



BOOK ONE: DEATH TOLL

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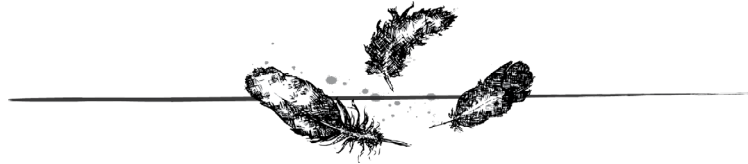
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Fever: Death Toll  
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“Imagine to yourself a vast plain of sand and clay... the stunted sage, the salt lakes, cheating the thirsty traveller into the belief that water is near; yes, water it is, but poison to the living thing that stops to drink... Burning wagons render still more hideous the solemn march; dead horses line the road, and living ones may be constantly seen, lapping and rolling the empty water casks (which have been cast away) for a drop of water to quench their burning thirst, or standing with drooping heads, waiting for death to relieve them of their tortures, or lying on the sand half buried, unable to rise, yet still trying. The sand hills are reached; then comes a scene of confusion and dismay.

Animal after animal drops down. Wagon after wagon is stopped, the strongest animals are taken out of the harness; the most important effects are taken out of the wagon and placed on their backs and all hurry away, leaving behind wagons, property and animals that, too weak to travel, lie and broil in the sun... The owners hurry on with but one object in view, that of reaching the Carson River before the boiling sun shall reduce them to the same condition...

The desert! You must see it and feel it in an August day, when legions have crossed it before you, to realize it in all its horrors. But heaven save you from the experience.

-Eleazar Stillman Ingalls, August 5, 1850



## *What is in this Book?*

*Fever: Death Toll* is the first of four books in a *Call of Cthulhu* campaign set at the start of the California gold rush in 1849. However, it can be run as a standalone story. In this book, you will find an in-depth breakdown of NPCs, Story & Dream Events, the broad strokes of how to manage a group of wagons, and a look at the unique environment the group will be travelling through.

This campaign is not designed for new Keepers. We recommend that you have some experience in running campaigns with large casts of NPCs and in calling rolls without direction.

This story can be played straight through, using each scene as it stands; however, we recommend that you use this book as a foundation to build on. It is a framework for Keepers to tailor to their own individual style and their group's desires. Whether they want a slow-paced trek through the desert discovering the pasts of the people they travel with, or a lightning-quick dash for safety while being pursued by an unknowable force, you can use this book to refine their experience and trim the fat. It's even possible to remove all aspects of the supernatural, or use them as hoaxes, and play *Fever: Death Toll* as a survival adventure, counting each and every drop of water. It is up to you to decide.

**THIS GAME IS INTENDED FOR A MATURE AUDIENCE AND CONTAINS THEMES THAT ARE ADULT IN NATURE.**

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# Story Overview

In the year 1849, gold fever struck the world. Reports confirmed that the rumours were true and there were fortunes to be made in the West. Parties of wagons struck out on a 2,000-mile trail from east to west across gruelling terrain, much of it unexplored. The dangers of the cross-country territory didn't stop tides of people from making the journey in hopes of a better life and riches beyond their reckoning. Most, however, only found toil, misery, and death.

Death Toll is the first part in a horror story that covers one of the last legs of the migration route to California called The Carson Trail. We pick up the trail at Lovelock, Nevada, as the party starts the treacherous crossing of the 40-mile desert; an alkali sink full of sucking clay, dust, and undrinkable soda pools. However, there is more to fear in the desert than its isolation and the ruthless environment. The very soul of the desert is being fought over by factions within one of the native tribes, the Northern Paiutes. Both reach for power that corrupts in order to push back the tide of white immigrants that flows into their lands each year.

Taking the party across this landscape are Captain Kingsley and his scout, Joe. They head up a wagon train of new settlers that are now resting at Lovelock. From there, they begin making the attempt to overcome harrowing conditions, group politics, and the increasingly hostile Paiutes in order to reach the safety of Ragtown, one of the only outposts of civilisation for hundreds of miles.

Keeper's Notes: *A Time Line on the history of how the gold rush came about can be found in APPENDIX 1: GOLD RUSH TIMELINE.*



## WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE DESERT?

The story of Death Toll revolves around the Northern Paiute people and their strife with the increasing numbers of whites flooding into the region. As the numbers grow and a new autumn approaches, the Paiutes are slowly pushed to the brink of starvation. There is little choice but to challenge the newcomers openly. Looking for opportunities to raid wagon trains heading into the Nevada desert, a young Paiute called Yadooe Tso'apa took on the rite of passage and started a vision quest. After the ceremonies were observed, he starved himself for four days and shouted at the spirits to give him answers as he sat in the sacred place set out by his elders. Finally, his request was answered by a large cat wreathed in smoke. It brought visions of Yadooe Tso'apa leading his people in a revival. He would bring in new age and turn back the flood of whites.

As he shared his vision with Ese Ada, an elder, he confessed that he thought the cat to be Korawini, an older fertility spirit thought to have been worshipped by their people's ancestors. Ese Ada did not agree with the youth's reasoning and the visions Tso'apa described worried him greatly. Angered by the elder's words, Yadooe Tso'apa told anyone who would listen about his visions and soon the desperate natives saw hope in his

words and gave all they could in tribute. Tso'apa elaborated the visions into tales of a great empire that would repel and even conquer the whites in turn. His feverish rhetoric bolstered young braves and weary elders alike. He now calls for the blood of the immigrants to be spilt into the sands of the thirsting desert as more tribute to his new devotion - The Seed of Woman.

Obsessed with finding the truth, Ese Ada sought his own visions of the future. Where Yadooe Tso'apa saw the rise of their nation, Ada saw its death throes: at its head, a single man making deals with the unfathomable. Eventually, Ada was cast out seen as mad and jealous. Discredited from his status as a medicine man, Ada travelled the region using powerful hallucinogens and rites to glean clearer visions of what was coming. After days of fasting and wandering in his pursuit of answers he almost died from exhaustion. Delirious, he found himself in what he would later call the Cave of Dreams. There he came upon the Snake Devil: a deity, eons old, that has been watching the Paiutes. They had angered him with a lack of offerings at harvest and his children were now being butchered for food. Old folklore was being abandoned, and The Great Old One made a pact. Ada was to set 'The Seeds of the Serpent' free on the world to punish the Paiute in the name of the Snake Devil, in exchange for removing Yadooe Tso'apa, his rhetoric, and his followers. Ada resigned himself to a stoic madness. Unsure if he was the death bringer he saw in his own visions, and with a heavy heart, he wandered the desert looking for the dying to carry the Snake Devil's seeds, growing them into grotesque abominations.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *This story entwines Native America myth, biblical text, astronomy, and Lovecraftian stories into a single grand narrative. Ada and the snake lore are the central arc of this story. If you wish to embellish the scenario's content, build around him and the Snake Devil. Where Yadooe Tso'apa is involved he should only be alluded to, and only shown if the party stumbles upon him, Keepers may find it well worth reading 'The Curse of Tig' beforehand.*



## THE TRUTH

Genesis 3.15: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The words of prophets tell of the past and predict the future. The Seed of the Serpent and The Seed of Woman influence the world, offering their favour to those desperate enough to bargain with unfathomable entities.

The Kingsley Party is wandering into an open conflict between those that have taken on the Seeds' mantles: the Seed of the Serpent (held by Ese Ada) and the Seed of Woman (held by Yadooe Tso'apa). Each represents a side in the cycle of conflict



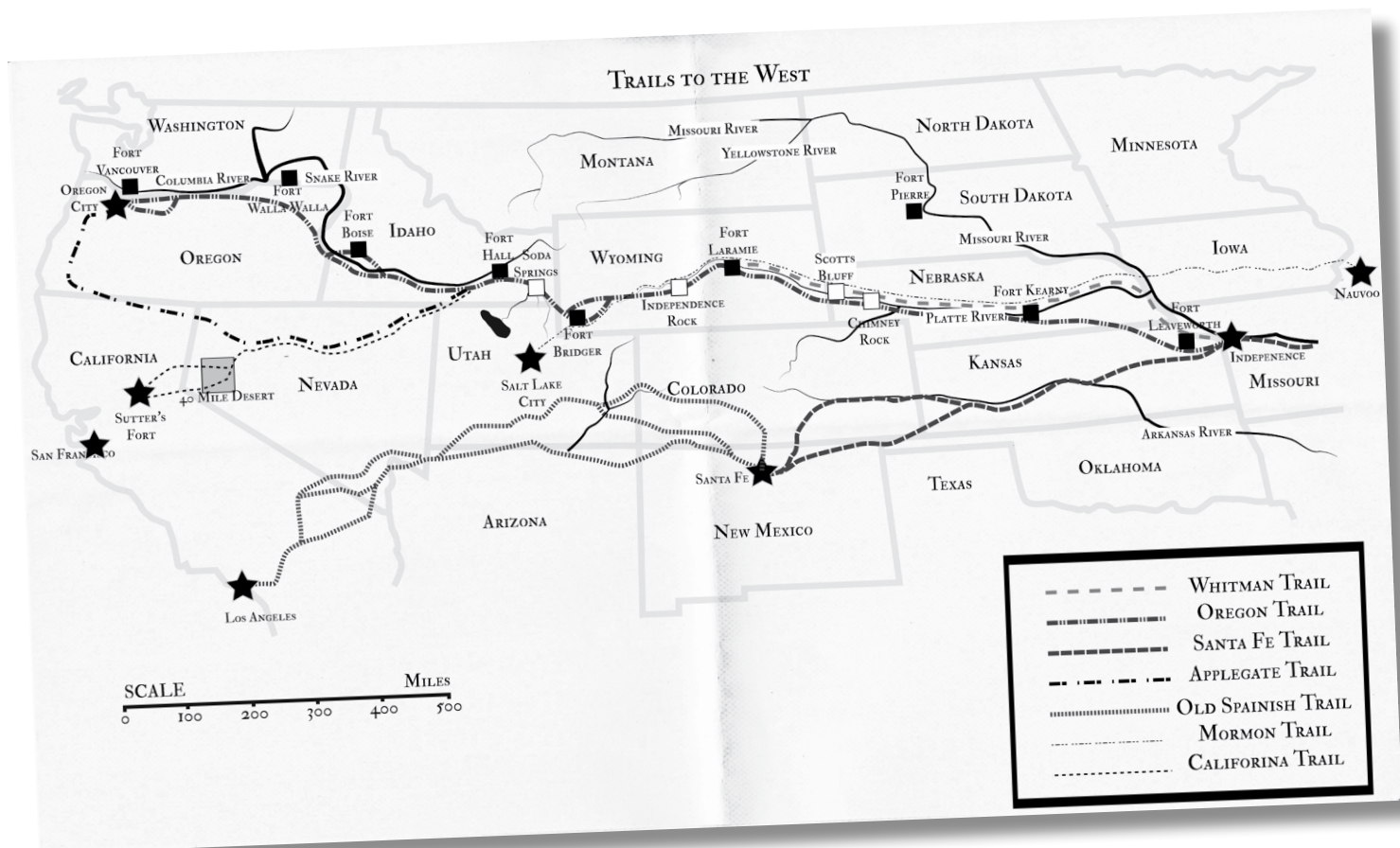
within many mythologies around the world, which ends in great floods and the death of Ages.

Yadooe Tso'apa traded with miners in the mountains, striking up friendships with many. One such miner, Isaiah Oakley, gave him a gift that was dug out of the mountain, telling him it was a relic of Tso'apa's ancestors. This relic was an obsidian mirror, its detailing showing a deity they worshipped, Korawini, another name for Shub-Niggurath. Ever since receiving this gift, Tso'apa's dreams have been filled with visions of the future. The coming of the Seed of Woman will transform his lands and people, making them strong enough to push out the invasion of the new-worlders. The miner asked for one more thing in exchange. Out in the desert lie monolithic stones; he asks Tso'apa to bring them to the mountain, where his men would give Tso'apa supplies in trade for them. Tso'apa returns to the desert with two of Oakley's men. The stones are the ruins of an old monolithic tower that was washed down into the desert by the cataclysmic floods 13,000 years ago when this cycle was last won by the Seed of Woman, Oakley intends to rebuild it.

Soon after gaining the mirror, Tso'apa was to take his vision quest to become a brave, fasting for days and asking questions of the spirits. They were answered by Shub-Niggurath. Tso'apa was overwhelmed by the experience. Driven to a zealot's conviction, he now spreads the word of the Seed of Woman, paving its way with a massive offering, he sets the desert as its stage. He does not know the Seed of Woman is an asteroid that is travelling to earth blessed by the touch of Shub-Niggurath. It will cause a cataclysm and rebirth earth's ecosystem in her image.

Yadooe Tso'apa has tasked his Devoted with ambushing wagon trains in the area in order to capture men to dig out monolithic stones. These stones are then moved west (foreshadowing later events in the story). Any that cannot work are taken to one of the two trees and sacrificed in a ritual. These two trees (The Wounded Tree and The Prophet's Tree) and a third (The Hanged Tree in Ragtown) are "High Places" of worship and relate to the stars Deneb, Altair, and Vega (respectively) which make up the Summer Triangle in the night sky. These are the keys to opening up the way for the Seed of Woman as it crosses the Dark Rift in the Milky Way to the World of Man. They will use the desert as a reflection of the rift, also known to the natives as the spirit road. Each corpse that the desert takes mimics another star in the vastness of the Dark Rift. See APPENDIX 2: ASTRONOMY for more information on the workings behind the story.

Ese Ada has some insight to Tso'apa's machinations, and has placed his only fully mature Abomination in the dune around Ragtown. Ada and the towns leader, Bailey, are old friends. They have come to an understanding about the "thing in the dunes". This stops Tso'apa from directly attacking Ragtown, where the third tree resides, and taking the last "High Place" so the ritual may be started in earnest. Tso'apa is now hunting Ada in the hopes that killing him will rid the desert of the Abomination and a dangerous game of cat and mouse has begun. The story of Ragtown and the third tree is told in *Book 2, Fever: Withered*.



# Timeline

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS LEADING UP TO FEVER: DEATH TOLL. 1849:

**MARCH 12TH,** Trading between the miners and the natives has become commonplace and many swap food, horses, and shoes for clothes, metal, and firearms. A miner named Isaiah Oakley, gifts Yadooe Tso'apa, a young Paiute, with a relic that he dug up; An obsidian mirror with a weathered woman carved on its back. He told Tso'apa that it must be his ancestors'.

**APRIL 1ST,** Yadooe Tso'apa takes a vision quest to come of age. He sees the toil and pain of his people and himself rising as a saviour and pushing back the flood of immigrants. He rallies support from his desperate people.

**APRIL 20TH,** The medicine man Ese Ada is denounced by the Northern Paiutes and is cast out. He wanders the desert to seek answers.

**APRIL 30TH,** Tso'apa confronts Ragtown's people, telling them to leave the desert and head west or they would be treated like the others and attacked. Bailey (leader of Ragtown) refuses Tso'apa, declaring Ragtown is his home and he will not give it up. He asks to speak with Ese Ada, as the two are friends; Tso'apa tells him Ada is an outcast.

**MAY 3RD,** Tso'apa confronts the miners in the Sierra Mountains to his intent. To his surprise, some ask to join him. They wish no competition to their claims and will acknowledge Tso'apa and his nation as long as their rights are allowed.

**MAY 5TH,** Isaiah Oakley comes to Tso'apa and shares his own dreams. He asks Tso'apa to help him in exchange for support. He needs old stones dug out of the desert and hauled to the mountains; he must rebuild the Denisovan tower. Tso'apa agrees and takes two of Oakley's miners into the desert to help find the stones.

**JUNE 12TH,** Ada finds the Cave of Dreams, all but dead from his wandering in the desert. He strikes his bargain with the Snake Devil.

**JULY 4TH,** Tso'apa gains enough support to openly start his war and tasks his "Devoted" to ambush wagon trains, taking any survivors to dig stones for Isaiah Oakley. He leaves the dead in place as a reflection of the stars on the spirit road (the Milky Way) in the night sky.

**JULY 10TH,** Ada plants the first seed into a survivor of a Devoted ambush, a dying boy. It grows and feeds on Tso'apa's people and unwary travellers alike.

**JULY 15TH,** Mother Wanekia, Tso'apa's new Medicine Woman tells of snakes rising against the Devoted. She tells Tso'apa of three dead trees in the desert that perfectly mimic the three brightest stars among the spirit road. These are to be made "High Places" where sacrifices will be gathered. One, however, is in the middle of Ragtown.

**JULY 25TH,** Tso'apa assaults Ragtown and fails losing many Devoted. He tasks Mother Wanekia with protecting the Devoted from bullets. She creates a ritual to produce 'Ghost Paint'.

**AUGUST 1ST,** A second attack on Ragtown fails but proves that Ghost Paint can stop bullets. Worried, Bailey asks Ada for help. Ada places his first abomination in the dunes around Ragtown to intercept the Devoted. It devours anyone attempting to cross the dunes. Few new immigrants make the crossing, and those that leave for the mountains go with fear in their hearts of the thing that lives in the dunes.

**AUGUST 20TH,** Ada and Tso'apa openly war with each other, playing a dangerous game of cat and mouse, as they hunt each other while trying to fulfil their devotions to their Gods.

**AUGUST 29TH,** The Kingsley Party makes their way onto the Great Basin.

# Travelling & The Great Basin

Barnabas Kingsley is the self-elected captain of the wagon train. The Keeper should have him delegate major decisions to a committee. Give each wagon or group one vote to keep it simple and vote on a course of action if one is needed. This gives the players agency and the chance to offer other options instead of blindly following Kingsley's usually ill-considered ideas. You can use the cast to sway the vote to your preferred outcome, or make the players gather favour with the members of the wagon train over time to supplant Kingsley altogether. Real-world parties did disagree at times and even split up to go their separate ways after feuds broke out.

The captain's duties include allocating the night watch for each campsite, picking the camp site, and organising the formation of the wagons. This gives the Keeper (as Kingsley) the tools to set up events to come. Again, players should be encouraged to try and persuade him into other options rather than suffer his mismanagement.

Outriders were often used to scout ahead of the main train and bring in options for campsites. Joe is the primary person who will perform this task and advise Kingsley as best he can. Use Joe's scouting to bring information and hooks to the players, asking for volunteers at times to investigate the scenes he finds. This isn't to say the camp should be ignored, PCs may choose to stay behind.

While the PCs will traverse the area using the map provided, the Keeper has a separate map from the players that shows the general locations of all the Story Events and a Draw for each that is used to grab the players attention and bring them into the Story Events. See Map 2: 40 Mile Desert



## KEEPING A JOURNAL

It's worth keeping a journal throughout the game documenting each day's events. This will help keep the players, and yourself, up to date. The cast is quite large and this is a way of keeping track of interactions and any revelations that have occurred. It's also good for use as a game overview when starting a new session, keeping everyone on the same page and helping anyone who missed a session get up to speed. It is best if a player does this, however sometimes bookkeeping has to fall to the Keeper. The overall story this journal will tell after the game is over will always be a welcome memento of the epic, tragic, and ridiculous.



## CARGO & SUPPLIES

This is a one-way trip for many and they are taking everything with them. Heirlooms that have been in the family for generations, valuables that are required to build a new life, or simply clothes that might be needed for colder times all add up. Their personal value will be what keeps the PCs from ditching everything. Make sure the players understand that arriving in the West with nothing to barter with, or use, might be just as much of a death sentence as the extra weight is in the desert. It was common in real life for caches to be dug into the ground with the idea of recovering them at another time. This recovery

rarely happened.

If you wish to continue Fever into other chapters, this can play a major part in the journey's appeal. What you start out with has to see you across the rest of the trail. Give it up, and you are throwing your lives away. This is something to consider when you start play. Do the players want a hardcore survival game where each bean counts, or a more trimmed down casual experience.

Experienced wagon train captains often wrote regulations to abide by. Immigrants were not to count on game animals for food. Goods such as beads, tobacco, handkerchiefs, blankets, cheap ready made clothes, knives, and fishhooks were also advised to trade with natives. Some of the most in-demand items to trade were calico shirts.

A typical food list, such as the following from Joel Palmer's Guide would include for each adult: "Two hundred pounds of flour, thirty pounds of pilot bread, seventy-five pounds of bacon, ten pounds of rice, five pounds of coffee, two pounds of tea, twenty-five pounds of sugar, half a bushel of dried beans, one bushel of dried fruit, two pounds of saleratus [baking soda], ten pounds of salt, half a bushel of corn meal; and it is well to have half a bushel of corn, parched and ground; a small keg of vinegar should also be taken." By the time parties reach the Nevada basin after their five-month trek, supplies will be very low. Animals need to graze and hunting won't feed more than a few, therefore it is wise to ration and make what little is there last.



## WATER MANAGEMENT

Water management can be a large part of the experience if the group chooses, adding to the survival element. The need for water should force interaction and can lead to all manner of conflict. Below are some measurements required to keep an animal or human hydrated, and the carrying capacity of some typical containers (using U.S. litres). Most wagons could carry one or two barrels. Tax the camp for usage at the end of each day, it will dwindle quickly.

Remember that these numbers represent typical consumption in a desert. Rationing can be used to lower the intake, but negative effects should be applied to the work rate of the animals and their temperament, if this is done. Animals and people will last at most two days without water in the desert, slowly decreasing in efficiency every hour to the point of exhaustion, then death.

### TYPICAL WATER CONTAINER CAPACITIES IN LITRES:

Large Barrel - 150L  
Water Skins - 20L

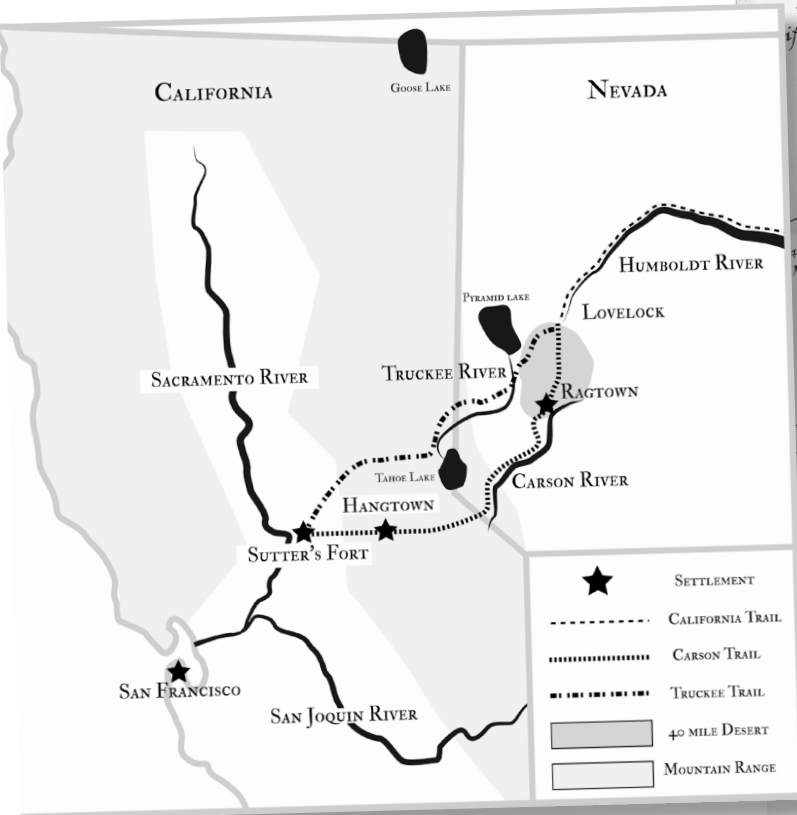
Canteen - 2L

### REQUIRED WATER TO STAY HYDRATED IN DESERT CONDITIONS PER DAY.

Horse - 35L  
Ox - 25L  
Mule - 30L

Human Adult - 9L  
Human Child - 3L





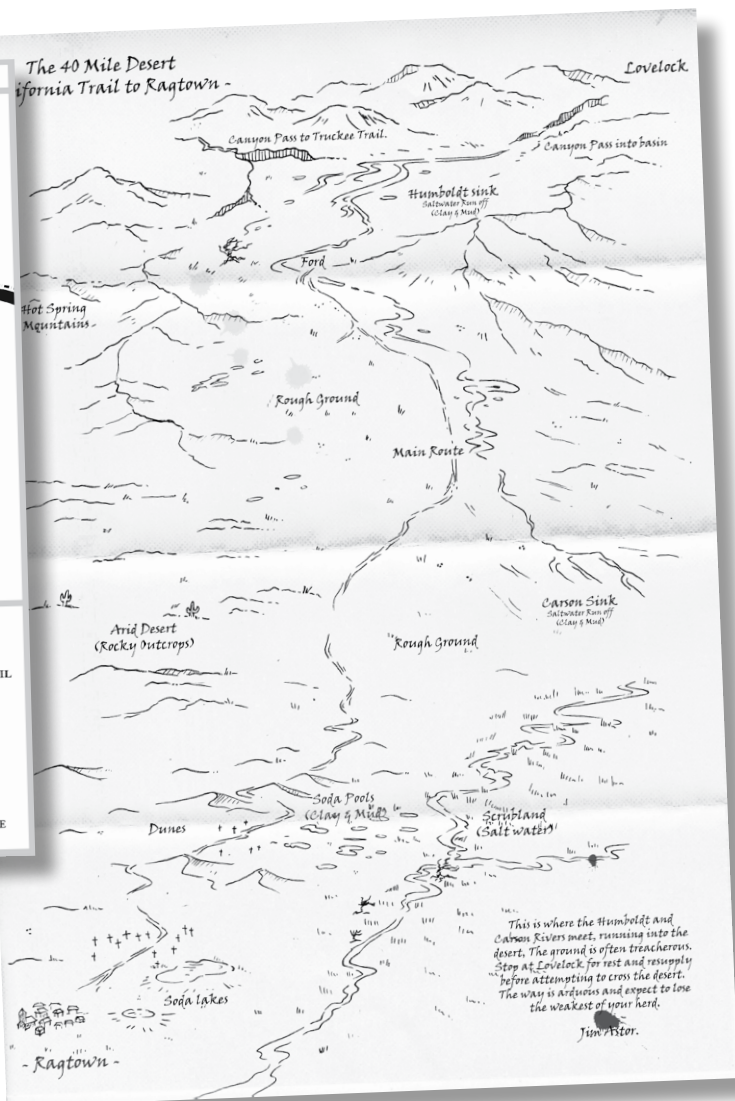
THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL BREAKS UP IN TO MANY BRANCHES, CUTOFFS, AND SHORTCUTS. ONE OF THESE IS THE CARSON TRAIL THAT THE STORY OF FEVER FOLLOWS.

## THE ENVIROMENT

Both the Keeper and the players will have to manage the terrain during the story and treat it like a major character to bring it into its own. The 40-Mile Desert isn't a typical desert and has several different types of terrain which the players need to be pay attention to; from clawing mud and clay to traditional shifting dunes. Each will need different solutions to cross effectively without slowly being ground to a halt. The map of the area gives basic terrain information and an idea of where these areas change.

The wagons have already suffered five months of abuse on a 2,000-mile journey, and now have to be put to their ultimate test for the final leg through extremely rugged landscapes. They will break, along with the animals pulling them, if put under major strain. All water within the desert sink is salt water (with the exceptions of the hidden underground springs the natives use) and cannot be drank. Animals will drink it if they are pushed to their limits, but its toxic effect will be visible within hours.

As the wagons move across the desert, dust gets everywhere. The sun boils off the top layer of water in the sink to create a dry, dusty crust over a gum-like mud that the wagons sink



deeply into. It's hard to keep wounds clean and keep them from festering in the sun. Flies will constantly harass the injured in the heat of the day. Sun stroke is a concern for the old and ill, and staying out at midday without any shade can be disastrous. Despite that, Fever is set in late autumn with no cloud cover to trap the heat of the day. Bitter, gale-force winds and a lack of real shelter mean the PCs have to endure the temperatures dropping far below freezing during the nights, forcing animals and humans to huddle for warmth. Accounts of early crossings tell of how settlers would have frozen if their dogs hadn't lain on top of them.

Where the normal hardships of the desert create a harrowing challenge, the further the party moves into the desert, the more its victims should become a reality. Horrors of dead and dying animals and humans litter the roadsides along with their abandoned belongings. Burning wagons and empty water barrels are commonplace. These should be revealed as a slow build, finally ending in a mass graveyard just outside of Ragtown, where some of the luckier victims rest. Always keep this imagery in the back of the players' minds as a constant reminder of their own possible fate.

See Appendix 3: Flora and Fauna for some useful information on the great basin.



## THE GREAT BASIN LOCALS

There are many names for certain tribes and peoples of the region. The attempts by Westerners to categorise the tribes almost certainly led to confusion. The Paiute also had other names over the years, as they were grouped with other tribes. Some called them Snake Indians. The Paiutes themselves had two main groups the Walpapi and the Yahooskin (these were the Snake Indians) and three main regions divided them. The Northern Paiutes covered California, Idaho, Nevada and Oregon; The Owens Valley Paiutes lived in California and Nevada; the Southern Paiutes claimed Arizona, South-east California, Nevada, and Utah.

The Northern Paiutes lived a nomadic lifestyle, living in temporary houses called “wikiups” during the winter. These were domed dwellings made from brush and grasses laid over wooden frames. During the hotter months, they would use only wind-breakers and light brush-made shelters. Being nomadic they followed animal migration patterns and seasonal foods, living in small independent groups made up of several family units. This changed with the arrival of foreigners as they started to occupy lands to protect themselves and their lands from new settlers, becoming more sedentary over time. They would hunt in communal drives with neighbouring tribes, mainly rabbits, ducks, and pronghorns to supplement a diet of fish, grass seeds, and roots. They would also rely on pinyon and pine nuts gathered in the mountains during autumn as a critical boost to winter food stocks. Along with this, certain areas were known for more local sources of food, and often the tribes that settled there would inherit names that associated them with those foods.

The tribes varied in how they hunted, with the Northern Paiutes using sinew-backed short bows made from birch and juniper wood. These tended to be low in quality compared to those of other tribes due to the materials in the region. They overcome this problem by using poisons on either arrows or blowpipe darts. They would agitate venomous snakes, commonly rattle snakes, into striking spoilt meat, then push the tips of arrows and darts into the bite wounds. This poison was used for hunting and warfare alike. The Northern Paiutes were one of the few tribes to use poisons and took to using them to target livestock and pull teams as a means to harass them. Other weapons and tools they used were spears, stone knives, rabbit sticks (curved sticks that were thrown as projectiles to stun or kill game, much like a boomerang), and clubs. Many took up the use of guns and more modern weapons soon after their introduction, and traded for them often.

The Paiutes wore few clothes during the baking hot summers. Most of what they did wear was made from either sagebrush bark twine, rabbit fur, or buck-skin. Men mainly wore breech-cloths, leggings, and shirts, with rabbit-fur robes for warmth, where women wore knee-length woven fibre aprons. Clothing was traditionally decorated with fringes, feathers, and jewellery made of shells and beads. The Paiute women were highly skilled weavers and produced many items, including baskets and hats, that were used for trade. These weaves were so tight that they held even the smallest seeds and they used pine pitch to seal it to

hold water. Once again, the introduction of western items saw them quickly adopted.



## PAIUTE RITUALS AND CEREMONIES

The Paiutes believe strongly in “Puha” meaning “power,” that everything in the universe has a life force and is connected, flowing like water from the source or point of creation to every corner of the universe. The puha was obtained from the spirit world by Paiute shamans, called “Puhagim” by their people. They would go on pilgrimages to sacred sites like caves, waterways, and unique places in the landscape, usually ones with associations with water. There they would leave offerings, practice meditation, and perform rituals to attempt to harness the puha. They believed that they could attain great benefits from this, and used these rituals to gain favour in fertility, war, and caring. Puhagim often took the ill and sick to these places and used song, smoke, rattles and dance to cure them; calling to souls of those who committed wrongs against the tribe. They used them to act as intermediaries between the evil acts they did and the good of the tribes, curing not only the body but the sick’s soul too. On doing this act, the soul could be reintroduced to the ways of the tribe.

The Paiutes are responsible for many dance rituals such as the Bear Dance and the Sun Dance, which all came out of the Great Basin. However, they also created the Ghost Dance, which was used in war against the whites, and which they are most famous for.



## PAIUTE MYTHS AND LEGENDS

There are many myths and legends among the Paiute, however these are the ones that are relevant to Fever. If you wish to learn more, the book *Legends of the Northern Paiutes: As told by Wilson Wewa* is an excellent source.

**Creation myth** - The animals created people. Once there was a female oriole, a bird known for making basket nests, and a coyote that wanted her as she was so pretty. She refused him at every turn, pushing him away. She didn’t want him, for his reputation was bad. In time, she talked to him and she was convinced to go with Coyote. She carried with her a basket of willow covered in pine pitch called a paosa. As they travelled, Coyote heard noises from the paosa. The oriole scolded him for wanting to open it and find out what was making the sounds. They fought, and Coyote asked for a drink from the paosa. This happened again the next day and they took a nap under a huge juniper tree. Sneakily, the Coyote opened the bottle and little people came out. Coyote tried to catch them but they were too fast. Some were tall, some short, some light and some dark.

After they all left, he looked into the basket to find a boy and girl still inside. Coyote had to pull them out, as they refused to leave the bottle. These were the first Paiutes.

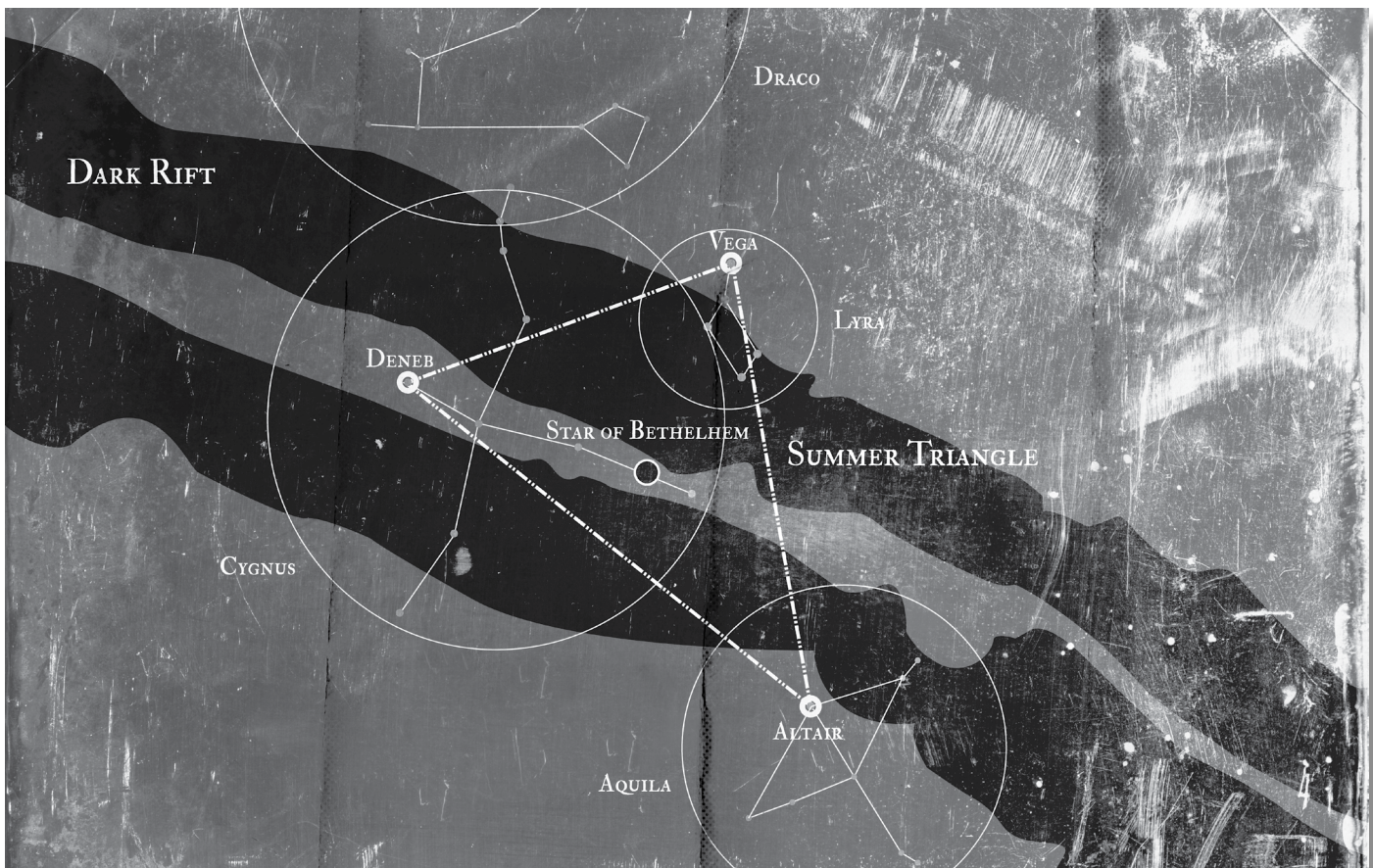
Prophecy of the Whites from the East. - The first people bore children of dark skin and light skin, a boy and a girl each, that would fight. The dark-skinned children took their parents' advice and learnt how to live from the land but the light children did not. They were wilful and not interested in learning the ways of their father and mother. One day, the four children were fighting and an arrow struck the father. In his anger he took the light-skinned boy and girl and threw them across the lake in the east, telling them to return once they had grown up. These were the children of the first Paiutes, and ever since the Paiutes have waited for the return of their white brothers from the east.

Note: There is evidence that an immigration from Europe might have happened over 13,000 years ago during the last ice age, using the ice as a land bridge. Evidence links similar technology in how stone arrowheads and spear heads were made in Spain and by the Clovis people of America. While this is still a fringe idea, most of the Clovis finds are on the east of the U.S.A., furthering the theory that this first immigration from Europe is what sparked this common myth among Native Americans.

The Spirit Road - In the mythology of the Paiutes, as with many other tribes, the Milky Way and its Dark Rift is the road the dead walk to enter the spirit world. The spirits of the dead are said to rise straight through the air to the Milky Way and travel to the mountains, where they will find a lake with a conical rock in the middle. Down through the apex of the rock the spirits pass. At the bottom they emerge as living bodies in Pugwainumu - Mugguwa - Bitighan, the place where spirits go in. This was the basis of the Ghost Dance songs.

Si-Te-Cah - The Si-Te-Cah were a red-headed white skinned race of cannibalistic giants. The Paiutes warred with them, and after a long struggle, a coalition of tribes trapped the last of the Si-Te-Cah in a cave at Lovelock. They piled brush at the cave mouth and annihilated them. This earned the Paiute the name Say-do-carah, which can mean "conqueror" or "enemy." These peoples' remains were accounted for when miners found them, and they were badly damaged in their excavation. The bodies were described as being about 6 feet 6 inches tall, some taller. The Paiutes wore mourning dresses fringed with red hair, these are very rare artefacts. Within Fever this race is married up as the same mysterious race from Russia called the Denisovan that lived on the Altai Mountains and crossed over into America using the Bering Strait. To learn more see 'The Baclanovas' Cast and Extras.

## THE ASTROMONY OF THE CROSSING





## TRAVELLING

This chapter of the campaign plays as a sandbox with the only objective being to reach Ragtown. Along the way Story Events will introduce the story of Fever. Between these scenes the world is open and improvised, giving ample room for Keepers and players to craft their own narrative on their journey from Lovelock to Ragtown. Along with the Story Events there are four lists of seed events: Camp, Travelling, Environmental, and Scouting. These are provided to help the Keeper as jumping off points should they need something to work with during the improvised travel and camping. Some are generic, some are NPC driven, or story driven. Find them as APPENDICES 4 THROUGH 7

Formula: Below is a basic idea of how travel could work if you wish to use it.

Step 1 – Have the players (or Kingsley) decide on the route they wish to take and how they go about travelling. Who is riding point, and are they sending scouts out in any directions on horse? Have the player narrate their morning routines. Don't get bogged down in too much detail but add in flavour with the NPCs. Once they have done so, this is how they will break camp in future unless they say otherwise. Add small interactions and events when the PCs wake up Perhaps a PC has a dog that keeps urinating on a certain wagon. It does this every morning causing arguments, until one morning the dog is missing. Allow time for roleplaying these interactions, like the short conversation about the damn dog as they break camp.

Step 2 – Describe their progress and the terrain they cross during the course of the day and note anything worthwhile. Tell the players they can stop you at anytime if they wish to interact or take an action. Perhaps a PC drops back in the wagon train to talk briefly with an NPC because he fired off his gun. He finds the NPC has accidentally shot himself and is bleeding out as his mules simply march on, following the wagon ahead, oblivious to their master's plight. Or perhaps the NPC noticed the glint of a mirror signal and now that it's pointed out they see it all the time.

When there is an environmental problem break into small scenes to solve or describe the party's struggling efforts to push on. Tax them for any damage, repair, losses, and time spent dealing with it.

Step 3 – Repeat step 2 for each section of the day or run scenes into one another until the party is forced to stop for night. Again have the players tell you their routine and how they go about setting up camp. This is their set routine until they say otherwise and doesn't have to be repeated each time. Let the players interact and role-play off the NPCs to breathe life into the camps. At this point, tax the group's supplies and have any outriders or scouts report back (if they return at all). This is a good time to tell some camp fire stories and give exposition.



## MOVING ON THE MAP

Each year after Labour Day, several real-life trains of wagons re-create the journey and traverses the 40-Mile Desert from Lovelock to Fallon on the Old California Trail. The ride covers the distance in three and a half days in modern times, with all the safety and advantages that provides. Back in 1849, with over-burdened wagons, exhausted, thirsty animals, and little in the way of rations, one was lucky to cross the desert in five to seven days. It was certain not all would survive.

Wagon trains typically moved at pace of a slow walk, one or two miles an hour. In the desert, with wagons sinking into sand and alkali sinks, it was a crawl. A very good day saw 10 miles covered, and at worst they might not move at all as a sand storm traps them, a wagon became stuck or needed repairs, or one of a million other problems that faced the immigrants came up. Some chose to travel at night when the temperature drops to below zero and footing is treacherous, other brave the days heat for clearer vision.

Bursts of speed are possible, but it was dangerous and may kill the animals. It would certainly weaken them without additional water and food.

The route was long, rough, and dangerous. Only the most robust animals were used to pull wagons across the 2,000 mile ordeal. Some settlers rode horses, a lot walked the whole distance beside their wagons to reduce the weight for the beasts. Others rode the wagons, suffering every bump and ditch in the road, but protected from the elements.

The speeds of the wagons listed below are their maximum speeds on roads. Moving at speeds over walking will tire the animals; they will need more water and food or will become weakened, or even die if already exhausted. Below are the top speeds of each type of wagon with a full compliment of supplies.

*Down Darker Trails pg 48 provides the basics for wagons.*

# Anatomy of a Wagon

The four main parts of a prairie wagon are the yoke, the bed, the undercarriage, and the cover. Below are the basics of how a wagon is put together. If you wish, randomise hits against a wagon by rolling 1D4. Hitting the yoke will hit the pull team unless another roll of a 1 is rolled on a further 1D4, in which case the actual yoke will be hit.

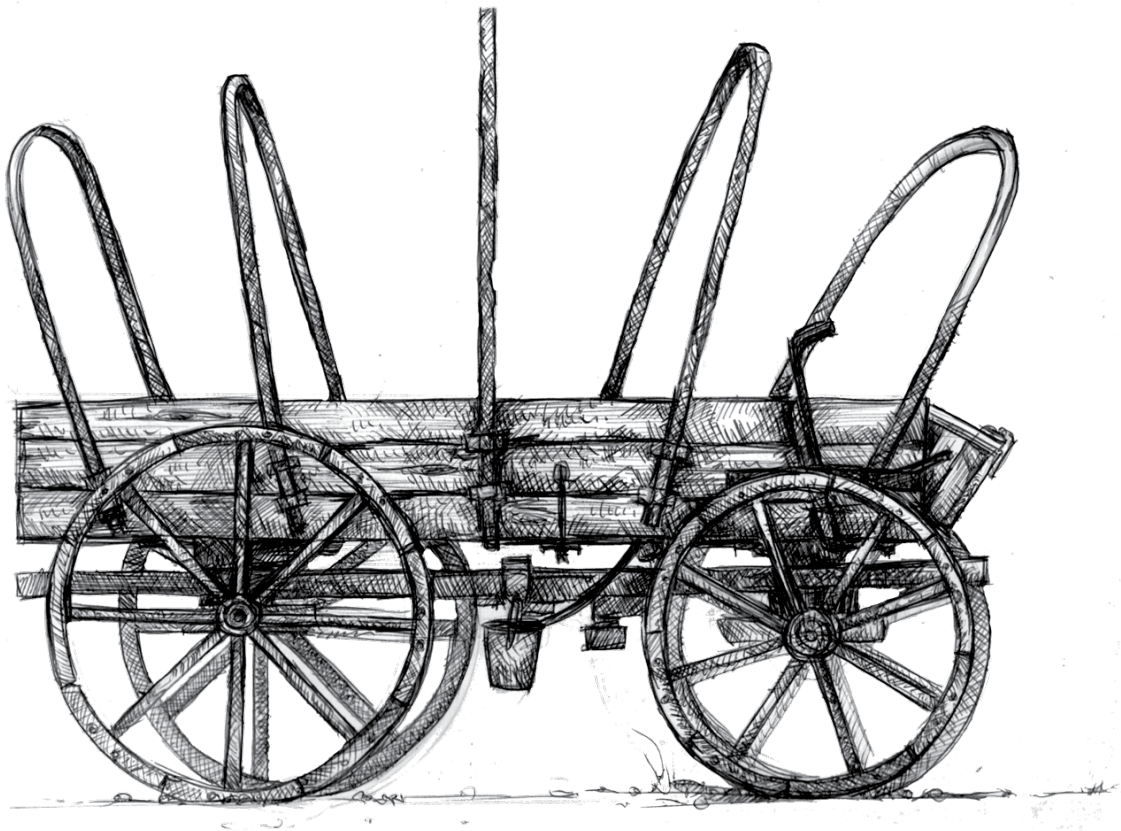
**YOKE** — Pull teams are attached to the wagon by the neck yoke, which goes over the animal's head and settles on the beast's shoulders and neck. A harness joins each set of animals to form each row of the pull team. They are then connected to the wagons front axle via a straight piece of wood known as the tongue.

**BED** — This is typically a rectangular wooden box, usually over three feet wide by ten feet long. The bed is made water-tight with tar to prevent water from seeping in and causing damage to goods and spoiling food. This also makes the bed buoyant, allowing it to cross even the deepest rivers. A jockey box, which holds tools for repair is usually found at the front end, near the driver's bench and foot-well. At this time it was

rare for the seats to have spring suspension making for a bumpy ride.

**UNDERCARRIAGE** — This piece is composed of several moving parts. Axles that hold the wheels are attached to hounds, braced wooden beams that connect to the tongue and the reach (an extension of wood joining the axles) via metal plates. This allows the rear and front axles a range of independent movement. The box of the wagon sits on bolsters that attach to the axle on a metal ring at the front, which allows that axle to swivel. Some wagons do not have this feature. Dangling from the rear axle is a bucket containing a mixture of tar and tallow to lubricate the wheel joints.

**COVER** — The wagon's cover is made of canvas, hemp, or cotton and is supported by a frame of hickory bows tied to the sides of the bed. It is closed by a drawstring. The cover serves the purpose of shielding the wagon from rain and dust; therefore it is sealed with paint, linseed oil, or grease. When the summer heat became stifling the cover could be rolled back and bunched.





# Wagon Types

There were many variants of wagons that made the crossing, made by many manufactures. Some were custom built ostentatious palaces on wheels, others innovative and experimental, but the most common and reliable fall into four types;

**CONESTOGA WAGON** - \$400 - SIZE - HEIGHT 11 FT - LENGTH 17 FT - WIDTH 4.5 FT

The Conestoga was a heavy commercial wagon used to freight goods. The Conestoga's box was curved upward on both ends to help stabilise its cargo; its white, waterproofed canvas hood was curved to fit the bottom and angled outward at the top to provide shelter. German-built, these were solid, heavy, and robust wagons. Even though these are thought of as the most common wagons used going west due to Hollywood films, they were seen as much too heavy and expensive by many of the immigrants.

**PRAIRIE SCHOONER** - \$230 - SIZE - HEIGHT - 10 FT - LENGTH 12 FT WIDTH 3.5 FT

Prairie schooners were designed for the journey to the west. The prairie schooner got its name from its boat-like box design and white canvas top, reminiscent of a ship's sails. Its box was made of hardwoods, which resisted shrinking in the arid plains of the Midwest. With smaller front wheels and large back wheels, the Schooner could turn sharply and in tighter circles than other wagons. These were popular, but expensive wagons.

**FARM WAGON** - \$120 - SIZE - HEIGHT 8 FT - LENGTH 10 FT - WIDTH 3.5 FT

Immigrants also used ordinary farm wagons. Some converted them for travel on the trail adding makeshift white canvas covers that weren't angled outward at the top. These farm wagons were slightly smaller than prairie schooners but, like them, carried a tool box (or jockey box), for emergency repairs on the trail, a water supply and extra axles. However, the bed was not sealed against river crossings, but it could be dismantled easily and moved across obstacles in pieces.

**MORMON HANDCART** - \$40 SIZE - HEIGHT 5 FT LENGTH 4 FT WIDTH 3 FT

The Mormon handcart was very common among the poorest of travellers. Having no way to afford animals to pull wagons, they did so themselves, for thousands of miles. The handcart consists of a simple, two-wheeled design with handle bars that would allow a person to pull it long behind them.



## BEASTS OF BURDEN

Teams of animals were used to pull the wagons across America to the west, from mules, horses, and oxen to even more unusual animals like buffalo. Ideally, each wagon would have a horse and other animals kept in reserve to replace those that became lame or worn out along the route. A horse provided the flexibility to ride along side the wagon rather than walking beside it, or riding on it.

Rules for these animals can be found in *Down Darker Trails* page 36, including quality differences. Pricing can be found on page 35, Below are some traits that might be useful for roleplaying proposes.

- **MULES** - Strong, Quick, Tolerate heat, Stubborn, Sure-footed
- **HORSES** - Very quick, Can be ridden with saddles, Well-trained
- **OXEN** - Good tempered, Strong, Eat native grasses. Ox teams were not controlled with reins. The driver walked alongside or rode a horse alongside the animals, using a whip and spoken commands to guide them.

Below are conditions that will affect an animals MOV. Keep note of the general condition of the wagon's pull team.

- -1 **OVERBURDENED**
- -1 **UNFIXED WAGON DAMAGE** (ACCUMULATIVE)
- -1 **EXHAUSTED/WOUNDED**
- -1 **PER LOST ANIMAL**
- +1 **FOR LIGHT LOAD** (TO THE MAX OF THE BEAST)
- +1 **FOR FRESH, WELL RESTED, FED, AND WATERED ANIMALS** (TO THE MAX OF THE BEAST)

NAME	PULL TEAM REQUIRED	MOV	BUILD	ARMOUR	WEIGHT CAPACITY/ VOLUME
Conestoga	4 Oxen/Mule/Horse	Beasts MOV -1	8	1	6,000 lbs or 6 people
Schooner	2 Oxen/Mule/Horse	Beasts MOV	6	0	2,000 lbs or 4 people
Farm Wagon	2 Oxen/Mule/Horse	Beasts MOV	5	0	1,300 lbs or 4 people
Hand Cart	1 Human	PCs MOV- 2	2	0	300 lbs or 1 person

# Group Dynamics

The group has spent six months crossing America together as a party under the leadership of Kingsley on the long, hard road. They will know the NPCs well enough and some might form friendships or rivalries between them. To simulate this, hand out the Group Cards to the players before the game and answer any questions they might have about the NPCs travelling with them. You might want to bring information about certain NPCs you plan to focus on to the front. This should give the players enough to roleplay off of and build up a picture of the party before the first scene. With that, consider the following dynamics.



## BUILDING A LOYALTY FANTASY.

This is a grim trip with hard and horrific choices within it. The group will be isolated and challenged at every turn by the environment, regional conflicts, treacherous acts, and the mythos. Building bonds with the others in the party is key. Growing these attachments will improve their chances of survival. As loyalty grows, so do the lengths they will go to save each other. This is the crux of the group dynamic as they push across the trail to a new life. These hopes of new starts and dreams of riches might all be lies, but that hope should always be at the back of their minds, pushing them ever forward. To go back now is to fail, and mostly likely all they will find is death. Punishing the PCs and grinding them down has to be balanced with the slimmest veneer of hope and salvation.



## SPLITS AND FEUDS

While the group should strive to create bonds between PCs and NPCs alike, this will always make cliques and outcasts. Emotions run high as the stakes peak with life-and-death decisions. Grudges are held for stupid mistakes and off-hand comments. Fissures can appear as one person's needs are put before another's. Keep note of them; they fuel resentment that boils into hate. Acting on that hate might be as petty as putting a fish in a percolator or as meaningful as not offering a hand to help a fellow traveller out when they fall into a pit of vipers. Turning their back, the grudge-holder is vindicated by their silent revenge.

Use NPCs' Hidden Knowledge and PCs' backstories to weave a personal experience, pulling sins into the light and doubts into the mind. Campsite scenes should be political hot beds of

bonding, friendship, power struggles, and pettiness.



## SHARED EXPERIENCES OVERCOMING RIVALRY.

Even the most bitter rivals might find themselves helping each other after so much has gone on before. An understanding between them is conveyed with a look; despite their contempt for each other, they are a well oiled team and the greater good of the party will push them to act. Spitting bloody curses at each other all the way, they drag what they think is dead weight over the finish line. A redemption arc full of begrudging help is always a good story. Remember that there could be a way back from the edge should emotions get too heated and knives come out. Traumatic experiences bond even the most unlikely of people to each other.



## DOUBT AND SELF LOATHING

Long stretches of hard terrain give you time to think. Ruminating over past mistakes, grief, and regret could play a large part in the breaking or making of a character. Dwell on their actions, good and bad. Make them take the hard choices, or remind them of their past mistakes so the players reflect on their characters' motives and ties within the group. A character that is always trying to help but always making it worse might think they're holding back the group, isolating themselves or even leaving just to die alone in the vastness of the desert. They may feel like they are just a burden on others, or turn to drinking to quiet the doubt.

During Playtesting one PC, Mr Crawford, fumbled a throw trying to hit the crow. He hit a little girl in the face instead. Apologising and in a panic, he offered to give aid; he was trained, after all. Another fumble. He broke her cheek-bone in the attempt, and the spiral into doubt began as people shunned him and whispered behind his back. The drink became his only friend.

For ease of keeping track of important interactions between players and characters print off the Cast Cards and make notes on the back.



# Followers

During this scenario there are many NPCs within the group and the players may wish to bring additional followers to fill out their backstory, family members or partners on their wagon journey. This comes with its own challenges, as the players can abuse these characters to act, in their stead to avoid danger or to make up for the flaws in their own PCs. These backstory followers should stay in the background unless called on to act, but they can also be used as back-up PCs if one should die or go mad. This makes them useful to have around during this isolating journey.

It is up to you - if you wish to allow players to give followers a fully developed sheet of their own ("hard stats") or, for simplicity sake, write a short blurb about what that character is like and add a few skills that they may be good at ("soft stats"). In the latter case, followers should have three skills at 40/50/60. If you intend for them to be entirely story-based do not stat them at all as this will give the impression to the players that they can come into play. Simply call them background followers, make reference to them and bring them into social interactions. If you do give your followers hard or soft statistics, consider using the following rules.

## OPTIONAL LOYALTY RULES:

PCs can spend 5 loyalty points on followers and known NPCs/contacts at the start of the campaign. Followers start at Friendly and each level can be bought on a 1 for 1 basis. This represents a degree of trust built up during their past experiences with each other. Add that person to the PC's list of Significant People and note their current loyalty level.

LOYALTY	ADVANTAGE
Zealous/Blood bond	+2 Advantage
Faithful	+1 Advantage
Friendly	N/A
Wary	+1 Disadvantage
Hostile	+2 Disadvantage



## COMPELLING A FOLLOWER

A PC can compel a follower to take various actions. First, consider the following questions from the followers point of view:

- IS THE ACT DANGEROUS?
- IS IT AGAINST MY NATURE?
- WHAT DO I GET IN RETURN?

Increase the difficulty of the roll by 1 for each answer that is negative in consequence for the follower.

The PC will make a Social Roll: Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade. Apply the difficulty modifiers to that roll. If successful, the desired act will be then be carried out as the follower would do it, decided by the Keeper, not how the PC wishes.

Sometimes it is reasonable for a follower to act by themselves if they are compelled by their own morals or loyalties. However, this is not the default for followers, as they are not the heroes of any story. They are bystanders unwilling to act. For them to act alone requires a Luck Roll in place of the Social Roll from the benefiting PC, applying all modifiers. On a success, roll for the followers action as normal.

**THE FALLOUT OF THE ACT:** If the compelled act is one that causes stress or harm, either physically or mentally, the relationship between the PC and the follower can be weakened or damaged. This could come to the point that the follower will no longer be willing to do any acts for the PC or could even act against them. Consider the following:

- WAS THE FOLLOWER LIED TO, OR DID THEY NOT UNDERSTAND THE CONSEQUENCES?
- WAS THE ACT TRAUMATISING?
- WAS THERE DANGER OF HARM OR THE DEATH OF ANOTHER?

Reduce the follower's loyalty by 1 if any two of these conditions are met, as the follower reassesses their relationship with the PC.

**Building Loyalty:** At the Keeper's whim a PC can gain loyalty by performing tasks that help and solve issues for followers. This can take any form, from defending them during an attack to generally being friendly and helping them in a way that is detrimental to the PC.

# Weapons & Explosives

The 1840s were a time of great innovation in the field of firearms. As it was only later that bullet casings and lever-action rifles dominated, most weapons in 1849 still used ball and cap percussion mechanisms. Pinfire and rimfire cartridges were in production, but they were more limited by the supply of their unique ammunition.

Below is a list of ranged weapons found in *Down Darker Trails* pages 38-42 that were available at the time. Only limit players if you wish to be era accurate to this time; otherwise, use all options from the sourcebook. All other equipment can be found in the same book on pages 33-35.

Era-Accurate Weapons: .31 POCKET COLT, .44 COLT DRAGOON, HAWKINS PLAINS RIFLE, .52 SHARPS RIFLE, SHOTGUN (ALL), INCENDIARY DEVICE, BOW AND ARROWS, SPEARS (THROWN)

The table lists some other specific weapons and common items of this time.

\* **CHAIN-FIRE** - These weapons can cause sympathetic fire. A spark ignites all the barrels, causing them to go off all at once. If this weapon malfunctions, the user is dealt 1D4+1 damage as the bullets trapped in the cylinder blow up. However Pepperbox

weapons have individual barrels for each chamber. All rounds still to be fired, fire from a Pepperbox. Determine who is hit within its range and direction. The user takes 1 damage.

\*\* **THE WALKER** - was the largest handgun of its time and rivalled rifles in stopping power and effective distance. It could also hold more black powder than was recommended. On loading decide if the gun is loaded with the safer 50 grains or the more potent 60 grains. Having 60 grains of black powder will have added +2 damage to chain-fire.

\*\*\* **BLOWGUN** - The Paiutes would use snake venom for both blowgun darts and arrows. This would be a strong poison. See *Call of Cthulhu 7th edition*, page 124. A blowgun cannot exceed its 10 range.

\*\*\*\* **VOLATILE LIQUID** - Dynamite wasn't invented until 1867, coming to the gold rush much later after Alfred Nobel managed to stabilise nitro-glycerine in a solid form. Until then, liquid nitro-glycerine was used to blast rock and was highly unstable, prone to blowing up if shocked in some way. If you need to carry it in a dramatic fashion, a DEX, Ride, or Drive roll is required. If you fail, roll LUCK, if LUCK roll is failed it will detonate. The most common way to set off nitro-glycerine was blasting caps, however a thrown bottle will detonate on the failure of the target's LUCK roll.

WEAPON	DAMAGE	RANGE	USES PER ROUND	BULLETS HELD	MALE	COST	AVAILABLE
.36 Colt Paterson Revolver*	1D10	30	1(3)/3	5	95	\$10	C
Colt Walker Revolver**	2D6 / 2D6+4	45/60	1(3)/3	6	95/90	\$70	R
Muff Pistol	1D8+1	10	1/2	1	98	\$2	C
Pepperbox Revolving Percussion Pistol*	1D6+1	10	1(3)/3	6	90	\$6	C
Pinfire Pistol	1D6+1	10	1(3)	4	98	\$7	U
Kentucky Rifle	1D10	80	1/4	1	96	\$2	U
Mississippi Rifle	2D6+1	60	1/3	1	99	\$4	C
Colt Ring Lever Rifle*	1D10+2	50	1(3)/3	10	99	\$45	VR
Colt Model 1839 Carbine*	1D10+2	50	1(3)/3	6	90	\$55	VR
Blowgun***	1+ Strong Poison	10	1	1	94	\$2+ Posion	U
Rabbit Stick	1D4	Thrown	1	N/A	00	\$2	U
Short Bow	1d4+half DB	20	1	N/A	-	\$4	C
Small Keg of Powder, 90 shots, 2 lbs	2D10/4 Yards	N/A	1	N/A	-	\$45	C
Bottle of Nitro-glycerine****	3D10/3 Yards	Thrown	1	N/A	-	\$0.50 Per Bottle	C

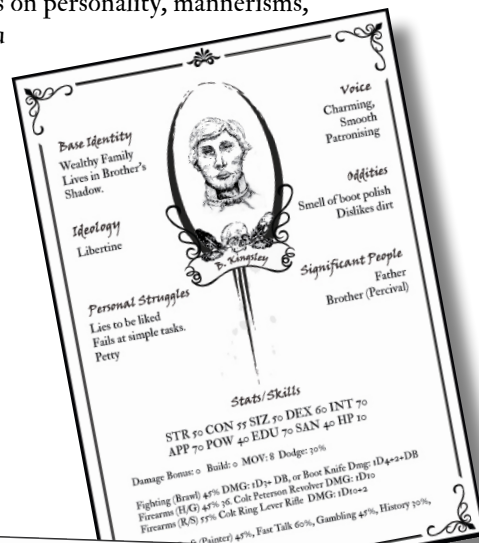


# Cast & Extras

Within the following pages you will find detailed breakdowns of the whole cast, and extras, that are used within the story of Death Toll. Note that the characters information can be used as a jumping off point to craft an alternative narrative to the main story or add flavour to campfire politics.

**GROUP CARDS** - A Group Card bundles together related cast members into a single entity that share resources, supplies and history. These cards are for player and GMs alike for referencing common information and should be available as handouts. They relay information players characters already know at the start of the game.

**CAST CARDS** - Cast Cards are quick references for Keepers to play a role while looking at the Story Event pages during play. They offer keyword prompts on personality, mannerisms, and voice types. This is where you will also find stats, skills, and equipment for each NPC.



**Base Identity**  
Wealthy Family  
Lives in Brother's Shadow.

**Ideology**  
Libertine

**Personal Struggles**  
Lies to be liked.  
Fails at simple tasks.  
Petty

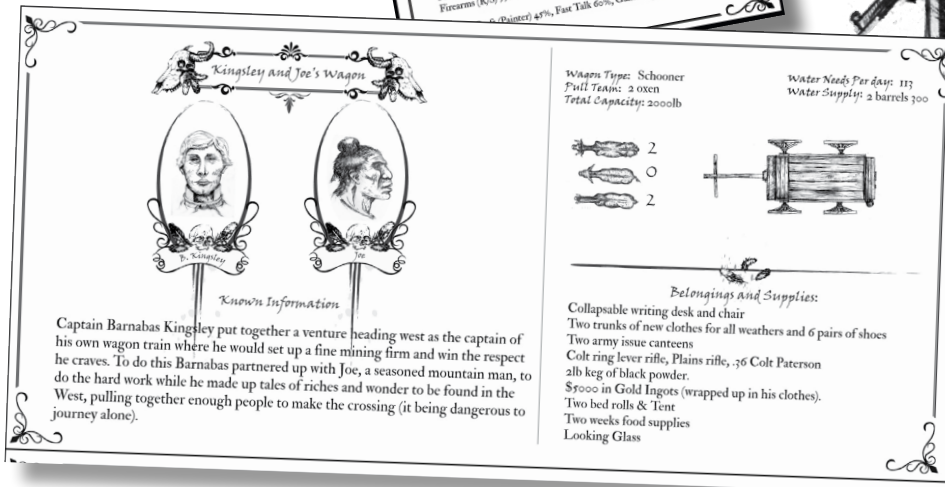
**Voice**  
Charming,  
Smooth  
Patronising

**Oddities**  
Smell of boot polish  
Dislikes dirt

**Significant People**  
Father  
Brother (Percival)

**Stats/Skills**  
STR 50 CON 55 SIZ 70 DEX 60 INT 70  
APP 70 POW 40 EDU 70 SAN 40 HP 10  
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 8 Dodge: 10%

Fighting (Bovl) 45% DMG: 1D10 DB or Boot Knife DMG: 1D4+2 DB  
Firearm (H.G) 45% 36 Colt Paterson Revolver DMG: 1D10+2  
Firearm (R.S) 55% Colt Ring Lever Rifle DMG: 1D10+2  
6-Pointed 45%, Fast Talk 60%, Gambling 45%, History 30%



**Kingsley and Joe's Wagon**

**Known Information**  
Captain Barnabas Kingsley put together a venture heading west as the captain of his own wagon train where he would set up a fine mining firm and win the respect he craves. To do this Barnabas partnered up with Joe, a seasoned mountain man, to do the hard work while he made up tales of riches and wonder to be found in the West, pulling together enough people to make the crossing (it being dangerous to journey alone).

**Wagon Type:** Schooner  
**Full Train:** 2 oxen  
**Total Capacity:** 2000lb

**Water Needs Per day:** 117  
**Water Supply:** 2 barrels 300

**Belongings and Supplies:**  
Collapsible writing desk and chair  
Two trunks of new clothes for all weathers and 6 pairs of shoes  
Two army issue canteens  
Colt ring lever rifle, Plains rifle, 36 Colt Paterson  
2lb keg of black powder.  
\$5000 in Gold Ingots (wrapped up in his clothes).  
Two bed rolls & Tent  
Two weeks food supplies  
Looking Glass



# CAPTAIN KINGSLEY & JOE

## THE KNOWN STORY - WAGON TRAIN LEADER



Captain Barnabas Kingsley followed his brother Percival into the military, serving as an officer during the Mexican-American war for a short brutal year. While he found fighting distasteful, it did give him a sense of adventure, and with his family's fortune he put his dreams into practice. He put together a venture heading west as the captain of his own wagon train where he would set up a fine mining firm and win the respect he craves. To do this Barnabas

partnered up with Joe, a seasoned mountain man, to do the hard work while he made up tales of riches and wonder to be found in the West, pulling together enough people to make the crossing (it being dangerous to journey alone).

### APPEARANCE & CHARACTER

Kingsley holds himself with pride, never slouching, and walking about with purpose and vigour. He is always well dressed in good clothes, favouring a military dress coat and breeches. He travels with many sets of clothing, all brand new. Kingsley changes and washes often. Being prone to making bad decisions or no decision at all. He is fastidious and pompous, but well meaning. Most start to loathe his bumbling ways in time. He will anger easily when his authority is challenged and be petty, but not cruel, to those he feels he has bested or he sees as rivals for the leadership of the wagon train.

### MOTIVES & HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

Kingsley is out to prove himself as a self-made man. Anything that will demonstrate his self-worth or make people like him is a short term goal for him, and these are often short-sighted acts. Returning a rich and important man to his family is his ultimate goal.

- Kingsley is very well educated. He can talk at length on hundreds of topics, however the subject matter always seems to be irrelevant to any given situation.
- He enjoys writing poetry and keeps a journal with his inner most thoughts.
- Kingsley has never made the journey to the West before over land, fighting only in the Siege of Veracruz. He was then garrisoned there before returning to the union via ship. His older brother went on to take Mexico City and become a Major.
- He'll make up stories about his time in the army and often take other people's stories he has heard, turning them into his own.
- His father agreed to finance the venture to rid himself of his son, telling him he'll either die out there or find enough common sense to make his own fortune.
- Kingsley was never a captain in the army, only a 2nd Lieutenant: a rank his family bought for him and his brother.

## THE KNOWN STORY - WAGON TRAIN SCOUT



Born Se'ku Oki (Gentle River), Joe can trace his lineage back to the Yamassee who were wiped out during the early settlement of the East. Absorbed into the local Creek tribe, Joe's early life was full of hatred and fighting. Fuelled by government land-grab incentives, they started forcing the Creeks west of their territories. Eventually the hate gave way to resignation, and Joe looked for a better future on the West Coast, taking up the life of a mountain man.

Helping to map out the Western Territories as a guide for the pioneers, he feels he is sealing his land's fate. However, it's a fate that cannot be changed in his eyes but he can minimise the damage done by the invaders, so he helps them and his own people come to terms.

### APPEARANCE & CHARACTER

Joe is an ugly man. Worn and weathered from a hard life of living off the land, he has been moulded into a stocky, robust figure. He holds himself with a lazy confidence that makes him feel dangerous. A withering stare from his black eyes and the setting of his jaw are enough to end an argument. Joe dresses in mountain man garb, likening himself to the whites that share his trade, rather than more native clothing in hopes of setting an example of cooperation. This can rankle some natives, who will mock him for being a bought man.

Joe is down to earth, tough, and hard to anger, having already lived through brutal changes in his life. He will do the right thing in a decisive manner, making hard choices with a passive calm that others can find disturbing.

### MOTIVES & HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

He sees Kingsley as easy to manipulate and aims to use him and his money to do some good; hoping to build a relationship with the younger man and establish them both in the West as major players. This will give Joe some pull over political affairs that will affect natives and ease the transition.

- Joe is a source of local legends and will tell stories around the campfire if asked to do so.
- He knows how to give tribute to the Snake Devil, and will be openly annoyed if anyone kills any snakes.
- He can tell the party things about the stars he learnt from another pioneer in the region and stories from locals.
- Joe has some knowledge about the local plants, medicines, and animals and basic knowledge of the Paiute culture.
- He has a genuine liking for Kingsley, seeing him as lacking real-life experience. He hopes a good reality check will bring the youth into his own

## THE WICKS



### THE KNOWN STORY - WAGON TRAIN MEMBERS

Mrs. Wicks is heading west to find her wayward husband, who headed out 10 months before and has not been heard from since. Left alone with their son Isaac to survive on savings until he returned with riches. Money ran low and she was forced to rent out his blacksmith shop herself after her husband's debts started to become evident, leaving them broke. She is very protective of her son whom she is always running after.

#### APPEARANCE & CHARACTER

**ABIGAIL WICKS** - Abigail is a round-faced woman of Romanian descent in her 40's. She is always well dressed and wears practical, simple (yet expensive) well cut clothes, the latest in New York fashion.

She is now a self-made woman, who looks down on people with less, however she is never rude. She sees the poor as lazy and unwilling to work their way out of poverty. She will listen to and debate with anyone that will talk to her but will anger when her own opinions are ignored for whatever reason, seeing it as being dismissed for being a woman. (While this is sometimes true, it can also be her downfall as she cannot see reason past her own anger).

**ISAAC WICKS** - As a twelve-year-old boy, he is usually dirty and scruffy despite his mother's efforts to keep him clean and respectable. He wears well made, practical clothes for the long journey to the west. Being a quiet, monosyllabic boy, he appears dim-witted; this is not the case.

#### MOTIVES & HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

**ABIGAIL WICKS** - Just wishes to protect Isaac and get him to stop acting on his impulses. Moving him to California, Abigail thinks she can start again with her own business ventures, but a new start for Isaac is her biggest concern. Nothing else but Isaac matters and Abigail will pander heavily to him.

- Abigail was a savvy and ruthless business woman when she took over and hired out her husband's blacksmith shop in the East.
- Making it more profitable than he ever did, she even expanded the business into new ventures, providing parts for wagons in the increasingly popular trade as more and more families headed west.
- She has an knowledge of metalwork and wagons.
- Despite her knowledge she didn't physically work in the blacksmiths however, she could fix a wagon if it were in dire straits.
- Actually finding her husband fills her with dread, since she found a new lease on life after he left.
- The real reason they left the East was that Isaac torched a house, killing the family of a boy who taunted him in school about his mother being unfaithful to his father. After finding out, Abigail has doubts about other odd accidents that have happened around Isaac. Fear of her son being taken off her pushed her into action. She feigned bankruptcy and cooked up a story to leave in an effort to find her husband in the west before Isaac could be suspected of anything.

**ISAAC WICKS** - If anyone picks on him his goal becomes to strongly hurt that person emotionally and physically. Isaac isn't stupid and will act with care to hide his actions from others.

- Isaac actually loves his mother and will protect her honour at every turn. Slight to her person or any romancing of her will end with Isaac directly targeting the source of the problem in a malicious fashion.
- He enjoys taking from people he deems a threat to himself or his mother, playing them off each other and creating conflict.
- He has a real passion for fire and takes interest in dead animals. His mother always jokes he wants to be a taxidermist.

## REBECCA NEWTON

### APPEARANCE & CHARACTER - FOUND IN ASHES STORY EVENT



She is badly burnt and has lost most of her hair. Her head, the left side of her face, and her shoulders are blistered angry red from 3rd-degree burns. The desert dust has stuck to her raw flesh, covering it in a muddy black grit of sand and dirt. Her hands are wrapped in dirty cloth strips, dyed an ugly brown from the seeping wounds they hide. She wears a torn and blackened nightgown, it is original colour lost and now a dusty grey. Her bare feet, gashed and torn by the rough ground, are



splashed with dry and fresh blood as old wounds open when she moves.

## MOTIVES & HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

Now hysterical with pain and trauma, only exhaustion brings her peace each day. Rebecca's life has been turned upside down. Her dreams of becoming a dancer lie in ruin and now has only one goal, to try and stop the pain and terror. While she can be comforted, she will act to end her own life when given the chance. Fire will send her into a panic and she will try to run from it. She will also want to find the rest of her family, with her mother and brother missing.

- Her name is Rebecca Newton
- Her family is from New York
- Her family names are Russ(father), Anne (mother), and Timothy (brother).
- Rebecca wanted to be an entertainer
- They were moving out west because her mother and father got a contract from a big mining company to survey.

## THE HAMILTONS



### THE KNOWN STORY - WAGON TRAIN MEMBERS

The Hamiltons are a Baptist pastor and wife couple heading west to bring the Lord to its misguided people. Anna met Obadiah at a church in Missouri where he was advocating against the Mormons, in favour of driving them out of the state. Anna convinced Obadiah to continue his crusade by following them into Illinois, travelling the state holding sermons and prayers with any local communities they came across. Where Obadiah brings spiritual guidance, Anna offers basic medical advice and aid in poorer districts. They are now heading west with the vision of building churches and helping bring down the ideas and views of the Mormons that have fled to the region.

## APPEARANCE & CHARACTER

**ANNA HAMILTON** — Anna is short, rake-thin woman in her late 30s, preferring to wear simple long dresses. She is pock-

marked from an early childhood disease and will absently-mindedly touch the marks when she is worried or thinking. There are deep pink scars that break up her ebony skin from her time as a slave. Anna is practical and straightforward, driven by what is achievable over what is wanted. She is kind and sensitive to the plights of others and will offer everything she has to help those in need, but she expects those who have more to pay for her services.

**OBADIAH HAMILTON**— A tall man of African descent, over six feet yet stoops low most of the time. He is usually dressed in simple breeches and shirts and doesn't wear a pastor's collar. Only his ever-present worn copy of the King James bible gives away his profession. Although he never seems to open it, it's presence is a source of comfort for him. Obadiah is man of God and a dreamer who wants to do good by all people. He is willing to go above and beyond to help those worse off than himself, offering kindness even to those he sees as cruel or bad people. He is a true believer in his faith and feels a need to spread what God has given him to anyone willing to hear it. He is not a violent man but hates his faith being mocked.

## MOTIVES & HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

**ANNA HAMILTON** —She sees Obadiah's mission as a way to help children in need rather than a religious calling, sometimes finding Obadiah's zeal counterproductive. She will always see protecting children as her priority.

- Anna escaped a Southern plantation when she was in her teens and despises being told what to do.
- Anna refuses to be violent in any way and will come to loathe those who deal it out in a causal manner.
- She met Obadiah while in a church to steal from the donations when she lived in poverty.
- She is wary of anyone from the Southern States. This will include the LaCombes.

**OBADIAH HAMILTON**— His long-term goal is the eradication of Mormonism as a religion by reintroducing them to Christianity and cleansing them of sin.

- Obadiah is well read in politics and religion.
- He has a basic knowledge of star-gazing and can point out major stars, most notably the Summer Triangle as it links into the Bible.
- He sees Mormonism as an abomination of Christianity. Should any players play a Mormon this should be abundantly clear. He will try his utmost to bring them back to the true vision of God's church.
- His father gave him his bible and it holds a lot of personal value. He'll go out of his way to get it back if it is lost or stolen.
- Obadiah has written a few articles for The North Star newspaper advocating the move west for African-Americans.

# THE LACOMBES & IRISH



## THE KNOWN STORY - WAGON TRAIN MEMBERS

Growing old and bored, the LaCombe brothers decided to have at least one adventure in their life. Louis being a bank clerk and Raymond a chef, banality was the only way to describe their existence. With word of gold in the West and growing restless, they saw a chance to change. They sold what they had, bought a wagon and hired an indentured servant – Irish.

Irish (John Lathom) came to America to avoid family debt that fell to him and remove himself from the prevalent problems in Ireland. However when he got to Union, it wasn't the promised new beginning he thought it would be. Penniless and without a trade, John put himself up for servitude to pay off mounting debt as an indentured servant to Louis.

## APPEARANCE & CHARACTER

**RAYMOND** – Raymond is an obese man, who has indulged in many vices, now balding and ruddy skinned touched with whisky blooms. His hair and moustache used be jet black but are now peppered by his age. Everything delights him as he rediscovers the world around him away from his hot stoves. The fresh air and vigour of the world is bright to him and he will always try to find good in any situation.

**LOUIS** – Worn down by poor health, Louis is a sorry state in his twilight years. His bald head littered with liver spots and a long, scruffy white beard completes his unkempt appearance. Constantly coughing into a handkerchief that is never out of his hand gives him the look of a someone on their last legs. He is blunt and unimaginative, however his life in banks has made him a shrewd man to do business with. Usually he is overshadowed by his brother's large personality and speaks little due to his coughing.

**IRISH** – His fair skin is now a perpetual bright red; the travel west in the long days of sun has not agreed with him. He seems constantly affected by the heat and is always seeking shade. Irish is however very mundane to look at. He seems to fade into the background and will constantly use it to his advantage to be left alone. He will act in kindness but rarely will he offer his opinion unless asked, often being seen as lazy as he sits in deep thought about grander things. He is disdainful of idiots, and the LaCombes are idiots in his eyes.

## MOTIVES & HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

**RAYMOND** - His only goals are to enjoy what he has left and not dwell on the past. He is looking for adventure but not hardship, and is soft to the ways of living rough. He will go out of his way for an easy life and avoid conflict.

- He is a nationalist and still calls himself French despite being a second-generation immigrant. He looks down on other nationalities and races but hides it under a smile, double meanings, and the rare barbed comment.
- He takes delight in amateur alchemy and hopes to set up a tonic business selling the latest in refreshment beverages if they reach California.
- His interest in botany and cooking always compel him to take samples of plants and press them in an annotated book.
- Raymond knows how to make poisons and has some samples made up.

**LOUIS** - He sees everything as a fiscal challenge and enjoys winning the best of deals. He fully intends to become rich in the West, looking to be the brains behind his brother's idea of a tonic company.

- It was Louis' idea to head west on the recommendation of his doctors. The dry weather would help his worsening health. After watching his wife die of the same wasting condition, he set out to make the move happen. At the very least he will get to see more of the world.

**IRISH** – Nothing motivates Irish more than money. His morals are thin and only apply to him when they can benefit his cause. His goals are to acquire quick and easy wealth and do the bare minimum to keep his deal with the brothers until it's no longer of value to him.

- Irish is smarter than he lets on. Travelling to Scotland he was enrolled in Edinburgh University at a young age to study Philosophy and Sociology, only to return home to find his family in debt and on the streets.
- He wants to write a book about the materialism of wealth.
- He has no intention of staying on as the LaCombes' indentured servant once they reach San Francisco

# THE BACLANOVAS



## THE KNOWN STORY - WAGON TRAIN MEMBERS

As Russian Jewish immigrants, the Baclanovas travelled for over a year to reach the Americas. Fleeing persecution in their homeland, they came to America for promises of a new beginning, only to arrive and find they were one of hundreds of thousands to do so. The East is bustling and dense with the poor, with more coming in each day. Using the last of their money, Alexander and Elena took another chance and joined up to the Kingsley party to move west on a new promise of gold.

## APPEARANCE & CHARACTER

**ALEXANDER** - A squat man in his 50s, Alexander is haggard, with deep lined crows' feet surrounding watery grey eyes betraying years of stress. He dresses in suits of Eastern European cut, almost unaware of how inadequate the fashion is for the hot weather of the American west and looks every bit the Russian tourist.

**ELENA** - Elena is a slender woman in the late stages of pregnancy, she is much younger than Alexander in her mid 30s and looks younger yet with light olive skin. Her raven hair is usually tied up in complex plaits showing off her high cheeks and pale green, feline eyes. Elena is at her end and has all but given up on trying to survive. She is depressed and is eaten by the guilt of leaving behind her mother and father as they fled.

**OLGA** - A mess of black hair is kept in check with neat plaits. The young girl is small for her age and shares her mother's complexion; only her hard grey eyes seem to depict her father. She wears boys' clothes and refuses her mother's meek efforts to civilise her into a young lady.

**ANDREI** - The tall, skeletally thin boy wears ill-fitting clothes that are too small for his frame, and a cowboy hat that is too large yet he is never without. He is a disillusioned teen spending many years on the road but now he sees hope since arriving in America. He isn't the brightest but works hard and will do anything for his mother and sister.

## MOTIVES & HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

**ALEXANDER** - Providing for his family and keeping them safe is Alexander's first and only goal. Elena's pregnancy plays heavily on how protective he is. He was a wealthy man working as an antiques merchant before losing it all. After much debate with Elena they decided to keep going until finally the family took a boat to America.

- Alexander never sold any of Elena's family heirlooms and still has them among other jewellery in his strong box but never told her he kept them. He is trying desperately never to sell.
- The Heirlooms include: Long bone needles topped with small stone figures, A jade comb with decorative grip, An obsidian mirror (it's decorative back depicting Umay an Altai god of fertility) **KEEPER'S NOTE:** *this a similar mirror to what Tso'apa carries. A symbol of the Denisovans.*
- A shaman drum (Elena's grandfathers). It's skin stretched over a wooden frame with long braces inside that are carved into grotesques of Altaian gods.

**ELENA** - She has given up on most goals in life and finds it hard just to keep going without the rest of her family about her.

- She can trace her family back for many generations in Russia and she has always said her father could link the family to the the Altai Peoples that live in southeast Siberia and met Alex when her father was forced to sell family heirlooms.
- All she has left of her mother and father is an old pendant she always wears. Its old, worn and primitive made of a dark green jade.
- She knows very little English



**THE DENISOVAN CONNECTION** - Elena's ancestry runs deep into the old blood of Altai peoples, an area of Russia that borders Kazakhstan, Mongolia and China. This mountainous region was the home of the Denisovan, an offshoot species of the Neanderthals. They were giants that interbred with humans, and had a cannibalistic appetite which led to conflict in the area. They were all but wiped out, but not before spreading to the Americas via the Bering Land Bridge. They brought with them worship and sacrifice to their god; Causing the last cataclysm that ended an era of civilisation in great floods. Elena's child is a Denisovan half-breed. They are being called to the Sierra Mountains, where they will set another cataclysm into motion. (The Denisovan will be explored more fully in *book 3 Fever: Sacrifice*.)

## ESE ADA & THE CROW



### THE KNOWN STORY - FOUND IN Ada's Omen, Cave of Dreams Story EVENTS, AND Heavy Heart DREAM EVENT

Having watched his people pushed off their lands with the creeping invasion of the Old World, Ada has become deeply troubled by their bleak future. Now with the rise of Yadooe Tso'apa and his blood-thirsty ideals, Ese Ada is driven to stand against the tide that tries to erode his traditions, his way of life, and his people's sovereignty. Once he was a medicine man who advised and guided the Paiutes; Ada is now shunned by them. Where his kinsmen have become openly hostile to whites, Ada looked for council in the spirits of the land. He gleaned the rise of a great malice that would engulf all things. Becoming obsessed with this vision, he has sought out any and all means of scrying more of the fate of his people and that of the settlers. He has found his way into dreams and has started talking to snakes. He is dabbling in dangerous places and is now hunted by his own kind.

### APPEARANCE & CHARACTER

**ESE ADA** - Ada is a dishevelled and weather-beaten native in his 50s, weary and exhausted with his time spent under the influences of meditative drugs. He wears simple local clothing and a few adornments made of crow feathers to mark him as some-

one of status. He carries a decorated staff to help him walk and will lean on it heavily when standing. He also carries a satchel of various bottles and plants that are medicinal, or mind-altering, in nature.

Resourceful and clever, he is likened to the crow which is his name-sake. He is not a warrior and bears no one any ill will, and killing personally is something he will only do reluctantly to cut the cancer out of his people and put them on the right path.

**CROW SPIRIT** - Tudzu'u looks like a hooded Crow, with many of its feathers a dull silvered grey. It is not a very large crow and looks thin and starved when it flaps its wings. Its true form is three times its shown size, perched with an awkward hunch and giving out a long, tuneless caw that pierces your very soul. Tendrils of ghostly snakes disgorge from its tooth-lined beak.

### MOTIVES & HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

Ada is looking for the almost dead, on whom to perform the rituals of the Snake Devil, placing the Seed Stones inside the dying for incubation. They will produce the right tools he needs to remove Tso'apa from power.

He is always looking to help anyone willing to see the truth no matter who they are, and has found over the years that letting them experience a hard lesson will bring them to that truth quicker than being told of it. He is hoping to teach any new settlers that this place is not ours, but the spirits'. He will look to enlighten them by showing them the will of his god in their dreams.

- Ada resides in the Cave of Dreams and can use it to find the Dreamlands and enter dreams.
- Ada is followed by a trickster spirit that takes the form of a crow with grey feathers in its wings. It aids him and Ada can see what it sees.
- Ada has vast knowledge of the Paiute, their legends, dreams, and spirits. Having been a medicine man of some repute.
- Has a good knowledge of medicine and local plants.

# THE SEED OF THE SERPENT



## THE KNOWN STORY - FOUND IN **The Standing Man, The Dig , & Sand Trap** STORY EVENTS.

After their bargain, the Snake Devil told Ada to dive down into the waters in the Cave of Dreams and recover the Seeds. These Seeds are jet black artefacts that hold dormant parasites within them. The stones are heated in the ashes of a fire while a ritual circle is drawn around the chosen host. Once this is done the host is opened and the Seed Stone is inserted into the sacrifice to gestate. The sacrifice acts as Seed-Bearer until the parasite is ready to feed for itself.

### APPEARANCE & CHARACTER

**STAGE 1 - SEED-BEARERS** - The Seed-Bearers change over time as their seeds mould them into better hosts, making them more aggressive and resilient to damage as they increase the bodies' mass. The bodies bloat and grow over the course of a few days. Their skin becomes semi translucent, like a cooked onion and the parasite inside can be vaguely seen, moving every so often within its host as it grows. The parasite is jet black, slick, and eel-like; thin and long. Its headless body writhes about looking for food to latch on to. The host will lay in a mostly dormant state and only react to direct threats to itself, rising only to feed on anything nearby that it can consume. It mainly acts as like a carrion feeder. A Seed-Bearer will try to protect it's seed at all costs. They are passive unless provoked.

**STAGE 2 - PARASITE** - A long, whip-thin coil of slick black body writhes like a tangle of cord with a wicked, fanged mouth that peels back like a flower opening its petals. Depending on the gestation period it can reach 20 feet in length and gains mass from consuming the host which it turns into a mobile cocoon and protector. Gestation takes two to three weeks if a constant source of food can be found for the Seed-Bearer to replace its mass. If not the process will be slowed. The parasite will push its way out of the host's mouth once it has matured enough to catch prey.

**STAGE 3 - JUVENILE** - Once the parasite leaves the host it will start to hunt its own food, feasting on anything it can find

from live prey to rotting carcasses. It develops scales and a mouth that is both surrounded by and filled with appendages which also have mouths that snap and dart about independently, tasting the air for food. Growing all the time, it starts to resemble the twisted, nightmare of a fully grown Abomination of Yig.

**STAGE 4 - ABOMINATION OF YIG** - Growing to the girth of a wagon and over 100 feet long, its body is now covered in large, pale white scales. Its head peels open to reveal multiple eyesless, snake like appendages each with its own fanged mouth. They strike at anything that moves dragging poisoned, convulsing victims into the thing's hook-toothed maw. The Abomination of Yig sits deep in the earth and feels for vibrations from loud noises within its territory.

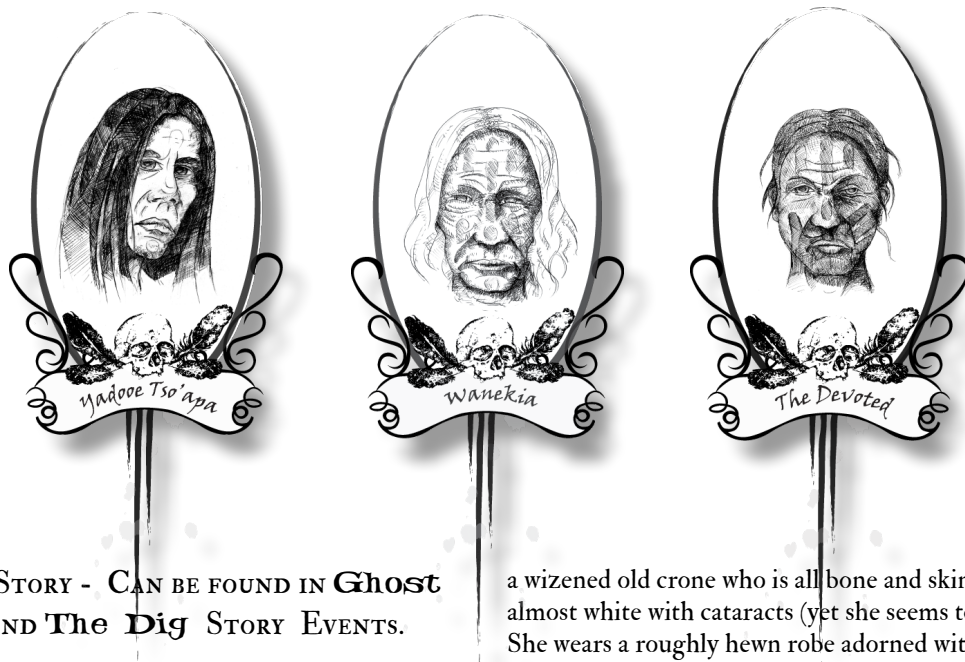
### MOTIVES & HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

**THE RHYTHM OF LIFE** - Beating drums and dance mesmerise the monster, they will focus on any source and become beguiled unless attacked. If the performance is exceptional & exquisite they will become subdued for a short time. The rhythm has to be held to keep the attention, It will require a Arts and Craft (Musician) using a drum. The affected creature loses 1 attack for each successful roll, and then its movement, then it is sent into a beguiled trance for several minutes. A Hard successes removes 2 attacks, and an Extreme success 3. A hard APP roll adding beauty to the performance giving the ritual performer +1 Advantage.

**WANEKIA'S RHYTHM** - knowing Waneikia's rhythm(learnt from **Rhythm in Death** Dream Event) will give +1 Advantage on any rolls.

Allow PCs to learn Arts and Craft (Musician) from watching the natives.

## YADOOE TSO'APA & THE DEVOTED



### THE KNOWN STORY - CAN BE FOUND IN **Ghost Dance** AND **The Dig** STORY EVENTS.

Despite being young Yadooe Tso'apa has risen quickly to a place of influence within the braves in the region due to his supposed ties to a powerful spirit; giving the Paiutes hope that they might be saved from their plight. He now leads a dedicated group called the Devoted in the desert. They perform lightning raids on travellers heading to Ragtown and travelling the northern Truckee Route. Mother Wanekia has taken up the position of medicine woman by Yadooe Tso'apa's side, guiding the Devoted and supporting them spiritually.

The Devoted are initiated members of the Northern Paiutes who have taken up Yadooe Tso'apa's cause to purge the West of the invading immigrants. They are utterly loyal and will die for him and each other. In their eyes, this is the start of an apocalypse as they are swept aside by the whites. They are known for their familiar ghost paint, wearing only rabbit fur leggings and, their torsos covered in black hand prints.

### APPEARANCE & CHARACTER

**YADOOE TSO'APA** - His dark features are hawkish and bold, he stand head and shoulders above the average Paiute. In the peak of his fitness, he is full of bravado and holds himself with a young man's arrogance dominating any gathering. Tso'apa wears only the bare minimum that is common in hotter weather. His body is covered in geometric shapes and the hand prints of the Ghost Paint, some are tattooed into his flesh and others are hastily painted on. An obsidian mirror, its surface surrounded by carvings of death and sacrifice, hangs from his belt. What he lacks in charm he makes up for in zeal. Speaking with passion and drive, he is a talented leader despite having a callous edge. He believes only the strong survive and will be openly disgusted with anyone he sees as weak. There is a hardness to his gaze that betrays a desperate edge that lingers on the cusp of fear.

**MOTHER WANEKIA** - An elder among the Paiutes, Wanekia took over for Ese Ada when it comes to the spiritual well-being of the Paiutes, acting as their new medicine woman. She is

a wizened old crone who is all bone and skin, her sunken eyes almost white with cataracts (yet she seems to see well enough). She wears a roughly hewn robe adorned with tufts of white rabbit fur, mimicking her own white mane of wild hair.

**DEVOTED** - Most of the natives in the area are underfed and show signs of the on-set of emaciation from the lack of steady sources of food. Tso'apa's followers are proven fighting men, braves that follow Yadooe directly and are the mostly die-hard sycophants of the tribe. These are not the average Paiutes but head strong and devoted to the belief that they are fighting a war for their very existence. All are wary of the whites and take no pleasure in dealing with them.

### MOTIVES & HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

**YADOOE TSO'APA** - He wants to see the whites broken and cleansed from the area. Following a grand plan, he is attacking the weakened wagon trains that are travelling to Ragtown. He ultimately plans to assault the settlement itself to access the third High Place and acquire the manpower to dig up the monolithic stones from the desert. He has started giving human offerings to an old fertility goddess the Paiute ancients once worshipped.

- The obsidian mirror whispers to him, guiding his actions. He believes the voice is that of the fertility god Korawini since his vision quest.
- Being very tall, it is rumoured that he has Si-Te-Cah blood in his veins.

**MOTHER WANEKIA** - She has been studying the burials found at Old Springs Story event. She is relearning the ways of the giants and is the mastermind behind using the teachings to wake the dead and create the Ghost Paint.

- She discover that the Si-Te-Cah of their own legends are real, and were actually a race of giants called the Denisovan. They immigrated to the Americas from the northern ice fields of Alaska or beyond thousands of years ago.
- She has used the Denisovan teachings to create the ritual in the desert.



**NEW SPELL:** Cost: 5 Magic Points per 100 ml of paint. Create Ghost Paint. This is a ritual, takes six hours, and binds spirits to war paint to create a barrier against bullets. It is black in colour (crushed charred bone) and is applied with a binding agent of spit, animal fats, and wild grapes. This symbolises the person to be protected the ghost paint and the land that feeds them. The ghosts are then called during a Ghost Dance and bound to the paint, which is then applied to the skin of the one to be protected. This person must offer a sacrifice of western weapons to a pyre. When struck with a bullet, the paint will flare up with the release of the ghost as an oily black smoke, leaving the paint pale white where the wearer was hit. The paint in that area will not stop a second shot. The paint doesn't stop the force of the blow and a bullet will still knock down the target. Wearing the Paint causes 1d3 SAN damage as the wearer can hear the spirits bound into the paint.

## THE SPAWN & CHILDREN OF YIG



FOUND IN **Cave of Dreams** STORY EVENTS, AND  
IN THE **GREAT BASIN** AREA IN GENERAL.

**SPAWN OF YIG** - These pale, human-like mutants have flat heads, forked tongues, and scales covering their bodies. Some of them have fused, withered legs that wind into tails. Their beady black eyes make them seem even more reptilian as they lack all emotion. The smell of rotten meat accompanies them as they slither about on their bellies. These are the Spawn born from victims of the curse of Yig; a bane put on humans that wrong Yig by killing his children. The spawn are long living and never seem to age. If left in the desert, they will make their way to the Cave of Dreams where they gather in the deep, cool, subterranean pools, drawn by Yig's call.

**CHILDREN OF YIG** - These snakes are sacred among their kind. They usually take the forms of huge versions of local venomous snakes; in Nevada that is diamondback and sidewinder rattlesnakes. While the typical snakes only grow to four feet, the children can easily double that. All children are marked with a white crescent on their heads and are directed and controlled by Yig and his servants; they are often used to guard sacred places and artefacts.



## MOTIVES & HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

**THE RHYTHM OF LIFE** - Beating drums and dance mesmerise the monster, they will focus on any source and become beguiled unless attacked. If the performance is exceptional & exquisite they will become subdued for a short time. The rhythm has to be held to keep the attention, It will require a Arts and Craft (Musician) using a drum. The affected creature loses 1 attack for each successful roll, and then its movement, then it is sent into a beguiled trance for several minutes. A Hard successes removes 2 attacks, and an Extreme success 3. A hard APP roll adding beauty to the performance giving the ritual performer +1 Advantage.

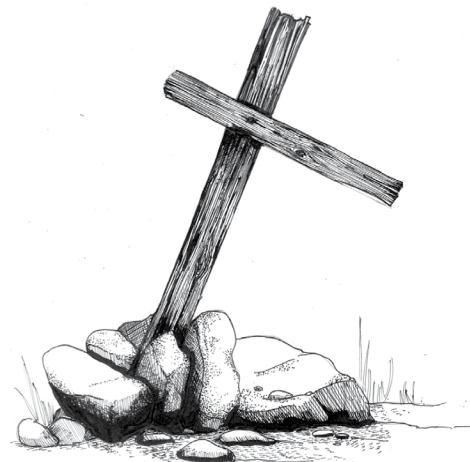
**WANEKIA'S RHYTHM** - knowing Waneikia's rhythm (learnt from Rhythm in Death Dream Event) will give +1 Advantage on any rolls.

Allow PCs to learn Arts and Craft (Musician) from watching the natives.

**POISONS:** There is many poisonous creatures within Fever. Below is how to deal with a bite, taken from *Down Darker Trails*.

"An Extreme CON roll halves this damage. The victim's STR, DEX, and Move are halved for 1D6 hours, as he or she writhes with convulsions and fits of vomiting. The region of the body where the bite was inflicted turns a ghastly purplish-black color and swells to nearly twice normal size; if the victim survives, the swelling subsides within 1D6 days.

Attempting to suck out the venom requires a First Aid roll; success halves damage (or quarters it if the victim made the Extreme CON roll). Immediate amputation of a bitten limb may prevent death, albeit at great and permanent cost."



# Story Events

Story events are written scenes that are set out to tell the main story within the game. These are a framework that can be used by the Keeper to relate those events and story arcs to the players and give advice on how to manage it. However these scenes shouldn't be set in stone. The Keeper should tailor the scenes to their own vision to better suit themselves and their own group's style of play.

By using the **Keeper's Map of the 40 mile Desert** you can control and track the scene locations in Death Toll, along with the hooks that may draw the groups toward them.

The scenes break down as following

**KEYSTONE SCENES** - Ashes, The Standing Man, and Sand Trap.

If you want to cut the scenario down to a one shot, these are the critical scenes that explore the Seed of the Serpent.

**ESE ADA DRIVEN SCENES** - Ada's Omen, Cave of Dreams, Ashes, Standing Man, Sand Trap.

Expanding on the Keystone scenes, these will show Ada's involvement and some of his motives.

**DEVOTED DRIVEN SCENES** - Old Springs, Ghost Dance, Snatched, The Dig, The Wounded Tree, The Prophet's Tree.


These scenes are not critical but are extended lore and story telling of what Ada is up against. These also foreshadow events found in later books.

**SLICE OF LIFE & SIGNPOST SCENES** - Divison, Crossroads, Snatched.

These scenes are focused on allowing the PCs to get to interacted with the Kingsley wagon memebers or help guide them to other scenes.

Reading all the scenes before trying to run Death Toll will help set out the game and choose which scenes to include.

The Scenes are broken down to sections, for ease of reference.



## Setting the Scene

These call outs are descriptions of what the scene is like and can be read out to the players or used as inspiration to create your own version of events.



## Scene Objectives

To inform the Keeper of the initial goals of why the scenes are included, what the players should get from it, and what the Keeper should be using the scene to portray - In essence its foundation and concept.

If you are stuck on what NPCs might do within the scene these are some helpful hints that can lead to pushing the players into action and open up avenues to explore. Having the NPCs act will also bring some depth and breathe life to the world.



## Triggered Event: NAME

Triggers that can be used if the players act in specific way or the Keeper requires a tool to move the scene on. These can add tension, nuance or pace. Adding more trigger events that are tailored to your group is a good way to create diverse story telling.



## Consequences

These are exactly that, they denote what can happen due to certain exits of a scene



## Rewards & Information

Additional information that can be found by the players. These are noted by (1) within the body of the text and each number will relate to the 'Rewards and Information' that can be obtained from the scene, if the PCs uncover it.

*Note: This module does not give many roll directions for scenes. This is for the Keeper to decide and as such this scenario might not be suited for new Keepers. Player Characters will be referred to as PC from here on out.*

# KEEPER'S MAP

Postions of scenes are not fixed, but general area markers.

## THE FORD

Deep mud and standing water.  
Difficult crossing.

## ACT 1

Few abandoned goods, mostly broken wagons and empty barrels. With only a couple of dead or otherwise dying animals. Some well made graves covered in rubble with headstones.

## ACT 2

The area is littered with heavy goods. Visible efforts by thousands to lighten loads and unburden animals can be seen. Littered with the dead and abandoned, burnt wagons.

## SODA POOLS

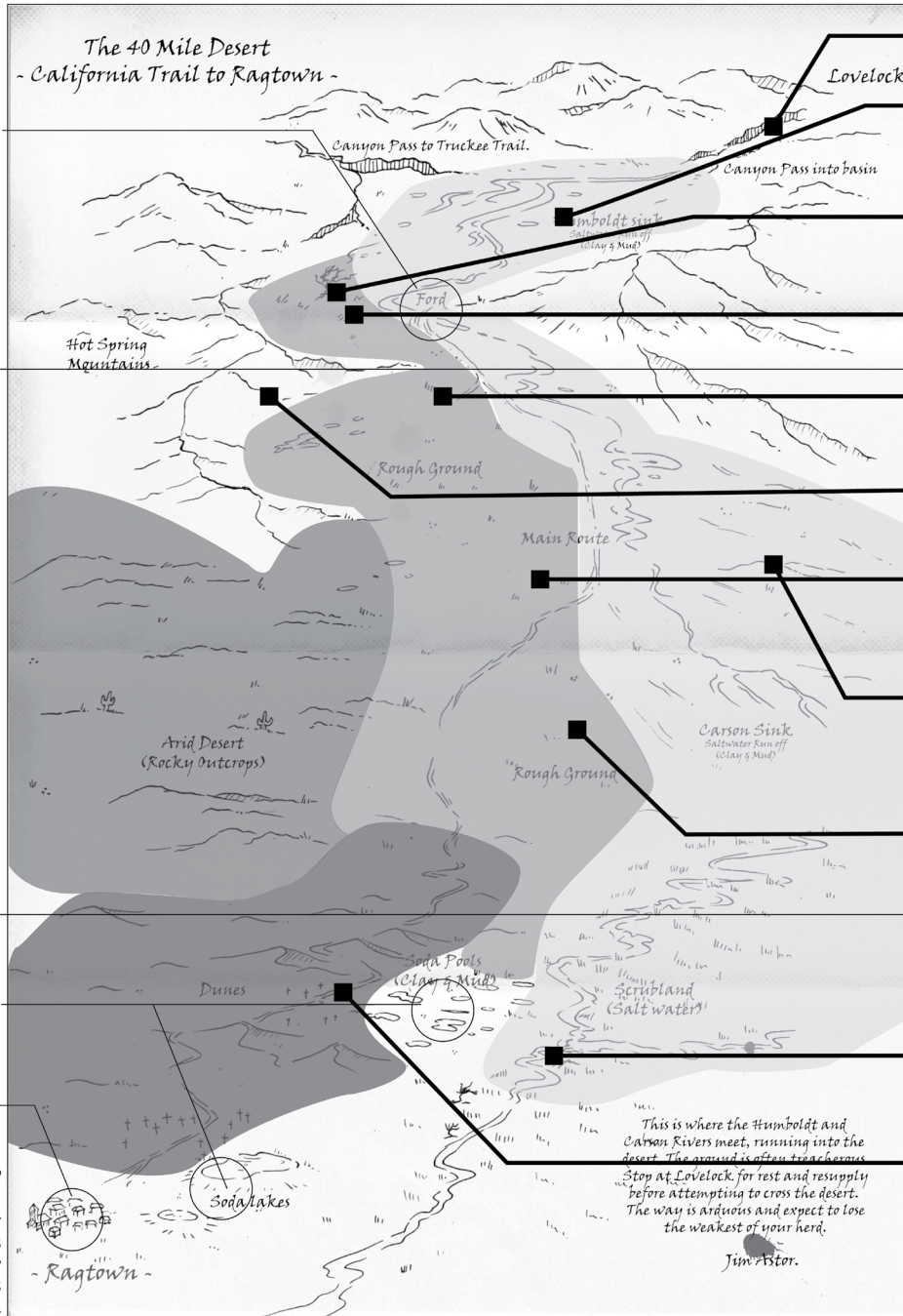
Salt water pools, impassible by wagons.

## RAGTOWN

End point of game

## ACT 3

The area is like a slaughter house, this is where most fail in their ts to cross. Dead and dying animals are commonplace. There are many sty makeshift graves. Many wagons left with all their belongings intact.



## DIVISION

Draw: NA - Opening Scene.

## ADA'S OMEN

Draw: Ada stands watching the group from a distance.

## THE WOUNDED TREE

Draw: Circling Carrion and an intense feeling of dread.

## ASHES

Draw: Smoke on the horizon.

## CROSSROADS

Draw: Tracks of cattle and humans, baying of cattle.

## CAVE OF DREAMS

Draw: The need for water (learned from Ada or Paiutes)

## THE STANDING MAN

Draw: A man stands on the horizon waiting for the wagon train to come to him.

## OLD SPRING/ GHOST DAN

Draw: The need for water (learned from Ada or braves), tracks from lone wagon (tracking from ashes).

## THE DIG

Tracks lead here from Ashes, Finding captured members.

## SNATCHED (ROAMING)

Draw: NA Attack on Wagons/Reactive

## THE PROPHET'S TREE

Draw: Rescue of prisoners or found trying to avoid Dunes. Carrion, uneasy feeling.

## SAND TRAP

Draw: NA Reactive.

## SINKS

Gum like mud under dried sun baked crust. Will slow beasts.

## ROUGH GROUND

Scattered rocks and rubble amongs Sagebrush. Can damage wagon wheels and misfoot Animals

## ARID DESERT

Sea of sagebrushes, cannot easily see the uneven ground, or what is on it.

## SAND DUNES

Loose sands, wagons sink deep, burning hot to the touch



# Division



## Setting the Scene

The Kingsley Party is starting one of the last legs of the two-thousand-mile journey from the east of America into the unsettled west. Exhausted, and with supplies depleted by their six-month migration, they are now following the Carson Trail, crossing into Nevada's great basin - a stretch of alkali sinks known as the 40-mile desert. Many stories and rumours surround the area, which is filled with the dead and their belongings. Personal effects and family heirlooms, once held as valuable, were carried so far only to be abandoned here, in a desperate attempt to unburden dying pack animals. They discarded everything from empty, broken water barrels to pristine gilded dressers; littering belongings across the desert to stand as grave markers for the half buried bleached bones of the unlucky, and ill-prepared.

The heat infects you with each breath of its dry air. It's stale taste invades your mouth and scorches your lungs, making the need for water ever present in your mind. The Kingsley party wagons ride single file into the canyon that leads down to the haze-washed plains beyond. You watch the wagons in front of you - each one in turn swallowed up by the gloom. Canyon walls rise oppressively high on each side of the dry, dusty riverbed, staving off a low autumn sun.

As you descend into the canyon, the distorted creaks of lumbering wagons and baying of worn-out oxen echo back off the stone walls, making an unnerving din. You are tired, and already turning grey with desert dust, as this place marks you as its own. You, and the other grim-faced immigrants push the beasts ever onward, hoping to reach the mountains before all are trapped in this lifeless desert by September snows.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *Allow players to describe their PCs and wagons as they pass into the canyon, placing them in the wagon train's rear. Banter and role-play until the conversations dry up, then continue with the scene.*

*The drivers all try to keep control of their wagons as their animals spook; anyone walking must avoid the mayhem or suffer wounds.*

An ungodly shriek erupts. Animals spook at the sudden outburst and try to bolt from their yokes and tethers, battering the wagons about. The dust they kick up obscures their dash into the haze of the salt plains.



## Scene Objectives

**PLAYER GOALS** – Within this scene the players will have to show their skill at controlling the wayward animals as they spook and try to bolt, deal with the critical situation that the Baclanovas find themselves in, and negotiate with Kingsley's inept leadership.

**KEEPER GOALS** – Introduce the Baclanova family, their origins, and their plight. They will set the tone for the adventure and serve as an example of an accident that could befall anyone – drive their hardships home. Introduce the idea of time-consuming jobs vs losing supplies. Will they fix the wagon, taking up hours, or ditch it and make good time? Will they round up the missing livestock that bolted into the desert? Each decision should cost either time or resources.

**NPC DIRECTION** - The NPCs will all tend to their own wagons, but in time will move to help the Baclanova wagon. This is to avoid crowding the scene and to let the focus be on the Baclanovas. Eventually, Kingsley will resolve the situation. Joe is scouting ahead of the wagon and will take some time to return.



## Triggered Event: The Commotion

Ahead, the group finds a large, overburdened wagon that has been pulled over on to its side. Its canvas has almost been crushed flat against the wall of the canyon. One of the oxen has been impaled through the neck by the wagon's broken tongue (the length of wood that attaches the wagon to the yokes), and is pinned to the ground. Its eyes are wild and the large animal kicks out as it tries to right itself in panic. Supply barrels and boxes lie around the family wagon, some cracked open leaking their contents over the canyon floor (1). The wagon belongs to the Baclanovas, immigrants from Russia.

Alexander, the family's father, looks like he was thrown from the wagon and has a heavy gash on his neck and shoulder. He screams and frantically tries to pull the wagon away from the canyon wall with no success. Their eldest Andrei, a boy of 12, stands stock-still and pale faced, watching the scene (2). Their 8 year old daughter, Olga, is making a defiant effort to calm the rest of the oxen, which are all still attached to the other half of the yoke. The oxen frantically mill about, trapped behind the next wagon desperate to push past it.

**KEEPERS NOTE'S:** *Alexander's pregnant wife, Elena, was resting out of the sun in the back of the wagon when it was slammed over on to its side against the wall. See consequences "Righting the Wagon" for her fate.*



### Triggered Event: Kingsley Enters

When it is most suited to cause a problem for the PCs, Kingsley demands to know what is going on in a pedantic fashion and moves to take over the scene. Ordering everyone about, he comes up with terrible solutions that will escalate the situation. He ties ropes poorly, shoots the oxen, and generally causes problems.

Let players argue and debate him on how to do things, and play him for a charming fool. However, he is in charge, and takes drastic and petty measures to prove it if the players anger or belittle him. The PCs will have to find ways to get around him in order to do things correctly, but Kingsley will move the scene to a conclusion if it is dragged out by telling the Baclanovas to ditch the massive wagon and find places among the others if they wish not to be left here alone.



### Triggered Event: Righting the Wagon

When the PCs pull the wagon off the canyon wall, shattered boxes drop free from the crush. Among them tumbles a pregnant woman, Elena, only to lie still among the splintered wood. Her clothes torn and wet with blood, splints of wood protrude from gashes on her arms and back (3).

Righting the wagon is a hard task that will require an organised effort. The wagon weighs close to 2,000 pounds and 6,000 pounds when fully loaded with its goods. Kingsley will involve himself and cause problems by not performing his part correctly or becoming a distraction. He might even take a job from a PC to "show them how its done." The act of righting it can damage the wagon further, forcing the wagon party to abandon it completely or increase repair time (which slows their progress). Once the wagon is righted, it is clear that Elena was pushed down into the box of the wagon saving her from more serious wounds; however she is unconscious, and has suffered moderate wounds.



### Consequences

**LIVESTOCK** - There is a lot that can go wrong in this scene with pull teams and accompanying animals. Make sure to keep track of how many animals are required to pull the wagons and their losses from this scene. It might not seem like a big deal right now, but this whole ordeal is the start of the wearing down of supplies and what the wagon train has at their disposal when they get to Ragtown. They still have a long way to go to survive the desert.

**ELENA** - While she is the most serious problem, Elena is the least pressing, as she cannot be woken. Alexander will not leave

her alone to deal with the other problems but he's no doctor, nursing Elena will fall to PCs, or Mrs Hamilton if convinced to do so.

**KEEPER'S NOTES:** *Elena is lost in a coma that should not be broken unless someone successfully completes The Glass Lake Dream Event. This dream/nightmare develops within her sleep during the passage through the desert, slowly taking hold in her mind as the reality of the desert descends on the party.*

**THE WAGON** - The wagon can be saved if the party is careful with it. If Kingsley is successful in taking charge, the wagon will suffer more damage. It will be serviceable but slow, and will lag behind the main group. If the wagon is broken beyond repair, or destroyed in some way, the party will have to barter with the other wagons to take on the Baclanovas, take the family into their own wagons, or leave them stranded. Supplies may have to be left behind to make space for Elena. Most NPCs will need a lot of convincing to take on the family of four.



### Rewards & Information

(1) The players can find out about Alexander's strongbox among the overturned possessions and possibly open it to find a drum. This is a Shamans drum linked to Elena's Siberian lineage.

(2) If anyone asks Alexander or Andrei what caused the wagon to overturn, Alexander will say that he was watching a bird that he spotted and then woke up bleeding in the dust. He is convinced he must have hit a ditch. Andrei will say it felt like the wagon was thrown against the canyon wall by a strong gust of wind. They seem shaken and are reluctant to get back on the wagon. An eagle eyed PC could make out that the bird Alexander saw is a Crow.

**KEEPER'S NOTES:** *This is Ada's Crow, scouting out the newcomers. He sees what it sees and it was Ada that flipped the wagon using a gust of wind to slow the new group, giving him time to perform the ritual at Ashes Story Event, undisturbed.*

(3) Looking closely at Elena, she isn't your typical Russian woman. She looks almost Native American, but is in fact Siberian. She doesn't leave the wagon often and has rarely interacted with anyone over the six months.



# Ada's Omen



## Setting the Scene

An old Paiute stands several yards away, watching the wagons pass in silence. He seems to be staring intensely at each in turn, as if committing them to memory.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *If PCs stop to talk to him, read on. If they don't, that is fine; play this scene as incidental.*

The old Paiute waits for you to approach. He is in his mid 50s, with skin worn by exposure to the elements, creased like old leather. He wears simple, worn native garb, on his shoulder is a large satchel, its tassels flutter in the breeze. Leaning heavily on a long staff that is decorated with coloured bindings and a few simple grey feathers, he waits for you to talk first (1).



## Scene Objectives

**PLAYER GOALS** – This is the players' first look at the local Paiutes. Here, they can gauge their relationship with them before they cross to Ragtown and try to improve it or take a more aggressive stance.

**KEEPER GOALS** – Eise Ada is here to take the measure of the newcomers. By their own words and actions, he will judge if they are worthy of the Snake Devil's blessing and turn them into allies by showing them his dreams.

**NPC DIRECTION** - If Joe is present (and if no PCs takes the initiative), have him talk to Ada about the state of the locals' activity and their attitudes toward the wagons. Other members of the wagon train won't take much interest unless Ada is invited to camp with them. Then they will react in a cautious but welcoming manner.



## Triggered Event: Being Hostile

If the players are openly hostile to Ada, members of the wagon train (especially Joe) will try to stop them from taking action, hoping not to anger the locals, whose territory they are about to cross. If the players manage to attack Ada for any reason, a huge, unrelenting sandstorm should roll in and he will vanish in its midst.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *Build the storm slowly during the conversation as it starts to sour reflecting Ada's mood. It will cause severe damage*

*to the wagons, blowing some over and burying others. Animals will not fare well either. Survival here will depend on the PCs skills with this type of terrain.*



## Triggered Event: Invited to Camp

If Ada is invited to share their food and stay the night, he will do so. He will tell the myths and legends of the Paiutes around the campfire (See Paiute Myths and Legends). Push home Ada's sadness about the whites' aggression and foolish rape of the land. Ada will share their creation myth explaining how the Paiutes saw the early whites in the region as brothers and helped them. Now, he tells the PCs that they should be wary of his people, as they have been driven to desperate acts.

Answer any questions the party may have about the desert in vague terms (2). Ada is here to get information about them, not give it out just yet. If they ask about water he will direct them to the **Cave of Dreams** Story Events (3) to be judged.



## Triggered Event: Treating Elena

If Ada is taken to Elena he will start acting strangely, muttering old rites under his breath, and will prepare a poultice with a mortar and pestle. He applies it to her forehead and makes her swallow a foul-smelling brew. He will say he is giving her a herbal remedy for pain, but actually gives her a powerful hallucinogenic, trying to share his visions with her. This will send her into a more troubled deep sleep which will keep her in her coma as she walks in dreams. The PCs are given more of the herbs to give her over the course of the journey. If anyone takes them, they will be taken to **The Glass Lake Dream Event**



## Consequences

**ELENA & THE CHILD** - If Ada treats Elena, he will also mark her wagon. He is troubled by her but as yet doesn't know why. He will have to think and find answers in dreams. Elena carries a child that has the rare genetics of a dead race known as the Denisovan that used to live in the Altai mountains of her home in Russia. See the Baclanovas Cast & Extras entry for more information on the Denisovan and their role within Fever.



**MARKING WAGONS** - If invited into the camp and allowed to move freely among the wagon party, Ada will single out people who have treated him well. He feels they have earned the Snake Devil's favour, that they have potential. He will mark their wagons with ritual symbols (friend). These wagons will be less likely to attract snakes (4).

He will also mark the Baclanovas' wagon, as he is unsure about Elena and the child.

**KEEPERS NOTE:** *Elena and the child are important to future events in the following chapters, however are replaceable, try not to let them die, but do not give them plot armour. If it is inevitable, let it happen.*

**FINDING THEM UNWORTHY** - If the PCs act in an aggressive or uncivil manner, Ada will give up on them. They will have to fend for themselves and regain his trust should they try to seek his help.

If Ada is angered within the camp, the wagons will be hit by a sandstorm and Ada will be gone. The desert will become more openly hostile as Ada's mood stirs it up. He might even mark a PC or NPC for the special attention of snakes, or his crow, and a ritual symbol (Foe) will be drawn onto the wagon, or an item of that person.

**ADA'S PARTING WORDS:** "YOU ARE A SPECIES WITH AMNESIA, WHITE BROTHERS. YOU WALK WITH THE CREATIONS OF THE UNKNOWNABLE ABOUT YOU. YOU STUMBLE LIKE A CHILD IN A PIT OF SLEEPING VIPERS WITHOUT THE NOTION OF VENOM. TREAD WITH CARE."



### Rewards & Information

(1) Ada's crow scouted the party coming into the basin as he performed the ritual described in the Ashes Story Event. He is now checking out the newcomers for himself. Ada looks for allies where he can and this new party might help. However, he is stoic, mad, and unsure of the newcomers. He will show them dreams and see who is willing and worthy rather than asking outright. Few will understand, much like his own people. They must be shown and tested.

Ada has several tonics and hallucinogens on him. He uses these to enter a dream state to learn about the future and talk to what he calls spirits. He'll give the PCs a ceramic pot with a paste inside it if he considers these people worth saving (**Handout 1**). Ada tells them to use it if they seek his council by smearing it under their eyes before sleep. This gives them the chance to understand the struggle for the soul of the Paiutes and see for themselves the destruction they bring. If any use this they will be taken to **Heavy Heart** Dream Event

(2) Ada can tell the PCs about the Paiutes in the area. He will explain that while some are hostile, others won't be and to watch for men with black painted hands. They are not to be trusted.

**KEEPER'S NOTES:** *This is a warning about Yadooe Tso'apa and the Devoted.*

3) Ada knows both locations are dangerous; however, he wants the PCs to see for themselves what is happening and choose a side. At the **Cave of Dreams**, they can discover more about the Snake Devil and be judged, or even adopted, into the cult, knowingly or not. At the **Old Springs** Story Event, they will run head long into Yadooe Tso'apa. There they will learn about and can even aid the Seed of the Mother and the Devoted instead.

(4) If the PCs can figure out any of the ritual circles left by Ada or if anyone sees him draw them, they can learn the warding and attraction spells by trying to memorise the ritual and studying the circles.



# Ashes



## Setting the Scene

The air is thick with acrid, choking smoke; its bitter taste vies for dominance with the pungent, gagging smell of offal that's been left in the sun to rot. The parched desert sands have greedily drank the spilt blood, leaving the ground mottled with black blotches. Carrion birds lift into the air as you approach the carnage. They circle lazily in the smoke-blemished sky waiting to finish their meals, leaving only the flies, thick as rain, to angrily defend the dead.

Four wagons sit in a semi circle facing the river. One of them is overturned and scorched from the heat of its charred neighbours. The radiating warmth can still be felt from the smouldering skeletons of the burnt out wagons. Supply boxes have been hacked open, their contents of clothing, bedding and belongings litter the camp, many are caught up in the sage brush, blown about by the winds (1). Three bodies can be seen at first glance; two are on the ground along with several dead livestock, and the last is slumped near a campfire. One curious lone crow still sits on a charred mule, occasionally pecking at its glassy dead eye; it watches you with curiosity.



## Scene Objectives

**PLAYER GOALS** – Investigate the site, find out what happened, and learn where the attackers went.

**KEEPER GOALS** – Infuse a sense of trapped isolation; this is a glimpse of the party's possible future. No one is coming to save them.

**NPC DIRECTION** - Depending on who travels to the site, they will call for organised efforts to bury the dead; Joe will actively look about the camp, If present Isaac Wicks stares at the scene in silent fascination; Mrs Wicks will pass it off as shock.



## Triggered Event: Ada's Crow

The crow is a scrawny bird with several greyed feathers. If the group interacts with it will react at a basic level, taking food from them, cawing at them, or allow them to pet it. This is Ada's crow and he can see what it sees, it was the crow in the sky during the **Division** Story Event. If they try to kill it, let them, and briefly show its true form(2). The crow is a spirit and a trickster. Have it cause occasional mishaps and misery to your chosen victim. It caws mockingly each time their failure amuses it and picks on anyone that tried to kill it.

The crow is an observer from here on out, following the group. If a PC tries to talk to it and befriend it, or if a player has any native knowledge about spirits they can glean information from it. The Keeper should use the crow to drip feed missed information over the game in obscure ways, or have it look into the PCs backstory, looking to find out if they are worthy of the Serpent's mantle, or just to dig up their past and cause misery for the crow's own amusement.



## Triggered Event: Dead Seed

if the PCs search or inspect the corpse near the fire.

The poor man sits with his back against a box. Crude lines are scraped into the dirt about the corpse and nearby fire. The lines swim in your mind as you try to focus on them for too long (**Handout 2**). The man's face is twisted in agony, and there are rough stitches across his stomach that hold a long, grisly wound loosely shut. His intestines poke out; from what you can see through the throng of flies; they have been charred black (3). SAN Check 1/d3.

This man is Russ Newton. He was left for dead after the raid on the camp, after which he was found by Ese Ada. Judging him to be a good candidate to receive the Seed of the Serpent, Ada began the ritual; however, the man died during the placement of the Seed Stone within him. The candidate is required to live through the experience to become an incubator for the Seed as it grows within them.

**KEEPER NOTES:** See *The Seed of the Serpent in Casts and Extras* for details on the seeds and the seed bearers.



## Triggered Event: The Charred Girl

A girl who was badly burned in the attack hides in the wreck of the upturned wagon to escape the fate of the other travellers.

She is terrified and unhinged after witnessing their capture, and then her father's torture at Ada's hands as he performed the ritual. She will attack anyone who goes near her hiding place and starts to search. She is armed with a bowie knife and won't back down. Screaming in pain and terror at anyone that gets close she will try to run at a sprint into the desert (north) after her initial attack. This could lead to a chase which will lead to the **The Wounded Tree** Story Event or at least it will be seen in the distance holding their gaze. SAN Check o/i for her hideous wounds

**READ OUT THE FOLLOWING IF ARE CLOSE ENOUGH TO SEE:** On the horizon a large, gnarled tree sits alone. You feel the pit of your

stomach lurch just looking at it.

If subdued, the girl will shut down and not answer questions. However, she should open up to anyone compassionate enough (4).



#### TRACKING THE ATTACKERS -

- A group of humans on foot headed north. This will lead to **The Wounded Tree** Story Event.
- There is one set of wagon tracks heading south. The PCs will not know who is on it unless the charred girl (Rebecca) tells them that the rest of the families were taken that way. Hundreds of other tracks mingle with this track as it crosses the main route, making it impossible to follow further. If they scout down the route they will find that a single wagon turns off into the sink, which will lead to **The Dig** Story Event (or if they are extremely lucky find the **Old Spring** Story Event)
- There is a single human track which is easy to miss heading the direction they just came from. If any want to go back for Ada he will lead them on a wild goose chase ending at the **Cave of Dreams** Story Event.

**VOTING** - Kingsley will call for a vote on how to handle the situation. He wants to track those responsible down. Have the PCs state their ideas. All the NPCs will want different things which will depend heavily on what information is recovered at the scene. Hold a committee for a vote on how the players want to proceed. If the PCs can sway the NPCs or get Kingsley's favour, they will lead the group where they wish. If not, choose how to proceed.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *Use this discussion as a distraction if the charred girl wasn't killed; have her grab a pistol from a player's belt. She screams she won't stay in this evil place, and shoots herself. If she is stopped, the players will have to take care of her and her wounds constantly. Her pain and fear overwhelm her; and she is heavily traumatised will actively seek to kill herself again if not watched carefully.*

**SCAVENGING** - Most of the useful supplies here have been taken however, the party can salvage the upturned wagon, if they cobble together enough scavenged parts.



#### Rewards & Information

(I) The following information can be discovered by investigating the site. Most of the people from the wagons are missing. Arrows suggest an attack by the natives, the fletchings are mottled black and white. The wagons seem to have been ransacked

for supplies, and there is not much left. There should be more pull teams and pack mules but most are gone, leaving only four dead that have been burned alive while still tied to the wagons. One of the dead men is a preacher, with a page from his bible in his mouth. If a player asks what the page is, give them **Handout 3**.


The PCs will also find the diary of Russ Newton, which addresses the rigmarole of life crossing the plains. A few entries about their days after entering the basin are more interesting. See **Handout 4** which shows its last entry.

(2) Read out following if the crow dies: The crow triples in size, perched with an awkward hunch and giving out a long, tuneless caw that pierces your very soul. Tendrils of ghostly snakes disgorge from its tooth-lined beak. It blurs out of reality. The experience takes a split second, and you are left unsure if it happened at all. The pieces of the crow you shot lay before you, dead. SAN Check 1/1d4.


(3) The Stone is about the size of an apple, pitch black and smooth like a pebble. When heated to a high temperature it becomes, translucent and the eagle eyed might see what looks like coiled wire within it. The stone will hold heat longer than it should and will set on fire any box/holder the PCs put it in if it's not quenched in water first to cool it. If the Stone is struck hard enough to crack open will shatter to dust.

(4) The Charred Girl's only answers are as follows:

- Her name is Becky Newton.
- She thinks some of her family and others were taken south on a wagon by savages.
- They were attacked two days ago.
- A day ago, an old man dragged her father to the campfire and re-lit it. He wasn't dead as she had thought. Rebecca will describe the ritual and the torture of her father. The old man drew in the dirt and put a hot stone into him and he wouldn't stop screaming. The old savage seemed annoyed at her father for dying and then left. She did not see in which direction.



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** In the next few days while scouting these tracks, Kingsley (the default) or another NPC needs to go missing to set up **The Standing Man** Story Event - Should you not wish to lose a wagon train member, you can use an unknown stranger. However it will have more impact if it's a member of the wagon train. Kingsley, or any stand in, will go missing in the desert only to be found by Ada after they are almost dead from dehydration. Ada will use them for the next ritual.





# The Wounded Tree



## Setting the Scene

A gnarled ancient tree sits on a raised mound; trunk torn open by a deep, black wound that runs up its peeling bark. Upon it, a woman is bound, and wearing the skull of a goat. Her pallid skin and the deep crimson marks of settled blood behind the tight ropes show that she has been here for some time (1). A rank, sweet stench drifts toward you as the winds change. The breeze disturbs a series of crude, hanging triangles fashioned from sticks and reed, they spin, knocking together gently in a soft disjointed chatter (2). Your mind swims and you feel groggy as you look to the black pit before the tree, the edge of the hole ringed in woven twigs. Its depths call to you with a soft voice (**Handout 5**). SAN Check 1d3/1d6

The pit is full of bodies and snakes like a charnel house (3).



## Scene Objectives

**PLAYER GOALS** - Investigate the ritual.

**KEEPER GOALS** - Introduce the idea of entering dreams, fevered visions, and raising the stakes.

**NPC DIRECTION** - None of the NPCs will be willing to go near the tree, they will want to be away from it. If any need to approach they will be lured the same as the PCs.



## Triggered Event: The Pit

Moving up to the tree, all PCs feel drawn toward the pit. The first to be compelled will walk up to the pit (opposed POW roll against the Dark Young's 90); their eyes will roll back into their skull and they will fall into its black depths. That PC will be taken to the **The Hanged Man** Dream Event. Once the dream scene ends the PC will hit the bottom of the pit (five feet down) and land on the dead bodies, surrounded by a torrent of flies. Witnesses will only see the PC fall into the pit, nothing else.

The longer they stay at the site and the closer they get to the pit, the harder it will be to resist its calling.



## Triggered Event: Staying too Long

If the PCs stay too long near the tree they will start to feel worse and worse until they pass out.

Read out the following if they still stay: You find yourself in a sea of ghostly forms, and feel their sorrow wash over you as they push past heading toward snow peaks in the distance. Three blazing suns rotate the hunger of a black void pulling them in around itself above your heads; spirals of gases from the suns are consumed by the waiting maw. You are pulled and pushed along with the sea of spirits as they march on to the mountains.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *This is the Spirit Road, the Dark Rift in the Milky Way, spirits travel it to enter the Underworld. This is a time for exploring PC's backgrounds, if they have dead loved ones or people who have recently died that are connected with them, including the Charred Girl, they will see them here. The PCs die if they aren't pulled away from the tree, travelling the road as a spirit into the underworld.*



## Consequences

**FAVOURED** - If a PC actively tries to get everyone to leave the tree and the ritual alone, they will carry favour with the Devoted; Mother Wanekia, their medicine woman, will know of it. If attempts are made to burn the tree, or destroy the High Place, then Ada's crow will notice and he will remember. Keep a note of it.

**ATTACKING THE TREE** - This tree is a slumbering Dark Young, as are all three of the trees. See Call of Cthulhu 7th edition, page 287. It will cast Wither Limb on anyone that does attack or meddle with it even from its hibernation.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *It is critical that no one finds this out just yet. That reveal is part of the finale during the second book Fever: With-ered but if it does somehow happen, it will be covered there.*

**STAYING ON THE SPIRIT ROAD** - If you don't wish the PC to die here, the Devoted will arrive. The party will be loaded onto a wagon and taken to **The Dig** Story Event. It will take some time for them to be taken there, presenting opportunity to escape, or be rescued.

If they live through the experience and tell their story back at the wagon train, Joe will tell them of the spirit road and the

Milky Way.

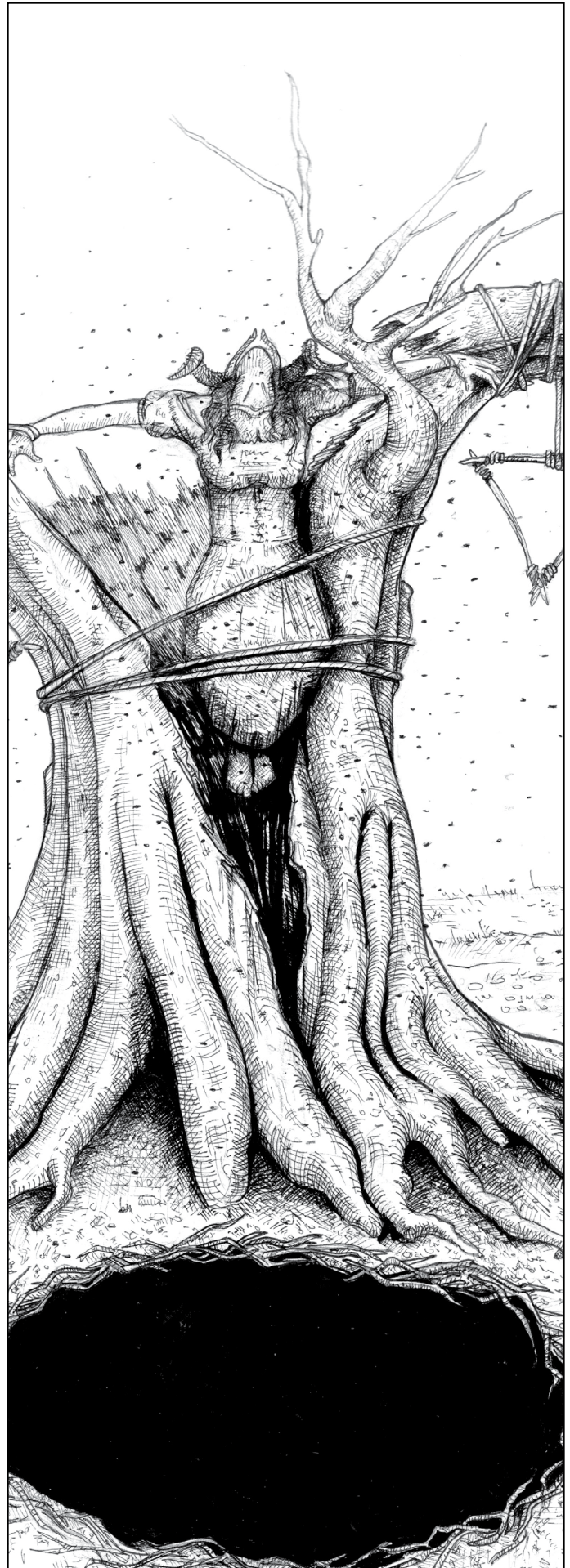
**THE DREAMER** - The PC that fell in (if any) will absently find themselves drawing triangles, each one precisely the same, in the dirt when they are thinking or absent minded. They have had their eyes opened to a truth about the world. When the PC is not involved in a conversation, describe to the player how they look down and see what they have drawn in the dirt at their feet without realising it.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *You may wish to give the player thanatophobia, fear of death, from their experience of falling into the pit. This phobia is often caused by traumatic experiences.*



#### Rewards & Information

- (1) Investigation of the bound body will reveal that it is a woman in her early 40s. Very close scrutiny will match the woman's likeness to that of the Charred Girl (Rebecca Newton). This is likely Rebecca's mother, with the same auburn hair and blue eyes. Her clothes are torn and dirty. The goat skull is attached with nails, and her feet are covered in puncture marks from snake bites.
- (2) Anyone with a good knowledge of the occult should know triangles are links to gateways, doors or "high places" as the bible would call them.
- (3) Deep footprints around the pit suggest dancing. All the prints move in the same direction, clockwise, apart from one set of prints, moving anti clockwise closer to the pit than the rest, on its own path. The bodies in the pit are all around the same age. All have been bitten by snakes on the feet; dead snakes lie among them, their heads dashed by rocks.



# Crossroads



## Setting the Scene

After some tracking, you find a small camp in a clearing of the sage brush. Two natives sit around a simple fire; they are stripping the bark off sticks, as a third butchers an ox. The butcher takes great care in each expert cut as he dismembers the poor beast. They seem content in their work, and have not seen you approach. They all wear deer-hide loincloths and leggings, their hair is long and braided and held in leather-bands (1). More oxen sit near the camp, grazing on the brush (2).

**APPROACHING HEAD ON:** The natives will see the group and act as if nothing is wrong. They will be eager to trade unless guns are drawn.

**SNEAKING UP:** There are other natives making a total of five. These two are foraging for plants nearby the camp and are low in the bushes. The group looks as if they have stopped to smoke meat. One of the men looks wounded with a leg in a makeshift splint (3).

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *The players might outright attack them, if so the Shoshone will fight back. Treat them as Devoted in terms of stats, however they would be using western weapons where the Devoted do not.*



## Scene Objectives

**Player Goals** – Gather information.

**KEEPER GOALS** - To make the PCs aware that there are two opposing factions within the Paiutes and that there are others in the area who are unaligned.

**NPC Direction** - If present: Joe is looking to get a better picture of the locals, the area, and any dangers. Some NPCs may assume these are the attackers from the burnt wagons, and will look to goad the PCs into doing the same.



## Triggered Event: Barter with the Shoshone

If PCs decide to just talk to the Shoshone, they will exchange information for rifles, metal, and clothing (4). They also have traditional medicine, Winterfat, that is made into a poultice for burns, and four-winged sage root for pain relief against insect bites. They will not give up the cattle; they are needed to survive

the winter. If the PCs intimidate them and use force they will give up (5), or if pushed too far will feel like they have no other option than to defend themselves. If the PCs didn't sneak up and open in a hostile fashion, the two Shoshone gathering plants will stay hidden.



## Triggered Event: Torture the Shoshone

The party might get the idea to torture the natives; this is not something many will be able to stomach. Let them go as far as they want and give up any information you feel they earned. Humanise the natives as desperate men with little left after the coming of the whites. They also will give up information and lies (6) depending on the methods and extremity of the torture.



## Consequences

**Good will** - If the PCs give gifts and treat the Shoshone fairly, the good will goes far, they will become more friendly as word spreads. They will not join with Yadoo Tso'apa in his plans to wipe out the whites.

**GUIDE** - One of the Shoshone may be convinced to act as a guide for a good amount of silver, or enough in metal and rifles. If so, he can lead them to these any of these locations:

**The Dig, Cave of Dreams, or Old Springs** Story Events. He can also teach them how to live in the desert if they wish, and knows the rituals to perform at the water sources.

**TORTURED NATIVES** - Someone will have to deal with the Shoshone after they are tortured, either letting them go or killing them. This task is not common for the group of settlers and they shouldn't jump to it. If the PC does, make them feel like a murderer. Others in the wagon will shun them if they witness these acts or find out about them. In the **Old Spring** Story Event, Yadoo Tso'apa asks who performed the torture, He will thank them for turning the Shoshone into allies. As word travels any other Shoshone will act against the wagon train.





## Rewards & Information

(1) If a PC knows about Native American cultures, they may notice these natives are dressed more like the plains people than those that live in the great basin area. These are Eastern Shoshone

(2) These oxen look like they were recently wearing yokes; they have scarring from pulling heavy loads, and bear brands of their owners. If asked about where they got the cattle they will say they found them wandering the desert, which is true. These are some of the oxen from the burnt camp (see the Ashes Story Event). They ran when the fighting started and were never rounded up.

(3) During the cattle round up, one knocked him over and he broke his leg.

(4) The following answers can be bought from the Shoshone under various circumstances.

### ANSWERS ABOUT THE PAIUTES, ESE ADA & YADOOE TSO'APA

- The Northern Paiutes are in embroiled in a civil war after Ese Ada was cast out for not believing in Yadooe Tso'apa's visions.
- The Paiutes are scared; the desert has become a place of bad spirits. Most are heading back to Pyramid Lake for the winter.
- Ese Ada has taken to personally punishing the Paiutes for turning their backs on tradition. He is a strong shaman and his loss has caused a fracture with the tribes. He was well liked.
- Mother Wanekia is now backing Tso'apa to stop the invasion. She is not to be meddled with, she is a mean-spirited woman. She has been seen travelling with two white men in the east of the basin. ( These are Salt and Valentine near the old spring.)
- If asked about where to get water, the Shoshone will give the location of Ada's camp at the **Cave of Dreams** Story Event.

### ANSWERS ABOUT THE SHOSHONE

- They are neutral for now. They have been left alone but they have no love for the newcomers.
- They trade with Ragtown, which is run by a man called Bailey.
- They found oxen wandering the desert and see them as theirs now.
- They stopped because one of the oxen died, and they decided to butcher it rather than waste the meat.

(5) THESE ANSWERS ARE AVAILABLE IF THE PCs THREATEN THE SHOSHONE AND LOOK LIKE THEY WILL ATTACK.

- Yadooe Tso'apa and Ada fell out over visions of the future. The Paiutes now hunt the old man as he is seen as dangerous, but neither is to be trusted.
- Ada is always surrounded by snakes; he worships them.
- They saw bound immigrants on a wagon heading south toward Yadooe Tso'apa. This may lead to **The Dig** Story Event.
- Yadooe Tso'apa has turned the people to worshipping an old deity from their past.
- They curse Ada and will blame him for the scene at **The Wounded Tree** Story Event, but they are unsure who is responsible and are only guessing.

(6) These answers (and lies) are available if the PCs torture the Shoshone. They will lie and confess to anything they can for the pain to end. Feed as many red herrings as possible to the players and add the following.

- They were the ones who attacked the burnt wagons (Lie)
- Ese Ada will command Abominations in the Sands to eat them (True)
- Yadooe Tso'apa will kill them all if the PCs continue the torture (Lie)
- Ragtown is gone, everyone is dead (Lie)
- The locations of water and great treasures (**Cave of Dreams** and **Old Spring** Story Events). (True)
- How to communicate with the other natives with mirror signals. (True) This could open up some interesting improvisation and could lead them to sites they otherwise may miss.
- The PCs can take anything the natives have on them including clubs, rifles, bows, knives, a mirror, rations and water skins, six cattle, and smoked meat.



# Cave of Dreams



## Setting the Scene

Low in a crevice wall, a long stretch of blackness greets you like a wolfish grin. The cavern mouth is all-consuming and you cannot see anything within. Listening closely to the dark, the only thing to be heard is the periodic sigh of cool air, causing goosebumps to rise on your skin. The entrance is only four feet high and you would need to crawl through the squeeze to reach the void beyond.

There are several entrances to the cavern, however, only this one will allow access for a human other than one that is directly over Ada's nook which they can find if they search the area before going in. **Use Map 4 & 5: Cave of Dreams** to navigate the caverns.

Places of water are held in high regard by the desert-dwelling natives, who make offerings to, and ask permission of the spirits before water is taken. This place is given over to the Snake Devil and it is where Ada came to have his vision and make the pact. The cave is filled with snakes, both poisonous and non-poisonous. See *The Spawn and Children of Yig* in *Cast and Extras*.

The central chamber is pitch black. Their own echoes are disorienting. They might have to follow the breeze to find Ada's Nook. If the PCs aren't careful they could always end back in the cave entrance after getting lost.

ON ENTERING THE CAVES READ THE FOLLOWING; Crawling through the tight entrance the cave finally opens up allowing you to stand. You smell and feel the thick coat of guano that covers the cave floor (1). The walls are cool to the touch and you can trace with your fingertips faint markings carved into the surface (2). Exploring further into the caves you find more petroglyphs within shallow alcoves with baskets of withered food. These forgotten shrines sit like gravestones to a long abandoned faith (**Handout 6**). One new basket sits apart on a ledge filled with splintered wagon boards, re-purposed as torches waiting to be used.



## Scene Objectives

**PLAYER GOALS** — Gain access to fresh water or find Ada and victims of the Ashes Story Event (if the PCs believe they were taken by him and chased him here).

**KEEPER GOALS** — Introduce the snake mythos and give some answers to what Ese Ada is doing in the desert.

**NPC DIRECTION** - A couple of the wagon party members will help carry water from the cave if asked, however most will make camp and wait for the PCs' return, guarding the wagons and livestock. If left outside, Joe will find Ada's Nook through the hole in the roof. This is where the PCs can escape and haul up barrels if they don't want to take them back through the caves.



## Triggered Event: Reaching the Ancient Lake

The lake stretches out in front of you like a sheet of black glass, that has been left here undisturbed for eons (3). The approach to the water is inscribed with ancient petroglyphs worn by the passage of people going to kneel at the water edge (4); depictions of worship extend over every surface across the rock walls. The area is littered with pieces of woven reed baskets, only a few sit stacked, pristine and empty, near a set of natural steps that lead up a narrow ledge.

The lake is teeming with the Spawn of Yig (5). If the PCs pay attention, give offerings and ask permission they will be allowed to take to the water without incident. A Spawn might even take the offering, showing itself but not attacking. If they do not give an offering, let them take some of what they want and then have one Spawn pull an offending PC into the lake. If anyone has played **The Glass Lake** Dream Event this place will be a terrifying reminder of that dream. SAN Check 0/1

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *The attack should start with two or three Spawn of Yig. Escalate, if warranted, for balance or drama, even having the Spawn chase the party into Ada's nook or back through the caves.*



## Triggered Event: Ada's Nook

If anyone scouts the ground above the entrance to the cave they can stumble upon the hole into Ada's nook. It is open to the air and a fire pit sits under the hole.

Ada's nook is lit from above by a four-foot-wide shaft leading up to the surface, 20 feet above. The chamber is cluttered with rough clay bowls with filled coloured pastes and bottles of liquids. The walls of the chamber are covered in paintings of nonsense creatures and ugly patterns (**Handout 7**). There is a sense of unease while looking at them and yet they still draw the eye, making anyone in the chamber feel ill. In the centre of the space, directly under the opening, a fire is placed and is still burning; on it is a large pot full of a foul smelling brew (6).





## Consequences

**BEING BITTEN** - Should a bitten PC survive, they will be taken to the Rhythm in Death Dream Event when they next sleep.

**KILLING A SNAKE** - Killing a snake in this place is very bad news and will mark you for the attentions of the Snake Devil.

He will torment and take the offender to the edge of their sanity before pushing them over it. Snakes will plague them, the PC will feel a constant threat of being bitten, animals near them will die, and eventually, this will all result in their own madness, or death unless they appease the Snake Devil. If the person that has killed a snake enters a dream they will be taken to the **Heavy Heart** Dream Event for judgement.

**MAKING AN OFFERING** - Depending on the offering, the results will differ at your discretion. However, anyone that follows the rituals and respects the Snake Devil and his children will be favoured by Yig. Make a note of it. Snakes will be more passive near them or even defend the PC against the Devoted.



## Rewards & Information

(1) Any loud noise will send the bats swarming out over the players. This could cause problems and sanity loss in the darkness as they try to perform other tasks.

(2) Most of the petroglyphs are scenes of people giving offerings to spirits, the hunting of animals, and harvesting seeds mingled along with random geometric shapes.

(3) Anyone with knowledge of geology can determine that this is fossil water; water that was deposited millennia ago and usually under climatic change or cataclysms. It has been sealed and stored underground since that time.

(4) These carvings and etchings in the rock depict scenes of worship; snakes feature heavily in the images. If any PC has knowledge in astronomy they can make out major star groups, in particular the Draco constellation. Any PC with anthropology or a similar education might be able to tell an offering of food is being given to the constellation.

(5) Few among the PCs will know what these are however if they have a Shoshone guide with them they will tell them the following information:

They have heard rumours about the things in the cave. They are the Spawn of cursed people paying a parents debt in servitude to the Snake Devil for angering him.

Anyone that kills snakes; they will have to pay tribute in blood and then hope for his mercy. Each year at harvest the snakes are agitated and require tributes to quell them.

Charms can be made as well to ward them off, and drums may keep them at bay.

(6) There are enough ingredients stored here for anyone with knowledge of botany or medicine to make an educated guess that the brews are hallucinogens of various types. They can match the tonic given to them by Ada, if they acquired it, to the brew that is on the fire (Ayahuasca). If anyone drinks the brew read the following:

The pit of your stomach lurches, as crippling pains force you to the floor, and your mind mingles the colours in the room into new writhing shapes.

**READ OUT THE FOLLOWING:** as the PC glimpses a possible future. Before you, a great ziggurat stands, its steps lined with worshippers. They kneel and chant, thousands of voices come together like a low whispered reverence. Tribute bearers lead the sacrifices up to the waiting priests that line the top platform, and one by one the animals have their throats slashed open, letting the blood run freely back down the steps. The bodies are dragged into the central temple where you know the Snake Devil waits to receive the offerings. The tributes never stop, night and day, animals, humans, and harvests are taken up the steps and enter the temple, the Great Yig cannot be sated.





# The Standing Man



## Setting the Scene

On the horizon, a single man stands against the bleak expanse, the heat haze from the desert warps his figure into an ethereal thing. He does not move but stands as if waiting for you.

If they keep going, read the following, replacing Kingsley if you choose another.

As you draw closer, you think you recognise Captain Kingsley. The scorching heat beats down on him, but he stands unmoving. His skin is an angry blistered red, his attire is ragged and grey with desert dust. With closed eyes, he seems to be mouthing soundless words as you stop in front of him. Anyone that can read lips will be able to make him out (1).

**KEEPER NOTES:** *Kingsley is transitioning into a Seed Bearer, becoming fully formed in a day or two. His shirt hides the crude stitches of the ritual; unless he is inspected closely the party will not see it. For all intents and purposes he looks like a man that has been walking aimlessly in the desert and is about to pass out and die of heat stroke. Kingsley is slow and confused. He can talk a little and will respond to some questions however will answer slowly and incoherently.*



## Scene Objectives

**PLAYER GOALS** – Help or deal with Kingsley

**KEEPER GOALS** – To introduce the Seeds and what they do, showing the process of their growth.

**NPC DIRECTION** - If the PCs do not act, Mr and Mrs Hamilton will move to help him, giving water and shade from the heat. Joe will take his failure to protect the young man hard, and will look out for his best interests and survival.



## Triggered Event: Help for Kingsley

The Captain is a mess of emotions. Anger and fear rule him as he comes to terms with what happened. When asked what is wrong, and he has had sometime to recover, he'll keep repeating 'Get it out' 'Get it out'... and show the stitches. He will fly into a terrified fury, screaming at anyone to help him. If they react too slowly (or without care) he will eventually attack them in a crying rage until he's subdued.

If the PCs open him up, they will see that the seed been has seared into his innards and is now entangled in his guts with a

network of nerves. The Seed is now the size as a man's heart but dull black slick in mucus. It should be clear cutting it out will tear up his guts. Only a top surgeon could do it with any hope of him not dying or without taking out 12 feet of intestine with it.



## Triggered Event: Killing Kingsley

Trying to kill Kingsley will go badly. He is far more resilient than a normal human. He will shrug off damage and will need a killing blow to put him down for good. Where he has only just started his transformation SEE THE SEED OF THE SERPENT IN THE CASTS AND EXTRA for information as he grows into a full Seed Bearer over the next few days. Until then half impaling damage against him.



## Consequences

**EXILE** - If the PCs leave Kingsley in the desert, have him follow them. He appears and disappears from the horizon behind them just standing there. If they go to him you can repeat The Standing man Story Event with a more aggressive Kingsley in a more advanced stage of the process, bloating and becoming translucent.

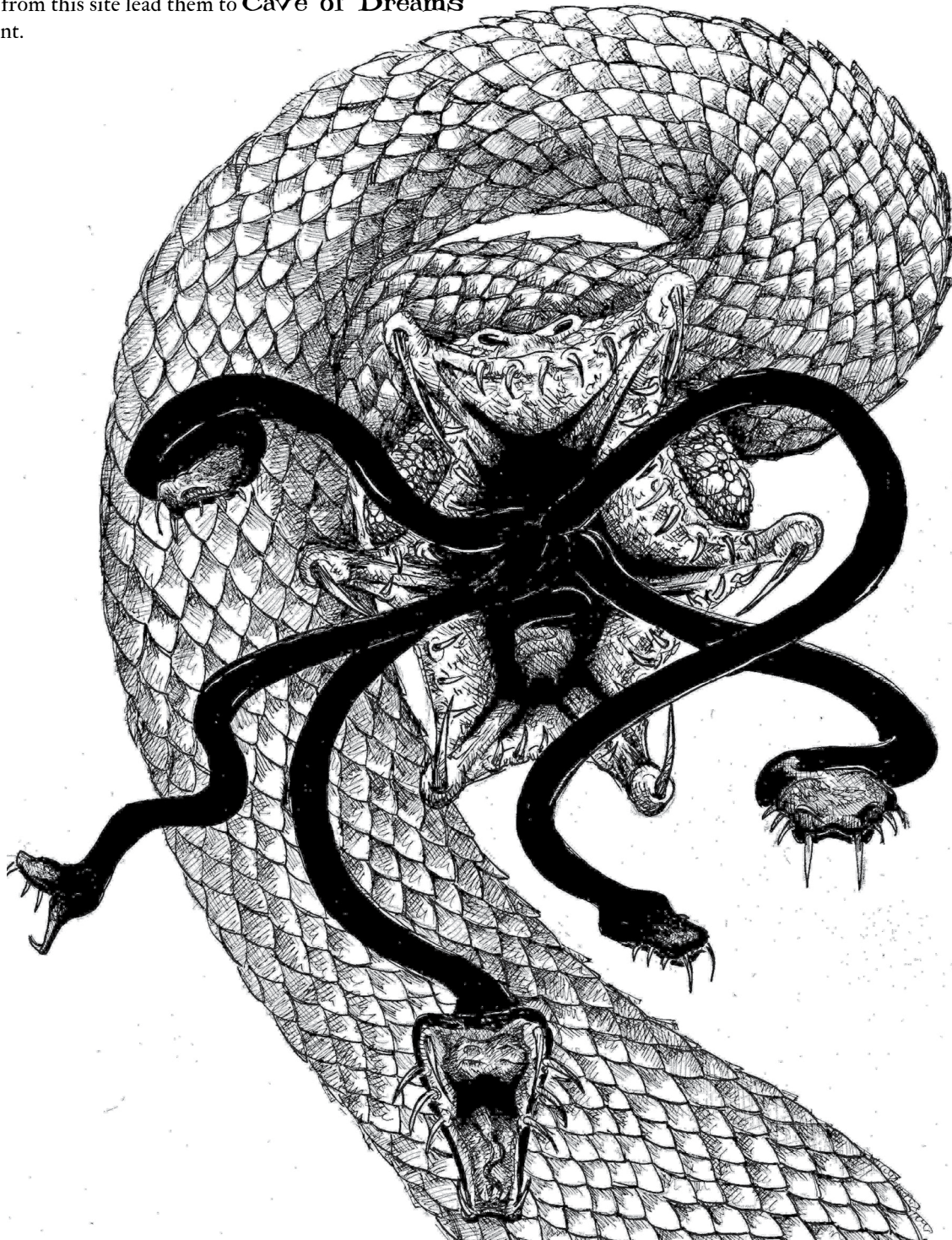
**REMOVING THE SEED** - If the PCs manage to remove the seed through surgery Kingsley will recover, This is unlikely and he will probably die with the attempt. Just holding him down will take four men. Dust and sand will blow into the open wound and cause infection. Constant care and water will be needed to save him. This should be a horrific scene of blood, misery, and hopelessness.

**NURSING** - If the PCs choose to nurse him until they can find a doctor at Ragtown (there isn't a doctor there, only a dentist), Joe's preferred choice, Kingsley will grow larger every few hours. He cries for water all the time, but is not able to keep it down. He will crave food at night and scavenge what he can, going as far as eating the dead carcasses in the desert if he can do so unnoticed. He's confused and shamed by the act until his mind starts to fail him, and finally his body will too as the parasite eats him from within (SEE THE SEED OF THE SERPENT IN THE CASTS AND EXTRA).



## Rewards & Information

(1) Kingsley got lost in the desert and almost died of dehydration before the crow found him, and then later the old man came. The old man performed the seed ritual on him and cut open his belly, inserted the red hot seed and sewed him up. Telling Kingsley that he would “become the Snake’s wrath”. If the PCs find tracks they will find the site. The same ritual marks can be seen here as at Ashes Story Event. If they can track Ada from this site lead them to **Cave of Dreams** Story Event.





# Old Springs



## Setting the Scene

The ground here is composed of mud and silt, deposited over thousands of years as seasonal waters carried it into the basin. With every step, your feet crack open the dusty crust and sink into the sucking mud beneath. The landscape is peppered with sagebrush and huge, slab like crag stones poke through the surface, like icebergs in a calm sea.

After some searching, you come to a narrow crevasse that leads you down through the crag stones. It opens up into a gully that bisects a range of low hills. Following the path, you find old petroglyphs adorning several rock faces (1). Some look very old and have faded with the passing of time, however some look recent. Several generations have used this place as a revered source of life in this bleak landscape, and offerings of pine nuts and berries lay scattered in the passage to a small dam at the back of the gully. The dam has been built across a back wall, and weak cascades of water trickle down out of the stone wall into the collection pool. More petroglyphs of humans hunting and offering food to spirits appear on virtually every stone surface, giving the place an uncanny eeriness that puts you on edge. Along this ancient site, signs of an archaeological dig can be seen; Some areas have been cleared out and dug into, and one such area opens into a cave down neatly dug steps.

The pool is shallow, but fifteen feet across; the water is crystal clear, and the images carved into the bottom of the pool twist and turn as the surface moves (2).



## Scene Objectives

**PLAYER GOALS** - Acquire water from the spring, and get away alive.

**KEEPER GOALS** - Hint at answers to what the Devoted are up to in the desert. Connecting the Denisovan to the Devoted.



## Triggered Event: Loud Noises

If the PCs make any loud noise, they will attract attention. A Devoted in the area will come to watch them from the top of the gully. A full attack by a dozen Devoted will occur if they try to kill him but don't manage to take him down quickly and quietly. Mounted braves will ride them down if they run. They will be rounded up and presented at the hidden camp. See **Ghost Dance** Story Event



## Triggered Event: Entering the Caves

You find yourself in a series of 3 oval chambers, each about 12 feet in length. The first few are empty but for the white strings of fungus that creep up the sides of the damp mud walls. The last chamber however holds an ancient burial site. A body lies in a recently opened stone lined pit. The mummified remains of an eight-foot-tall humanoid is swaddled in decorated reed mats. They have been ravaged by the wet conditions and fungus. The mummy has bright red hair and the pale blue of polished beryl gemstones sits over each sunken eye (3). The walls of the chamber are made of packed mud and covered in symbols and geometry, all ruined by seeping water that leaks into the cave (4).

Amongst the debris from the dig two satchels sit bulging with what looks like digging tools they are soaking wet and those too are covered in thin strings of white strands of mycelium fungus. (5)



## Triggered Event: Searching the Area

If the group is not diligent, they will miss the fact there is a campsite hidden nearby above the gully in the hills. This is Yadooe Tso'apa's camp. There are many braves here, more than the group can handle. If they search carefully they will spot rope ladders and a simple pulley system, used to hoist water up the side of the gully, indicating that there is something up there. If any PCs decide to climb up, this will lead right into **Ghost Dance** Story Event.



## Consequences

**GETTING CAUGHT OR SURRENDERING** - This will result in the PCs being interrogated by Yadooe Tso'apa and Mother Wanekia.

They will have to work hard to be accepted by the Devoted, but if they are, they will be taken to their camp and the **Ghost Dance** Story Event. Those that make a bad impression will be bound and put on wagons. This will lead to the group being split up by age. The able bodied will be sent to **The Dig Site** Story Event. Wounded adults will go north to **The Wounded Tree** Story Event and the old sent to the **The Prophet's Tree** Story Event. The wagons and supplies will be divided up between the braves, to be burnt during the the **Ghost Dance** Story Event.



**DRAWING A DEVOTED TO WATCH** - If the PC make enough noise to draw a watcher and do not spot him, he will follow them back to the wagons and try and to sabotage their water supplies and shoot poison arrows at the pull teams.

**TAKING WATER** - There is enough water in the spring for three barrels to be filled. The water is clean at the dam.

**THEFT OF BURIAL ITEMS** - Taking any of the jewels or relics from the site will sour relations with the Devoted.



#### Rewards & Information

(1) Most of the petroglyphs are scenes of people giving offerings to spirits, and the hunting of animals, however many have been vandalised. Images of snakes have had their heads chiselled out, and the animals that are freshly carved are ill-looking and badly deformed. Any PC with Anthropology or similar education might be able to tell, after some time, that an offering of food must be given to the spirits to take the water.

(2) The images of three star constellations swirl and turn about a carving of a large dark circle at the bottom of the pool. The constellations are Cygnus, Aquila, & Lyra (**Handout 8**).

(3) Any PC who has knowledge of Native American myths will know that they often speak of giants that were wiped out by the Natives. If they spoke to Ada about the giant myths they may know they are called the Si-Te-Cah to his people.

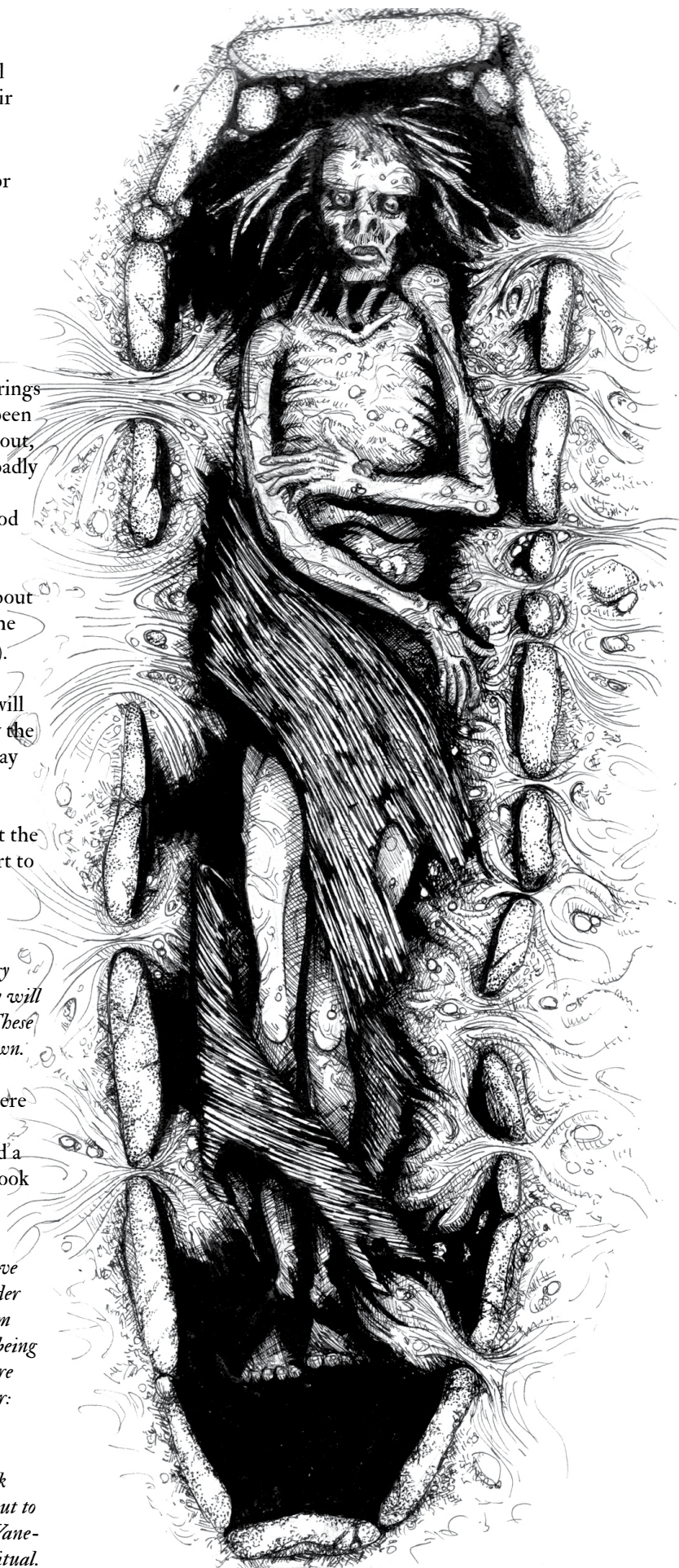
(4) A PC with Archaeology or Geology will understand that the opening of the crypt has caused the water to leak in and start to destroy the finds.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *If anyone licks, ingests, or lets open wounds touch the water in the crypt, they will feel their mind become foggy and their actions slow as it affects them. If they keep doing it, they will start to go mad and hallucinate, seeing others as strange giants. These is the memories of the mycelium fungus blending with the PC's own.*

(5) The bag contains mostly trowels, picks and brushes. There are several stone samples in a wooden box labelled "Xenolith" that is thick with fungal strands, the stones are wet and a reddish hue flecked with black, there is also damaged notebook (**Handout 9**).

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *The Xenoliths samples are granite that have enveloped older rock when it was lava and formed around the older stone. These black flecks of older stone contain an ancient mycelium fungus. The stones have been here for almost 13,000 years, after being washed into the desert from the mountains after a cataclysm. More information about these stones will be revealed in Book 2 - Fever: Withered.*

*this is the epicentre for the Devoted being able to discover and talk with the spirits of the dead; the samples of the Xenolith reached out to the remains of the Denisovan. The spirit now advises Mother Wane-kia, telling her many of their secrets to their ways in magic and ritual.*





# Ghost Dance



## Setting the Scene

The camp is composed of several hut-like structures made of dried foliage laid over low, domed wooden frames. Simple wind screens are dug into the ground to protect workers, who are busy creating what look like baskets out of large piles of willow and leather. Lazy trails of smoke exit a couple of huts from their centres, filling the air with the smell of smouldering pine.

There are several men in the camp and a couple more tending a dozen horses off to the south (1). The men are all dressed in various forms of scant clothing made from rabbit skin and little else, their exposed skin marked with black-painted hand prints. An old woman sits in front of a large flat rock, grinding charcoal against it with a smooth rounded stone (2).

**KEEPER'S NOTE** - *If the players stay in camp due to being captured, spying, or being invited to join them, continue on to the night ritual below - The Ghost Dance.*

As the sun starts to set, and the stars appear, the mood in the camp changes. Drums strike up a low bass beat, steady and constant. The clearing in the middle of the camp becomes the focus of activity as braves prepare a fire and clear the path around it, lining the ground with freshly cut foliage. Some sort of ceremony is being prepared. The old woman pulls a large pot to the fire and sets to cook. Braves come forward and spit into it sporadically.

The drummers sit around the fire and the old Paiute woman starts to sing. The braves join her and throw objects into the fire (3). In the distant desert you hear other drums strike up, more and more join the deep beat of the desert's breath.

They sing, dance, eat, and chant around the fire.

Nuva Ka Ro'rani  
Nuva Ka Ro'rani  
Nuva Ka Ro'rani  
Nuva Ka Ro'rani  
Gos'pa'havi'ginu  
Gos'pa'havi'ginu (4)

Small ceramic bowls are passed around and the braves chew on the dried plant. (5)



## Scene Objectives

**PLAYER GOALS** - Observe and escape, or at least try to not die. There are a lot of chances for a wrong step here, and the PCs are quite likely at the mercy of the warband. However, keep in mind that the Paiutes would rather have able bodies to dig the monolithic stone out of the desert and to be given to the trees as sacrifices after that.

**KEEPER GOALS** - This scene can expose key information about what the Devoted are doing here in the basin, and possibly their conflict with Ese Ada and their rejection of the Snake Devil. It should be made quite clear that these are not average Paiutes.

**NPC DIRECTION** - The camp has no one on watch as they have no real enemies other than Ada, and he will not confront them openly. The NPCs in the camp should be alert to any new presence, but still go about their business. If the PCs approach the site openly, Mother Wanekia, or Tso'apa himself, will talk to them with a few other members on hand. If they find the PCs spying, however, they will instantly be on guard and act to overpower and detain them before questions are asked. The Devoted are openly hostile to whites and they will act with caution until they find out how many are in the area. Black or Asian PCs will have a much better chance of civil communication (historically, these groups were often used as negotiators with locals where there was a lot of friction). The Devoted have no fear of firearms as they are protected by the Ghost Paint.



## Triggered Event: Attacking the Camp

There are 24 Devoted in the camp and the old woman, Mother Wanekia. This includes Tso'apa if you wish; otherwise he will be found at the dig site, or with another war party. Those present are all accomplished warriors and this should be made very clear. They will only use traditional weapons, but are protected with Ghost Paint and carry drums across their backs (See YADOOE TSO'APA AND DEVOTED IN CAST AND EXTRAS). If the camp is attacked during the ceremony of the Ghost Dance, spirits will also join in the fight. Ethereal things will be pulled out of the sky and brought into being by Mother Wanekia. These will be braves, animals, or immigrants. The braves will also ignore pain, as they are under the influence of peyote.



## Triggered Event: Talking and Trading

Some players will want to trade and talk their way out of this. The braves are 100% committed to Yadooe Tso'apa and his visions. They will assess their chances of capturing the PCs without losses and even invite them into the camp to put the PCs at ease and disarm them. They will want to know the condition and location of their wagons and about any sightings of Ada (6). But ultimately, any PC that approaches them will be captured, or will have to offer up something of great value to walk away free.

If Tso'apa himself talks to the party and they are charming and humble before the Saviour, Tso'apa feels he can trust them. He is willing to gamble, letting them go free on the promise to convince the population of Ragtown to leave the Great Basin or undermine their leader Bailey's authority. Tso'apa also asks

them to look for two men that fled there, Salt and Valentine. They are to be handed over to the Devoted (7). In return, Tso'apa will allow the PCs to go unharmed into the mountains. He warns the PCs if they fail to do what he asks and he catches them, they will be skinned alive. Note that they have gained Yadoo Tso'apa's favour.



### Triggered Event: Consuming Peyote

Read the following - You are given a ceramic bowl with a cut-up plant that looks and feels like dried melon to eat. It tastes bitter, and makes you feel ill.

You begin to experience brightened colours and strange, repeating patterns of triangles that won't leave your vision even when you close your eyes. The braves partake in the dance and also eat the dried, button-shaped plant fibre. They dance. Drums sound louder. The night sky fills with stars looming closer than they have ever seemed and dominating your view. Your body feels like it swirls in the motion and in time to the din of the drums, you leave yourself, swirling into the sky. You see that the stars are really spectre like figures and you see them in minute detail. Settlers walk with braves, and even animals, all looking dead ahead to the mountain peaks (8).

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *Let the PCs interact with the spectres, who could even be people known to the PCs who have died during the campaign. You can create some good moments here that reflect on player choices and their pasts, or impart information that they missed. If a PC passes out or vomits (failing a CON roll), they are taken out of the scene and find themselves in the 'Dream Sequence'*

**Rhythm In Death Dream Event.**

*Call for a hard CON roll to keep the drug down over the course of the night's experience.*



### Consequences

**CAPTURE** - If the PCs are captured they are stripped of everything they have on them, bound, and put on the back of a wagon, then transported to **The Dig** Story Event. Their items will be burned on the pyre during the night.

**ESCAPE** - If they manage to convince the Devoted to let them go for some incredible reason, through roleplay or sheer luck, have them followed back to the wagons, if necessary leading to the **Snatched** Story Event.

**FIGHTING** - There is the possibility of the party all dying here. The Devoted are tough and experienced. If the PCs push it then this will be their last stand however the Devoted look to capture and not kill if possible. Capture leads to **The Dig** Story Event for the healthy survivors. The nearly dead will be put on wagons to **The Wounded Tree** (if adults) or **The Prophet's Tree** (if they are elderly) Story Events depending on age.



### Rewards & Information

(1) Players with knowledge of the locals will know that the structures are called wickiups, and that the lack of women and children suggests that this is not a community group, but instead most likely a hunting or war party. The PCs may also spot stolen goods from raids. On closer inspection the workers are making drums, not just baskets.

(2) The players might know that the paint markings are Ghost Paint, if they have been extremely lucky when talking to Ada or other Paiutes. The wearers believe this will make them bullet proof (See YADOOE TSO'APA AND DEVOTED IN CAST AND EXTRAS). Mother Wanekia is creating more Ghost Paint to reapply during the Ghost Dance. It's colour is black, made from crushed, charred bone and mixed with a binding agent of spit, animal fats, and wild grapes. This symbolises the person to be protected and the land that feeds them, the bone calling back and trapping the spirit into the paint.

(3) The objects thrown into the fire are all those of foreign cultures, not their own. They are cleansing themselves of outside influence and reaffirming their own culture and origins.

(4) If the PC knows the Paiute language, they will know the gist of what they are chanting:  
"Beneath the snow it lies there"  
"The road of the dead to the world of spirits lies there"  
If they asked about it they can find out more -  
"The stars shine down on the desert of the dead, a reflection of our spirit road (The Dark Rift). Those dead now move to the peak where they will cross from this world to the next."

(5) Once the dancing and the rhythm of the drums are established, the stars seem to all move toward the peaks of the Sierra mountains in a never-ending trail, outlined by the dark rift. With good knowledge of the Astronomy or similar, the PCs will notice the stars Deneb and Altair are throbbing with the beats of the drums and are not moving along with the other stars. It hurts to focus on them.

(6) If PCs allude to Ada, the trees, or the Seed Stone found at the **Ashes** Story Event, it will draw a lot of worried and angry questions from Tso'apa and Mother Wanekia about what they know. Paint Ada as a mad man and relate some of his story (found in ESE ADA & THE CROW IN CAST AND EXTRAS). They will tell the PC that they are hunting him and he still offers tribute to the Snake Devil.

(7) Salt and Valentine were working with the Devoted and helped uncover the ancient grave of what is thought to be an ancestor (see **Old Spring** Story Event). The Paiutes called these giants Si-Te-Cah. The two men stole from the graves they uncovered then fled.

(8) These are the spirits of the dead travelling the spirit road to the underworld, Wanekia is plucking off their path, using them to help the Devoted as Puha (local magic and faith) prescribes.



# Inatched



## Setting the Scene

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *This is a flexible scene that can be used as the Keeper sees fit to pull the PCs into many other scenes. It is a kidnapping that could devolve into a vicious fight if all else fails, or could go unnoticed completely by the players. This scene will not take place if the PCs are captured during the **Old Springs** Story Event and they side with Tso'apa. This scene could happen if the PCs leave the camp alone, and return to find the aftermath with the NPCs taken or killed. They will find the wounded enroute to **The Wounded Tree**, the old at **The Prophet's Tree**, and the able-bodied at **The Dig** Story Events if they choose to go after them.*

*This scene is very dependent on how the players set up their campsite and if there is a night watch. Deal with the watch first, then play out as below. Choose one PC to wake at a time. Let the PCs have a chance to hear the Devoted as they move about the camp.*

**READ OUT THE FOLLOWING:** You awake to the taste of sweat from a rough hand clamped heavily over your mouth and the hard, thin edge of a knife blade pressing down on your throat. Dark eyes glint in the dim moonlight as you look up into the face of a Paiute brave. He gestures for you to move silently and get out of your bedroll.

Outside the chilling night fogs your breath. You see others being herded into a small group, huddled on the back of a wagon sitting a little way off from the campsite. The group is bound and gagged. As you appear, one brave makes the wagon ready. Your captor shoves you into motion, gesturing for you to take a place on the back of the open top wagon with the other terrified immigrants. All else is still.



## Scene Objectives

**PLAYER GOALS** - Protect themselves and others and retain their supplies.

**KEEPER GOALS** - Double down on the threat of what happened at Ashes Story Event picking off some of the NPCs. The Devoted are making a quick raid to take more slaves for the dig sites.

**NPC DIRECTION** - Choose who you want to be on the wagon at the start of the scenario. This should include anyone on guard. Everybody else is sleeping.



## Triggered Event: Noises & The Braves

Each time an NPC or PC makes a sound, roll to see who wakes. Anyone who makes a loud noise will get hit hard on the head with the hilt of a knife. This will escalate until it is not worth the risk and kidnappers will move to kill the person. If you want to wake the PCs, all at once, have one of the attackers blunder into a stack of pots or a low-burning fire.

There are four braves - three in camp moving between the wagons and one on their wagon ready to move it quickly if necessary.

If they are attacked, the ones in the camp will fight and the one on the wagon will take who he has and flee. The braves will fight but withdraw to the darkness of the desert and take anyone they can with them, using them as human shields.



## Triggered Event: Waking up Kingsley

If the Devoted attack and Kingsley is being cared for, he will attack them without concern for his own safety. In fact, he will attack anyone after being woken (See **THE SEED OF THE SERPENT IN CAST AND EXTRAS**). He should be full grown Seed Bearer by this point and it will take a concerted effort to take him down as he rampages through the campsite. *See Cast Card for stats.*

Read following on Kingsley's death.

The bloated carcass of what was once your wagon captain writhes on the ground gasping, then grows still. Its mouth is pushed open as a long, pitch-black parasite uncoils from within and pushes itself free of the dead body. The cadaver's jaw and throat ruptures as the Parasite's body begins to widen and the thing whips and screams on the desert sands before starting to bury itself in the ground.



## Triggered Event: Attack in the Dunes

If the wagon train manages to stay off the main road and get to the dunes before the Paiutes find them, any loud prolonged noise, like a gun fight, will attract the Abomination (see **THE SEED OF THE SERPENT IN CAST AND EXTRAS**). Anyone who runs into the open desert will be pulled down into the sand and simply disappear. In the light of day, the remains of their crushed bones can be found. If the wagons flee to lose the Abomination, move directly to the **Sand Trap** Story Event.



## Consequences

**Heavy Sleeper** - It is possible for some to sleep right through the ordeal. If anyone does, have them shamed and start rumours that they are cowards, causing tension in the group. This guilt could cause the PCs or NPCs to act rashly, or heroically, where they wouldn't before. This is a good tool to pull backstory into play through redemption, overcoming personal problems, or creating new problems for the characters.

**DISTRACTION** - As the Devoted get to the edge of the camp, they will cut open a hostage and run, leaving them to bleed out to make their getaway. The PCs might be forced to choose between saving a life, or giving chase.

Make it clear that following the Devoted into the darkness is a truly bad idea. As the bows are silent, they will not betray the positions of the natives went fired and give them a huge advantage at night. However, if they do follow, play it out as a dramatic night chase.

**CAPTURED DEVOTED** - This is similar to the interrogation in the **Crossroads** Story Event and should be played as such. However they will give different answers (1). Devoted are zealous in their worship of Tso'apa and their new deity. They will not be broken easily. It will take going all the way to get anything meaningful out of them; however, they can be tricked into giving up information by clever questioning.



## Rewards & Information

(1) The braves will mock and spit at the questioner to answer most questions.

If mocked about being scared of snakes, they will tell of how the drums affect the snakes. The Devoted will keep looking around themselves and seem nervous about the desert dunes. If noticed this can lead the PCs to knowledge of the Abomination that lurks there.

If the PCs mock Tso'apa, the Devoted will tell them to go and meet the man himself and give up the location for Tso'apa's camp and the **Ghost Dance** Story Event.

The Devoted will spit and shout at the crow if they see it here and say Ese Ada can always see him. He knows...

Only if threatened with snakes, or with being given over to Ada, will any captured Devoted talk.

They will answer most questions about the Devoted and their worship, and will tell how Mother Wanekia makes them Ghost Paint, and bullets cannot harm them.

If torture the Devoted will give up the Trees locations **The Wounded Tree**, **The Prophet's Tree**, and **The Dig** Story Events. They don't know why they need the stones but do know miners in the mountains take them in exchange for supplies.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *The Xenolith and its purpose are explored in Book 2 - Fever: Withered and further on. It is however an ancient stone that made up part of a great monolithic site in the mountains. That was washed into the desert after the cataclysm 13,000 years ago.*



# The Dig



## Setting the Scene

A monolithic stone sits straddled by a makeshift wooden frame; Ropes tether the two together, holding the stone at a precarious angle from the bed of sand in which it sits like a toppling pillar caught in the act. The block of dull grey stone lies half-entombed in the earth, despite a five-foot trench that has been dug around its base. The dry, exposed stone surface is dusty and unremarkable, crossing over into a deep red hue as it meets the wet sand. Flecks of black stone are mottled through its crimson surface (1). A team of five immigrants (2) wedge wooden stakes underneath it, and dig with spades and picks to lever the mammoth stone out of the clutches of the sucking mud to be hoisted free by the frame. They are filthy and soaked through with sweat, and saline water pool and collect around their feet in the stinking mud.

Standing over the workers are a couple of idle natives. They wear rabbit-skin leggings and drums slung along their backs (3), their exposed skin covered in black hand prints, one sports several white hand prints on his chest. They seem to be directing the dig and push about any worker that stops for more than a few minutes, resorting to beating them if they refuse to move. On a small wagon some way off, a man lies unmoving, bleeding and broken. He broils in the sun. He may even be dead already.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** Yadooe Tso'apa is using the immigrants to dig up stones, and hauling them off in stolen wagons. These stones are given to the miners at the base of the foothills west of Ragtown. There have already been several stones dug up.



## Scene Objectives

**PLAYER GOALS** - Rescue the kidnapped immigrants and for themselves to escape, if they have been caught.

**KEEPER GOALS** - Show what the kidnapped settlers are being used for. This scene can also show Juvenile Abominations as one attacks, and how to use the drums.

**NPC DIRECTION** - The PCs will be thrown in the trench with the others to dig out the stone. The Devoted are not taking any attitude and will beat anyone who protests too hard or tries to act out, but otherwise they are relaxed, confident, and in control. They will be on watch for snakes. There are three Devoted and five workers

The NPC captives will be cowed and afraid of the Devoted, and will try not to draw attention to themselves. They often forget what they were talking about and become confused, going back to work when told to.



## Triggered Event: Hard Day's Work

If the PCs are brought here to work put them through a grueling day's work. If they falter, they will be beaten. Push the PCs to the brink as they work along with the other slaves. If they break, they will then be put on a wagon and taken to the appropriate tree. They can talk to the other diggers, but only if they avoid notice and are quiet about it (4). When the day's work is done and the sun goes down, they are tied to stakes that are driven into the ground. These can be pulled out but it should be very difficult to do so; a group effort should be the only way to escape. They will be given some water but no food.



## Triggered Event: Attracting the Abominations

If Nitro-glycerine, found on the wagon, is used and/or there are loud constant noises, this will in time attract a Juvenile Abomination. It will attack indiscriminately, going for noisy targets. The Devoted will use drumming to halt the attack if they can keep the beat up and correct; however, if the drumming stops it will redouble its attack with vengeance. If a PC can perform the same drumming, they can also hold it off. If they have done the **Rhythm in Death** Dream Event and successfully played the drum, then they will naturally know the beat instinctively but will still need to keep the beat steady.



## Consequences

**SAVING THE IMMIGRANTS** - If the PCs rescue the captives, they will be grateful and try to help where they can, but they are just more people that will tax the water and supplies of the wagon train. They will require wagons to carry them if they are to move faster than walking speed, and more than likely will slow the party down, having been mistreated as they were. Harold Sandor, if he survives, will ask for help to save his wife. If none is offered he will leave in search for her, and will never be seen again. Any captured Devoted will give up the same information as that found in **Snatched** Story Event.

**USING THE STONES** - If anyone puts part of the stone in their mouth or licks the excretion off their hands, they will be favoured by the Devoted. If they continue to do this they will lapse into a waking coma; they won't be able to move their body but will be able to feel and see.



**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *This will cause the death of the character, slowly. They will bloom fungal shoots, and the mycelium fungus will try to spread and reach out to other colonies. It will add the PCs knowledge to its own. More information about these stones will be revealed in Book 2 - Fever: Withered.*



## Rewards & Information

1) An oil like film shines off the wet stone as you look closer, spilling an ill-looking spectrum of colour over the hands of the people working in the trench. The sharp eyed will noticed that the oil film on the stones also clings to the workers' clothes. Any NPCs or PCs with wounds that the oil can soak into will feel the effects of the Stone.

**KEEPER NOTE:** *If anyone licks, ingests, or lets open wounds touch the oil, they will feel their mind become foggy and their actions slow as it affects them. If they keep doing it, they will start to go mad and hallucinate, seeing others as strange giants. This is the memories of the mycelium fungus blending with the PC's own.*

These monolithic slabs are Xenoliths, granite that has enveloped older rock when it was lava and formed around the older stone. These black flecks of older stone contain an ancient mycelium fungus. The stones have been here for almost 13,000 years, after being washed into the desert from the mountains after a cataclysm. More information about these stones will be revealed in *Book 2 - Fever: Withered*.

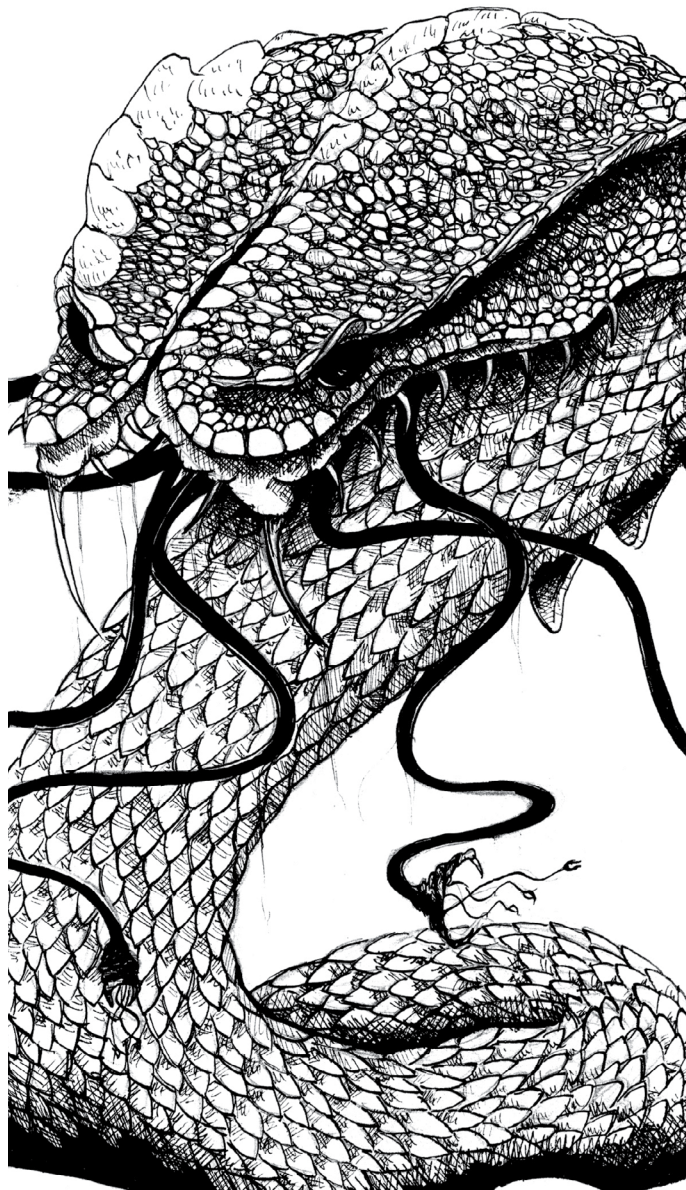
(2) There are four people here digging: Morag Harris, 35, a short stout woman with fiery red hair from Glasgow; Harold Sandor of Florida, 52, rake thin, with wisps of white hair haloling his bald burnt head; Theodore Wilson, 27, a nervous obese man with pinhole eyes from Boston; Maximillian, 41, dressed in the finest ruined clothes money could buy with slick black hair and a thin moustache, Maximillian speaks only German.

(3) The Devoted's drums are painted with strange symbols, if a PC examines them. The drums are used to drive off snakes and the Devoted take turns to drum continuously to hide their location from any of Ada's creatures. The drums have a hypnotic effect on them (See **THE SEED OF THE SERPENT CAST AND EXTRAS** for more information).

(4) If they are too loud or cause work to slow down they will be beaten, however the PCs can learn the following from their fellow diggers: Harold's wife, Maggie, recently got taken away, after developing sun stroke.

- Harold sports a black eye the guards gave him when he tried to stop her being taken. He will ask anyone he meets to help find her. She was taken to **The Prophet's Tree** Story Event and will be found inside the grotto.
- They have dug up two stones before this one, and have seen other groups like them being taken to other sites.

- They have been digging this stone out for two days.
- "Don't lick your hands!", the stone seems to have some sort of poisonous oil coming from it.
- "The Devoted are immortal! We saw one get shot and he just stood up again!" **KEEPER'S NOTE:** *This is a lie. The Ghost Paint saved him leaving him with only the white painted hands, see Cast & extras Tadooe Tso'apa and Devoted for more information.*
- If anyone can understand Maximillian, they will learn that he found a pistol in the discarded piles of barrels that litter the area. He has it wrapped in an oil rag and buried nearby. The gun is a Colt Walker, and holds 4 shots.
- The Devoted get nervous when using blasting oil to break up the stones which are too large and they play drums afterwards. The Nitro-glycerine bottles are in the wagon.
- They used the name Tso'apa for their leader.
- The man on the wagon was called Mr. Gordan. He tried to run and the Devoted beat him to death.
- Morag will know Rebecca Newton. She can tell them her name, and that of her parents, Russ and Anne, if they don't already know. They were a couple of prospectors sent out here by one of the big companies.



# The Prophet's Tree



## Setting the Scene

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *This scene is very likely never to play out as it is secluded. It is here for completion's sake and will also be included in Book 2 - Fever: Withered.*

On the opposite bank of an all but dried river bed, an old woman (1) is lashed tightly to a dead tree, her head clad in a goat skull, her body greyed and bloated. Large triangles made from bound bones squeal as the desert's hot breath whistles through the holes bored down their length. The tree straddles an opening in the riverbank, a grotto of pitch black, its entrance trimmed with woven branches creating a portal to another place. Within the darkness, whispered babbling can be heard as the heralding winds die back, it draws you in as you try to make out the words. They are begging you to listen, but you cannot quite hear as a gust picks up the tree's song once more (**Hand-out 10**). SAN Check 1d3/1d6

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *The tree is linked with the Star Deneb, which heralds the Seed of Woman. It symbolises the Crone as the past telling of the future. Within the grotto are broken and mad prisoners. They whisper and babble nonsense about the coming of the Seed.*



## Scene Objectives

**PLAYER GOALS** - Investigate the ritual.

**KEEPER GOALS** - This is the second tree, which should reinforce the idea that there are more out there, linking them back to the three stars.

**NPC DIRECTION** - No one will go near the tree but may be compelled to, the same as the PCs however they should never enter first.



## Triggered Event: The Grotto

Moving up to the tree, all the PCs feel drawn toward the grotto. The first to be compelled will walk up to it (opposed POW roll against the Dark Young's 90), their eyes roll back into their skull and they fall inside. A dream event will happen to that player. The default for this scene is The Glass Lake Dream Event. Once the dream scene ends, the PC will find themselves kneeling in the middle of the grotto, feeling the grasping, weak hands of the old on their face. Inside the grotto, the old are shackled to the walls by twisted roots, their bodies pierced as

roots grow into them and pin them to the damp earth. Their eyes sewn shut, they paw at the newcomer, fighting over them and pulling them into their embrace.

The ceiling of the grotto is pierced in several places letting thin beams of light in (2).

The longer the PCs stay at the site, and the closer they get to the grotto, the harder it will be to resist its call to enter.



## Triggered Event: Staying too Long

If the PCs stay too long near the tree they will start to feel worse and worse until they pass out.

**READ OUT THE FOLLOWING IF THEY STILL STAY:** You find yourself in a sea of ghostly forms, and feel their sorrow wash over you as they push past heading toward the snow bound peaks in the distance. Three blazing suns rotate, the hunger of a black void pulling them in around itself above your heads, spirals of gases from the suns are consumed by the waiting maw. You are pulled and pushed along with the sea of spirits as they march on to the mountains.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *This is the Spirit Road, the Dark Rift in the Milky Way, spirits travel it to enter the underworld. This is a time for exploring PC's backgrounds, if they have dead loved ones or people who have recently died that are connected with them, including the Charred Girl, they will see them here. The PCs die if they aren't pulled away from the tree, travelling the road as a spirit into the underworld.*



## Consequences

**RESCUING THE OLD** - Cutting the old prisoners free of the roots will take time, and no amount of nursing will bring them around. They are insane, and will lash out for as long as they can before bleeding out from the wounds left by the roots that pinned them to the walls. If a determined PC staunchly tries to save them, have them be a constant burden to that PC. If they make it to Ragtown, they will survive physically, but they will still be functioning as prophets for the Devoted.

**FAVOURED** - If a PC actively tries to get everyone to leave the tree and the ritual alone they will carry favour with the Devoted; Mother Wanekia, their medicine woman, will know of it. If attempts are made to burn the tree, or destroy the High Place, then Ada's crow will notice and he will remember. Keep a note of it.



**ATTACKING THE TREE** - This tree is a slumbering Dark Young, as are all three of the trees. See *Call of Cthulhu* 7th edition, page 287. It will cast *Wither Limb* on anyone that does attack or meddle with it, even from its hibernation.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *It is critical that no one finds this out just yet. That reveal is part of the finale during the second book Fever: Withered but if it does somehow happen, it will be covered there.*

**STAYING ON THE SPIRIT ROAD** - If you don't wish them to die here, the Devoted will arrive and capture them, they will be loaded onto a wagon and taken to **The Dig** Story Event. It will take some time for them to be taken there, presenting opportunity to escape.

If they live through the experience and tell their story back at the wagon train, Joe will tell them of the spirit road and the Milky Way.

**THE DREAMER** - The PC that fell in (if any) will absently find themselves drawing triangles, each one precisely the same, in the dirt when they are thinking or absent minded. They have had their eyes opened to a truth about the world. When the PC is not involved in a conversation, describe to the player how they look down and see what they have drawn in the dirt at their feet without realising it.

**KEEPER'S NOTES:** *You may wish to give the player thanatophobia, fear of death, from their experience of falling into the grotto. This phobia is often caused by traumatic experiences.*



### Rewards & Information

(1) The woman has been here for a long time. Her greyed flesh sloughs from her bones if she is moved and she is unidentifiable.

(2) If the ceiling of the grotto is examined they will see the holes create a star map and there are crude figures drawn about it.

Any PC with knowledge of astronomy can pick out the constellations of Cygnus, Aquila, Lyra, and Dracos. With some study the image shows the figures are trying to pull the constellation Dracos out of the sky, while other figures praise and worship the star Vega.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *This is the heralding of the Seed of Woman as it travels across the Dark Rift from the Star of Bethlehem. It is a warning and a celebration. Dracos symbolises the Serpent and the opposition to the Seed of Woman. It is pulled to earth from the heavens.*

Anyone with a good knowledge of the occult may know triangles are link to gateways, doors or "High Places" as the bible would call them. In particular a door, or gateway into a river. There are several references in the bible to "High Places".





# Sand Trap



## Setting the Scene

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *Decide beforehand which NPC, or PC wagon will take the initial attack. You can target NPCs here that were pushed to the back, or simply a wagon left unattended during a stop.*

A slaughtering field lies before you. Dozens of the dead and their possessions are slowly buried by the the ever-shifting sand (1). The heavy wagons sink into the the blistering sun kissed dunes as the animals pick there way carefully through the carnage. There is determination in the beast's eyes; the scent of water is on the breeze masked by the all too familiar smell of death. They bay and groan as they give their last efforts to reach it before they join the dead at their feet (2).

*Let the PCs role play and spot any details, then continue.*

Tremors underfoot startle the whole wagon train and oxen dance nervously as their eyes dart about. The ground shifts once more and animals start a baying protest as a dune breaks like a wave against the wagon in an explosion of sand, revealing a great scaled abomination. It coils about an unlucky schooner, squeezing it to ruin, tossing the occupants aside like rag dolls, then the screaming starts. Multiple eyeless serpentine appendages dart forward, striking at the harnessed animals over and over until they convulse violently and are hauled into the thing's hook toothed maw. The horrific terror rises to a height of twelve feet, dropping the wagon and tastes the air with its snake like inner mouths searching for new prey.



## Scene Objectives

**PLAYER GOALS** - Escape or defeat the Abomination however they can and reach Ragtown.

**KEEPER GOALS** - The dramatic finale; this should be a show-boat scene whether the PCs stand up to Ada's Abominations, or run for the safety of Ragtown.

**NPC DIRECTION** - Terror takes hold and all ride and run as fast as they can to the town. Trim the fat from the crowd, no one should be safe here, however the Baclanovas are key players and should be saved if possible. Do not save them if they are cornered and required to die, but they have a role to play otherwise.



## Triggered Event: Drums

Using drums to slow and enthrall the Abomination can be done by knowing the drum beat and holding it steady. The abomination will follow the target and not react unless it is attacked physically. If the drummer should stop for any length of time the abomination will attack immediately (See THE SEED OF THE SERPENT, THE RHYTHM of life for more information).



## Triggered Event: Fighting

This is a tough fight and one where only the coordination of the whole group would stand a good chance. Decide which NPCs are loyal enough to back an attack and which will flee with no regard for others (See THE ABOMINATION CAST CARD for Stats).



## Triggered Event: Fleeing To Ragtown.

If the PCs choose to run, take them on a break-neck chase through the dunes littered with dead animals, discarded barrels, and possessions. It should be like riding through Hell itself in the heat and the stink of the carnage that surrounds them. The abomination will tunnel when it wants to chase, then surface, coming up underneath its target. It will attack the loudest targets that it can catch first, moving on to others afterwards.

**READ OUT ON REACHING RAGTOWN** - In its centre a tall withered tree sits in a small dusty courtyard. About it is a collection of shacks and tents; It is more like a campsite than a town. People pile out of the largest building, a saloon sign sways back and forth on it proclaiming it "The Coachman".

The PC's will be approached by Astor, the towns head enforcer. He asks has happened. If warned that the Abomination is coming, he will send out riders with drums to drive it off, taking the PCs into the bar to settle their nerves.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *the 5 men sent to subdue the Abomination have Ride 35%, Musician 40% and are armed with 16 gauge shotguns with R/S firearms 45% if you wish to play this out mechanically having them join the fight or use the drums to drive it off.*

If the PCs do not tell the town what is chasing them they will guess, however have the abomination crash into the town in a rage, and Bailey's men will be forced to put it down to save the

buildings. There are about 40 armed residents in the town.

## POSSIBLE HAZARDS AND BARRIERS FOR CHASES

1 - Sand Dunes - Loose sand and high dunes, wagons sink in to a foot and the animals must find their way through the shifting sand.

2 - Ditch - a sudden low ditch looms out of nowhere.

3 - Sea of Sagegrass - the ground is obscured by a stretch of two foot high brush, it could hide many more dangers.

4 - Discarded belongings - from furniture to personal items, a lucky search from a PC could discover just what they needed but navigating the junk costs time.

5 - Soda Pools - a wide pool of standing salt water, slows the wagon or makes it impossible to pass and must go around.

6 - Snakes! - the chase disturbs a nest of writhing snakes, they strike at anything they can, animals or people.

7 - Burning Wagon - thick black smoke fills the air making it hard to see.

8 - Dead Animals - Carcasses of the rotting dead have to be navigated.

9 - Not Dead Animal - An animal left to die here is panicked by the chase and lurches in terror trying to get up, only to get in the way.

10 - Rocky Outcrops - Narrow passages through rocks, will the wagon fit? Might have to go round.

11 - Grave Sites - Piled rocks mark the dead, and are hard to drive over, causing damage to the wagons



## Rewards & Information

(1) There is not enough wind to cause the dunes to shift like this, the shifting is due to the Abomination in the sands moving.

(2) The group can find crushed and regurgitated bodies in the dunes, their flesh eaten down to the bone by acid and covered in mucus. These are the Abomination's victims that it has regurgitated.

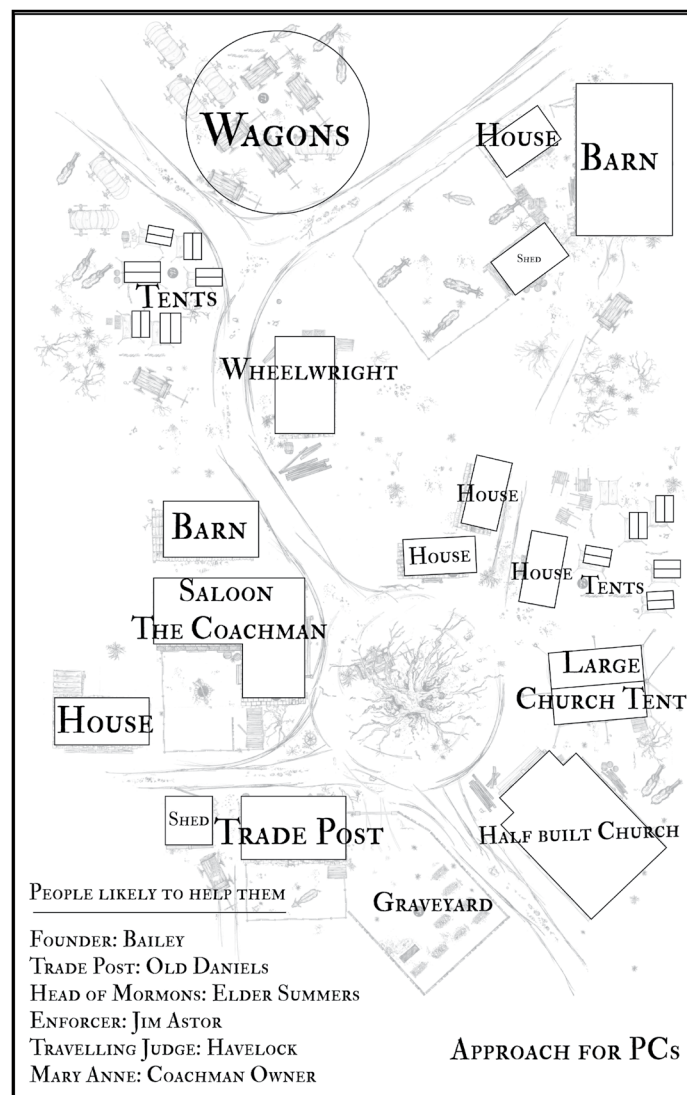


**KEEPER NOTES:** *This is the end of the adventure across the 40-Mile Desert. Any consequences are only applicable if you choose to continue the journey with Book 2: Fever - Withered. Keep track of who died, what players lost, and who favoured them during this chapter.*

**KILLING THE ABOMINATION** - Where this this is a short term victory, Ragtown will be devastated. This was the only thing keeping them safe from the Devoted. It will give the PCs 2D10 SAN if they killed it and 1D6 for reaching Ragtown.

**LEADING IT OFF INTO THE DESERT** - This will be the most desirable for Bailey and he will be pleased the Abomination is still there. This is what the men sent out from Ragtown will attempt to do if left to their own devices.

**DAMAGE IN RAGTOWN** - Try to keep this to a minimum. Bailey will take a dislike to the PCs should their presence lead to property damage, with him being the only source of supplies in the area this will bring only more misery to the PCs.





**RESTLESS DREAMING** - If you wish the PC's dreams can reflect their choices and actions. Each night, describe brief dreamscapes, or scenes, that they find themselves in. Get them to describe this for you based on a concept given to them. The PC's will never sleep soundly in the desert. These dreams should be infused with the day's drama. They should be horrific in subtle ways and repeat key themes. Personalise and tailor to each of them, getting under their skin. Dreams can be used to train the players on to an idea or place to visit, if you require. The NPCs in the caravan should also act as if they have had these unnerving dreams.

**SOME BASIC THEMES** - Rebirth, triangles and trees, messages from the past, travelling, a road of spirits, snakes, drums, dancing, judgement, Ada and his crow.

**ENTERING THE DREAMS** - The following can be used to enter the dreams.

- Using Ada's potions, either taken from the cave, given by him, or stolen from him
- Fevers brought on by snake venom and the drums
- Drinking the water from the **Old Spring** or the **Cave of Dreams** Story Events
- Being drawn into the dreaming wells at **The Wounded Tree** or **The Prophet's Tree** Story Events
- Hallucinations brought on by thirst
- Ritual crossing using dance, drugs, and drums (the PC must proceed with ritual steps of cleansing, dress, and protocols like that shown in the **Ghost Dance** Story Event).

Some Dream Events have multiple ways to be reached. If the dream has been played out then use the themes to craft another one based on the PC's own fears. Keep the scene short. Five to ten minutes.

**RETELLING DREAMS** - Dreams can be hard to remember or retell accurately, at the Keepers discretion, the PCs may only express their experiences in drawings or paintings. This can be coupled with a quick private one on one session, playing out the Dreams before the real session begins.



# The Hanged Man



## Setting the Scene

*Titus' confession - This scene depicts Titus Salt's final descent into madness, taking place in Ragtown at The Hanged Tree. The three trees are connected and the PC's and Salt's dreams blur together as the PCs enter the black pit.*

Read the following: A black mass looms overhead, blotting out the starlight, leaving you standing in near darkness on a vast barren wasteland. The ground cracks and crumbles away being pulled into an abyssal black mass. Far out in the blackness huge toothless maws open and scream out like newborn birds greedily eating the land as it falls near. You feel the weight of a noose around your neck. Its rough hemp fabric chafes at your skin. Finding your hands bound in the same rough large rope try as you might you cannot break your bonds. The other end of the noose sinks deep into the earth at your feet. As you look about you find another man is in the same situation. He sits naked, watching the mouths snap and fight for clumps of dirt. SAN Check 1/1d3

The man will shout gleefully at the mouths or cries proclaiming he cannot see his stars anymore. In a few sullen moments he'll mutter '1, 2, 3 up to 72 then we turn one degree!'(1)

An old withered tree slowly pushes itself from the earth; branches pierce the ground with the end of the noose about them. You are both hanged slowly as it grows up to its full height of 30 feet. As the tree grows and Titus answers questions they will begin to strangle on the nooses. Once their feet leave the ground

Titus panics and screams 'i must eat your heart so i can wake! They told me! They told me!' 'Don't eat mine!' He rakes at the player's flesh which comes away like wet clay. SAN Check 0/1d3 He digs into their chest with feverish strength. (2)

**KEEPER'S NOTES:** *The player can also dig into Titus' chest in the same way.*



## Consequences

**CUTTING THE NOOSE** - They will fall into the blackness of the maws and appear back in the pit. The player's neck will be whiplashed, sport rope burns, and still be wearing the cut noose about their neck, taking 1D3 damage.

**FIGHTING TITUS** - If Titus eats their heart, either by the PC letting him or by the PC losing the fight, there will be bruising on PCs chest. Their skin is marked with white streaks where Titus clawed at them. They also lose all memories of a loved one, work with the player to decide what this could be. It might even be a member of their family who is travelling with them.

Titus - Str 50%, Dex 45%, Brawl 35% Dmg: 1d3 HP 5

**EATING TITUS' HEART** - If the PC wins the fight and chooses to eat Titus' heart they will wake up choking on a piece of meat, a literal piece of heart. SAN Check 0/1

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *The players will meet Titus Salt and Caleb Valentine in Book 2 Fever: Withered. Make note of who eats who's heart, if any and if Salt dies.*



## Rewards & Information

(1) If asked about this, he will blurt out, "its the Procession of the Equinox of course! Don't you know astronomy?" Every 72 years the earth will turn one degree. Thats almost 13,000 years backwards!' as he points upward to the stars. If the PC has Astronomy they will see that Vega is now the North Star instead of Polaris. He'll also tell of three stars that will make the river yawn wide then you'll never stop the crossing. These are the three stars that are linked to the trees (see **Appendix 2: Astronomy** for more details)

(2) This is symbolic of Caleb Valentine, not Titus' actual heart; Valentine is his companion. Titus is afraid the Seed of Woman will take him too and is trying to offer the PCs heart in Valentines place.



# Heavy Heart



## Setting the Scene

*Ada's Search* - This is Ada looking for the worthy among anyone he comes across, he will take them to this place to be judged if they seek him in dreams. This scene can be played out multiple times with other PCs.

You find yourself in a dense jungle, the humidity is intense, and the constant hum of insects thrums through you. You see an old Paiute man (Ese Ada) in a clearing. In front of him is a tree stump some three feet wide, it holds a pool of water within a hollow trunk, and a single large serpentine scale floats on the surface. He nods and gestures for you to sit. He asks for a tribute and for it to be placed on the scale. SAN Check o/1

The offering will be lost no matter what the outcome. This is the judgement of the Snake Devil. If the PC has killed snakes, this will not go well. Ada will ask questions weighing their morals. He will know of any lies if the crow was present to see the truth. Tailor the questions to incorporate backstory. One question should always be asked at the end.

- Why do you head west? Do you flee from the restrictions of societies? Or do you bring it with you to civilise chaos?

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *Yig represents rule and worship, where Shub-Niggurath symbolises chaos and a state of nature.*

READ OUT THE FOLLOWING ONCE YOU HAVE DECIDED THE PCs FATE. Ada nods and dislocates his jaw, sucking the landscape in like a watercolour painting being washed into a drain. You are left standing on a vast open field of churned mud. Hissing, he spews forth a river of blood that washes over you, knocking you down. As the deluge passes you are left covered in writhing blood slick snakes.

The clawing mud pulls you down as the snakes strike, clamping down, determined not to let go; puncturing fangs deliver a paralysing poison. You start to sink beneath the surface; you cannot even scream as the bloody sludge invades your mouth and you begin to suffocate. Sound and sight are muted, your only companions are the squirming serpents holding on to your numbing flesh, and the cold sucking mud that pulls you ever downward.

With a sickening squelch you fall upward and crash back down into the floor of the desert you know only too well. It seems to breathe beneath you. SAN Check 1/1d6



## Consequences

**ADA'S JUDGEMENT** - The scale will either sink or float based on the answers. If they desire strong rules of law and tradition Ada will favour them. If they wish to act recklessly and abandon traditions in favour of anarchy he will disdain them.

**IF FOUND UNWORTHY** - The PC wakes with ophidiophobia, a fear of snakes. If the PC has also caused harm to snakes, they will be cursed. If the PC or any member of their family is pregnant, a twisted Spawn of Yig will be born to them. They will be plagued with snakes; if there are any present in a scene they will take particular interest in this PC. This attraction of snakes can be off set by the correct snake charms.

**IF FOUND WORTHY** - The snakes' embrace has made the PC immune to snake venom and able to handle snakes with no fear. This favour will be removed if they choose to turn from the path of Yig, or kill a snake. Make a note of this.



# Rhythm in Death



## Setting the Scene

*Wanekia's Vigil - Wanekia is responsible for the safeguarding of the Devoted against Ada's magic. Ada torments her day and night, never relenting.*

The beat of a drum fills you with dread as you survey the mounds of withered husks; the dead are piled as far as you can see. Twisted faces look at you in despair as you try to keep your footing; bones snap and skin tears with each step. Among the dead, an old Paiute woman strikes a drum; the tempo is feverish and she looks exhausted by the effort. Glancing up, she misses a beat, surprised to see you. The bodies shift and roll underfoot and she quickly returns to keeping the tempo on the old drum. SAN Check 1/1d3

Turning to the PC she pleads - "Please take up the drum so I can rest a while." (1)

If they do so, the old woman will sit on the dead and rest, then run away from the PC as fast as she can over the corpses.

**KEEPER'S NOTES:** *This dream explains how to deal with Ada's abominations in a non combative fashion.*



## Consequences

**REFUSING TO DRUM** - Wanekia will falter and the abomination will come, burrowing through the bodies like they are sand dunes, it will breach the surface and devour her whole before submerging again, leaving the PC alone with the drum at their feet. SAN Check 1d6/1d20 (for seeing the Abomination)

**KEEPING THE RHYTHM** - If the PC chooses to play the drum, the tempo is extremely taxing. See The Seed of the Serpent in Cast and Extras for how to handle this. The PC will have to make hard CON roll to keep the beat steady and constant drum for the whole night, as snakes will start to wind about the players feet unnerving them trying to force failure (2).

If the PC fails the CON roll they are devoured whole by the Abomination as they falter. waking in a cold sweat, their finger twitches in time to a beat they can't quite remember. SAN Check 1/1d3

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *Playing the drum will displease Ada, and give them favour with the Devoted, make a note of it.*



## Rewards & Information

(1) If questioned for information Wanekia will tell the PC the following:

- The old woman's name is Wanekia and she is drumming the beat to keep the serpent from her chieftain. Tso'apa.
- The bodies about her are generations of her people that have displeased the Snake Devil and perished to his curse. He is an evil that plagues the land, asking for tribute yet giving no boons, or help against the invasions.

She will also ask one question

- "Have you given tribute to the Snake Devil?"

If yes and they find themselves talking to Wanekia again she will treat them poorly and advise Tso'apa to kill them.

(2) They will have learnt Wanekia's Rhythm, also found under THE SEED OF THE SERPENT IN CAST & EXTRAS, if they pass.

The Devoted will favour the PC with a gift of ghost paint in a small ceramic pot left for them where they can find it. If they understand what it is they can apply it to anything they like, it will repel bullets once ( See YADOOE TSO'APA AND DEVOTED IN CAST AND EXTRAS).





# The Glass Lake



## Setting the Scene

*Elena's Nightmare - Elena Baclanova is trapped here and cannot fight her way back. This is Ada's doing; he has kept her here prisoner, fearing her unborn child, and what it might be.*

You sit in an oppressive blackness that envelops all. Feeling around yourself, you find the roughly hewn surface of a canoe hollowed out from a single old trunk, and cool water beyond it.

An abundance of pin-point lights wink awake from deep within the water, illuminating a great subterranean lake; its surface is sleek like black glass. More and more lights blaze into existence in the crystal-clear depths of the water, they now number in the billions, suspended in ink black below you (1). A woman appears out of the gloom at the opposite end of the canoe. She holds a lamb, looking at you in terrified silence (2). The lights stir, swell, and swirl becoming more sinister in their rhythmic motion. The lights congeal to form a long writhing serpent of light (3). The lamb bays in terror as it senses the danger. SAN Check 1/1d6

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *The star serpent will ram and try to overturn the canoe and attack anyone it can get hold of.*

*It has the following stats HP 15, STR 80, DEX 90, CON 40, DODGE 40%, ATTACKS BITE 60% DMG: 1d4+2*

*If attacked it will split and reform growing dimmer, until it doesn't reform again going below 15 HP. The star serpent will keep attacking until it kills Elena, pulls the PC off the boat, or the boat reaches the shoreline. There is a paddle in the canoe if they look.*



## Consequences

**ELENA DIES** - Elena will remain in the coma, and will never wake. Her husband will care for her at all times and talk will turn to cutting the unborn from her womb.

**REACHING LAND** - Stepping on to the shore with the woman, causes the earth to blacken beneath your feet, the lake surges raising to engulf both of you. Fighting for air, your body finally breathes in the bitter cold water and you drown as the woman watches you still holding the lamb.

**KEEPER'S NOTES:** *The PC should be dripping wet, and choking on water as they find themselves back in reality. Elena will wake from her coma knowing of the event, seeking out the PC to see if they do too. She will be frightened by the experience and seeking answers.*

**BEING BITTEN** - With every bite the colour is bleached from the PCs skin leaving pallid grey patches of tight knotted flesh, these will stay with the PC when they wake. SAN Check 0/1d3



## Rewards & Information

(1) A observant player might notice it is like the nights sky.

(2) This is Elena, there is a slim chance the PC will recognise her. Needing an Extreme Spot Hidden roll.

**KEEPER'S NOTE:** *This is a symbolic crossing. Some may assume the child is the Seed of Woman, and while there are parallels, it is not. The child is the return of a dead race of giants known as the Denisovan. More will be learnt about the Denisovan in future books.*

(3) This is the constellation Draco, guarding the crossing from the Star of Bethlehem. See **Appendix 2: Astronomy** for more information.



# Appendix 1: Gold Rush Timeline

The 1849 invasion of the West was the third of its kind. The area was first settled by the Spanish, then by the Russians, and now the Europeans. It would soon be followed by the whole world as they descend on what the Chinese called the Gold Mountain to make their own fortunes.

Timeline of America's expansion into the west to the 1849 gold rush

1803: President Thomas Jefferson buys the Louisiana Territory from France for \$15 million. This doubles the size of the United States and provides a large area to the west of the country for expansion.

1805: Explorers Lewis and Clark, with the help of Sacagawea, map out areas of the Louisiana Territory and eventually reach the Pacific Ocean.

1810: The Treaty of Fort Wayne brings the Delaware, Potawatomi, Miami, and Eel River Miami nations together to cede 3 million acres of their land along the Wabash River to the United States.

1814: The Treaty of Fort Jackson ends a year long Creek war. To count the Creek dead, whites cut off their noses, piling 557 of them. This is the single largest cessation of territory ever made in the Southeast. The Creek lost 14 million acres.

1819/21: With the Adams-Onís Treaty, Spain is forced to sell Florida to America and ignore their Oregon Territory claims. The U.S.A gives up claims to Spanish Texas to settle the dispute, until Mexico won independence 183 days after its signing.

1822: Jedediah Smith becomes the first White to explore and cross the Great Basin Desert into California.

1830: Congress passes the Indian Removal Act, to move Native Americans from the Southeast to the west of the Mississippi River.

1830: The Mormon church is founded by Joseph Smith, The Book of Mormon is published.

1834: The Great Basin is declared Indian Territory by the U.S. government with the Indian Intercourse Act, starting the trend of Indian reservations and the country's lack of commitment to their treaties.

1836: Mexican troops attack the Alamo Mission killing all but two Texans. This spurs the Texans on in the Texas Revolution.

1838: The Cherokee are forced from the East Coast to Oklahoma on the Trail of Tears. Many thousands die along the way.

1839: Joseph Smith founds the Mormon Capital City of Nauvoo.

1839: John Sutter makes a deal with the Californios and founds Sacramento. Looking to create an agricultural, independent state, building on his success of managing a Russian whaling town.

1841: People begin to travel west in wagon trains on the Oregon Trail. Some cut south to California at Snake Lake blazing the California Trail.

1842: Mountain man Jim Bridger establishes Fort Bridger. This, and later Salt Lake City, will become pivotal in resupplying wagons heading west.

1844: Mormon founder Joseph Smith declares he will run for president. He is killed in custody (detained for destroying a printing press) less than a year later. No one is charged with the crime.

1845: John O'Sullivan, editor of the Morning Post; first uses the term "Manifest Destiny". He says it is white America's God given right to occupy all of North America; A view shared by the then 11th president James Knox Polk.

1845: Texas is officially annexed by the United States; Mexico disputes the claim.

1846: Brigham Young leads 5,000 Mormons to Utah. After experiencing religious persecution, the Mormons move west and found Salt Lake City. Young rules the Utah territory as a personal theocracy until it is declared in rebellion in 1857 by the US Government. Many forge on westward, cutting new trails.

1846: The Mexican-American War breaks out.

1846: Britain signs the Oregon Treaty, handing over the Oregon Territory to the United States.

1846: A flood of 75,000 Americans moves west to fight the Mexicans

1846: California declares itself an independent republic from Mexico.

1847: The infamous Donner Party forges a new path west suffering heavy losses.

1847: California surrenders to an American army at Los Angeles.

1848: Mormon James Marshall discovers gold at Sutter's Mill, Sacramento. He and John Sutter hide the fact, fearing Sutter's plans for a personal empire would be lost to gold fever.

1848: The Mexican-American War ends. America annexes the California Territory and Texas.

1849: Ex-Mormon Samuel Brannan fuels the gold claim rumours with articles in the California Star hoping for financial gain (selling over priced mining equipment.). Sutter is ruined as his workers abandon him to find gold, leaving crops to rot in the fields.

1849: The gold rush begins - President James Knox Polk confirms the gold claims in the West to Parliament. Around 90,000 "forty-niners" start the journey west to California in hopes of finding gold.

# Appendix 2: Astronomy

## THE SUMMER TRIANGLE

This set of three stars is not a constellation; it is an astronomical asterism, a known and easily seen pattern in the northern celestial hemisphere. The triangle is formed by the stars Deneb, Altair, and Vega which are the brightest stars within their own constellations (Cygnus, Aquila, and Lyra respectively). This asterism has been observed by many cultures, leading to legends to surround these three stars as people used them to navigate. The summer triangle is seen directly over head at midnight during the summer months and into the autumn and winter evenings, or the early morning in spring, in the Northern hemisphere; hence the name “summer,” as this is when it is at its zenith.

This passage from Genesis 3.15 is attributed by some to this triangle: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel”. This is God talking with the Serpent within the Garden of Eden before Adam and Eve were cast out, telling of the coming of the Lord whom the serpent will fight. The first of the stars, Deneb, is given the meaning “The Lord Comes” it’s constellation is Cygnus, the Swan and also the Northern Cross. The second star, Altair, is given the meaning of “The Wounding.” It’s constellation is that of Aquila, the Eagle which speaks of the bruising of the Seed of Woman (“her offspring”). And the Third Vega is “He Shall Be Exalted.” Sitting within the constellation of Lyra, the Harp, it tells of the victory of the Seed of Woman, the Messiah.

## THE DARK RIFT

This long black band across the Milky Way scythes the night sky in two and is sometimes referred to as the Great Rift or Dark River; earning many titles throughout different cultures as a very visible asterism in the night sky. This dark band through the stars is said to be caused by dust clouds that lie between our solar system and the visible stars that should occupy this space. The summer triangle straddles this dark rift and the black hole X-1 Cygnus (sometimes referred to as the Star of Bethlehem) lies within it. The star, now a black hole is said to have been observed going supernova by Chinese astronomers in 5 BC, and is theorised to have been the guiding light that lead the wise men and heralded the birth of the Messiah. The star now black hole, sits on the Northern Cross, the constellation of Cygnus, at the place where the heel of Christ would have been pierced by a nail on His own cross and where the serpent will wound him. Within the Paiute and other Native American tribes, the Dark Rift is often known as the spirit road, which guides the dead to the Underworld.

## PROCESSION OF THE EQUINOX AND THE NORTH STAR

The earth rotates around an axis from the north to south poles. This axis shifts over time, like a spinning top that wobbles,

changing the view of the stars from Earth and slowly rotating what is commonly known as the North Star; currently Polaris in modern day. It also gives us our astrological ages as we shift through the night sky, taking us into each of the western zodiacs. It takes about 26000 years to complete a cycle of the precession, with the Earth turning one degree every 72 years and changing ages (zodiac signs) every 2,166. About 13,000 years ago, Vega, the victory of the Seed of Woman, was the North Star and the world was hit by a meteor, causing the melting of huge ice caps and massive floods. This sparked off an era known as the Younger Dryas or the mini ice age throwing Neolithic cultures into a dark age and causing extinctions around the world. It is theorised that this is the origin of the most common myth found in almost every culture on earth: the flood myth (not explored until Fever: Claims, the final of the four books).

## THE DRACO CONSTELLATION

Draco, or the Dragon, is one of the largest constellations in the night sky and one that never sets, a constant feature all year round. The serpent-like constellation sits with its brightest star, Eltanin, facing the constellation of Cygnus, the Northern Cross, and the star of Bethlehem as if guarding against it.

## SYMBOLISM AND MEANING WITHIN FEVER.

Draco symbolises Yig within Fever; waiting for the Seed of Woman to cross the Dark Rift. Only when the star Vega is the North Star again will the Seed prevail, causing cataclysmic change to Earth, which is reborn in fire, flood and ice; only the strongest surviving to rebuild. The Devoted have plans to quicken the cycle.

Without Vega as the North Star, the Devoted have created a ritual using the desert as a mirror of the spirit road, building ritual sites called “High Places” at three trees and tying these to symbols of fertility and birth. “The Wounded Tree”, the Mother, is tied to Altair. “The Prophet’s Tree”, the Crone, tied to Deneb; and “The Hanged Tree,” the Maiden, is linked to Vega. The Devoted plan to change the path the spirits travel on the spirit road into the mountains, they will use these to create a gateway opening up the sky of the past where Vega was the North Star and where the Seed of Woman will be victorious over the serpent.

The serpent seeks to control with knowledge and enslave humanity. Within the Lovecraftian mythos, this is seen in many tales controlling humanity using a cult of worship. Where Shub-Niggurath is the embodiment of chaos, evolution, and nature. Seeing her will as a state of nature and not civilisation, followers call on Shub-Niggurath to create cataclysms caused by the Seeds of Woman, meteors thrown from the distant death of the star of Bethlehem. The bible and many other stories serve as warnings from the past about floods and the loss of civilisation.



# Appendix 3: Flora & Fauna

## USEFUL GREAT BASIN PLANTS

The goosefoot family of plants dominates the Great Basin having specialised in growing in arid and semi-arid conditions throughout cold deserts, steppes, and mountain habitats. They thrive in these typically hostile conditions. With a natural salt tolerance, the sagebrush can grow in high-alkaline soil; this salt tolerance doubles as a natural anti-freeze, which allows it to survive the sub-zero drops in temperature during the night.

Below is a list of the most common plants found in the area.

### BIG SAGEBRUSH

**DESCRIPTION** – Aromatic (increases when wet); evergreen shrub; grows to 1-3 metres in length; pale grey leathery foliage; small, yellow, tubular flowers; grows in deep soil.

**Medical Application** – Despite being toxic, natives use this plant as a natural cleanser on infected wounds, and it can help with internal bleeding. Its vapours are often used as a cold and headache remedy.

**Food** – Its seeds are often ground for flour, or eaten by various animals.

### SHADESCALE

**DESCRIPTION** – Height from 0.3 to 0.8 metres, dense green bush; short and wide leaves; small berry-like fruit; blooms from March to June with small bunched delicate purple flowers.

**Food** – Domestic animals use this for winter foraging.

### FOUR WING SALTBRUSH

**DESCRIPTION** – Common heights of 0.5-1 metre but can grow up to 3 metres; pale green bush, thin leaves, 3-5cm long; fruits with four wings like a caltrop, and densely packed on long stems; blooms from April to October.

**MEDICAL APPLICATION** – An infusion of blossoms and roots can be used for ant bites.

**TRADITIONAL USE** – Saltbrush is attached to prayer plumes and given in sacrifice to the cottontail rabbit for good fortune in the hunt.

**Food** – Domestic animals use this for winter foraging.

### WINTERFAT

**DESCRIPTION** – Small shrub with vertical branches from 0.5-1 metres; flat, tear-shaped 3 cm leaves; branches topped with spikes. The whole plant is covered in woolly hairs that turn from white to red in autumn; produces small white fruits.

**MEDICAL APPLICATION** – Winterfat is a traditional native plant for treatments of various ailments and gives an abundance of benefits. Most notably it is said to help burns when applied as a poultice.

**Food** - Domestic animals use this for winter foraging.



### FAUNA

Despite the harsh conditions of the Great Basin life still thrives there, and many specialist and migrational animals take advantage of it as a source of food. Many birds, including Golden Eagles, Harriers and ducks are common here. Below are a few more specific animals found in the Great Basin just for quick reference if required. Other predators like coyote and lions will also roam onto the basin at times.

### WESTERN DIAMONDBACK RATTLESNAKE

**DESCRIPTION** – Grows to over 5ft; highly venomous; colour pattern generally consists of a dusty grey brown, but varies from pinkish red to chalky white with darker diamond shaped blotches.

**FOUND** - Sunning on open surfaces in early evenings or hiding in nooks and crevices.

**EATS** - Small Mammals

### SIDEWINDER OR HORNED RATTLESNAKE

**DESCRIPTION** – Grows to around 30 inches; venomous; has raised scales above its eyes that look like horns; typically yellow-brown or cream in colour and a white belly; moves in an unusual pattern to help it move at speed over wind-blown sands.

**FOUND** - Sunning on open surfaces in early evenings or hiding in nooks and crevices.

**EATS** - Small Mammals

STR 35 CON 35 SIZ 15 DEX 90 HP 5 Dodge: 42%

Damage Bonus: -2 Build: -2 MOV: 8

Fighting (bite) 40% DMG: 1D4+ DB + poison

Skills: Stealth 90%

### SIERRA GARTER SNAKES

**DESCRIPTION** – Grows to 30 inches long; harmless mild toxins; aggressive behaviour; dark brown with yellow mottled markings

**FOUND** - Found near sources of water.

**EATS** - fish, frogs, reptiles, rodents.

STR 25 CON 25 SIZ 10 DEX 60 HP 3 Dodge: 30%

Damage Bonus: -2 Build: -2 MOV: 8

Fighting (bite) 40% DMG: 1D4+ DB

Skills: Stealth 90%

### CALIFORNIA KINGSNAKES

**DESCRIPTION** – Grows to over 6 feet; dark red or black bodies, banded with white; non-venomous; immune to venoms; hunt other snakes and kills using constriction; can rattle tail like a rattlesnake.

**FOUND** - Sunning on open surfaces in early evenings, or hiding in nooks and crevices.

**Eats** - Snakes, reptiles, rodents, birds.

STR 40 CON 50 SIZ 45 DEX 60 HP 8 Dodge: 30%

Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 8

Fighting (bite) 40% DMG: 1D4+ DB Crush 2d4 Round after opposed Str.

Skills: Stealth 50%

### GILA MONSTER

**DESCRIPTION** – 1-2 feet long; only native venomous lizard in the USA; regarded as living fossils; snub nosed with black and orange markings; sluggish movements.

**FOUND** - Found near sources of water.

**EATS** - fish, frogs, reptiles, rodents.

STR 25 CON 30 SIZ 20 DEX 20 HP 5 Dodge: 10%

Damage Bonus: -2 Build: -2 MOV: 4

Fighting (bite) 45% DMG: 1D6+ DB (-2) + mild poison

### SAGEBRUSH LIZARD

**DESCRIPTION** – 3 - 5 inches; olive grey in colour with irregular banding patterns.

**FOUND** - Found about sagebrush in the low desert.

**EATS** - insects

### THE YUMA BAT

**DESCRIPTION** – Small 2 inch bats, wing spans of 10 inches; live in caves near stagnant waters; fur colour ranges from yellow tans to dark brown.

**FOUND** - lowland arid scrubs to coniferous forests but always near standing water, such as lakes and ponds. Can be found in the thousands roosting in caves, mines, and under bridges.

**EATS** - insects.

### PYGMY RABBITS

**DESCRIPTION** – 10 inches; grey; short ears: lack of white fur on tails.

**FOUND** - restricted to areas of heavy shrub cover, and burrows about sagebrush.

**EATS** - Sagebrush, grass.

### PRONGHORN ANTELOPES

**DESCRIPTION** – Reddish-orange coat; sharp black horns; chest, sides, and rump are bright white; Fastest land mammal in the USA, clocking 70mph.

**FOUND** - roaming in scattered bands, active both day and night.

**EATS** - brush, grass.

STR 140 CON 70 SIZ 150 DEX 50 HP 20 Dodge: 25%

Damage Bonus: +3d6 Build: +4 MOV: 12

Fighting 25% DMG: 1D8+ DB

### MULE DEER

**DESCRIPTION** – Large six inch ears; large white rump with black tails; bucks grow antlers.

**FOUND** - seen in large herds during dusk

**EATS** - brush, grass.

STR 120 CON 75 SIZ 120 DEX 55 HP 19 Dodge: 28%

Damage Bonus: +2d6 Build: +3 MOV: 10

Fighting 25% DMG: 1D8+ DB

# Appendix 4: Camp Seed Events

**1 – BITTEN.** While pulling on a boot, or taking a similar action that is part of their set routine someone is bitten by a snake, spider, scorpion or something less dangerous. Set up a scene of either the PC's or NPC's limb swelling and in time the onset of necrosis, or their hysteria of thinking they will die. They will have to deal with the grisly business of amputation, or hope they come through it with other remedies. Identifying the creature that bit them could be the difference between these options. Alternatively, the bite was not dangerous and the character is made a fool of. You could set up a "boy who cried wolf" scenario and keep getting this character into these incidents until the group are dismissive of them.

**2 – TRACKS IN THE CAMP.** It appears that something has been in the camp in the night and wasn't spotted. This could be anything from a large animal, to one of the natives, or something unknown. Its tracks come right up to some of the wagons and lead away into the desert. You could have a Watchman be killed or go missing. This could be foreshadowing for another scene of screams in the night, or the night-time visitor may keep coming back and start leaving unsettling gifts. They might choose to follow the tracks and kill it.

**3 – MESSAGES IN THE SAND.** Have one of the PCs keep finding personal messages in the sand. These could be simple words like "killer" or phrases in front of their wagon. Reference a PC's background or foretelling future events. For example, the words "The bite is not dangerous" could precede the Bitten event. This could cause rumours, or other characters could start asking questions and mistrusting the PC who is acting with foreknowledge of events. This could be connected with Ada's crow after the *Ashes* Story Event set piece and lead to sanity problems. It could be all in their heads.

**4 – SOUNDS IN THE DESERT AT NIGHT.** The party hear surreal noises from an unknown source, or the tortured screams of a member of the wagon train that's been captured. Coupled with other small happenings, the tension will start to build into an oppressive atmosphere. Don't undervalue repetition. The dread of knowing the noises will be back can be an excellent tool to bring in a mystery that needs solved before they come again.

**5 – CATTLE EXHAUSTION/DEATH.** Cattle or pull teams will not move, can be bad tempered and require water. They could even attack a PC as a final act. This can cause friction with NPCs who really need the cattle, could encourage the players to find fresh water or at least look for it. They may be forced to lighten the loads of the wagons and walk along next to them, which will slow them down.

**6 – DISEASE/SICKNESS/DEATH.** The environment is filthy and relentless, and using water to wash and keep clean seems futile in the mud and dust. But disease is very easy to pick up in this place. Food poisoning from bad meat, wounds festering in the heat, and disease borne by animal faeces are just some avenues of strife that could strike the group. This can be an on-going problem that you hint at during down time, and will only get worse if they don't deal with it. Any poisonings could even be Raymond LaCombe's deliberate attempt to kill someone, if anyone decides to dislike him.

**7 – SOMETHING AMISS.** Something has moved or is missing. This could be a barrel of water, food, a personal possession, a whole wagon, or a person. As the group stops for the night, the last wagon in the party is just gone, or something a PC would use for part of their routine is not there. This will create unease and accusations. Once the accusations have begun, have the item turn up. It could be Isaac Wicks messing with someone he's taken a dislike too, or the Crow, or the Devoted snatching the last wagon silently without notice.

**8 – FIRE IN CAMP.** Whether by accident, or sabotage, a fire starts to engulf the camp. This could have been caused by a careless cook not dousing the fire correctly, or someone on watch setting down a torch, or Isaac finally acting against a suitor to his mother. It can also remove weapons from the group if anyone comes packing an arsenal of gear. Ammunition may go off in the heat and cause another threat to the group.

**9 – HAUNTED ITEM.** Someone gets a quirky item. It could be a water skin that is never empty; do they keep drinking from it? Perhaps it's something they throw away that always turns up back in their gear. This could be the Charred Girl's tarnished Bowie knife, as the crow returns it to the PC that let her die. It could link into PC backgrounds or someone else's missing items. Maybe a gun always ends up in a PC's hand when they get annoyed or angry, wanting to be used.

**10 – CONFLICT.** Simple disagreements arise about where to go and what to do. Use the NPCs as tools to point in directions you want the party go. It is simple to let your group run riot, but give them at least some idea of what they should be doing to progress the plot and give reasons to go certain ways. These can be directly in conflict with player's wishes. Their decisions could come back to haunt them; NPCs could react poorly if the PCs refused to do something and it has later consequences. This can also be used to foreshadow events to come, or cause the group to split up for a bit.



# Appendix 5: Travelling Seed Events

**1 – SIGNALS.** There are glints of reflections on the horizon, and the more obvious smoke signals. These can be ongoing and become part of the routine. If the PCs manage to figure out the signals meaning by relating them to events that happen on the road, or from a captured brave, they can start to understand them or even communicate back to the signaller.

**2 – THE STRANGER.** The figure could be anyone from a traveller coming towards the wagon train, to a lost member of the party. It could be a mad man left in the desert to die by someone else, an escaped convict, or a even a woman holding a swaddled newborn, a Spawn of Yig, she was left to die here with her freakish child.

**3 – SPOTTING A PREDATOR ANIMAL.** A predator can be tracking the wagons or just interested in the carnage that follows them. It can be a warning or some sort of message. Perhaps if the PCs don't take care and watch for it, they could lose some horses or cattle during the night.

**4 – GUN SHOT INCIDENT.** An NPC fires at something or a weapon is dropped and goes off. Someone could get hit and injured or killed outright. One of the NPCs could become paranoid and keep shooting at something he thinks he can see in the scrub. Perhaps one of the children wants to help and takes a gun, and there is an accident.

**5 – WAGON PROBLEMS.** Wagons are rugged things, but they do break and get stuck constantly. They have been on the road for six months taking abuse and being worn out. Slower, heavier wagons might trail behind and the wagon train will lose sight of it at times as it catches up. A wagon might not reappear, forcing the players to go back and find out what happened.

**6 – FINDING DUMPED GOODS.** Anything that is not water might be thrown out to lighten a wagon's load to make it across the desert. The players could find something incredibly rare or riches beyond their dreams. It could be very bulky and heavy like a locked chest full of gold being sent back to the East. Keeping the heavy load might cause more problems than its worth: They will have to learn the same lesson personally, it was left here for a reason.

**7 – ANIMALS ACTING ODDLY.** The cattle or pull teams, keep stopping and looking off to a fixed point in the distance, or sit down every so often. This could be nothing more than them predicting a sandstorm or spotting a predator that can't be seen by the humans, or something far more sinister. If the tell is not acted on, the players could have less time to prepare for that storm or could lose cattle during the night, which could lead to cattle mutilation. You could set up a nemesis animal that just hates a particular PC will do anything to piss them off or bite them. There could even be something living inside one of the animals, a parasite that is supernatural in nature.

**8 – HARASSED BY NATIVES.** Every so often, an arrow thuds into the side of a wagon or hits the ground near a person. The eerie thing about bows is that they are silent weapons. Play on that and on the unknown location of the attackers. You could have the party stop and circle the wagons, creating a good old-fashioned standoff. This could go on right into the night and even for days, with the PCs getting no sleep and perhaps forcing them not to stop to make camp. The classic continuous drums could also be a good tool to break the PCs' sleep. Tell them they are unable to sleep until the drums stop; when they eventually become a familiar background noise, have them suddenly stop. This should put players on alert, though you might never pull the trigger on the attack they are predicting. Start them second guessing. Natives are very adept in hit-and-run tactics and psychological warfare in this environment. Poisoned arrows kill cattle.

**9 – ROTTING ANIMALS.** A field of dead cattle, bloated and rotting in the sun for days, could be a tricky thing to navigate. The smell itself is rank and the animals would be wary of moving through them. Perhaps a wagon hits one, and it explodes as the gases of decay are released. This could cause disease in camp, or just mockery. It could cause a wagon pull team to bolt which will end up with a runaway wagon that needs chased down.

**10 – STUMBLING INTO PIT OF VIPERS.** The wagons have to pick their way carefully through a desert littered with debris that creates shade for snakes to dwell. If the wagon knocked over a barrel that's filled with snakes resting out of the midday sun, stirring them into an angry response. If the PCs are targeted by the Snake Devil and Ada, these viper pits might spill out to attack unprovoked.

# Appendix 6: Environmental Seed Events

**1 – SAND STORM.** Strong winds bring in a dust storm that causes the group to lose vision and their sense of direction. They could end up in the wrong place, or get turned around completely. You could have the sun rise on the wrong side of them, to see if they notice. Alternatively, the storm is so bad that they have to spend a day digging out the wagons and lose some of the animals.

**2 – ROCKY FIELD.** Having to navigate among the large rocks is difficult and can cause a lot of damage to the wagons. They may have to move a boulder out the way to progress as many wagon trains did, this was called blazing a trail. A PC might fall from a wagon getting banged about or breaking bones.

**3 – HEATWAVE.** The heat rises dramatically. The PCs will have to deal with the possibility of heat stroke and dehydration for themselves and their animals. Have the players describe what they do to prevent it. Supplies should be used heavily, and some of the water may evaporate. This could lead to mirages or sightings that the PCs can't quite believe, like a camel from a circus wagon.

**4 – HEAVY BOGS.** Heavy wagons and animals sink into the mud. This slows progress to a crawl, creates an easy target for bandits and could lead them getting stuck. Items can fall and be lost. There is also ample scope to find items lost to the mud from other travellers that can lead the party, or allude to story threads that the PCs can follow.

**5 – CAVES.** Being home to bats, small reptiles, and thousands of insect species, a cave can be a real gauntlet of phobias to push your players through. They can be used to hole up and defend against overwhelming attacks, or wait out heat waves or even freak storms. They could be the sites of rituals, torture, sacred rites, or living quarters for locals and hermits. A whole lead up to tracking and killing a monster could end in a crazy hermit dressed in a costume to scare away the locals.

Also remember caves like to flood, and there is nothing more ironic than drowning in a desert.

**6 – SINK HOLES AND EARTHQUAKES.** The sudden collapse of the ground can swallow wagons whole or hold them on the edge of tipping in, with only the straining animals holding it out of the new pit. There is lots of drama that could work around sink holes, and earthquakes opening fissures. This could expose underground caverns, or buried horrors.

**7 – FOG.** Fog is inherently eerie and dulls the senses, masking what's ahead. The fog could move in unnatural ways, swirling about the legs of the animals at a low level and hiding dangerous terrain. Anything could be hiding within it. If not all of the wagons in the train can be seen, one could simply disappear from the back as if it took a wrong turn, or vanish right from the middle of train where it couldn't possibly have done so.

**8 – SUDDEN DOWNPOUR.** With the setting of the campaign during autumn, a freak downpour or storm is well within the scope of the environment. Having starved your players of water you can now drown them in it. Their wagons get stuck fast in the sucking mud and baked hard by the next day's sun. Once the water is absorbed into the ground, it will mix with the salt. The damage and problems the water causes could be huge, even creating quicksand.

**9 – DUST DEVILS.** Whilst not dangerous in themselves, being too small to lift a person, dust devils can act as plot points, by depositing items swept up in their funnels dropping them in the camp, spooking animals, or have a supernatural edge to them. The Indians believe they are spirits of the dead. They could also sweep into a camp and throw campfire cinders around, or remove other items like maps or critical MacGuffins from the players.

**10 – FREEZING COLD NIGHTS.** Moving in the desert at night is incredibly hazardous as the temperature can drop as low as -20 C. The freezing conditions along with the heat of the day can cause many problems for gear and people alike. Metals will stress and can fracture. Barrels of water freeze and expand bursting apart only to leak out in the blazing heat of the day. Exhausted animals could die. People without proper clothing can get hypothermia and risk death.

# Appendix 7: Scouting Seed Events

1 – **CAMPFIRE.** The scout finds a campfire that has burned down to ash. There might be no signs of activity at all around the fire and no signs of tracks within a hundred feet; or perhaps they find the scene of a missing member of the group who has been tortured, then left to die in the sun. Maybe they stumble on a sleeping native, a chance to take one alive and get some revenge. After putting up with signals and harassment every day, this is an apt scene.

2 – **A BODY BEING PULLED UNDERGROUND.** The scout comes across a Juvenile Abomination pulling a dead body underground, it takes a few minutes, watching the body pulled about, bones breaking, skin torn, guts burst open and its forcefully pulled into a hole too small for it to fit then devoured by the unseen animal.

3 – **Mirage.** Play on the characters back stories and pull in people they know to talk to them about life and death. A mirage can be used as a draw to get the PC to follow a desired direction. Perhaps a PC will be attacked by someone from his past, only to wake from his illusion to find himself with his hands around another scout, who is gasping for their final breath.

4 – **GETTING LOST.** If a PC or NPC goes off to scout, they can get lost in the barren landscape. Did they take enough food and water to last? Can they find the wagons once more? Perhaps they are found by the wrong people. The Devoted might torture them and try to trade the PC back to the group for animals. Maybe it is Ada who finds them, and they become the latest host for a Seed (becoming the victim that is found in **The Standing Man** Story Event). It is a horrific first person experience of the transformation but can provide insights into Ada's plans and motives before they have to move on to a new PC.

5 – **RITUAL SITES.** Coming across a ritual site of any sort can be unnerving. Why are those stones stacked like that? Why is there wood bound in reeds? A ritual site can contain anything from cave paintings depicting deities and some dusty old bones, to hellish ceremonies of human sacrifice. The options are limitless.

6 – **TRACKS.** Finding a new lead on your own poses some questions. What is it? Where is it going? Does the PC follow or report back? This could be a way to peel a PC off from the pack. It can lead to anything you wish or even forewarn an attack like the **Snatched** Story Event.

7 – **FINDING A NATIVE.** This could be a one-on-one fight between a brave and the player, a hard and brutal close combat. It could be a conversation at knife point or a friendly chat over shared food. Being a lone scout, they could choose to watch, listen and follow the natives to gain some understanding of events in the desert, or be lead to a new scene altogether like **The Dig**, or **Old Springs** Story Events.

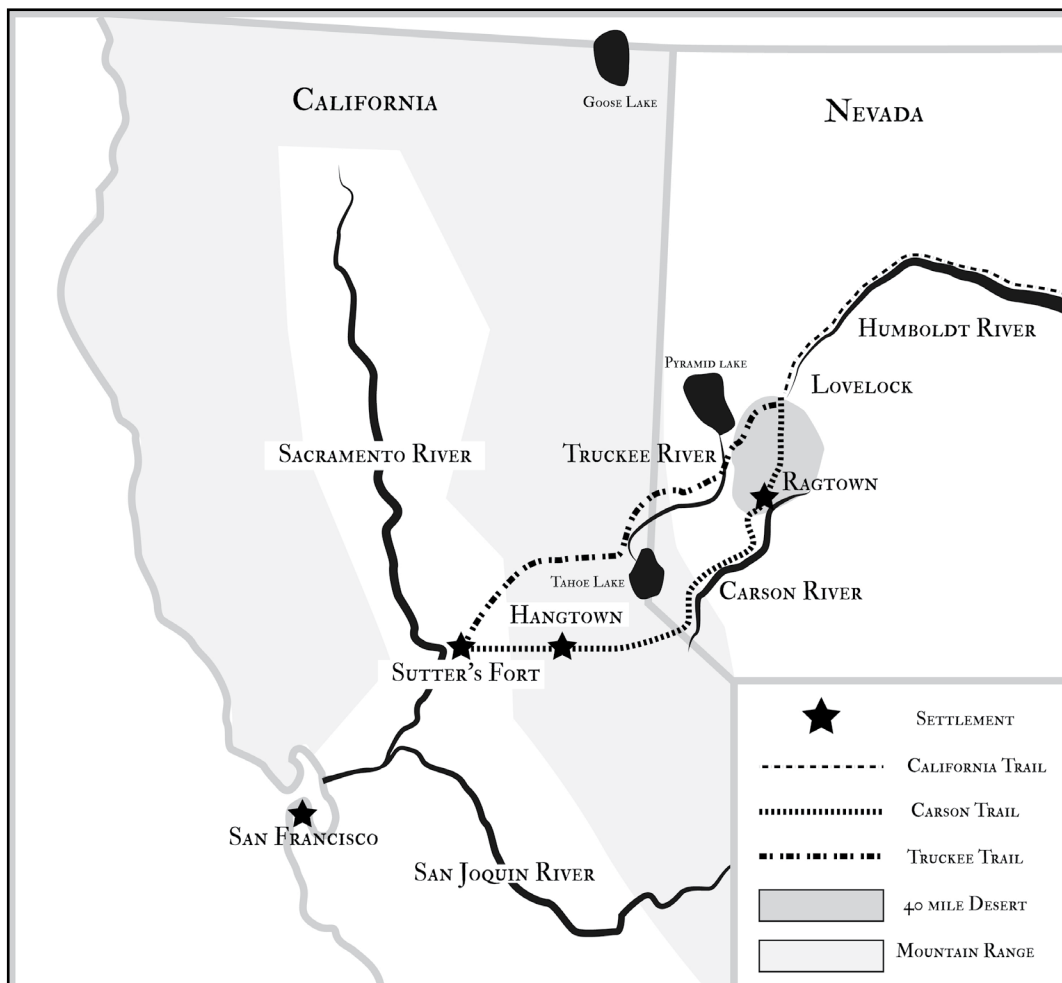
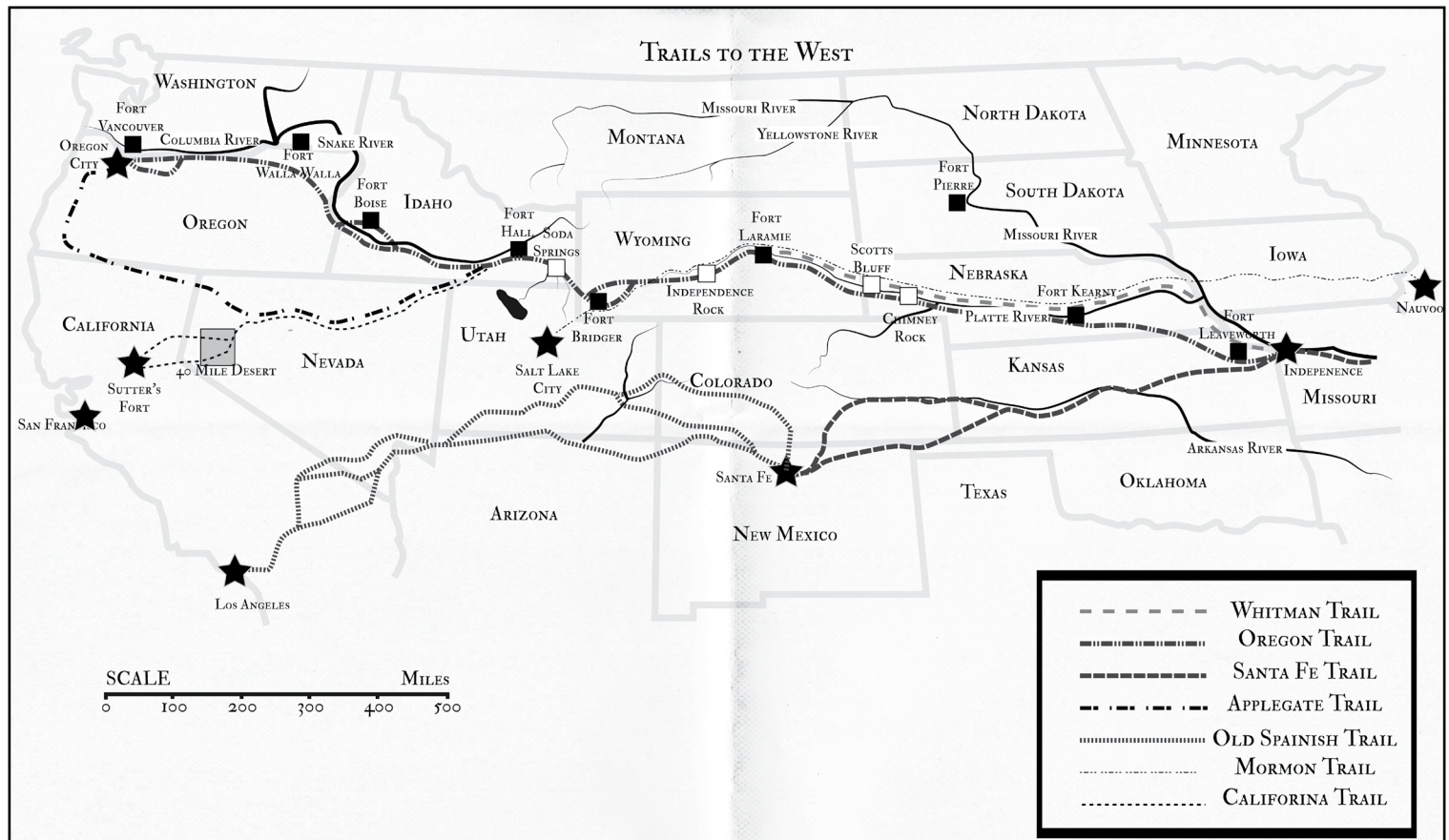
8 – **GETTING STUCK.** Exploring a potential hazard or going out on your own can lead to a PC getting stuck. A rock traps their foot, or a scree pile shifts and the PC falls into a crevasse. They may have to mutilate themselves to get free, like a wolf in a trap. Or maybe they stumble upon someone else who was stuck and attempted the same ending in their death; a grisly discovery to drive home the dangers here.

9 – **CATTLE MUTILATION.** There are no tracks near the body and no blood. The animal looks like it was drained, and then parts have been removed with surgical precision. The eyes, tongue, and genitals are usually targeted in real cases. Some of the parts could show up at any time when it works for the story, or they could be left arranged further down the road.

10 – **ANIMAL ATTACK.** With no back up from the group, facing off with an animal or being bitten by a snake takes a whole new turn. The tension is increased and it becomes a personal test of the PCs mettle. Whether they are playing an adventurer, or they are built for this type of event will play a huge role in a more personal discovery of who they are and what they are capable of.

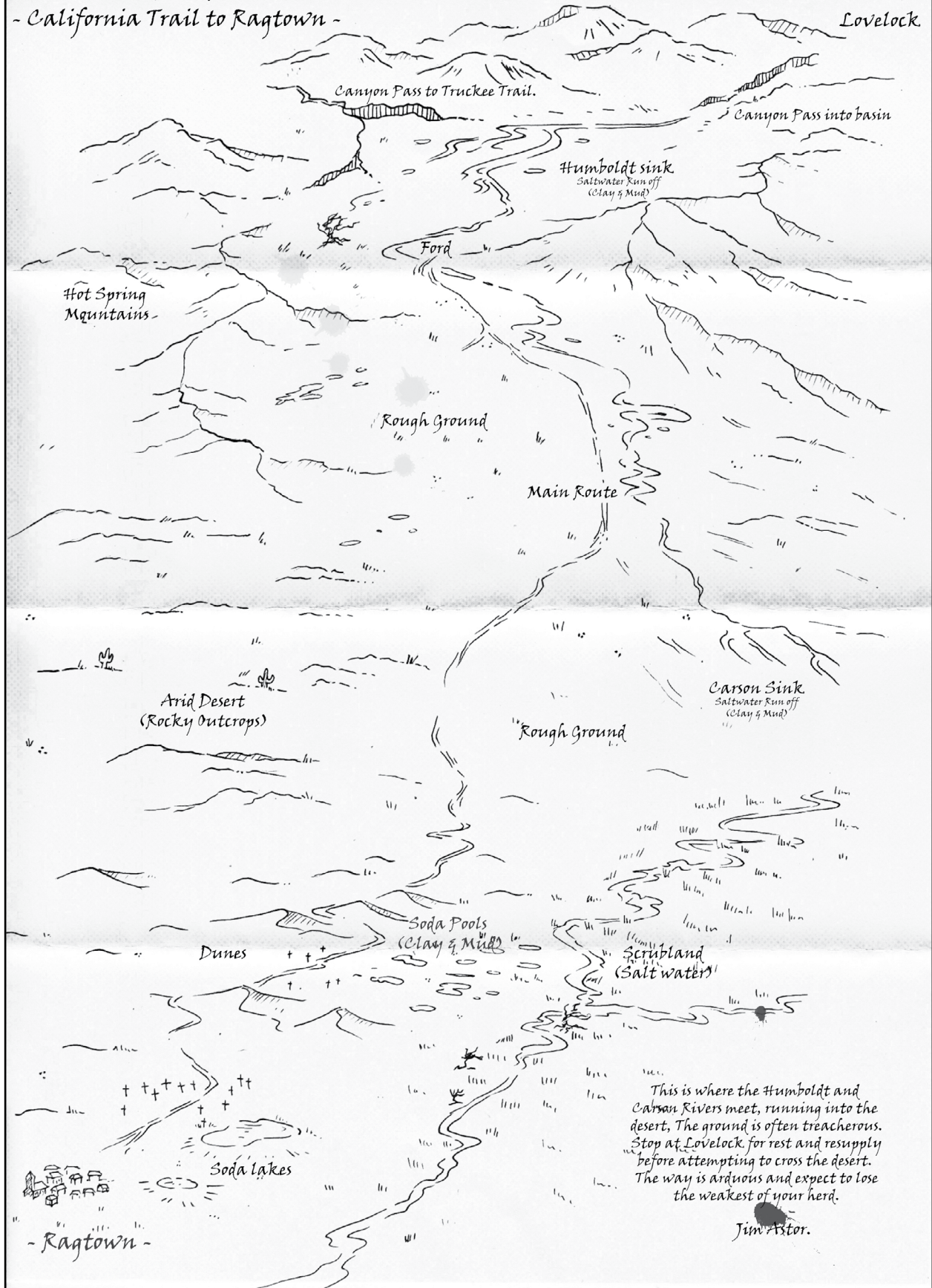


# TRAILS TO THE WEST



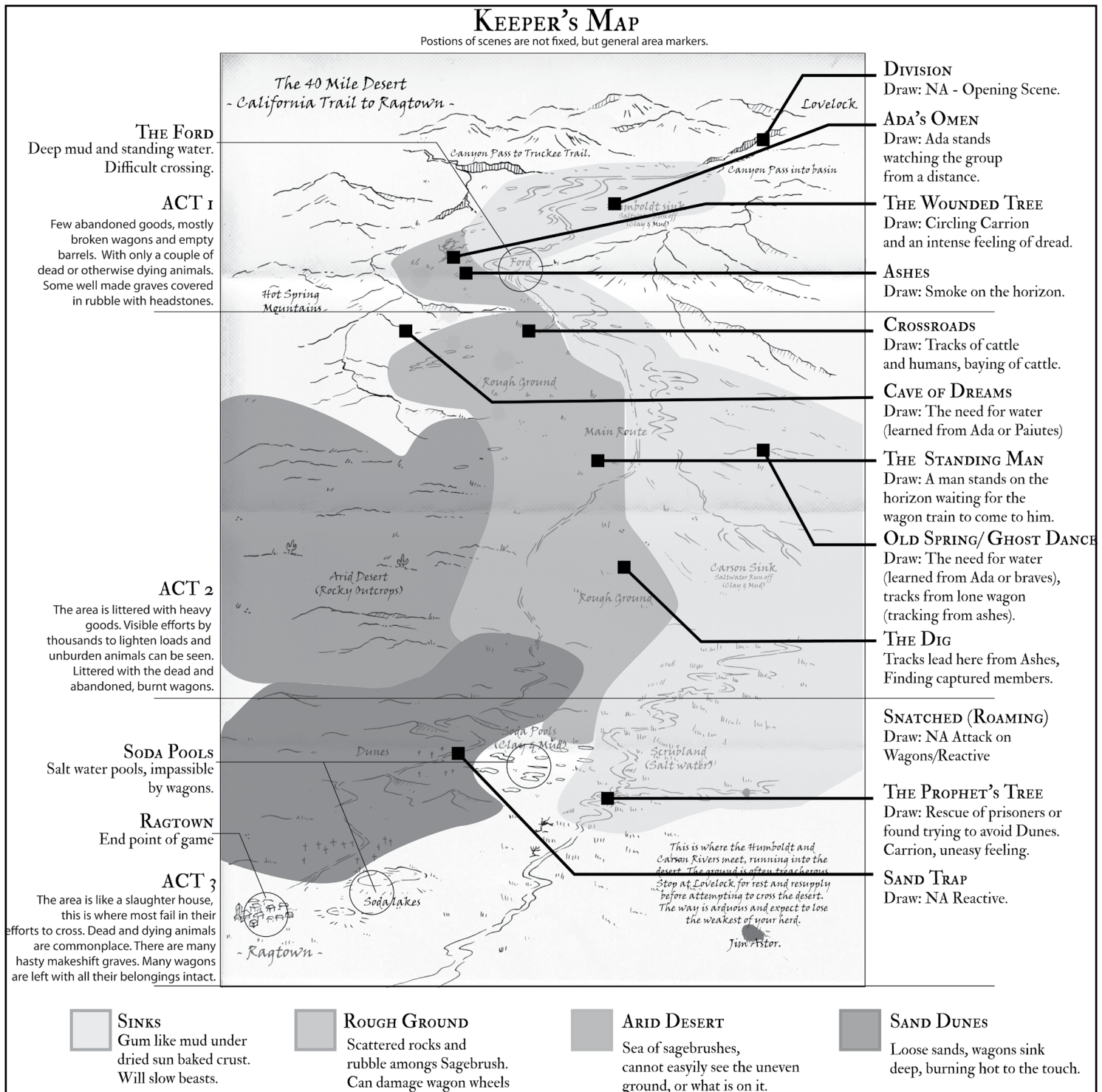
# 40 MILE DESERT

The 40 Mile Desert  
- California Trail to Ragtown -





# 40 MILE DESERT KEEPER'S MAP



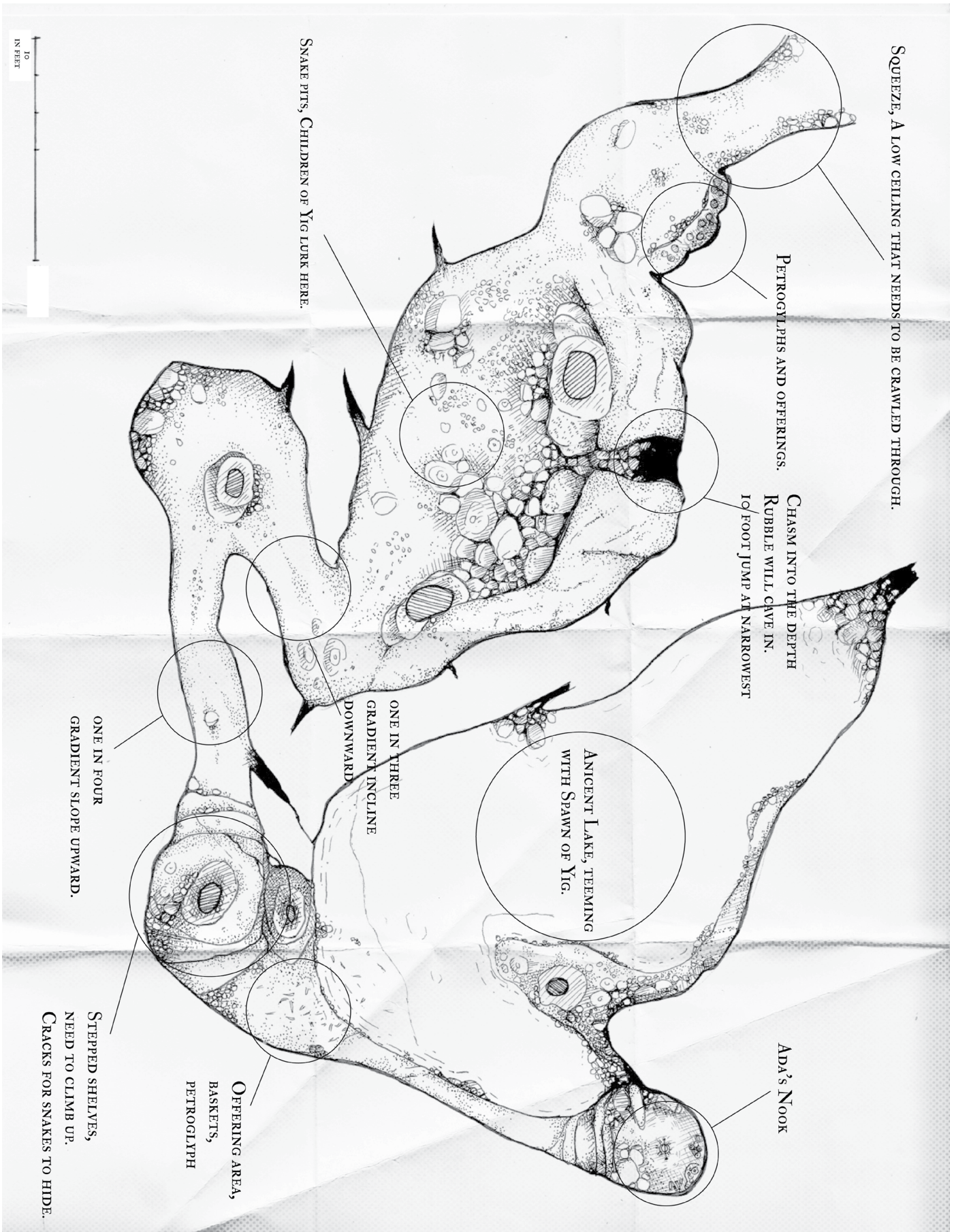


# CAVE OF DREAMS



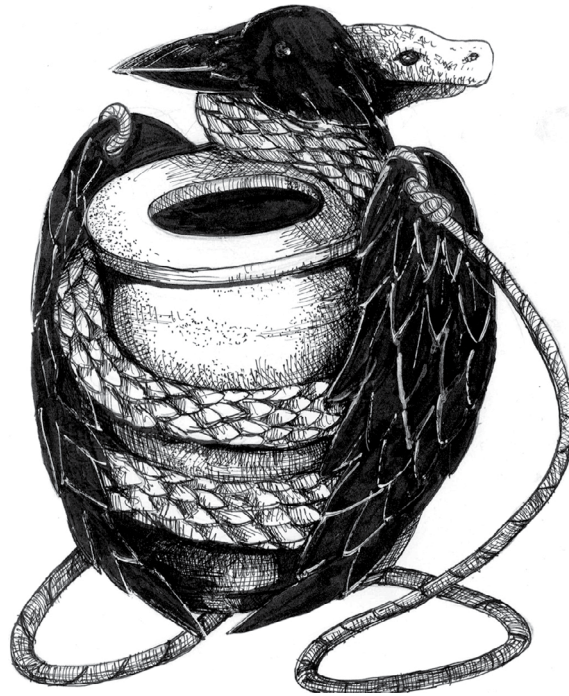


# CAVE OF DREAMS KEEPER'S MAP





## HANDOUT I



## HANDOUT 2





## HANDOUT 3

3.15 *"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."*

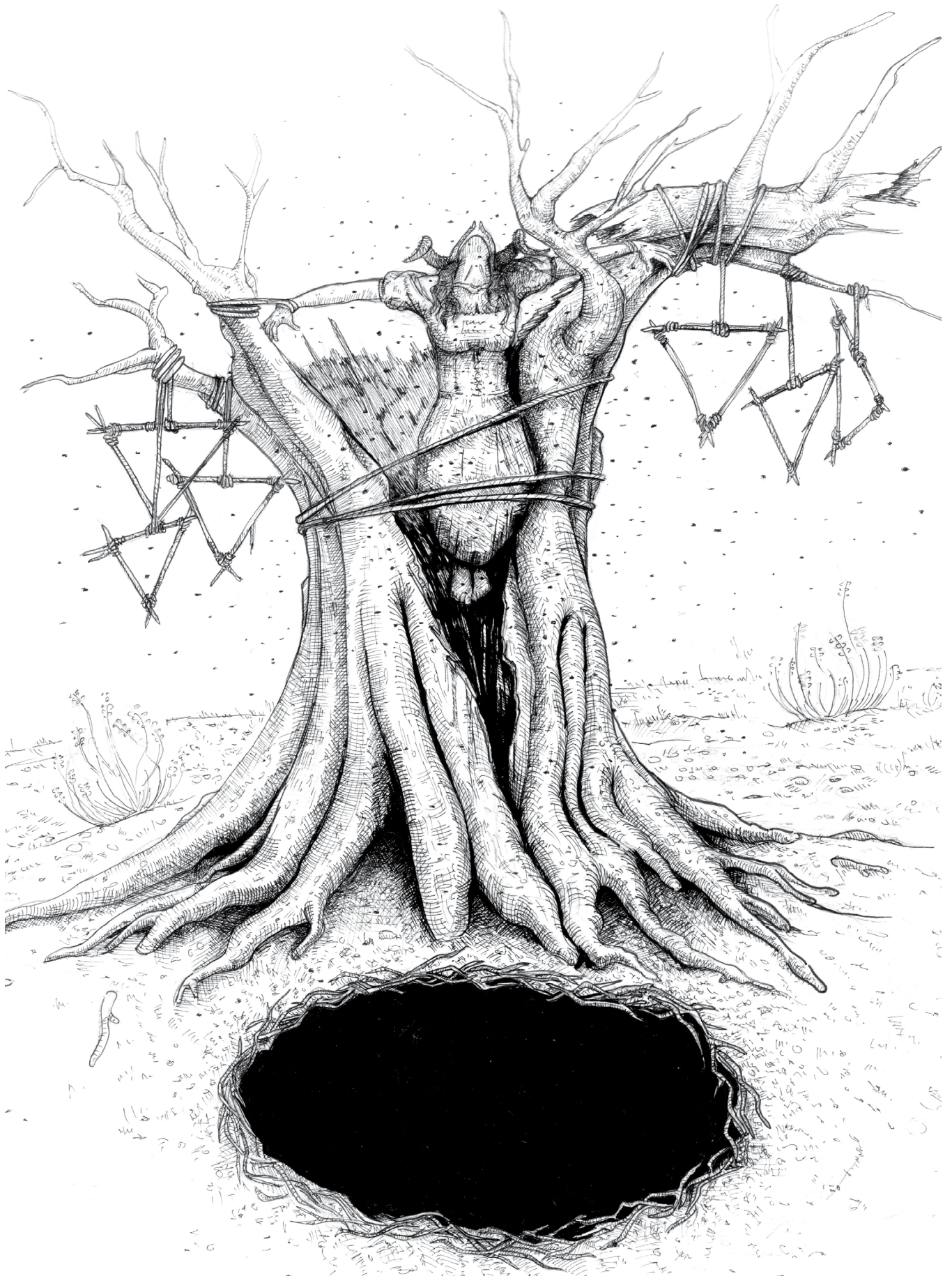
## HANDOUT 4

*The savages have circled the camp, arrows flit out the dark without a sound and John was hit an hour ago. The wound was not deep however he went into shock and has taken a turn for the worse. They say it is poison, at least his constant preaching has stopped.*

*I cannot see a way out of this until dawn. We cannot see them in the dark and we waste powder shooting at shadows, in the morning we will break out or hunt them down.*

*Russ Newton*

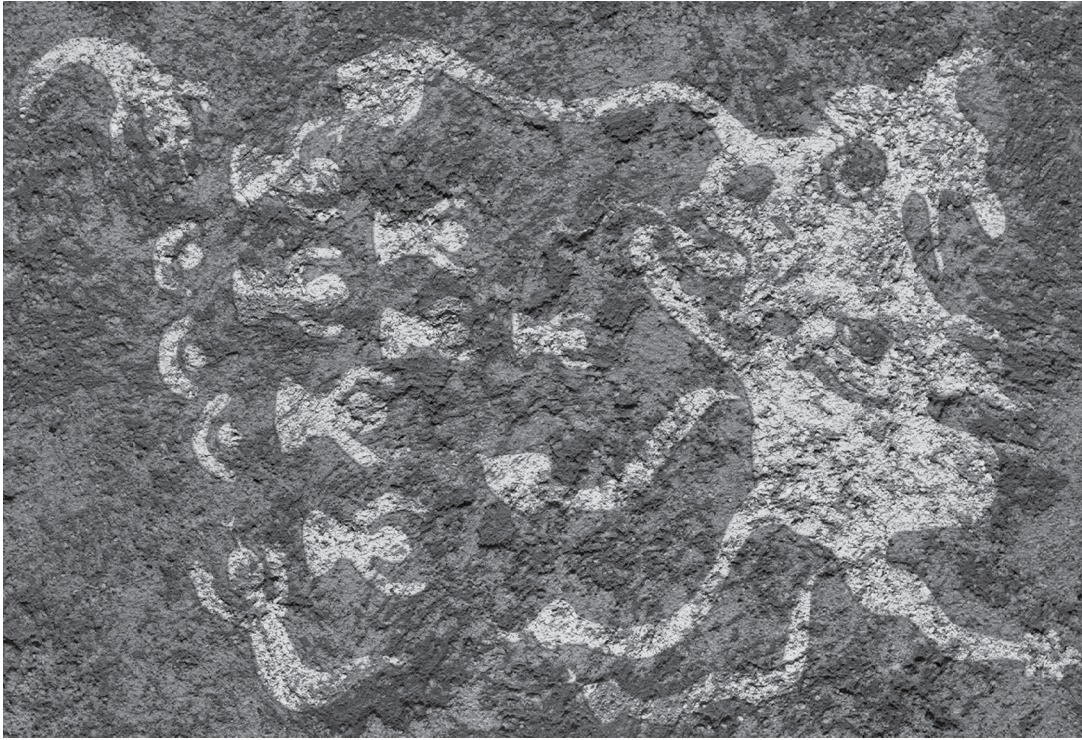
# HANDOUT 5





## HANDOUT 6

Shows worship of Yig, and offerings to the Spawn.



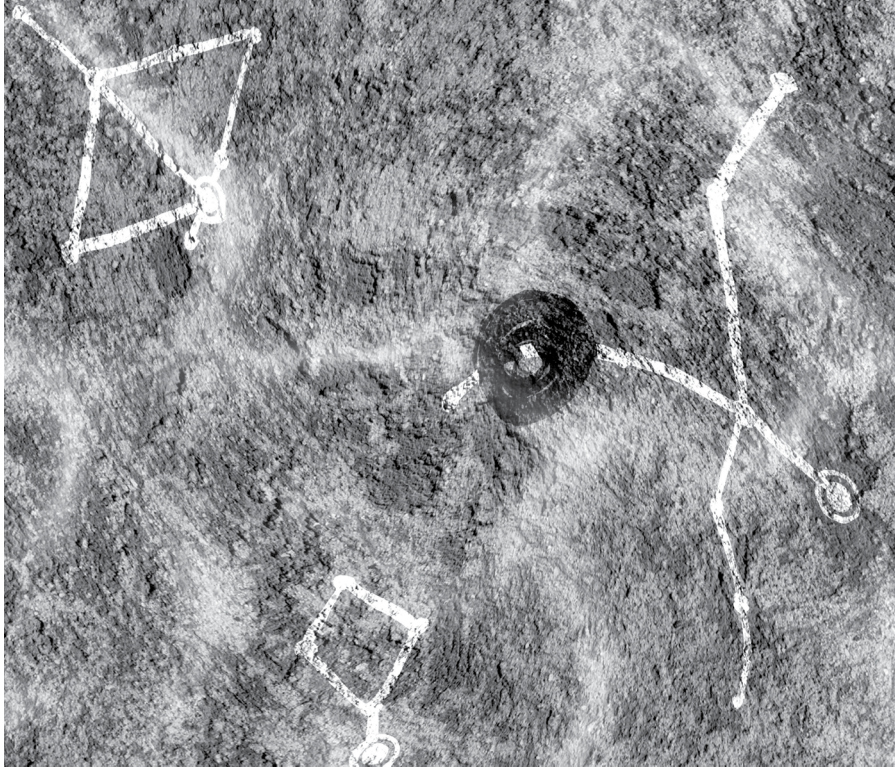
## HANDOUT 7

Abomination being born and fighting with Shub-Niggurath

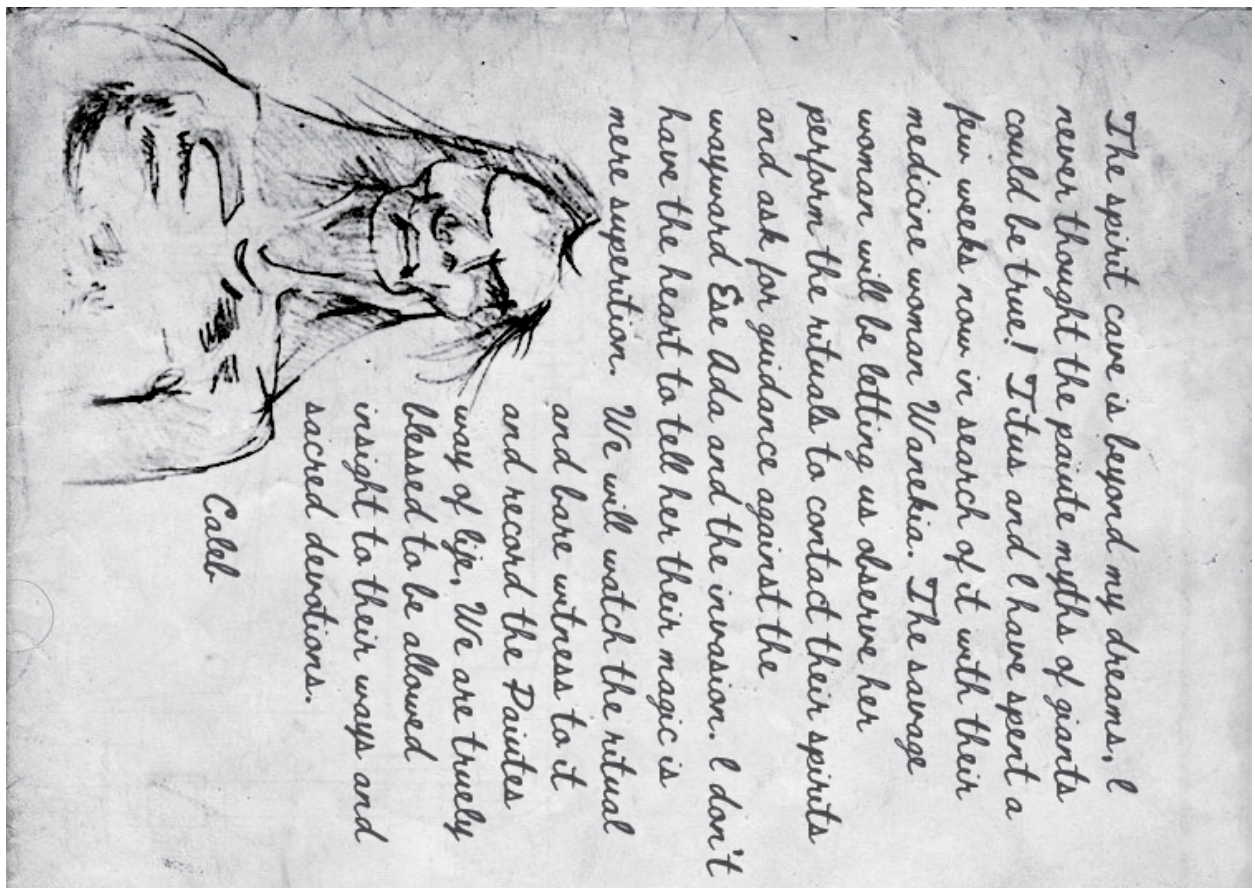




## HAND OUT 8

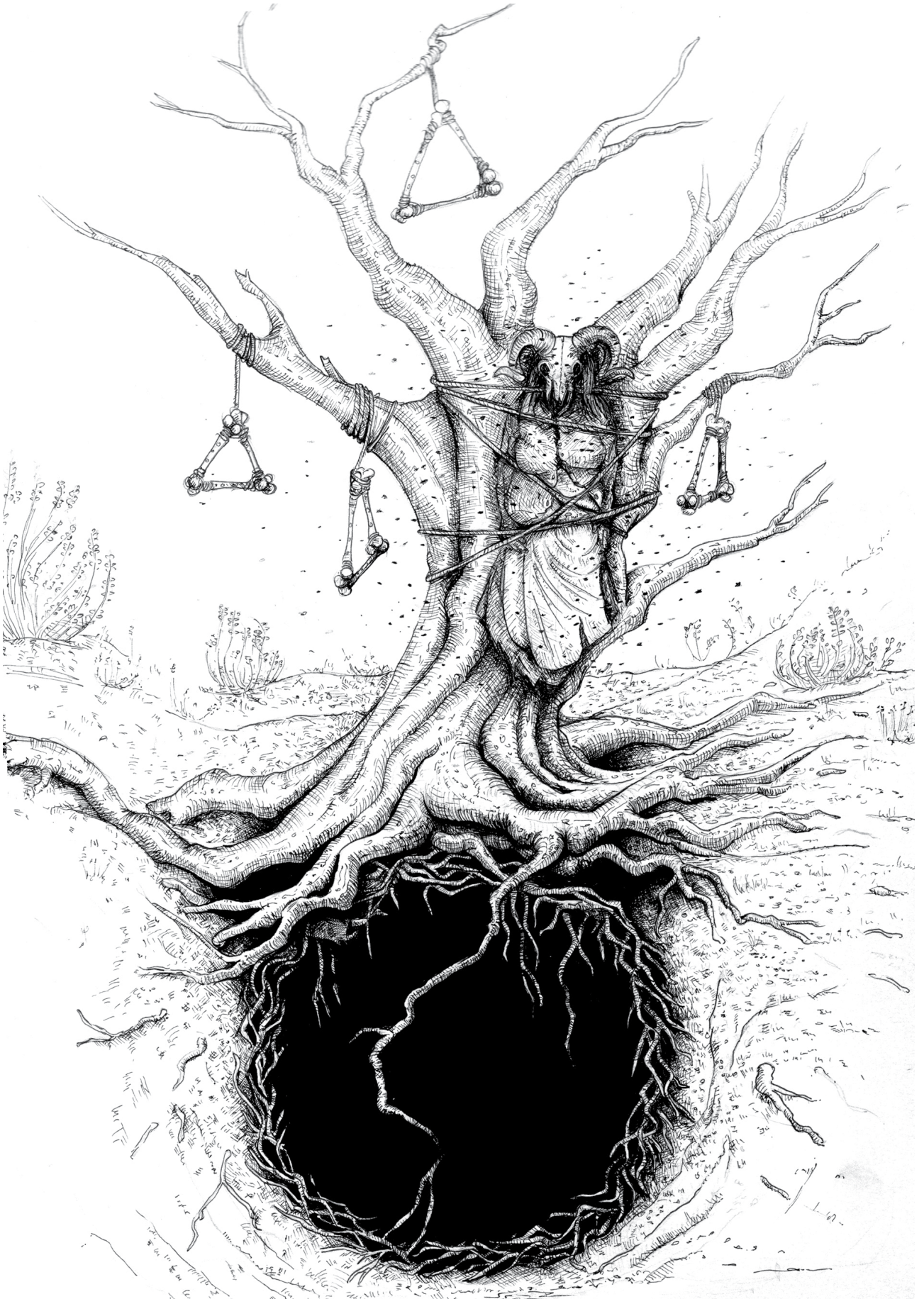


## HANDOUT 9





# HANDOUT 10



# Print, Cut, Hand to players

## The Hamiltons' Wagon

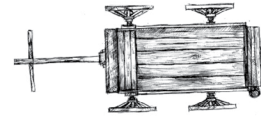


### Known Information

The Hamiltons are a Baptist pastor and wife couple heading west to bring the Lord to its misguided people. Anna convinced Obadiah to continue his crusade by following them into Illinois, travelling the state holding sermons and prayers with any local communities they came across. Where Obadiah brings spiritual guidance, Anna offers basic medical advice and aid in poorer districts. They are now heading west with the vision of building churches and helping bring down the ideas and views of the Mormons that have fled to the region.

Wagon Type: Farm Wagon  
Full Team: 2 oxen  
Total Capacity: 1300 lb

Water Needs Per day: 78  
Water Supply: 2 barrels 300



### Belongings and Supplies:

Trunk of King James Bibles  
Trunk of clothes  
Shotgun  
Month of dried food supplies  
Two bed rolls  
Basic medical supplies  
Camp Stove

## The Baclanovas' Wagon

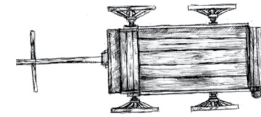


### Known Information

As Russian Jewish immigrants, the Baclanovas travelled for over a year to reach the Americas. Fleeing persecution in their homeland, they came to America for promises of a new beginning, only to arrive and find they were one of hundreds of thousands to do so. The east is bustling and dense with the poor, with more coming in each day. Using the last of their money, Alexander and Elena took another chance and joined up to the Kingsley party to move west on a new promise of gold.

Wagon Type: Conestoga  
Full Team: 4 oxen  
Total Capacity: 6000lb

Water Needs Per day: 124  
Water Supply: 2 barrels 300



### Belongings and Supplies:

Replacement wheel.  
Toolbox  
Two crates of belongings  
Two trunks of clothing  
Four bed rolls  
Locked Trunk of antiques & Jewellery  
Vintage dresser  
Sack of animal feed  
Shotgun

## The LaCombes' Wagon

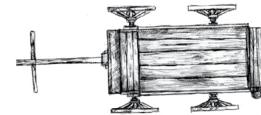


### Known Information

Growing old and bored, the LaCombe brothers decided to have at least one adventure in their life. Louis being a bank clerk and Raymond a chef, banality was the only way to describe their existence. With word of gold in the West and growing restless, they saw a chance to change. They sold what they had, bought a wagon and hired an indentured servant – Irish. Irish (John Lathom) came to America to avoid family debt that fell to him and remove himself from the prevalent problems in Ireland.

Wagon Type: Schooner  
Full Team: 2 oxen  
Total Capacity: 2000lb

Water Needs Per day: 115  
Water Supply: 2 barrels 300



### Belongings and Supplies:

One barrel of salted meat  
Three chickens (1 litre of water each per day)  
Camp stove  
Lockbox (silver \$500)  
Crate of belongings  
Toolbox  
Trunk of clothing  
Two Bedding Rolls  
Tent





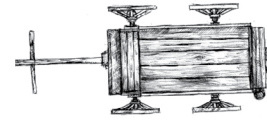


## Known Information

Captain Barnabas Kingsley put together a venture heading west as the captain of his own wagon train where he would set up a fine mining firm and win the respect he craves. To do this Barnabas partnered up with Joe, a seasoned mountain man, to do the hard work while he made up tales of riches and wonder to be found in the West, pulling together enough people to make the crossing (it being dangerous to journey alone).

Wagon Type: Schooner  
Pull Team: 2 oxen  
Total Capacity: 2000lb

Water Needs Per day: 113  
Water Supply: 2 barrels 300



## Belongings and Supplies:

Collapsible writing desk and chair  
Two trunks of new clothes for all weathers and 6 pairs of shoes  
Two army issue canteens  
Colt ring lever rifle, Plains rifle, .36 Colt Paterson  
2lb keg of black powder.  
\$5000 in Gold Ingots (wrapped up in his clothes).  
Two bed rolls & Tent  
Two weeks food supplies  
Looking Glass

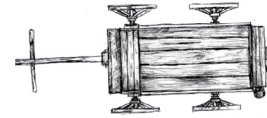


## Known Information

Mrs. Wicks is heading west to find her wayward husband, who headed out 10 months before and has not been heard from since. Left alone with their son, Isaac, to survive on savings until he returned with riches. Money ran low and she was forced to rent out his blacksmiths' shop after her husband's debts started to become evident, leaving them broke. She is very protective of her son whom she is always running after.

Wagon Type: Schooner  
Pull Team: 2 oxen  
Total Capacity: 2000lb

Water Needs Per day: 92  
Water Supply: 1 barrels 150




## Belongings and Supplies:

1 month dried food  
Replacement tongue, axle, and 2 wheel tyres.  
Toolbox  
Trunk of clothing  
Lockbox (Silver \$3000)  
Two Bedding  
Two crates of shovels and picks (to sell)  
Box of iron & lead ingots  
Sack of animal feed

*Base Identity*  
Wealthy Family  
Lives in Brother's  
Shadow

*Ideology*  
Libertine

*Personal Struggles*  
Lies to be liked  
Fails at simple tasks,  
Petty



*B. Kingsley*

*Voice*  
Charming  
Smooth  
Patronising

*Oddities*  
Smell of boot polish  
Dislikes dirt

*Significant People*  
Father  
Brother (Percival)

*Stats/Skills*

STR 50 CON 55 SIZ 50 DEX 60 INT 70  
APP 70 POW 40 EDU 70 SAN 40 HP 10

Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 8 Dodge: 30%


Fighting (Brawl) 45% DMG: 1D3+ DB, or Boot Knife Dmg: 1D4+2+DB  
Firearms (H/G) 45% 36. Colt Peterson Revolver DMG: 1D10  
Firearms (R/S) 55% Colt Ring Lever Rifle DMG: 1D10+2

Art and Craft (Painter) 45%, Fast Talk 60%, Gambling 45%, History 30%,  
Ride 30%

*Base Identity*  
Creek, Native

*Ideology*  
Violence doesn't  
work.

*Personal Struggles*  
Resigned to the loss of lands



*Joe*

*Voice*  
Gruff  
Low

*Oddities*  
Ugly, scarred

*Significant People*  
Kingsley

*Stats/Skills*

STR 65 CON 85 SIZ 60 DEX 60 INT 60  
APP 35 POW 45 EDU 25 SAN 40 HP 14

Damage Bonus: 1d4 Build: 1 MOV: 8 Dodge: 30%


Fighting (Brawl) 55% DMG: 1D3+ DB, or Antler Tomahawk: 1D8+1+DB  
Firearms (R/S) 55% Hawkins Plains Rifle DMG: 2d6+4

Skills: Intimidate 40%, Listen 45%, Drive Wagon 30%, Ride 50%,  
Occult 20%, Throw 45%, Track 30%, Survival (forest) 35%

*Base Identity*  
House wife, turned  
business woman.  
Was working Class,  
now Middle.

*Ideology*  
Catholic  
Capitalist

*Personal Struggles*  
Her place in society  
Controlling Isaac



*Abigail Wicks*

*Voice*  
Clipped  
Dismissive

*Oddities*  
Never asks for help

*Significant People*  
Husband (Fredric)  
Son (Isaac)

*Stats/Skills*

STR 40 CON 45 SIZ 50 DEX 55 INT 70  
APP 55 POW 45 EDU 65 SAN 40 HP 9

Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 8 Dodge: 28%


Fighting (Brawl) 30% DMG: 1D3+ DB, or Stiletto Knife Dmg: 1D4+2+DB  
Firearms (H/G) 40% Muff Pistol DMG: 1D8+1

Skills: Accounting 30%, Charm 50%, Drive Wagon 55%, Fast Talk 30%,  
Mech Repair 25%, Op Hvy Machine 30%, Ride 35%,  
Art and Craft (Blacksmith) 15%, (Woodwork) 25%

*Base Identity*  
Poor upbringing

*Ideology*  
Catholic

*Personal Struggles*  
Anger Issues  
Sociopath



*Isaac Wicks*

*Voice*  
Soft

*Oddities*  
Thousand Yard Stare  
Monosyllabic

*Significant People*  
Abigail Wicks (Mother)

*Stats/Skills*

STR 20 CON 40 SIZ 30 DEX 60 INT 40  
APP 50 POW 50 EDU 55 SAN 50 HP 7

Damage Bonus: -2 Build: -2 MOV: 8 Dodge: 30%

Fighting (Brawl) 25% DMG: 1D3+ DB, or Pocket Knife Dmg: 1D4+2+DB

Skills: Fast Talk 40%, Sleight of Hand 60%, Spot Hidden 50%, Occult 15%  
Art and Craft (Taxidermy) 15%, Stealth 40%

<p><b>Base Identity</b> Cynical Old man, Blunt, Banker</p> <p><b>Voice</b> Rasping</p> <p><b>Ideology</b> Never pay more than you need to. Capitalist</p> <p><b>Oddities</b> Seldom Speaks Hacking Cough</p> <p><b>Personal Struggles</b> Dying, Needs excitement</p> <p><b>Significant People</b> Brother (Raymond)</p> <p><b>Stats/Skills</b> STR 45 CON 40 SIZ 50 DEX 70 INT 55 APP 35 POW 70 EDU 50 SAN 50 HP 9</p> <p>Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 8 Dodge: 35%</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 25% DMG: 1D3+ DB Firearms (R/S) 35% 16-gauge Shotgun DMG: 4d6+2/2d6+1/1d4</p> <p>Skills: Accounting 65%, Drive Wagon 30%, Locksmith 40%, Library Use 30%, Spot Hidden 45%, Science (Mathematics) 75%</p>	<p><b>Base Identity</b> Old man, Bigot, Chef.</p> <p><b>Voice</b> Low Drawl</p> <p><b>Ideology</b> Nationalist (French descendant). Love for life</p> <p><b>Oddities</b> Always smiling, Overly helpful</p> <p><b>Personal Struggles</b> Never comfortable around others. Uprooted for his brothers sake.</p> <p><b>Significant People</b> Brother (Louis)</p> <p><b>Stats/Skills</b> STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 80 DEX 45 INT 50 APP 55 POW 65 EDU 35 SAN 65 HP 14</p> <p>Damage Bonus: +1d4 Build: +1 MOV: 7 Dodge: 23%</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 25% DMG: 1D3+ DB Firearms (R/S) 40% Mississippi Rifle DMG: 2d6+1</p> <p>Skills: First Aid 35%, Law 20%, Listen 50%, History 25%, Medicine 20%, Intimidate 30%, Ride 30%, Science (Botany) 25%, Arts and Craft (Cook) 60%</p>
<p><b>Base Identity</b> Intellectual, Book Smart, Indentured Servant.</p> <p><b>Voice</b> Measured, Calm</p> <p><b>Ideology</b> Catholic</p> <p><b>Oddities</b> Calculating</p> <p><b>Personal Struggles</b> Conflict between his catholic upbringing and his studies.</p> <p><b>Significant People</b> Himself.</p> <p><b>Stats/Skills</b> STR 55 CON 55 SIZ 45 DEX 60 INT 65 APP 55 POW 70 EDU 90 SAN 70 HP 10</p> <p>Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 9 Dodge: 30%</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 25% DMG: 1D3+ DB, or Boot Knife DMG: 1D4+2+DB</p> <p>Skills: Anthropology 45%, Charm 40%, Gambling 40%, Library Use 50%, Psychology 55%, Science (Philosophy) 60%</p>	<p><b>Base Identity</b> Traumatized Child Ruined Life</p> <p><b>Voice</b> Soft</p> <p><b>Ideology</b> Catholic</p> <p><b>Oddities</b> In constant horrific pain.</p> <p><b>Personal Struggles</b> Family is missing, saw father tortured to death. Alone in the world.</p> <p><b>Significant People</b> Family (all are dead)</p> <p><b>Stats/Skills</b> STR 40 CON 50 SIZ 45 DEX 75 INT 55 APP 10 POW 55 EDU 45 SAN 25 HP 9</p> <p>Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 8 Dodge: 50%</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 25% DMG: 1D3+ DB, or Tarnished Bowie Knife DMG: 1D4+2+DB</p> <p>Skills: Arts and Craft (Dancer) 65%, Arts and Craft (Musician) 50% Arts and Craft (Acting) 40% Stealth 40%</p>







Alexander		Elena	
<p><i>Base Identity</i> Jewish Russian, antique dealer by trade.</p> <p><i>Ideology</i> Jewish</p> <p><i>Personal Struggles</i> Providing for his family Feels like a failure.</p>	<p><i>Voice</i> Thick Accent</p> <p><i>Oddities</i> Very protective</p> <p><i>Significant People</i> Wife (Elena) Child (Andrei) Child (Olga)</p>	<p><i>Base Identity</i> From Altai mountains, deep roots in tribal society of Siberia</p> <p><i>Ideology</i> Shaminism</p> <p><i>Drive &amp; Motives</i> Protecting family</p>	<p><i>Voice</i> Warm, Comforting</p> <p><i>Oddities</i> Looks more Native than Russian</p> <p><i>Significant People</i> Husband (Alexander) Child (Andrei) Child (Olga)</p>
<p><i>Stats/Skills</i></p> <p>STR 60 CON 55 SIZ 45 DEX 55 INT 55 APP 45 POW 50 EDU 55 SAN 70 HP 10</p> <p>Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 9 Dodge: 28%</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 25% DMG: 1D3+ DB Firearms (H/G) 35% Pinfire Pistol DMG: 1d6+1</p> <p>Skills: Anthropology 45%, Appraise 20%, History 70%, Library Use 35%, Occult 20%, Ride 30%, Spot Hidden 50%, Language Other (English) 60%</p>		<p><i>Stats/Skills</i></p> <p>STR 45 CON 40 SIZ 50 DEX 70 INT 55 APP 60 POW 55 EDU 45 SAN 55 HP 7</p> <p>Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 8 Dodge: 35%</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 25% DMG: 1D3+ DB</p> <p>Skills: , Charm 40%, Fast Talk 40%, Natural World 40%, Occult 55%, Spot Hidden 50%, Language Other (English) 30%, Arts and Craft (Musician) 50%</p>	
<p><i>Base Identity</i> Young boy, displaced, Always travelling.</p> <p><i>Ideology</i></p> <p><i>Personal Struggles</i> Doesn't respect his father</p>		<p><i>Voice</i> Whines</p> <p><i>Oddities</i> No awareness</p> <p><i>Significant People</i> Mother (Elena) Sister (Olga)</p>	
<p><i>Stats/Skills</i></p> <p>STR 50 CON 40 SIZ 45 DEX 55 INT 50 APP 25 POW 65 EDU 25 SAN 65 HP 8</p> <p>Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 9</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 25% DMG: 1D3+ DB</p> <p>Dodge: 33%</p> <p>Skills: Listen 40%, Rope Use 25%, Trap 30%,</p>		<p><i>Base Identity</i> Young girl, displaced, always travelling.</p> <p><i>Ideology</i></p> <p><i>Personal Struggles</i> Her mothers fussing</p>	
		<p><i>Voice</i> Childish</p> <p><i>Oddities</i> Always joyful</p> <p><i>Significant People</i> Father (Alexander) Mother (Elena) Brother (Andrei)</p>	
		<p><i>Stats/Skills</i></p> <p>STR 20 CON 35 SIZ 35 DEX 45 INT 40 APP 45 POW 50 EDU 20 SAN 50 HP 7</p> <p>Damage Bonus: -2 Build: -2 MOV: 8</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 25% DMG: 1D3+ DB</p> <p>Dodge: 23%</p> <p>Skills: Animal Handling 30%, Stealth 30%, Spot Hidden 30%</p>	

<p><i>Base Identity</i> Catholic Preacher, Activist, North States upbringing.</p> <p><i>Ideology</i> Catholic, Firebrand</p> <p><i>Personal Struggles</i> Hatred for Mormons and capitalists.</p> <p><i>Stats/Skills</i> STR 55 CON 40 SIZ 60 DEX 70 INT 70 APP 45 POW 70 EDU 60 SAN 70 HP 10</p> <p>Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 9 Dodge: 35%</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 25% DMG: 1D3+ DB Firearms (R/S) 45% 10-gauge Shotgun DMG: 4d6+2/2d6+1/1d4</p> <p>Skills: Art and Craft (writer) 45%, Charm 60% Drive Wagon 30%, Fast Talk 40%, Library Use 40%, Occult 35%, Spot Hidden 50%, Science (Astronomy) 35%</p>	<p><i>Voice</i> Commanding</p> <p><i>Oddities</i> Sighs before correcting someone</p> <p><i>Significant People</i> Wife (Anna) Anyone he feels needs him Good Christians</p> <p><i>Base Identity</i> Catholic, South State upbringing, Run away slave.</p> <p><i>Ideology</i> Make do with what you have.</p> <p><i>Personal Struggles</i> Finds it hard to trust people. Cannot say no to someone that is suffering.</p> <p><i>Stats/Skills</i> STR 60 CON 55 SIZ 45 DEX 55 INT 60 APP 55 POW 65 EDU 45 SAN 55 HP 10</p> <p>Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 9 Dodge: 28%</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 25% DMG: 1D3+ DB</p> <p>Skills: First Aid 45%, Law 20%, Listen 50%, History 25%, Medicine 20%, Persuade 30%, Psychology 20%, Ride 30%, Science (Biology) 25%</p>
<p><i>Base Identity</i> Old Medicine Man, Elder, Paiute</p> <p><i>Ideology</i> belief in Puha</p> <p><i>Personal Struggles</i> Conflict between himself and Tso'apa</p> <p><i>Stats/Skills</i> STR 60 CON 70 SIZ 60 DEX 45 INT 90 APP 45 POW 95 EDU 35 SAN 30 HP 13</p> <p>Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 8 Dodge: 23%</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 45% DMG: 1D3+ DB, or Enchanted Stave DMG: 1d6+1 Firearms (H/G) 45% Blowpipe DMG: 1+ Strong Poison (2d10)</p> <p>Skills: First Aid 55%, Cthulhu Mythos 40% Listen 50%, History 60%, Medicine 40%, Occult 70%, Persuade 60%, Science (Botany)</p> <p>Spells: Align Paviut, Coyote Dust, Command Ghost, Winds of Desolation, Healing, Song of Yig (chant of warding), Call Yig, Fang of Yig (this is currently active), Dream Vision, Send Sacred Snake.55%,</p>	<p><i>Voice</i> Low Gravelly</p> <p><i>Oddities</i> Never gives direct answers.</p> <p><i>Significant People</i> The Paiute People</p> <p><i>Base Identity</i> Trickster Spirit</p> <p><i>Ideology</i></p> <p><i>Personal Struggles</i></p> <p><i>Stats/Skills</i> STR 15 CON 30 SIZ 20 DEX 100 INT 120 APP 55 POW 90 EDU 50 MP 20 HP 7</p> <p>Damage Bonus: -2 Build: -2 MOV: 4/20 Dodge: 50%</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 25% DMG: 1D3+ DB</p> <p>Notes: Cannot be harmed by conventional weapons, only magical items. Will only attack if Ada is threatened. Can fly.</p> <p>Spells: Curse, Dominate, Dream Vision. Drown Mind, Instant Enlightenment, Send Sacred Snake, Liquid Death, Wither limb.</p>

SAN 1/1D3		SAN 1/1D4	
Base Identity Protector	Voice Slurred	Base Identity Parasite	Voice Whistling hiss
Ideology None	Oddities Lays dormant	Ideology None	Oddities Whips about
Personal Struggles Being eaten from within	Significant People The Parasite	Personal Struggles To feed, find protection.	Significant People The Seed Bearer
Stats/Skills STR 90 CON 90 SIZ 100 DEX 40 HP 19 Damage Bonus: +1d6 Build: +2 MOV: 7 Dodge: 0% Armour 1 2 attacks per round. Fighting (Brawl) 65% DMG: 1D4+ DB Notes: The Seed Bear Feels no pain, Its skin turning rubbery and thick. Bullets do half damage. Once dead the parasite will leave the host.		Stats/Skills STR 55 CON 45 SIZ 45 DEX 90 HP 7 Damage Bonus: 0 Build: -2 MOV: 12 Dodge: 40% Fighting (Bite) 45% DMG: 1D3+ mild poison, Burrow 55%, The parasite tries to enter a new host, Target roll CON, if failed the parasite starts eating its way into them. DMG 1D3 per round, Opposed STR to remove. Notes: Instinct: The parasite will seek safety of the ground or taking a new host over fighting if it is removed before its ready, otherwise it will look for food	
SAN 1D3/1D10		SAN 1D6/1D20	
Base Identity Wrath of Yig	Voice Low multiple hisses	Base Identity Wrath of Yig	Voice Cacophany of hisses
Ideology Worships Yig	Oddities	Ideology Worships Yig	Oddities
Drive & Motives To feed	Significant People Ese Ada	Drive & Motives	Significant People Ese Ada
Stats/Skills STR 70 CON 50 SIZ 90 DEX 75 HP 15 2 Attacks or 1 Crush Dodge: 45% Armour 1 Fighting (Claws/Bite) 55% DMG: 1d4 + Strong poison. Hug (Mnvr) 60%, following rounds auto crush, 2d10. Skills: Listen 70%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 50%, Tunnel 70%* Notes: Can find anyone by vibration and movement *As an action during a chase it can choose to tunnel, gaining speed And a surprise attack with a successful opposed stealth roll. Affected by The Rhythm of life		Stats/Skills STR 200 CON 200 SIZ 300 DEX 70 HP 50 6 Attacks or 1 Crush Dodge: 35% Armour 6 Fighting (Bite) 55% DMG: 3d10 Crush (Mnvr) 60%, following rounds auto crush, 3d10+DB Firearm (Harpoon) 60%, DMG: 1+ Strong Poison, Following a hit Drag target to Abomination with opposed Str roll. Range 20 yards. Skills: Listen 70%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 40%, Tunnel 90%* Notes: Can find anyone by vibration and movement. *As an action during a chase it can choose to tunnel, gaining speed and a surprise attack with a successful opposed stealth roll Affected by The Rhythm of life	



SAN 1/1D8		SAN 0/1			
<p><i>Base Identity</i> Born from a human that was cursed by Yig</p> <p><i>Ideology</i> Worships Yig</p> <p><i>Personal Struggles</i> To create a new cult of Yig</p>	 <p><i>Spawn of Yig</i></p>	<p><i>Voice</i> Lisping</p> <p><i>Oddities</i> Aggressive</p> <p><i>Significant People</i> Yig Ese Ada</p>	<p><i>Base Identity</i> Blessed by Yig, Guardian</p> <p><i>Ideology</i> Worships Yig</p> <p><i>Drive &amp; Motives</i> Yigs Will.</p>	 <p><i>Children of Yig</i></p>	<p><i>Voice</i> Hiss</p> <p><i>Oddities</i> Oversized</p> <p><i>Significant People</i> Yig Ese Ada</p>
<p><i>Stats/Skills</i></p> <p>STR 80 CON 90 SIZ 55 DEX 90 HP 9</p> <p>Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 9 Dodge: 65% Armour 1</p> <p>2 Attacks or 1 crush Fighting (Claws/Bite) 45% DMG: 1+ Strong poison. Hug (Mnvr) 60%, following rounds auto crush: 2d4.</p> <p>Skills: Listen 50%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 50%, Swim 80%</p> <p>Notes: The spawn move and act more snakelike than Human.</p>		<p><i>Stats/Skills</i></p> <p>STR 30/40 CON 40/40 SIZ 20/30 DEX 90/90 HP 6/7 (Diamondback/Sidewinder)</p> <p>Damage Bonus: n/a Build: -2 MOV: 8/9 Dodge: 45%</p> <p>1 Attacks per round. Fighting 50% DMG: 1+ Strong Poison</p> <p>Skills: Stealth 70%</p> <p>Notes: A successful First Aid roll will half the damage from poison as the venom is sucked out, or immediate amputation. Affected by The Rhythm of life</p>			
<p><i>Base Identity</i> Chosen by a God to lead a new age. Head Strong</p> <p><i>Ideology</i> Belief in Puha</p> <p><i>Personal Struggles</i> The need to control every aspect of his destiny</p>	 <p><i>Yadoo Tso'apa</i></p>	<p><i>Voice</i> Commanding</p> <p><i>Oddities</i> Thousand Yard Stare</p> <p><i>Significant People</i> The Paiutes</p>	<p><i>Base Identity</i> Old medicine woman, Cruel.</p> <p><i>Ideology</i> Belief in Puha</p> <p><i>Personal Struggles</i> Was overshadowed by Ese Ada, Personally seeks revenge.</p>	 <p><i>Wanekia</i></p>	<p><i>Voice</i> Mumbling</p> <p><i>Oddities</i> Seems to see but eyes look like they have bad cataracts</p> <p><i>Significant People</i> Tso'apa</p>
<p><i>Stats/Skills</i></p> <p>STR 65 CON 55 SIZ 60 DEX 80 INT 55 APP 55 POW 55 EDU 35 SAN 45 HP 11</p> <p>Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: +1 MOV: 9 Dodge: 50%</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 55% DMG: 1D3+ DB, Large Club DMG: 1D8+DB Fighting (Spear) 60% DMG: 1d8+1+D</p> <p>Skills: Animal Handling 40%, Charm 60% Cthulhu Mythos 30% Intimidate 80%, Climb 50%, Jump 20%, Occult 45%, Natural World 70%, Ride 60%, Throw 70% Track 60% Trap 25%</p> <p>Note: Wears Ghost Paint unless Wanekia is killed.</p>		<p><i>Stats/Skills</i></p> <p>STR 45 CON 40 SIZ 40 DEX 35 INT 75 APP 35 POW 80 EDU 50 SAN 40 HP 7</p> <p>Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 7 Dodge: 18%</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 25% DMG: 1D3+ DB, Ritual Stone Knife DMG: 1D4+2+DB</p> <p>Skills: First Aid 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 40% Intimidate 50%, History 60%, Medicine 20%, Occult 70%, Persuade 20%, Science (Botany) 50%, Arts and Craft (Musician) 60%</p> <p>Spells: Dismiss Spirit, Divination, Command Spirit, Healing, Dominate, Denisovan Dust (Enchanted Dust of Anubis) Contact Spirits of the Dead. Create Ghost Paint, Summon Dark Young</p>			

Print, Cut, Staple.	
<p><i>Base Identity</i> Zealous braves, given over to total devotion.</p> <p><i>Ideology</i> Puha Xenophobic</p> <p><i>Personal Struggles</i> Facing the extinction of their own race, Following the unknown</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Stats/Skills</i></p> <p>STR 55 CON 55 SIZ 45 DEX 60 HP 7</p> <p>Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 MOV: 9 Dodge: 30%</p> <p>Fighting (Brawl) 55% DMG: 1D3+ DB, Stone Knife DMG: 1D4+2+DB Fighting (Spear) 40% DMG: 1d8+1+DB Firearms (R/S) 45% Short Bow DMG: 1D4+1/2+DB</p> <p>Skills: Animal Handling 30%, Cthulhu Mythos 10%, Climb 30%, Jump 20%, Throw 45%, Ride 30%, Track 30% Trap 45%, Arts and Craft (Musician) 30%</p>	<p><i>Voice</i></p> <p><i>Oddities</i> Protective Aggressive</p> <p><i>Significant People</i> Mother Wanekia Tso'apa</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Stats/Skills</i></p> <p>STR CON SIZ DEX INT APP POW EDU SAN HP</p> <p>Damage Bonus: Build: MOV: Dodge:</p> <p>Fighting</p> <p>Skills:</p>
<p><i>Base Identity</i></p> <p><i>Ideology</i></p> <p><i>Personal Struggles</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Stats/Skills</i></p> <p>STR CON SIZ DEX INT APP POW EDU SAN HP</p> <p>Damage Bonus: Build: MOV: Dodge:</p> <p>Fighting</p> <p>Skills:</p>	<p><i>Voice</i></p> <p><i>Oddities</i></p> <p><i>Significant People</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Stats/Skills</i></p> <p>STR CON SIZ DEX INT APP POW EDU SAN HP</p> <p>Damage Bonus: Build: MOV: Dodge:</p> <p>Fighting</p> <p>Skills:</p>



“Forty memorable miles of bottomless sand, into which the coach wheels sank from six inches to a foot. We worked our passage across. That is to say, we got out and walked. It was a dreary pull and a long and thirsty one, for we had no water. From one extremity of this desert to the other, the road was white with the bones of oxen and horses. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that we could have walked the forty miles and set our feet on a bone at every step! The desert was one prodigious graveyard. And the log chains, wagon tires, and rotting wrecks of vehicles were almost as thick as the bones.”

*Mark Twain, “Roughing it”*

