

Barn Burner

A Deadlands Reloaded Adventure

For 3-4 Heroes of Novice Rank

By Winfred King

This adventure was designed for a single session. It should not be used for a posse's first adventure. The adventure assumes that the posse has already performed a few noteworthy deeds that some folk may have heard about.

Background

Finney County, Kansas is a brand new entity. The local population just grew large enough this last year to justify official recognition of the area as a county by the state government. With this recognition comes the necessity for a county commissioner. Given that Kansas remains a democracy, an election is required to find the best candidate.

The adventure begins with all members of the posse being invited to a party to celebrate the announcement of *Calvin Sterling's* candidacy for County Commissioner. The party is held in the largest barn in the county erected on the Roberts family farm.

A dark and evil being is threatened by all of this promise of civilization. An ancient skinwalker has been the true power in the area over the last few decades. The skinwalker has taken on the identity of a figure known as *Cullen d'Heard*, a legendary half-breed trapper. Cullen has set in motion a devious plan to destroy this new threat to his power. He plans to kill Calvin Sterling and all his followers, setting back progress for another decade.

Realism and Arms

Let's face it. The players will be inclined to take all of their weapons to the dance, even though this would be seen as in poor taste by the security officers overseeing the party. Inform the players that the invitation states in fine print that all dangerous items will be confiscated at

the door. To entice the players to attend the party unarmed, the Marshall should offer two extra bennies for those who go completely unarmed and a single benny for those who go only with some sort of concealed arm such as a small knife or Derringer.

Innocent Bystanders

Obviously something dark and sinister is going to go down at the party. When everything goes to hell, the heroes will have to contend with a barn full of frightened partiers and innocent bystanders. Use the following statistics when needed.

Typical Partygoer

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

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts, d4, Notice d6

Charisma 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 4; Toughness: 4

Cullen's Evil Plans

The skinwalker's goal is to send the rest of the county a message, warning them against too much progress and civility. First, Cullen removes Sterling's four chief supporters from the party. The security team members then reveal themselves as turncoats. They shut and bar all doors to the barn, trapping everyone inside. They then lower the lift down to the ground floor filled with explosives. Then Cullen has Calvin Sterling brought up to the top floor where he can be skinned alive. When this is done and Calvin's identity is assumed, the explosives are detonated and the barn and occupants destroyed.

The posse may thwart or interrupt any of these plans at any time during the course of the adventure.

Scene One:

Party Like its 1878

The posse attends the party as a group, but may separate to pursue their own agendas. A stage is set up in the center of the barn with a dance area established in front of it. A band plays just off to the side of the stage. Food and drink are served from a designated area in the northwest corner.

Barbequed pork is the main dish. There is also a display where the party attendants can vote on a choice of three different designs for the official county seal, which will be incorporated into the flag.

Calvin Sterling interrupts the dance briefly for a short speech. He acknowledges the efforts of four leading citizens, local business owners who sit on the stage with him. When finished, he goes to work the crowd, shaking hands and kissing babies. As Calvin circulates throughout the room, he approaches the posse. He tells them that he has heard some stories about their exploits, was eager to meet them, and wishes to set a meeting with them concerning a problem in the county. While Calvin is talking to the heroes, his four loyal supporters are called away upstairs. The posse should be unaware of this, however.

Chaos Erupts

The Marshal should be familiarized with the layout of the barn before the action starts. The upper levels of the barn can be accessed in two ways. Stairwells are built into certain corners of the building. These are guarded at all times by the security guards. There is also an elevator platform that moves up and down in the center of the structure. The elevator is controlled on the platform itself with ascension requiring hand power.

Shortly after Calvin speaks with the posse, Cullen announces his presence to the heroes by hanging four of Sterling's underlings. The four men are simply kicked off the side from the next story above through the opening through which the elevator platform passes. The bodies hang over the heads of the crowd below. This causes chaos to erupt and requires a Guts check if viewed. All of the vigilantes are spread out around the outside of the building making sure that those trapped inside do not escape. They have locked and barred the doors. They occasionally fire bullets into the side of the barn for fun and to reinforce the danger they represent to those people inside.

False Bodyguards (10)

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts, d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8

Charisma 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: -

Edges: Quick Draw

Gear: Winchester '76 (24/48/96, 2d8, AP 2), Colt Peacemaker (12/24/45, 2d6+1, AP 1), corn knife (machete) (d6+d6), 30 .45 rifle rounds, 30 .45 pistol rounds.

The locations of all of Cullen's men are indicated on the map. They take up these positions once their plan has been initiated. The vigilantes are not above killing unarmed people.

If the posse should happen to secure the bottom floor and keep Calvin Sterling free and alive, he tells them what he knows about the situation. He tells how a rival governmental power in the county has existed from its inception. This power network is ruled by a mysterious figure that goes by the name of Cullen d'Heard. Calvin has had several meetings with this individual and has been doing some secret investigations. He has reason to believe that there is something supernatural about him. Cullen and his followers have opposed all progress in the county. They have driven out settlers in certain areas and attacked government workers and officials. Indians and other old-timers claim that Cullen's father was an Indian shaman.

Lowering the Boom

Shortly after hanging Calvin's supporters, Cullen's security guards lower the elevator platform to the ground floor loaded with explosives. The large pile of explosives consists mainly of dynamite and kegs of powder. The detonator line runs up the chains of the lift then out a window to the plunger hidden well away at a safe distance. If a hero can get close enough to defuse the explosives without getting shot, a successful Repair roll does the job. If possible, the Marshall should avoid having the explosives detonated.

Scene Two: Loft Party

Once the party finds a way to get to the next floor, the adventure moves to Scene Two. Large piles of hay, straw and even piles of grain take up most of the floor space on this level. The posse must wind there way around these piles to get around. Hidden behind a pile on the western side of the barn is a group of the vigilantes that have grabbed a trio of the most attractive women from the crowd downstairs along with a pair of musicians. They have forced the musicians to play and one of the women to dance and disrobe.

Vigilantes (4)

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts, d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8

Charisma 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: -

Edges: Quick Draw

Gear: Winchester '76 (24/48/96, 2d8, AP 2), Colt Peacemaker (12/24/45, 2d6+1, AP 1), corn knife (machete) (d6+d6), 30 .45 rifle rounds, 30 .45 pistol rounds.

The Remains of the Day

Also, as the posse is searching over this level, they find, on a successful Notice roll, the shed skin of Cullen's former disguise. They also find the skinned remains of Sterling's brother. The skin was hastily stashed into a haystack and the hero happens to notice a piece of it protruding from the pile. Viewing the skin and body requires a Guts check

Scene Three: Thinned Skin

When the posse reaches the uppermost floor of the barn, the adventure moves into Scene Three. If the posse manages to make it this far, the skinwalker has realized that someone is opposing him and has prepared for this eventuality. Cullen waits for the posse on the southern side of the top floor. Unless the elevator platform has been raised to this level, a

long drop down looms nearby. When the posse arrives on the scene, they see a man who looks similar to Calvin Sterling sitting on the wooden floor huddled together with Calvin Sterling's wife and daughter. If approached, the man introduces himself as James, Calvin's younger brother.

Hopefully the players realize that something is amiss with the situation. The skinwalker has killed Calvin's brother and taken on his skin. Through threat of violence, Cullen has coerced Calvin's family to play along. If possible, Cullen attempts to maintain the disguise in order to survive. He claims that Cullen d'Heard is responsible for the carnage and has just escaped out the window. Once his presence is discovered, he turns on the posse and attacks.

Cullen d' Heard Skinwalker (Wild Card)

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d12, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Stealth d12

Pace: 5; Parry: 7; Toughness: 6

Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** d8+d6
- **Disguise:** -4 Notice roll to detect disguised skinwalker
- **Fear (-1):** A Guts roll (-1) is required when first seeing a skinless skinwalker.

If the battle starts to go against him, Cullen attempts to escape out a window on the western side. A long knotted rope hangs down the side. Cullen's original plan was to climb down this rope once everything was in place and then detonate the explosives.

Ending the Adventure

Once the posse has secured the barn, Sterling approaches them with thanks and gratitude. The brand-new Finney County dubs them honorary heroes of the county for all time and gives each a \$100 reward, a side of beef, a new dining room set and a new custom-tailored suit or dress in gratitude.

BARN
BURNER
MAP

□ = 4 yards

Ⓟ = Vigilante

