



El Brujo is an adventure for the unofficial Hollow Earth Expedition plug-in Old West HEX.

This adventure is meant for 2-5 experienced heroes of any Archetype. The opposition is quite formidable; but the GM can easily adjust the difficulties, number of adversaries and their strength fitting to his group. The adventure assumes that the heroes are willing to help a desperate woman, even if they don't get paid a fortune. The tone of the adventure is grim and dark, but the action scenes have pulp potential.

The adventure is heavily based on the Western film *The Missing* (2003), which I recommend watching.

The adventure contains some Indian magic as described in Old West HEX, but the GM can easily ignore the mystical aspects; the adventure will work just as well without Indian curses and medicine bundles. You can easily play the adventure strictly historical, but even then the GM should let the players wonder if El Brujo (an Apache witch) actually is capable of Magic or if there is another explanation. Magic - real or not, superstitious or religious heroes should have enough opportunities to gain style points, as should especially sceptical characters.

Plot synopsis

A dangerous gang of outlaws is terrorizing the area of Southern New Mexico, settlers and ingenious tribes alike. These bandits prey on young women, which they abduct from isolated farms or settlements and sell south of the border as slaves.

The gang is lead by the Apache renegade known as El Brujo (Spanish: Witch, sorcerer). El Brujo

is a brutal and dangerous sociopath, feared and hated by Whites, Mexicans and Indians alike. Even his own gang is not safe from his wrath. The Apache gang members, however, see in El Brujo a kind of a dark priest and are fiercely loyal to him.



The outlaws take advantage of the fact that the U.S. army and the tribes of the Apache and Navajo fight their guerrilla war, which makes it quite easy to cover their crimes as war incidents.

The heroes enter the scene when they stumble over the last victims of El Brujo's gang, the widow Sarah Wilkinson whose older daughter Margret got abducted in her mother's absence, while the fore-man of the farm got tortured to death. The widow asks the heroes to help getting her daughter back.

The heroes agree to escort Sarah Wilkinson and her second daughter to the town of Greendale where Sarah Wilkinson wants to look for more help. In Greendale the heroes learn that there is a considerable price on El Brujo's head as well as on any of his gang members. The local marshal, however, is not willing or able to provide men



and the military is occupied otherwise. The heroes are on their own.

During the following man hunt the heroes will stumble over the remnants of a farm “visited by El Brujo, encounter natural hazards and wary Indians. They will find a gang member about to be punished by angry Chiricahua warriors and may gain unlikely allies.

In the end the heroes are able to free some or all of the girls. But a furious El Brujo is hot on their tails and it comes to a final stand at the ruins of an old Spanish church.

Prelude

Sarah Wilkinson received a call for helping as a midwife on a neighbouring farm. Meanwhile, Jackson Howard, the fore-man, was to take ranch hand Jorge Morales and the Wilkinson daughters out for catching and marking cattle. It was during that activity that they got surprised by El Brujo and his gang. Morales managed to hide the younger Wilkinson daughter, Dorothy under a fallen tree, and tried to fight the bandits, dying in the attempt. The fore-man and Margret were caught alive; the girl was added to El Brujo’s growing group of captives. Howard was not than lucky. Sewn in a hide hanging from a tree, the bandits tortured him to death by roasting him slowly over a fire.

Sarah Wilkinson

(Range hand /Love)

Style: 3

Health: 5

Body: 2

Charisma: 3

Dexterity: 3

Intelligence: 3

Strength: 2

Willpower: 3

Size: 0

Initiative: 6

Move: 5

Defense: 5

Perception: 5

Stun: 2

Skills:

Animal handling 6, Guts 6, Knowledge: Herb lore 6, Firearms(Rifle) 4(5), Lingo (Spanish) 5, Medicine 7, Persuasion (Bargain) 4 (6), Ride 6, Survival (Tracking)4 (7)

Talents / Resources:

Healer

Flaws:

Stubborn

Weapons:

Sharps rifle (1) 4L Attack: 9L 40/80/160/161+

Sarah Wilkinson is a tall, fair woman in her early thirties. Although she lost her husband to an accident 5 years ago, Sarah has kept her strong will and determination. She resolutely takes care of the farm and earns some extra money with her medical skills.

Sarah is a caring mother who would do anything for her family. Any hero looking for a romance, however, should be warned; Sarah would never allow her to fall in love with an adventurer, who could leave her and her girls alone. She may open up a little for any hero who she perceives as honest, diligent and polite, but will keep her distance. Loud-mouthed or rude heroes will be treated with cool politeness and a pinch of disdain, but she will keep herself in reigns as she needs the heroes to rescue her daughter.

When Sarah came back she saw that two of the horses (Dorothy’s and Jorge’s) had returned to the farm, saddled. Uneasy, she found the house empty, packed her old Sharps rifle and left to search for the others.

In the woods Sarah found the fireplace, with Howard still hanging in the hide from the tree. Before she could investigate further, Dorothy called out. Sarah found her cold, dehydrated and in a state of shock, but otherwise unharmed. She took her youngest girl home. The heroes arrive just a short time after that...

Scene 1 – The Wilkinson ranch

The heroes’ arrival at the farm

The adventure assumes that the heroes travelling the South West without any pressing or urgent errant.

“After a long journey in the saddle, sleeping under the stars, you stumble over a small ranch in the hills. Maybe you can get some warm food and a cosy corner in the barn for sleeping. At least you could freshen up your supplies.”

“As you come closer, you recognize some strange details: There are no people in the yard, but three saddled horses stroll around, as if the riders just jumped off and left the horses for them selves. The front door of the main building stands open.”

The heroes may approach as cautious as they want to. Let them make Stealth and Perception rolls. The barn has a workshop and a fenced area attached to it. There are some hogs, goats and chicken strolling around within the fences, but no people are to be seen. When the heroes go up the porch into the main house, let them make another **Stealth roll (Average 2)**. If successful, they surprise Sarah and Dorothy in the girl’s room. Sarah tries to grab her rifle. If the heroes fail the Stealth roll, Sarah closes and jams the girl’s room door with a chair, trying to flee through the window.

The heroes must persuade Sarah that they mean no harm if they want her to put down the rifle (**Persuasion roll, Tough 3**). If the heroes do no set aside their weapons, increase the Difficulty to **Very Hard (5)**.

When Sarah is calmer, she explains the strange welcome and details the events as far as she knows (Dorothy could explain some of what



happens to her). As far as she knows is Margret still alive. A successful **Knowledge: Folklore, Indian customs or Criminals roll (Average 2)** would strengthen that assumption, as the heroes would have heard about slave trading across the border. She begs the heroes to help her finding her older daughter. The GM should reward Style points for heroes who react to the pledge according to their archetype, motivation or flaws.

Sarah has not much to offer, about \$70, but hopefully the heroes *are* heroic and help a damsel in distress. Even if the heroes do not agree, they probably will escort Sarah and Dorothy to Greendale. Sarah wants Dorothy to stay with her cousin Walter Wilkinson, a shopkeeper in Greendale, while she searches for Margret with the heroes. If the heroes have not agreed yet, she hopes to find help there.

Sarah also asks the heroes to get the remains of Howard and Jorge for a decent burial.

The Torture site

The site lies about half an hour on horse back into the woods. The place stinks of burnt flesh and death; Howard still hangs over the fire place which smokes slightly. A bird is nailed to the tree where Howard hangs, and there are strange markings in the ground around the fire place. A **Ritual roll (Average 2), Knowledge: Folklore (Hard 4) or Indian customs (Tough 3)** reveals that these markings are used by followers of the Witchery Way – Evil medicine men or Witches as they are called by the Indians.

This is a good opportunity for superstitious or sceptical characters to gain style points for appropriate behaviour. A character with the Faith motivation (Indian or other) could perform some prayers, or plainly refuse to get closer. The GM should make clear that something really bad has happened here. Warriors, Mystics and any character with motivations like Faith, Justice, Love, Redemption and the like should by now be convinced to help Sarah to find her girl and dispose the World of some evil.

Cutting down the remains of Howards requires a **Guts roll (Tough 3)**. Jorge's body can be found after a successful **Perception roll (Average 2)** which takes about 10 minutes. If the Perception roll was unsuccessful, the heroes are allowed another roll for every 10 minutes of searching.

A successful **Survival (Tracking) roll (Average 2)** will reveal in which direction the bandits left

(SW). With two additional successes the heroes can even tell that there were quite many horses, about 15 to 20.

The heroes should take the remains of Jorge and Howard back to the Wilkinson farm. The burials take about 2 hours. After that, Sarah packs her and Dorothy's things and they head for Greendale, hopefully accompanied by the heroes.

Scene 2 – Greendale

“You arrive at Greendale after a one-hour ride from the Wilkinson farm. Greendale appears to be a small tidy town, living of timber production and trade with the surrounding farms and ranches. Although it is late in the afternoon, the main street is bustling with activity, as the citizens are busy to prepare a festival. It seems that the town is going to celebrate its 10th anniversary!”

Sarah wants to visit the marshal's office first, reporting the events.

The marshal's office

In the office a small elderly fellow introduces himself as Marshal Jeremiah Purdy (use County sheriff from Old West HEX if needed). Sarah explains what happened to the marshal who seems to get more and more concerned. She demands that the marshal rounds up a posse immediately! Purdy, however, declines, saying that he cannot spare a single man because of the up-coming festival. He informs Sarah and the heroes further that requesting the army would not of great use either as a cavalry troop passed through just 2 days ago, hunting another group of Apache renegades. Purdy has enough compassion, however, to tease the heroes into help, if they have not agreed already. He informs them that there is a price on an Apache renegade's head whose actions fit those described by Sara and the heroes. *The felon is known under the name El Brujo, the reward is \$300, dead or alive. Each member of his gang is worth another \$40.*

Cousin Wilkinson

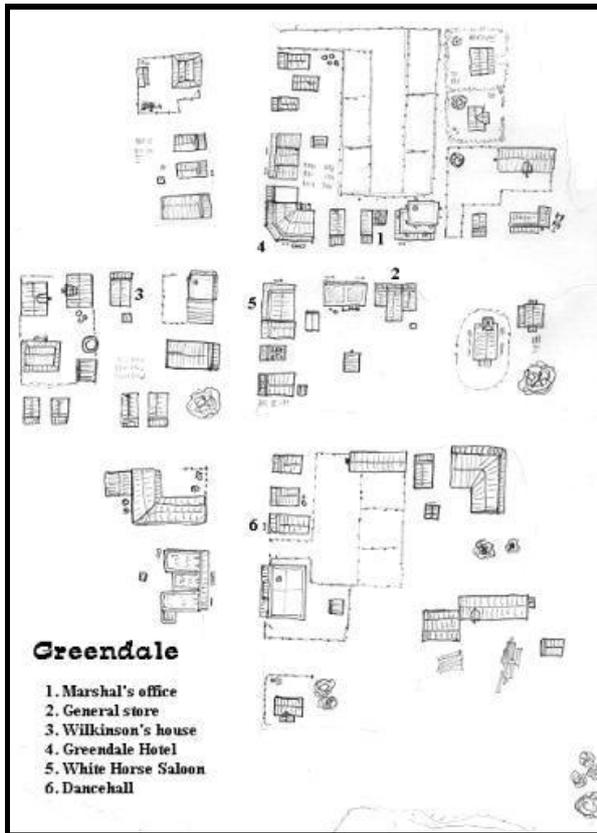
After visiting the marshal's office Sarah heads for the house of her cousin Walter who owns the General store of Greendale (use Business owner from Old West HEX if needed). Walter is shocked by the events. He is no fighter or outdoor man, but wants to help. He can afford to



give Sarah \$100 which she can use to buy Margret free. As it is too late in the day for pursuit, he offers the heroes a place to stay over night. Two heroes can have a room in his house; additional heroes can sleep in the back room of his General store. Walter will provide ammunition, provisions and other reasonable equipment. (He may also offer the heroes a reward, if they still are hesitant!).

The heroes might want to explore the town in the evening. There are a couple of lively saloons, as the town is in a celebration mood. The best place for a “friendly” poker game, for instance, would be the White Horse saloon.

Early next morning, the heroes leave to hunt down the kidnapers. Sarah will accompany them, no matter what they say, leaving Dorothy in the custody of Walter and his family. For doubting heroes Sarah points out that she is used to out-door life, a good rider and a healer.



Picking up the trail

The best way to start the hunt probably is the torture site, following the tracks. Sarah will point this out if necessary.

Picking up the trail is an **Easy (1) Survival roll** due to the size of the bandit group. If no-one of the heroes has the Survival skill, let Sarah do the

scouting: just give her a Survival (Tracking) rating of 7. To stay on the trail, the heroes (or Sarah) should make an **Average (2) Survival roll** every 4 hours. A failure means they lose 4 hours, searching for tracks. Remember modifiers for ground, weather and light conditions.

While on the trail the GM may choose to throw in any type of encounter, using the Travel encounter table on page 33 in the Old West HEX supplement. The following Indian tribes are most likely encountered in the area: Apache, Comanche, Kiowa, Navajo or Zuni.

Scene 3 – The raided farm

The trail leads the heroes south towards the Mexican border, as expected.

“Late in the afternoon, you spot a small farm. The tracks of the bandits are leading towards the buildings consisting of a barn, some storage buildings and the main house. It seems El Brujo and his gang has paid a visit to these homesteaders. There are dead animals lying around, some pigs, a cow and a number of chickens. You cannot make out any horses or people!”

The farm was indeed raided by El Brujo during the last night, killing most of the farmers and stealing any valuables.

The heroes may suspect that bandits are still there and proceed cautiously. Let them make **Stealth rolls (Easy 0)** and a **Perception roll (Average 2)**. Heroes, who make the Perception roll, can see already from distance that a dog is nailed to the door of the farm house. 1 additional success let the heroes hear a faint crying from inside the main house; it sounds like a baby!

The sight inside the farm house is shocking; two male bodies are lying mutilated on the floor of the main room, surrounded by mystical symbols painted in blood and animal parts.

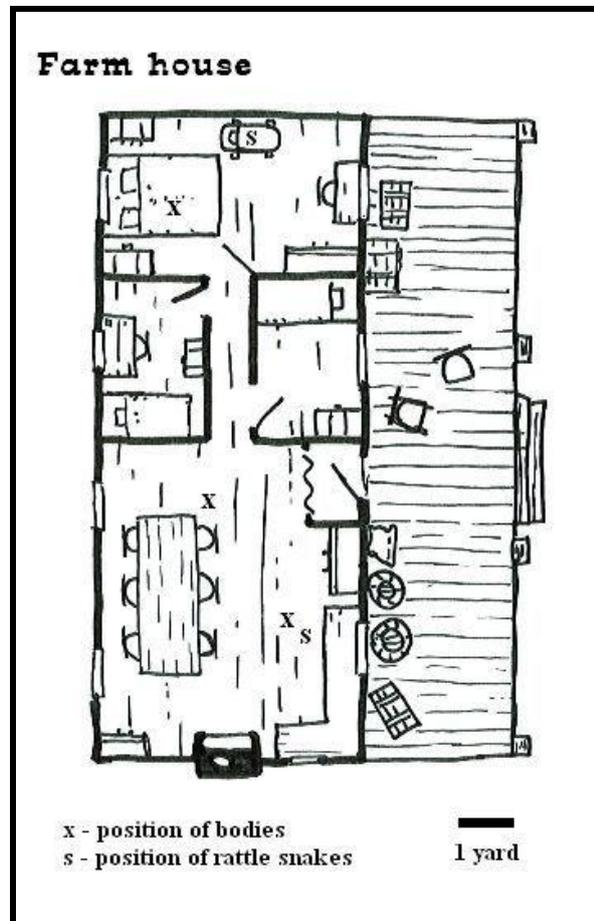
Everyone must make an **Average (2) Guts test** just to enter the house. While in the house, all rolls are at -2 due to shock and nausea. Reduce the penalty by 1 per success on the Guts roll.

Those who dare to search the house find the farmer’s wife lying dead in the bed in the largest sleeping room. A baby is lying beside her, dehydrated and crying. Searching the house for clues and the like takes about 30 minutes and requires an **Average (2) Investigation roll**. Success reveals that the farm belongs to the Svendson family, which – according to a quite



new picture – consisting of Svendson sr. and his wife, and their son (obvious resemblance to the father) and daughter in law who just became parents themselves. The heroes will recognize that the daughter in law is not among the bodies.

But any investigation is probably interrupted by El Brujo's trap.



The Trap

El Brujo used his version of the Beast summoning ritual to call and bind four rattle snakes, as a nasty surprise for any investigator. The rattlers are hidden at several places inside the house. One hides beside the bodies in the main room, attacking any person who tries to move them. Another is hidden in the cradle, ready to bite any person who takes out the baby's blanket or rug doll. The GM may place the other two snakes where he likes. The rattlers are aggressive and do not warn anyone who comes close by their typical sound. Heroes examine the house must make a **Hard (3) Perception roll**; a success means the hero saw the rattler in time to withdraw, failure means the rattler surprises the hero with its attack (Passive defense only). After their discovery the rattlers

will attack until killed. Fortunately, Sarah is never without the proper herbs and her knowledge can probably reduce the effects of the rattler poison.

4 Rattlers

Rattle snakes are common all over the South-West. Older rattlers can get over 2 yards long.

Primary attributes: Body 1, Dexterity 4, Strength 2, Charisma 0, Intelligence 0, Willpower 2

Secondary attributes: Size -1, Move 4, Perception 2, Initiative 2, Defense 6, Stun 1, Health 2

Skills: Brawl 4, Stealth 6, Survival 2

Talents: -

Weapons: Bite 4L

Poison: If the rattle snake causes at least 1 wound, the victim gets poisoned.

Toxin rating: 4 **Damage:** 2L **Recovery:** 2 (6 successes)

A rattle snake's poison is quite potent and may kill a man. The first effects of the poison show up after 1 hour when the victim becomes feverish. Body rolls thereafter represent 4 hours.

Option for a game without magic

El Brujo has caught 4 rattlers and placed them in the house; one is in the cradle, the rest moves around. The snakes behave naturally, but are somewhat vexed. Any hero, who comes close to one of them (except the one in the cradle which will bite without warning, Perception roll as above), will hear their rattle warning. If cornered the snakes will attack otherwise they will try to get away.

Choices

The heroes now have to make some choices; Sarah insists that the dead get a decent burial, which will take about 4 hour for one man to do. Additionally, there is the baby which must be taken care for. Taking the baby along on the hunt is obviously not an option, any hero suggesting this will have to face Sarah's wrath. Riding back to Greendale will cost too much time, so the most practical solution is that someone rides back to Greendale with the baby and reports to the marshal, while the rest continue the pursuit.

Sarah, being probably the only person who knows something about babies, will agree hesitantly to take the baby back to town, but will not suggest that on her own.

If one or two of the heroes want to take the baby to Greendale, they may try to catch up later on. The GM may get some comic relief in this task as gunslingers, gamblers or mountain men take care of the baby. "What does babies drink?" "Dunno! Mellow Old Kentucky, I reckon!"

Scene 4 – New Mexico Flood

“It is now the second day after you left the raided farm, but you do not seem to catch up. You cannot get rid of the feeling that El Brujo knows that he is followed. But may be it is just that the bandits know the terrain better than you. At noon you have come to the ridge of the plateau you were riding over for the last hour or so; the only way down seems to be a rocky canyon.”

The heroes have followed the track of the bandits for two more days. They found the remnants of a night camp the other day, but beside that it seems El Brujo drives his gangs relentlessly on, whereas the heroes must slow down after dusk, as the tracks have become harder to follow: the rocky terrain adds a **-2 penalty** to the **Average (2) Survival roll**.

Let the heroes make a **Survival roll (Tough 3)** when they ride down into the canyon. Success will let them notice that the weather is about to change; it will start to rain soon. On **an additional success**, the heroes will reckon that they should better get clear of the canyon by then, as rain fall can result in sudden floods in these parts.

If the heroes make their Survival rolls and decide to wait entering the ravine until the weather has passed, they loose halve a day on El Brujo, get cold and miserable in the rainstorm, but are otherwise safe.

If they do not read the signs or decide to push on, the rainstorm will be over them sooner as predicted. They are only half way through the narrow canyon, when it arrives. The first signs of the storm are the strong wind and heavy clouds darkening the sky and within minutes a drenching rain is pouring down on them.

The heroes should make a **Tough (3) Perception roll** a short while after the storm hit. A success warns them of the coming flood, as they hear a rumbling behind them. The sound is at first difficulty to hear above the noise of the storm, but it gives them about 1 minute to evacuate to higher ground, which requires an **Easy (1) Athletics roll**. Unfortunately, it is no possible for the horses to follow up the steep sides of the canyon.

If the heroes did not hear the flood coming, let them make another **Perception roll (Easy 1)**. On a success, they have just 2 actions to react

(**Average 2 Athletics test** to climb safe), or get hit by the flood.

The GM should make the scene as dramatic as possible. Heroes who get hit by the flood should make **Athletics (Swimming) rolls** and/or **Strength rolls** to keep their heads over water and hold on to a branch or rock. Heroes who made it up on the canyon’s slopes may try to follow their lesser fortunate companions, reaching out helping hands and throwing lariats.

In the end the GM should not use this scene to kill off the heroes, just beat them tender (1-2N damage or so). Let them use Style points, but don’t forget to grant points for good action either!

During the night the storm lessens and eventually stops; and the heroes can begin to recover their belongings. Finding their stuff is an **extended action (8 successes necessary)**. The heroes may use any reasonable skill for searching: **Investigate, Perception or Survival**. Each roll equals 1 hour of search. Gunpowder and muzzle loaders (which also includes Cap and ball guns) must dry for a couple of hours, and most of the dried food has become useless if not packed water-proof. Fancy clothes have become less fancy and the breeches start to shrink. The GM could use the chance to get rid off unwanted equipment.

All horses survived the flood, as the heroes find them grazing on the plain below the ravine. The horses are bruised, but most can continue the journey. Only one has broken a leg and has to be shot. If they don’t have a spare horse (e.g. a pack horse), two heroes have to share a mount from now on. At least, El Brujo had to wait for the storm to pass, as well.

Scene 5 – The Spirit pit

“Aching and tired after the night in the storm, you ride on towards the Mexican border. Or have you already crossed it? At least you are dry again as the sun burns as hot as ever. But the heavy rain has erased most of the tracks, so your only hope is to continue south! ...but wait, was that a gunshot?”

The heroes hear a couple distant gunshots ahead, but cannot make out the battle. If they decide to check out what happened, it takes them the better part of two hours through the difficult terrain. If they are still able to make out tracks after the bandits, these will lead the same way.



Finally, the heroes approach a large pit in the terrain, approximately 30 yards in diameter and about 3 to 4 yards deep. An **Easy (1) Athletics roll** is necessary to get down into the pit, an **Average (2) roll** to get out again.

The pit at first looks quite empty, little rubble and no vegetation; but there are for two features:

The first feature is a set-up of four large rocks standing between 2 and 4 yards high. The other feature is a man buried in the middle of the pit, only the head above ground. As soon as the man hears or sees the heroes, he starts screaming for help.



What happened before?

Earlier that day, El Brujo recognized that he was followed, not by the heroes, but by someone more dangerous (in his opinion). A group of Chiricahua Apache whose tribe El Brujo has “visited” before, and abducted two women. Although his men outnumber the Chiricahua, El Brujo is not too eager to pick up a fight just now. Close to his hide-out, he can defend himself easily there, without risking losing slaves. He decides to delay the Chiricahua by leaving 2 of his men in an ambush behind. El Brujo chooses two of his gringo followers, as he thinks he can afford to lose those more than other members of his gang.

The two bandits, fearing El Brujo more than the Chiricahua, stay behind waiting for the Indians to come close. The ambush fails, however, and the Chiricahua kill one and capture the other bandit.

As a punishment and to appease the spirits, they bury him leaving only his head exposed to the burning sun. This is how the heroes find Sam Mewell, opportunistic low-life and member of El Brujos gang.

What happens next?

The heroes can not know at first that Sam Mewell is a member of El Brujo’s gang; they may even think he is a victim of the witch. Sam will tell them he is a drifter who got caught by Indians. If they ask about El Brujo, he will pretend that he never heard of him.

It takes one man 30 minutes to dig out Sam with a shovel. A maximum two men can work at the task simultaneously, halving the digging time. If the heroes do not have proper digging tools, triple the digging time, but in this case three men can work at the same time.

Unfortunately for the heroes, the Chiricahua were watching the pit, and are not pleased with interference in their ritual punishment. If the heroes have left someone outside the pit, let this guard make an **Average (2) Perception roll** to see the Indians approaching. This gives them 10 minutes before the Chiricahua arrive. Otherwise, a rifle shot close to some hero’s head will make clear that they are under attack.

6 Chiricahua warriors
(Warrior / Revenge)

Style: 0	Health: 4	
Body: 2	Charisma: 2	Dexterity: 3
Intelligence: 2	Strength: 2	Willpower: 2
Size: 0	Initiative: 5	
Move: 5	Defense: 5	
Perception: 4	Stun: 2	

Skills:
Brawl 6, Firearms 6, Guts 8, Melee 6, Ride 6, Stealth 8, Survival 6

Talents / Resources:
 -

Flaws:
Outlaw

Weapons:
Sharps carbine (1) 4L Attack: 10L 35/70/140/141+
Bowie knife 1L Attack: 7L
Punch 0N Attack: 6L

The Chiricahua warriors are hardened fighters. All they want is get their wives and daughters back and make El Brujo and everyone in league with him pay. The group is led by Kayitah who speaks a little Spanish. The warriors do not trust white people easily, there still is a war going on, but they will ally with anyone who wants to free the abducted women.

There are 6 Indians on horse; if all heroes are in the pit, they will circle the rim of it and fire at them. Otherwise they will dismount and sneak closer, making good use of the cover the terrain provides. The heroes can take cover behind the standing stones, while Sam screams that they



must save him. He will now admit that he knows El Brujo and can lead the heroes to his hide-out, if they save him. The heroes must fend off the angry Indians while digging out Sam. If this encounter is not exciting enough, the GM may throw in a rattle snake heading towards Sam who still is stuck.

The Chiricahua will retreat when 2 or more receive more serious wounds (Health reduced to 0). They will, however, follow the heroes at a safe distance. The Indians are not sure what the heroes have to do with all this, but reckon that they are allies of El Brujo. They fought to free Sam after all. A **Tough (3) Perception roll** is necessary to recognize the pursuers.

If the heroes decide to leave Sam to his fate, the Indians will not pursue them, but stay at the pit to guard him.

Sam Mewell (Outlaw / Survival)		
<i>Style: 0</i>	<i>Health: 3</i>	
Body: 2	Charisma: 2	Dexterity: 2
Intelligence: 2	Strength: 2	Willpower: 1
<i>Size: 0</i>	<i>Initiative: 5</i>	
<i>Move: 4</i>	<i>Defense: 4</i>	
<i>Perception: 4</i>	<i>Stun: 2</i>	
Skills:		
<i>Brawl 4, Firearms 5, Guts 3, Ride 5</i>		
Talents / Resources:		
-		
Flaws:		
<i>Outlaw</i>		
Weapons:		
<i>Punch ON Attack: 6L</i>		
Sam Mewell is an opportunistic low-life who joined the gang for the prospect of money and violence. The heroes will have to keep an eye on Sam as he is entirely untrustworthy. He will give his word and break it just as easy. Sam uses any opportunity to flee, but the threat of being left to the Chiricahua will at least ensure his cooperation for a short while. Sam has no other stuff than the clothes he wears, when the heroes discover him.		

But wait . . . , friend or foe?

As mentioned before, the Chiricahua are not the bad guys; they are hunting El Brujo, just like the heroes. If the heroes try to talk to the attacking Indians (Unlikely, but not impossible!), there is a chance they gain allies. A hero who speaks an Apache dialect must make an **Average (2) Persuasion roll** to stop the attack. Raise the Difficulty to **Hard (4)** if talking Spanish. The Chiricahua do not understand any other language.

Even if the heroes cannot befriend the Indians now, it is possible that the Chiricahua deduct the heroes' plans from their actions as they follow and observe the heroes. The GM may use them as a Deus-ex-machine in scene 7, when the heroes try to free the women.

Scene 6 – The Old Spanish church

“What a day! Washed through a ravine, shot at by Indians, dug out a stinking low-life... It would be nice with a good night's sleep.

“As you think about finding a camp site for the night, your eyes fall upon the ruin of a Spanish church. The church perches on a cliff, accessible only over small path. The builders of the church knew their trade, but who would build a church out here in the first place?”

Either they are led by Sam, the Chiricahua or follow El Brujo by themselves, the heroes will come over the remains of an old Spanish church, which seems to be a good camp site for the night.

The Hermit

But the ruins are not deserted. In fact, an old Navajo medicine man named Shiye has made this place his home. Once a mighty hunter and warrior, Shiye decided to live his last years as a hermit, listening to the spirits.

If the heroes approach open and friendly, Shiye will invite them to stay overnight. He will not ask for it, but canned fruit, tobacco or other small luxuries will be most welcome. The old man himself shares a couple of jackrabbits with his guests.

If the heroes approach seems threatening to Shiye, he will simply flee, vanishing in the terrain he knows so well.

Shiye speaks a little English, some more Spanish and a couple of Indian languages. He will enjoy any pleasant conversation, mostly listening, asking questions now and then. If the heroes tell him about El Brujo, Shiye's features will darken. He knows El Brujo who he considers an Evil man, who should be stopped. If someone asks how the old man could avoid this sadistic bandit, the old man will enigmatically reply that he knows some secrets the Witch never will.

Let the heroes catch their breath, they will need it. If Sarah has not come along, the old medicine man can tend wounds and bruises.

The medicine bundle

If the heroes told Shiye that they plan to fight El Brujo, he will offer the heroes two medicine bundles with protects against evil magic. The **medicine bundles grant a +4 bonus** when defending against any evil-wishing magic.



Alternatively, they **increase the difficulty** for any harmful ritual against the wearer by +2. The effect lasts until next new moon.

Option for a game without magic

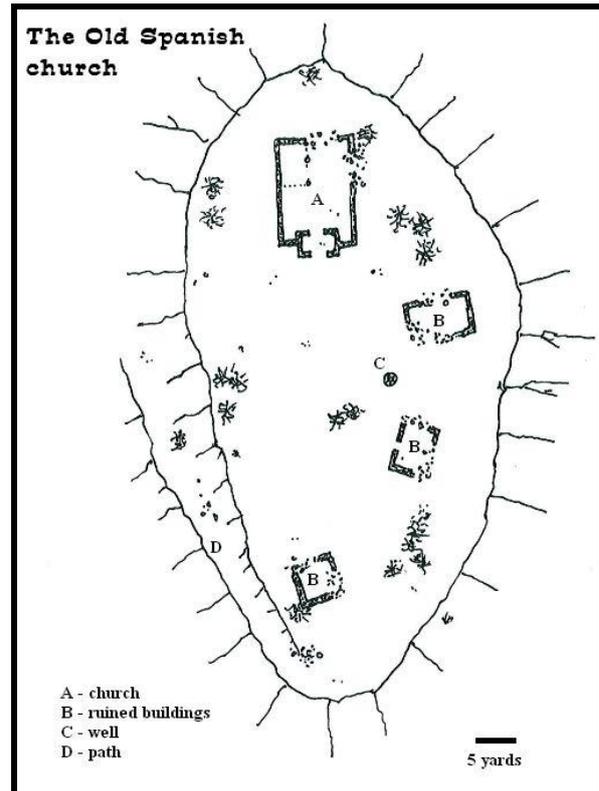
Heroes who believe in Indian magic gain a +2 **bonus to any Guts roll** when wearing the medicine bundle while opposing El Brujo, as they are convince that the bundle will protect them.

Shiye		
(Medicine man / Truth)		
<i>Style: 0</i>	<i>Health: 4</i>	
Body: 1	Charisma: 3	Dexterity: 2
Intelligence: 3	Strength: 2	Willpower: 3
<i>Size: 0</i>	<i>Initiative: 5</i>	
<i>Move: 4</i>	<i>Defense: 3</i>	
<i>Perception: 6</i>	<i>Stun: 1</i>	
Skills:		
Archery 5, Brawl 4, Fetish 5, Firearms 4, Melee 5, Medicine 7, Knowledge: Indian myths 6, Lingo 8, Ritual 8, Stealth 9, Survival 9,		
Talents / Resources:		
Dream walker, Medicine man		
Rituals / Fetishes:		
Banish, Beast summoning, Bless, Ghost travel, Healing, Medicine,		
Flaws:		
Ailing		
Weapons:		
Harper rifle .58 3L Attack: 7L 35/70/140/141+		
Hunting bow 2L Attack: 7L 15/30/60/61+		
Bowie knife 1L Attack: 6L 6/12/25/26+		
Punch 0N Attack: 4L		
Shiye is a far-travelled man, who has seen a lot. But his health is not what it used to be, and he has settled for the solitude of the desert. Although old and with a weak constitution, Shiye still is a formidable hunter and knows how to move silently. It is more because of this skills and alertness than his magic that saved him those times El Brujo tried to catch the old man. After Shiye easily got away a couple of times, El Brujo lost interest in his "neighbour" and left him alone.		

The Ruins

There are four buildings on top of the cliff. All buildings are ruins with partly collapsed walls and roofs. The church is in the best condition as Shiye lives here and does some basic repairs. He has set up a canvas as a roof over the north-western part of the church for protection against the weather. Shiye repaired the floor in the bell tower which he now uses as an outlook. The building closest to the church has been converted to a stable. The other buildings are not used. The well works as a cistern; after the rain storm it contains a good quantity of water.

If the heroes look around a little they will see that this place is easy to defend with just a few people. The path could be blocked with rubble or burning scrub, and it is a tough climb up the cliff sides.



Scene 7 – The Hide-out

The hide-out of the bandits lies about half a day on horse from the old church. The women are hold in a shelter between the rocks. There is usually one man guarding them, which is enough as they are bound and have nowhere to go. A map of the hide-out is given on the last page of this adventure.

When the heroes scout the area (**Stealth rolls with varying difficulty**, depending on distance and cover) they will make out the women – eight of them – with 1 guard as well as 7 more men lingering in the shadows, relaxing. An **Average (2) Knowledge: Indian customs** will reveal that none of the men in the hide-out looks like shaman or witch. Maybe El Brujo is not present.

El Brujo has indeed left the gang with 3 of his Apache followers to fetch some Mexican buyers. There are some of the options for the heroes:

- The heroes buy back some of the girls; the price, however is high. The bandits demand \$150 per girl.
- The heroes sneak into the hide-out to free the girls. This requires some sort of distraction. They will need some horses, too.

- The heroes attack the bandits. If the bandits loose more than half of their number they will retreat.
- If the heroes have the help of the Chiricahua, these will opt for an attack.

If the heroes have not befriended the Chiricahuas, the GM may use them as an unexpected help if the heroes get pressed.

4 Apache renegades		
(Warrior / Revenge)		
Style: 0	Health: 5	
Body: 3	Charisma: 2	Dexterity: 2
Intelligence: 2	Strength: 2	Willpower: 2
Size: 0	Initiative: 5	
Move: 4	Defense: 5	
Perception: 4	Stun: 3	
Skills:		
Brawl 6, Firearms 5, Guts 8, Melee 6, Ride 6, Stealth 7, Survival 6		
Talents / Resources:		
Tough		
Flaws:		
Outlaw		
Weapons:		
Henry rifle (9) 3L Attack: 8L 25/60/120/121+		
Bowie knife 1L Attack: 7L		
Punch 0N Attack: 6L		
These outlaws follow every command of El Brujo. They are tough fighters, skilled in the art of guerrilla warfare. They will, however, retreat, if hard pressed, unless El Brujo has them ordered not to.		

4 Gringo bandits		
(Outlaws / Greed)		
Style: 0	Health: 4	
Body: 2	Charisma: 2	Dexterity: 2
Intelligence: 2	Strength: 2	Willpower: 2
Size: 0	Initiative: 4	
Move: 4	Defense: 4	
Perception: 4	Stun: 2	
Skills:		
Brawl 5, Firearms 5, Guts 6, Ride 6, Stealth 6, Survival 5		
Talents / Resources:		
-		
Flaws:		
Outlaw		
Weapons:		
Winchester carbine .44 (8) 3L Attack: 8L 25/60/120/121+		
Colt Peacemaker 3L Attack: 8L 20/40/80/81+		
Punch 0N Attack: 5L		
Having made a deal with the devil, these bandits are after the money they can make following El Brujo. Totally amoral and mean by most standards, the gringos cannot measure with El Brujo. They fear him enough to do follow any order of their leader. If on their own, they will beg for mercy and offer help to survive, but will turn on any soft-hearted fool as soon as they get the chance.		

The Chiricahuas will leave with their women as soon as they have freed them. The heroes must now leave on their own with the remaining 6 women, as El Brujo could return any time. As the women are not in the best shape, travelling speed will be rather slow.

El Brujo returns shortly after the heroes left the hide-out. He will be furious, having four

Mexican customers with him and nothing to sell. If the heroes bought out Margret, El Brujo still wants to get her back as he has promised his customers the blond girl.

No matter how the heroes got the women back, they will be followed by El Brujo, the rest of his men and some Mexican customers. In case, the heroes took all horses with them, he will force the Mexicans to share horses, so that he and his men can move faster.

Let the heroes make a **Tough (3) Perception roll** an hour after they left the hide-out, to recognize that they get followed. If unsuccessful, let them try again an hour later. The **Difficulty is Average (2)** now, as the bandits catch up. The heroes will soon see that the bandits will be upon them within a couple of hours. The best option would be to take a stand at a place of their choice. The old church should be perfect! An **Average (2) roll for Reason** or an appropriate skill like **Survival (Shelter) or Tactics** will reveal that.

Finale – El Brujo’s wrath

“You make it up to the church just before dusk! Shiye looks concerned as he guessed why you have come back. He offers water and food to the deprived women, while you check out the defense potential of the cliff.”

The heroes will only have a short time before El Brujo arrives. They can block the path up the cliff easily with rocks. This will hinder any horses to ride up, and slow down the advance of attackers on foot, as they will be longer exposed to gunfire from above that way. The heroes may also use brush and wooden remains from the buildings as fire barriers. The GM should give the heroes some time to organize their defense.

The pursuers arrive about 1 hour after the heroes make it up the cliff. But El Brujo waits, planning to attack under the cover of darkness. The witch might use the waiting time to cast some magic. Maybe he found some blood drops from one of the heroes at the hide-out or a hero dropped some personal item, El Brujo could use to curse a hero.

When night has come El Brujo will send the 4 Mexicans, one Apache warrior and any of the men who survived the raid on the hide-out to the west side of the cliff, where they try to come up the path. At least that is what he wants the heroes to think. El Brujo and the two other Apache warriors will sneak to the North east side



and scale the cliff side to fall the heroes in the back. He will succeed if the heroes do not state clearly that they guard that area. Even then a **Tough (3) Perception roll** is necessary to recognize one of the infiltrators.

For the Apache warriors use the stats for the Apache renegades from scene 7. The Mexicans have the same stats as the gringos, but are armed with pistols only.

El Brujo		
(Mystic /Hate)		
Style: 3	Health: 7(* death threshold -7)	
Body: 3	Charisma: 3	Dexterity: 3
Intelligence: 3	Strength: 3	Willpower: 4
Size: 0	Initiative: 6	
Move: 5	Defense: 6(8)*	
Perception: 7	Stun: 3	
Skills:		
Athletics 8, Brawl 8, Guts 10, Intimidation 8, Knowledge: Herb lore 8, Knowledge: Evil-wishing magic 10, Firearms(Shotguns) 4(6), Lingo (Spanish) 5, Medicine 7,Melee 8, Ride 6, Survival 7		
Talents / Resources:		
Follower of the Witchery way, Fearsome, Diehard*		
Flaws:		
Cruel, Outlaw		
Rituals/Fetishes:		
Curse, Resist fire, Lightning, Tracking, Medicine bundle, Armour		
Weapons:		
Scattergun (2) 4L Attack: 10L 8/16/32/33+		
Tomahawk 2L Attack: 10L 6/12/24/25+		
Punch 0N Attack: 8N		
Special items:		
Magical shirt (Defense +2* against firearms)		
Witchpowder Toxin rating: 3 Damage: see below Recovery: 1 (8 successes)		
In a melee or brawl El Brujo throws witchpowder into the face of an opponent (range 2 yards). He uses his Athletics skill (-2 penalty) instead of an attack. The target can only use his Active defense. If El Brujo scores at least one success, the witchpowder has hit the target in the eyes. If the target cannot resist the toxin rating, it has a -2 penalty due to impaired sight until recovery. Additionally, the target is cursed getting the Coward flaw. A Blessing ritual can lift the curse.		
Alternatives for games without magic:		
No magical armour but, El Brujo has poisoned his tomahawk with rattle snake venom. The Witchpowder just blinds without the curse effect.		
Superstitious characters must make an Average (2) Guts roll or dare not to take direct actions against the witch. A hero who wears Shiye's medicine bundle, however, need no roll as he thinks himself protected.		
El Brujo is a sadistic sociopath, whose hate is beyond limit. He is a follower of the Witchery way, evil Indian magic, which he uses to cause pain and death. Usually, El Brujo does only things that suits his ends, but sometimes he shows a twisted sense of honour, like keeping a word given. At least as long as he cares for the issue.		

Upon the cliff El Brujo will at first spread confusion among the defenders by stealth attacks. Finally, he will charge into close combat using his tomahawk and witch powder.

As soon as the men on the west side hear their leader attacking, they begin to press up the path.

The GM should make this an exciting and hard battle. The heroes will have to split up as some must cover the path while others must stop El Brujo and his two warriors. There should be enough heroics and desperate measures during the fight.

When the dust settles, and the heroes are mostly alive, they should return with the women to Greendale without any problems. Every outlaw they can catch or can prove killed (by taking the bodies, scalps or ears with them, yuck!), they may claim the reward at the marshal's office.

Sarah will be grateful for ever for returning her daughter. They will always be welcome at the Wilkinson farm. If she has agreed to pay the heroes at the start of the adventure, they will receive what Sarah is able to pay.

What about El Brujo? If the GM wants to use him as a nasty returning Nemesis, there are possibilities. But do not rob the players of the satisfaction of defeating a really bad guy. Anyway, his body might have disappeared from where it has fallen from the cliff or the undertaker reports it missing the after the heroes returned to town....

Experience rewards

Every GM will have his own ideas of how fast the heroes should advance so the following experience rewards are mere suggestions:

Group experience

- 1 EP Burying the remains of Howard and Morales.
- 1 EP Offering help without payment
- 2 EP Fighting the rattlers and bury the farmers.
- 1 EP Getting through the canyon.
- 2 EP Rescuing Sam Mewell from the Chiricahua (alternately 3 EP for befriending the Chiricahua)
- 1EP Freeing Margret Wilkinson
- +2EP Freeing all of the women
- 3 EP Defeating El Brujo

Individual experience

- 1 EP For exceptional good role-playing (once per session).
- 1 EP For taking the baby back to town (only the involved characters)



El Brujo's Hide-out

