example, can move normally while numbed. It has no effect on permanent Injuries.

### Shootist

**Rank:** Special

**Power Points:** Special

**Range:** By weapon

**Duration:** Special

When a hexslinger takes the *shootist* power, he learns 13 secret runes. With this knowledge, he can prepare bullets that deliver effects few powers can duplicate. Moreover, these rounds can be fired by anyone, not just the creator! The downside to using these effects is they must be prepared ahead of time.

The caster can divide a maximum of half her normal Power Points among as many bullets as she wishes – see the costs below. But these Power Points are “tied up” in the bullets until they’re fired. A single bullet can hold only one rune.

Accurately carving the proper rune into a bullet typically requires 1 minute. A rushed

hexslinger can carve one as an action for double the Power Point cost – the bullet still has to be loaded into a weapon. When the bullet’s carved, the gunman must make a Hexslinging roll (at –2 if the hexslinger is carving on the fly). Failure means the bullet is ruined, and will misfire if used, and the Power Points expended.

Success means the bullet works as described when fired, in addition to inflicting the weapon’s usual damage. Attack powers require a Shooting roll to hit, as usual. Because only a Shooting roll is needed to activate these bullets, the hero can hand them off to others for use without penalty (except for those “tied up” Power Points).

The *shootist* power can be used to engrave any of the 13 effects listed below, as long as the hero meets the Rank requirement.

**Ammo Whammy (Veteran, 3 Power Points):** The bullet bearing this rune is considered a Heavy Weapon.

**Argent Agony (Veteran, 3 Power Points):** The bullet etched with this rune affects a being as though it were composed of its Weakness. The hexslinger must know the specific Weakness he wants to mimic when she etches the rune. If a creature can only be harmed by magic, the bullet



also counts as magical. But this power doesn't work against Servitors' Weaknesses—no rune can match the Reckoners' power.

**Bullet With Your Name on It (Seasoned, 2 Power Points):** This rune allows the shootist to ignore 2 points of Cover. The bullet ricochets or simply travels "around" the obstacle.

**Ghost Bullet (Novice, 1 Power Point):** The bullet with this rune carved into it inflicts nonlethal damage.

**Guidin' Light (Seasoned, 2 Power Points):** Firing this "flare" bullet into the night sky removes Illumination penalties in the immediate area for 1 minute. If fired indoors, roll a d6: On a 4–6, the bullet ignites any flammable materials it strikes.

**Kentucky Windage (Heroic, 4 Power Points):** This rune doubles the Range of a bullet and allows the shooter to ignore 2 points of penalties from any source.

**Knife Through Butter (Novice, 1 Power Point):** This rune grants a bullet +4 AP.

**Loaded for Bear (Novice, 1 Power Point):** This rune adds +1 die type to the weapon's damage.

**Longbarrel Special (Seasoned, 2 Power Points):** The bullet carved with this rune ignores 2 points of Range penalties.

**Sacramento Surprise (Seasoned, 2 Power Points):** This rune adds +1 die of energy damage—acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sound—to a bullet. The hexslinger determines the effect when the rune is carved.

**Segmented Shell (Veteran, 3 Power Points):** This rune causes the bullet to explode when it strikes a target, inflicting its damage in a Medium Burst Template.

**Shrapnel Storm (Heroic, 4 Power Points):** This rune causes the bullet to spray shrapnel in all directions when it strikes a target, inflicting its damage in a Large Burst Template. It is a Heavy Weapon.

**Spherical Shell (Seasoned, 2 Power Points):** This rune causes the bullet to fragment when it strikes a target, inflicting its damage in a Small Burst Template.

## NEW EDGE

This Edge is available only to hexslingers.

### Born to Kill

**Requirements:** Novice, Arcane Background (Hexslinger), Hexslinging d6+

When a hexslinger takes the Born to Kill Edge, it allows her to maintain the *aim*, *boost Shooting*, and *smite* powers on her chosen item with no penalty to other Spellcasting rolls, although she still must pay Power Point costs.

### Hexslinger Trappings

Following are some suggested pistol-based Trappings for a selection of hexslingers' available powers. Others are possible with the Marshal's consent, but note that they must derive in some way from the hexslinger's chosen item.

**Aim:** The shootist performs a complex pistol spin to activate the hex. Known as *bullseye*.

**Blast:** The hexslinger fires an exploding bullet. Called *hand cannon*.

**Blind:** After performing some complex pistol work, the shootist's weapon reflects available light in a blinding prism. Called *blinded by the glare*.

**Boost/Lower Trait:** No visible effect, beyond the shootist's awe-inspiring pistol spins. Called *gun wise*.

**Burst:** The hexslinger's muzzle flash looses a cone of flame. Called *hellfire*.

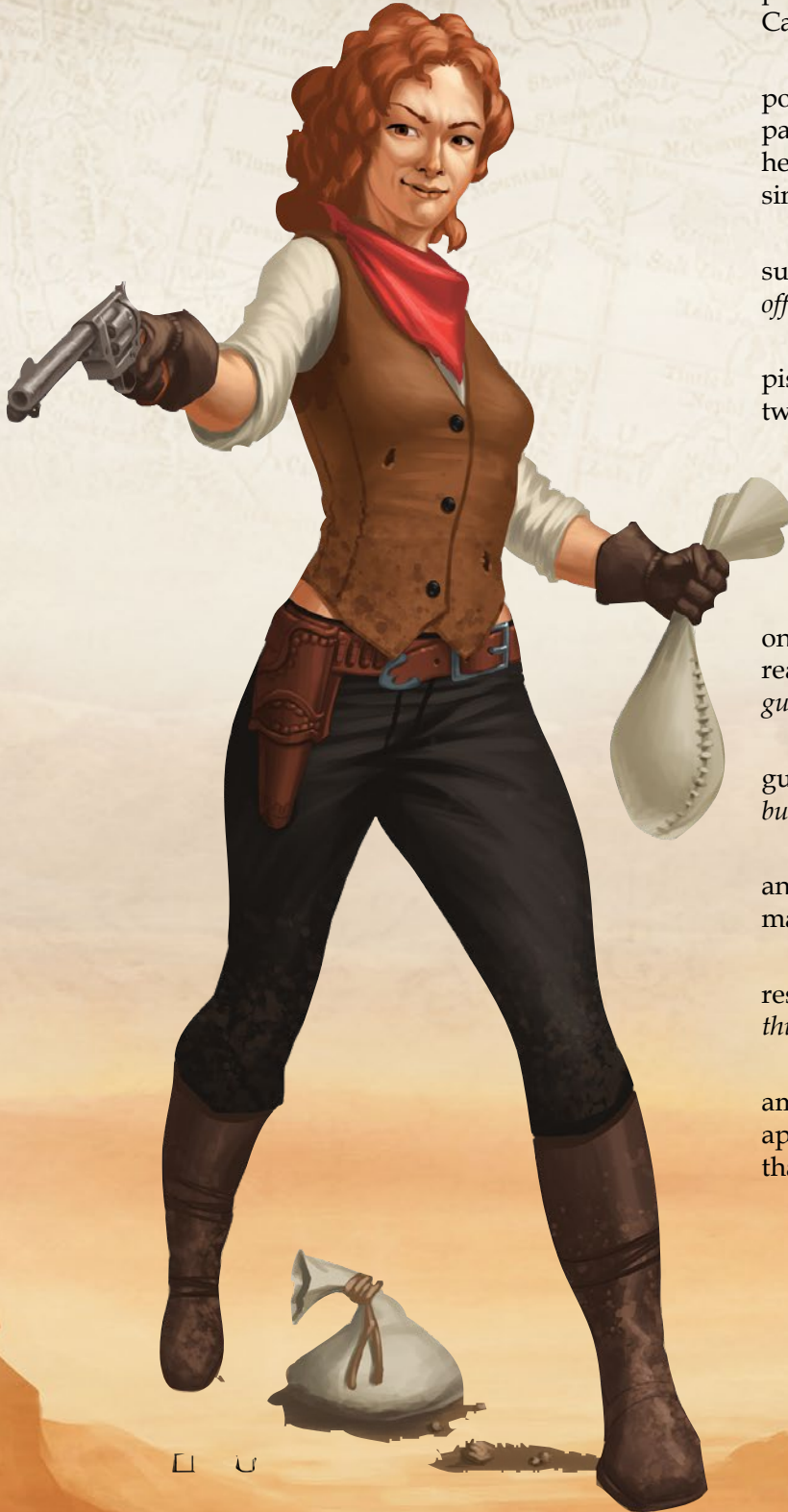
**Confusion:** The shootist performs rapid and dazzling pistol spins, leaving observers dumbfounded. Called *Albuquerque circus*.

**Deflection:** The shootist spins her pistol to activate the hex, which causes attacks to simply miss. Called *skin o' the teeth*.

**Dispel:** The shootist performs an intricate, multipart pistol spin, but the power has no other visible effect. Called *hex repellent*.

**Fear:** The shootist's pistol spins seem so reckless as to result in wild shots any second. Called *hit the deck!*

## DEADLANDS: STONE AND A HARD PLACE



**Havoc:** The hexslinger fires a bullet that unleashes a shockwave when it strikes the target. Called *eatin' gravel*.

**Numb:** The shootist performs a few elaborate pistol spins to loosen up stiff and sore joints. Called *hale n' hearty*.

**Obscure:** Before the advent of smokeless powder, gunfights soon rendered their participants nearly blind. With this power, the hexslinger can create a blinding cloud with a single shot. Called *gunsmoke*.

**Pummel:** The hexslinger fires a cone-shaped surge of magical force from his gun. Called *back off!*.

**Quickness:** The shootist cuts loose with a few pistol spins, and seems to move as fast as those twirling six-shooters. Called *fast as lightning*.

**Shootist:** Trappings vary by effect; see *shootist* on page 26.

**Slow:** The hexslinger fires a shot in the air, distracting targets. Called *molasses in January*.

**Slumber:** The hexslinger seems to gun down one or more targets with a single shot—in reality, they've fallen asleep. Called *sandman's gunpowder*.

**Smite:** This power can only affect a hexslinger's gun. It's activated by cocking the hammer. Called *bushwhacker*.

**Speed:** The shootist's pistol spins blur faster and faster, until the hexslinger's legs seem to match. Called *jackrabbit*.

**Stun:** The hexslinger fires a shockingly loud, resounding shot from her weapon. Called *rollin' thunder*.

**Trinkets:** A shootist can only summon ammunition with this power, but the rounds appear loaded in the character's weapon rather than in her hand. Called *load 'em up*.

🔫 **1 Power Point:** 1 pistol round.

🔫 **2 Power Points:** 1 rifle/shotgun round or 3 pistol rounds.

🔫 **3 Power Points:** 3 rifle/shotgun rounds or 6 pistol rounds.

🔫 **4 Power Points:** 15 rifle/shotgun rounds or 30 pistol rounds.

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