

THE SECRETS OF BUGSWALLOW CITY

WRITTEN BY: M. SECHIN TOWER

The Secrets of Bugswallow City is a Hollow Earth Expedition surface world adventure featuring rules from the expansion book *Secrets of the Surface World*. It is a good way to introduce both new and veteran players to surface-centric features such as vehicle combat, secret societies, sorcery, and weird science (not to mention insurance fraud—you don't see a lot of that inside the Hollow Earth).

NB: The story sequence is somewhat non-linear, which some players and GM's prefer, while others do not. For this reason, it can be challenging (but far from impossible) to run as a one-shot adventure. Alternately, with the right group, Bugswallow could serve well as the home base or stopover in a longer campaign.

PLAYER'S PREVIEW

In the sleepy town of Bugswallow, a mysterious murder thrusts you into the middle of a war between powerful secret societies. Now you must utilize weird science and uncover ancient magic in a race against time to save the unbelieving townsfolk from an inconceivable fate. All in a day's work!



GM'S PLOT OVERVIEW:

Bugswallow is a little town with some big secrets. One secret is that after a decade of conflict and harassment, the corrupt leaders of two secret societies—Dr. Chase of The Order of Prometheus and Mayor Feldspar of The Hermetic Order of the Rose Cross (HORC)—have combined their powers to attempt the creation of a monster capable of destroying much of the town. Each of these two leaders have purchased and triple-insured many of the buildings in the town, and they are going to cash in... unless a group of meddling outsiders puts a stop to their wicked scheme.

WHERE IS BUGSWALLOW?

Bugswallow City looks like the kind of place featured in Norman Rockwell paintings. There are flower boxes in every window, children chase hoops down streets with sticks, all the dogs are well behaved, and all the men tip their hats to passers-by. Bugswallow is a miniscule town Out West that would not appear on any map if it did not happen to be a stopover for a minor train line. (Maybe it is located in the same state as Springfield and Shelbyville.) It is surrounded by rural farmland and ranches, which are in turn surrounded by boundless scrubland. It is the perfect place for those seeking to go unnoticed by the rest of the world.

ARCHETYPES

To help get you started, some of the Archetypes best suited for this adventure are listed below:

- **Scientist:** Professor Mortimer would naturally have sought to hire a colleague, and a scientist would have the opportunity to utilize (or neutralize) some of the local Order of Prometheus resources.
- **Adventurer, Soldier, Criminal, Spy:** This mission might require a variety of skills in both combat and information

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gathering. Unorthodox methods are welcome.

- **Lawman:** It would be good to have the law on your side, not to mention investigative acumen.
- **Occultist:** An occultist could provide valuable insight into the local members of the HORC, and might be able to learn a thing or two of value from the locals.

MOTIVATIONS

The adventure's major Themes and Motivations are listed below.

- **Justice:** I won't let them get away with this!
- **Duty:** I will stay true to the job I was hired to do.
- **Fame:** In a small town like this, it will be easy for me to get noticed.
- **Truth:** What is going on in this crazy little town?
- **Mystery:** Who cares what's going on? We just need to keep the public from finding out about it.

THE HOOK: ALL ABOARD!

Professor Mortimer (of Burroughs University in Bugswallow City) has contacted the player characters and has offered them \$250 each to use their uncommon expertise to safeguard his cargo and experiments. He may be personally acquainted with some of the PC's (especially if any of them are members of the Order of Prometheus), or he may have learned of them through mutual associates. In any case, he offers few details except to say that his research may be "dangerous if it falls into the wrong hands." He instructs them to be on a certain train at a certain time, where further information will be revealed.

Once the group is assembled, they will be approached by Bugswallow's lawman, Sheriff Dudley, a slow-witted yokel who has never had to deal with any crime more serious than a parishioner showing up hung over to a church service. He will explain that the cargo is some kind of big egg for Professor Mortimer and his partner Professor Chase, and it is safely sealed in an Icebox car that was hooked up

to the train at the last depot. (An icebox car is essentially a big cooler on wheels, packed with ice to keep its contents cool. Not even the Order of Prometheus had invented refrigeration in 1936.) The car is locked, the conductor has the only key, and the cargo is being guarded by a grad student, so the sheriff assures them that all is secure.

If that's not enough to cause the players to stampede to check the safety of the cargo, let them ride the train in complacency a while longer before a woman come screaming through their cabin, shouting for help because she saw someone being killed in the icebox car.

SCENE 1: MURDER IN THE BOXCAR

The icebox car is indeed locked and secure, but a glance through the tiny window in the door reveals the figure of a young man in arctic gear sprawled out on the floor. The sight will cause Sheriff Dudley's eyes to roll up in his head as he nearly passes out from shock. The players can go get the key from the conductor, or pick or shoot the lock off. Inside they find the dead grad student (a Medicine roll with a Difficulty of 2 or Investigation roll with a Difficulty of 3 will reveal purple bruises at his throat—clearly strangulation). There is also a 2 x 2 x 2 wooden crate smashed open, its contents gone and the straw packing material scattered across the floor grating. The packing slip is addressed to "**Pffrs Mortimer and Chase, Bugswallow University**" (the return address reads only: Scrumtumbler, Little America, Antarctica). On the metal shelves around the walls, the other crates (about 2 x 2 x 7 feet) seem undisturbed, and are marked "Anatomy Lab, Burroughs University." There is no conceivable way anyone could have broken into or out of the car to kill the student and take the egg, and yet that is what appears to have happened.

In truth, the other crates contain cadavers being sent to Burroughs University, and these cadavers were animated by a black-hooded HORC necromancer before the arrival of the egg, who used them to dispatch the grad

student and take the professor's egg. But the door was locked and his zombies couldn't open it, so he was forced to wait on the roof of the train, where he remains now. When the PC's arrived, he began his Levitation ritual (*Secrets*, p. 51. Note the errata on sorcery—the cultist would be able to prepare this ritual in under a minute by taking his average). Now that the PC's have opened the door, he will have the zombies burst out of their containers (there should be one per PC. For stats, see *Secrets*, p.50), and then on his turn he will levitate the egg out the door and up to the roof, shouting "glory to the Supreme Leader!"

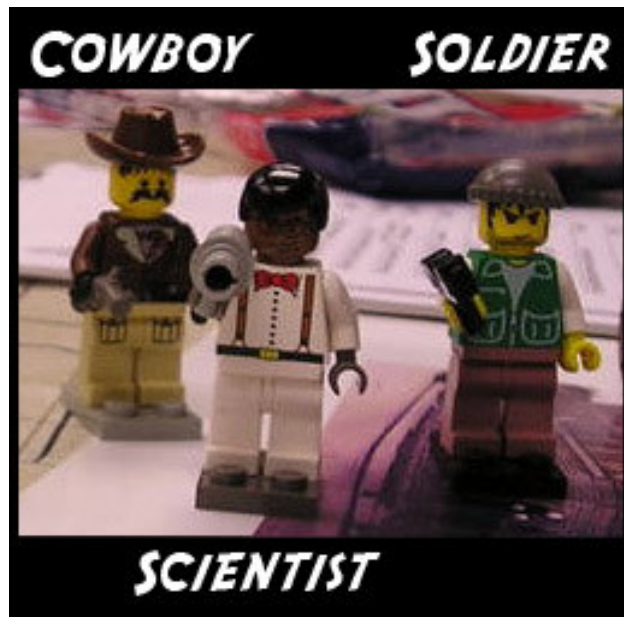
If the PC's take the time to finish all zombies, the cultist will use his head start to lead the players on a rooftop race from car to car. If the heroes swarm up and mug him before he gets away, the zombies will collapse as soon as he is KO'd or killed. If they interrogate their prisoner, they might be able to force him to spill that the cult's meeting place is the Vaudeville Theatre. If he gets away with the egg, the characters will have to investigate Bugswallow to uproot the HORC.

SCENE 2: WELCOME TO BUGSWALLOW

The train pulls into Bugswallow Station a little after 6am, when the sun is just beginning to send orange and red rays over the distant mountaintops.

Almost as soon as the engine hisses to a stop, Mayor Feldspar bursts aboard, calling to the sheriff. He hands him a letter that was delivered to city hall last night and demands that the sheriff "do something to protect the citizens, and, above all, *protect my investment!*" He then notices the players and shifts into his politician persona, offering them empty pleasantries. If they mention Professor Mortimer, he will break the news that the professor passed away last night from a heart attack, and proffer several platitudes by way of condolence.

The sheriff is too stunned to react, but can explain later that it is common knowledge that the mayor's investment consists of two square blocks of downtown Bugswallow, which he plans to renovate to restore the local economy. It is a simple thing to get the note out of the sheriff's hands (the sheriff is about to faint again) and see that it is a ransom note demanding ten thousand dollars or someone called the Supreme Leader will destroy the town. Ten thousand dollars is a ridiculous amount—the sheriff knows that it exceeds the sum of all the city coffers.



As the mayor's Duesenberg roars away from the station, he calls back to the sheriff "and remember to keep it SECRET!" Half a second after he is gone, a paperboy walks through with the morning edition, calling "Extra! Extra! Madman Blackmails Bugswallow! Read all about it!" It seems that the Supreme Leader sent a copy of his letter to the Bugswallow Times as well as to City Hall.

If any of the characters seem interested in helping investigate, the sheriff will happily swear them in as deputies. He is not perfectly clear on the words, but the oath as he recalls it runs as follows. "Repeat after me: I, state your

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name (pause) do solemnly swear to protect and serve Bugswallow City and its citizens from all threats foreign and domestic (pause) and to uphold the law until such time as, uh, I don't want to do it any more and officially quit." Deputies have access to the sheriff's armory (3 shotguns and 12 shotgun shells) and, more importantly, to the Bugswallow Police and Fire Truck, which will likely become the character's main means of transportation. He also furnishes them with a hand-drawn but reasonably accurate map of the city.

Before the characters leave, a man in a horrible suit approaches the least likely of them. He asks if they are new in town, then launches into his pitch: "I'm Chuck, Chuck Wagon, of Chuck Wagon Insurance, and I can see you are a person of too much intelligence to go another day without an insurance policy. Why should you trust me? Why, the mayor has a large policy with me, and if the mayor trusts me then you know you can, too." The mayor has indeed insured his city property with Chuck Wagon, and it is indeed a large policy. That might get the players thinking.

SCENE 3: HIGH SPEED CULTISTS

After the train station, the characters are welcome to stop to eat breakfast or to explore the town (see Scene 4). When they are ready to move to Burroughs University Science Lab, begin this scene.

The science lab is on the ground floor with windows facing the parking lot, and all its walls are bedecked with shelves containing tanks full of all imaginable insects, arachnids, and every other creepy-crawly imaginable. Even at this early hour, the lab is abuzz with activity as Professor Chase and his two grad students work on their invention. Chase, confined to a wheelchair, will wave characters in and inform them about Professor Mortimer's demise last night. It seems he was inspecting cadavers at the cemetery last night when he suffered a fatal heart attack. (Anyone who knows Prof. Mortimer can confirm that he did indeed have a heart condition, but in truth his heart attack was

caused by zombies re-animating in front of him.)

If the players ask about the mystical cult, he will explain that for more than a decade a local enclave of backwards primitive superstitious magicians have been trying to drive out the forward-thinking and benevolent Order of the Prometheus. Mostly, the aggression has amounted to idle threats and vandalism, perpetrated by both sides.

Chase then asks eagerly to see the egg, setting it excitedly down on a stainless steel table (or in a safe if the players seem paranoid about its presence). He explains that the fetal reptilian within is long dead, but will be used with his invention, the Titano-Machina, which looks a little like a giant microscope dominating one wall of the room. He explains that this device will revolutionize modern understanding of evolutionary biology and entomological anatomy through focused plasma-induced cellular hypertrophy. Even better than an explanation, he will demonstrate.

The professor takes a handful of insects, places them under the Titano-Machina, then throws switches, and looks content. The machine begins to glow green in its charge-chamber, and he suddenly remembers: "Goggles! Goggles, quickly! And maybe lead aprons too, but only if you have time and want children!" In a flash of green, the insects grow to enormous proportions (make up stats for cool giant insects of Size 1, go on the forums to find good ones, wait for the *Mysteries of the Hollow Earth* expansion book, or just use the stats for the Giant Spider in the core book). The bugs, though now gigantic, appear stunned, and the professor explains that it is a trying process, and quite fatal for any creature more complex than an insect.

Around this time, the door to the lab will slam open, and in rush three cult minions, all brandishing shotguns and wearing hoods that look like modified pillow cases (if the party is particularly adept at combat, add two or more zombies). The cultists will announce that

the Supreme Leader sent them to claim the Professor and his mystical egg.

While the professor shouts threats and taunts, the grad students will go for their various weapons (a stun gun and a jet pack, neither of which are going to be useful in this battle). The giant insects also recover to join any ensuing fray, attacking whoever seems convenient, or simply wandering off if it seems appropriate for them to do so. On their turn, the cultists will throw a smoke pellet down at the egg; when the smoke clears, the egg has disappeared! Perception difficulty 2 or more will reveal that a Model A pulling through the parking lot at that moment also contains a few cultists. Just as their buddies inside drop the smoke pellet, those in the car flourish a sheet to reveal that the egg seems to have re-appeared in their car. Magic! At that moment, they speed off, and any remaining cultists inside break through a window to head for the parking lot. The Bugswallow Fire Truck is conveniently parked right next to the lab windows, so the real action can now ensue.

Use the Vehicle Combat system for car chases (*Secrets*, p. 145). The Bugswallow truck is big enough to carry 6 people in back (plus the driver and up to two more in the cab), but it is not nearly as quick as the Model A. If the party contains an expert driver, give the bad guys 150 to 200



foot head start. If not, 50 or 100 feet might be appropriate, and fire from the truck will slow the Model A through performance degradation.

However, the Model A is not alone. It is accompanied by two pickup trucks, each of which carries a gaggle of zombies and some kind of strange contraption. The trucks will drop back to flank the hero's car, then reveal that the contraption is, in fact, a steam-powered catapult used to fling two zombies each round into the hero's car! (This might spark some suspicion—this is the kind of contraption a Promethean would come up with, and not at all what one might expect from the members of HORC.) Characters struck by the zombie-pult take 3N wounds (minus the player's Defense). Zombies may soon pile up in the back of the truck, but keep in mind that the tight space can work to the player's advantage as well: a knockback effect of only 5 or 10 feet is ample to send the ghoul cart wheeling along the asphalt behind the truck.

The likely conclusion is a nasty wreck of the Model A (and maybe some of the other cars as well). This will attract quite a crowd of gawkers—including a representative of Farmland Insurance, who will try to sell the heroes anything other than auto insurance, citing that the mayor has a property policy with them. Searching the car will reveal that the egg in the back seat is a Papier-mâché fake! When the smoke hit, the real egg dropped through a false bottom into a safe compartment, where it remained until the moment the players sped off, when a second wave of cultists captured it and Professor Chase. Duped by a cheap parlor trick!

SCENE 4: POUNDING THE PAVEMENT

Now the players will want to do some investigation to find the HORC, the egg, or the professor. Most likely, they will have pummelled one of their prisoners into telling them that the Vaudeville Theatre is the cult hideout, but there is plenty of Bugswallow to explore. Here are some sample locations:

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Burroughs University: Aside from the Science Lab, there isn't much of interest here today. The PC's may meet students who are in the Army officer training corps who might mention that there is a military base out in the nearby scrublands (actually an Army Intelligence depot), but it has nothing to do with what the players are looking for.

Bugswallow Café: Offering more kinds of pies than anything else on the menu combined, PC's can get a good meal here for a reasonable price. While they are dining, a man tries to sell them Country-wide Insurance, assuring them that the mayor trusts Countrywide enough to have a substantial property policy with them, will approach them.

The Cinema House: The good news is that they are playing *Embrace of the Zombie*. The bad news is that the first showing isn't until this evening.

Campus You Bug-Em Steak-N-Cone: Very popular with the college students, this is a split ice-cream parlor and burger joint. Anyone who is a member of the Hermetic Order of the Rose Cross, or who rolls 3 or more on their Academics: Occult, or who scores 4 or more on a Perception roll, will notice a few mystical symbols back in the kitchen. The proprietor is kindly man and a former member of the local Order, but he dropped out years ago as the lodge got a new, more aggressive leader (known only as The Supreme Leader) and moved into dark magic. Now the proprietor summons fire spirits and frost spirits to save on his business expenses (coal and ice are not cheap). He knows the identities of a few HORC members—mostly local farmers—and that they meet at the vaudeville theatre, but he does not know who the Supreme Leader is.

City Hall and Police Station: The Mayor is out today, but here the players can research to find that he had purchased two square city blocks and filed paperwork for renovation, but has hired no contractors. Careful investigation will also reveal that Professor Chase has

recently purchased a great number of buildings in the city. Players who looking into the mayor's past will also discover that he got his start as a vaudeville magician, and that he is currently the major financial backer of the local theatre.

If the characters are deputized, they may use the police station freely. It is equipped with 3 shotguns (and 12 cartridges), and a jail cell big enough to hold two.

Bugswallow Books: This little shop sells both new and used, and has a surprisingly decent occult section. The proprietor is a meek but friendly little man who shakes the hands of each of his new customers politely. In fact, he is a member of the Foundation for Research and Enlightenment, and he himself is telepathic and uses his handshake to read the minds of each of his customers. He won't volunteer any information, but if players make an ethical appeal for the need to find and disrupt the HORC, he can tell them that they meet in the old Vaudeville theater.

Rodeo and Fairgrounds: Few people are present unless there is an event. If some of the giant insects escaped from Professor Chase's lab, one of them is here now and a couple of rootin'-tootin' cowboys are attempting to rope and/or ride it. This will also be the location of the final showdown (see Scene 5), but the villains do not arrive until later.

General Store: This sells most every common item and features a large hunting section (including a Tommy Gun, which was originally marketed to farmers for "vermin control"). The proprietor also happens to be a low-ranking Terra Arcanum agent who monitors his ledger for unusual sales (such as large quantities of ammunition). He is ostensibly assigned to keep an eye on the saloon owner, who is a suspected Thule cultist.

Bugswallow Church: This appears to be a regular church in every way, and that's just what it is. The junior priest, however, has dreams of one day joining the Ordo Spectare, and talk of zombies

will cause him to trip over his own feet with excitement for the investigation.

Saloon: One of the oldest establishments in town, this is where cowboys get their rotgut after a long day of roping steer. The building even features the classic wild-west swinging half-doors at its entrance. It is by Otto Blitz, an old German who immigrated before World War I and goes to great lengths to present himself as a cowboy despite his thick accent and complete ignorance of some of the finer points of American culture. Underneath it all, he is fanatically loyal to his Teutonic heritage, and serves as a spy for the Thule society, often offering free drinks to local military personnel in order to loosen their tongues.

Hospital and Sanatorium: The physician on call is Di Huangdi (Dr. Di), a highly competent Chinese man of some fifty or sixty years whose chief hobby seems to be inscrutability. No one in town knows that in Shanghai he was on the wrong side of a crime war with the Green Gang, and fled to Bugswallow because it is as far off the Tong map as possible. Dr. Di keeps his head down and does everything by the book - unless he is offered better cover ("we'll officially fix your status with immigration") or threatened ("I know some people who would be *very* interested to hear that such a distinguished doctor is hiding out here in the middle of nowhere"). Then he could be encouraged to break the rules, such as fudging paperwork, providing access to hospital records, or even sedating and detaining people for short periods.

Vaudeville Theatre: This is the HORC hideout, and many of the current members are performers. When the players enter, the place is deserted except for the back room behind the stage. When the players approach, however, they discover that the entire stage is a trap door, dropping them into a death-trap.

When they drop in, a few cultists will run out from the back room and congratulate each other on catching these meddling outsiders. Then one will say, "let's get out to the rodeo grounds so we

can see the Supreme Leader put the big plan into effect!" As soon as the players escape and go to the Rodeo grounds, move on to Scene 5.

VAUDEVILLE DEATHTRAP

Originally designed as a means to dispose of unsatisfactory performers, the trap door opens into a chute that is rapidly filling with water. The players land on a rickety metal platform ten feet down, and they can see that a school of mean looking piranha with nasty, snapping teeth swirl and circle below. Up above on the wall are twelve levers and a plaque which reads:

There is a lever, which will set you free.

The prime result of pulling levers is death.

Try to get even and you will end up wet.

Tell the players that they have exactly 3 minutes before the water fills to their level, and start a watch. Once players have the answer, they must throw the switch, which could be done with a lasso, telekinesis, a human pyramid (Athletics roll of 3 required for each member), a carefully called shot (-8 penalty), or any other clever means. Flipping the wrong switch accelerates the rate at which water pours into the chute (take 15 seconds off the clock). The correct answer is 9, and when that switch is flipped, a ladder will drop down from above to offer a means of escape.

SCENE 5: HIGH NOON SHOWDOWN

The villains have accelerated their plans due to the meddling outsiders, and the sun beats down from almost directly overhead when the players arrive at the rodeo grounds (If the heroes are not at the rodeo grounds at noon, then they will probably hear the sound of crashing as the monster begins the destruction of the city).

When the heroes arrive they see a green flash emitting from within the grounds, and they can recognize it as the Titano-Machina in action. They must break down the gate, pick the lock, or scale the stadium walls. There, in the

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center of the arena, is a commercial truck rigged to carry a second Titano-machina, and beside it is the T-Rex, grown to full proportions through the power of the ray, re-animated through dark magic, and even modified with broad iron plates riveted to its sides and other locations. It is vast and tall, with grey scales and bright steely patches and pistons showing through breaks in its skin. The milky-white eyes gaze vacantly out at the arena while and long ropes of saliva dangle from its limp lips.

Riding atop the monster is a man in a black robe who is clearly the Supreme Leader. Surrounding its feet is a gang of cultists and Professor Chase sitting in what appears to be a beefed up, diesel powered wheel chair. (If the players manage to sneak within listening distance, they can hear that the Leader and Chase are having a professional disagreement as to whether to call their monster a Cyber-Zombiesaur or a Reanimated Rex.)

When the villains become aware of the players, Chase will point to the monster and shout, "Behold—the ultimate combination of Magic and Science!" Then he will hit a button on his chair to reveal that it is a heavily armed autogiro. The Supreme Leader will throw back his hood to reveal that he is Mayor Feldspar. The mayor then cocks his Tommy Gun and shouts, "I've triple insured half this city, and no meddling outsider will stop me from cashing in on my policies!" On their turns, the mayor will attempt to strafe as many characters as possible; Chase will use his grenades (on the heroes' automobile if they are driving one) before switching to his pistol while the cultists and Zombiesaur will attack whoever is closest. If the fight proves overwhelming for the PC's, the mayor will spur the Zombiesaur out into the streets of Bugswallow and have it focus on destroying buildings while the panicking populace flees before its feet.

THE RESOLUTION

If the characters played their cards right, they may receive a hero's parade for saving the city and one of them might

even be elected to replace the mayor. Alternatively, they might all be blamed for the death of the beloved previous mayor and be run out of town. Most likely, the players will simply want to move on to bigger and seemingly more exciting cities. Still, for anyone wanting to settle down, there is plenty to do here... the HORC is down but not out (possibly looking for a new leader)... one of the other secret societies might use the town as a staging ground for schemes of a different sort... Army Intelligence is testing drilling machines in the surrounding scrublands... strange creatures are wandering up out of caves in them thar hills...

It's Bugswallow City. Anything can happen here, and it usually does.

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ADDITIONAL CREDITS

Photographs: Kate Masters, Krista Porch
Layout and Town Map: Andrew McColl
Map Images: Found on Google

THE SECRETS OF BUGSWALLOW CITY
PLAYER HANDOUTS

I. THE LETTER

Citizens of Bugswallow:

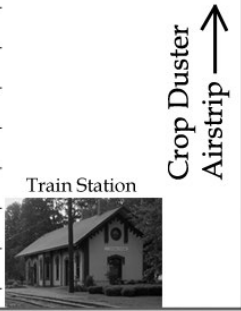
*Deliver 10,000 dollars to
the Cemetery today at Noon.*

*If you fail to do so, we, the
Sorcerers of the Cult of the Rose
Cross, will bring your town to
RUIN!*

Sincerely,

The Supreme Leader

2. **BUGSWALLOW CITY MAP**



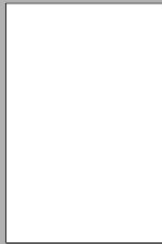
Crop Duster
Airstrip ↑

Welcome to Bugswallow

Population: 3,517

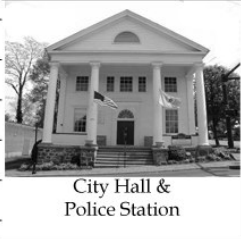


College Street



Bugswallow
Cemetery →

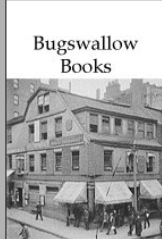
Third Street



Main Street



Elm Street

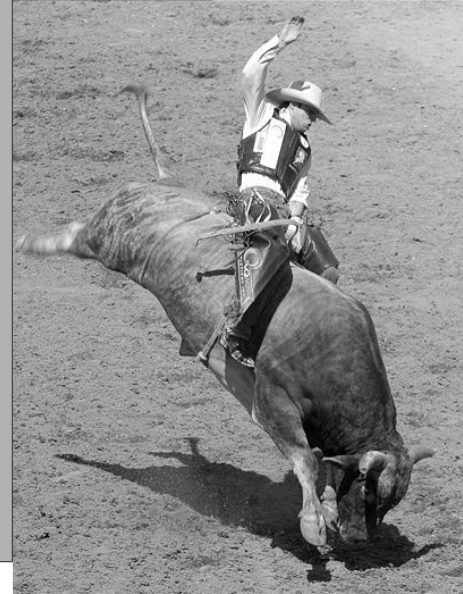


Ruby Street

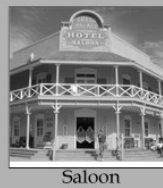
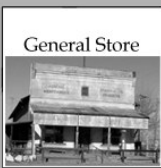


Walnut Street

Rodeo &
Fairgrounds



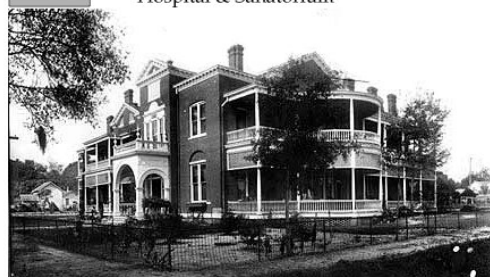
Second Street



First Street



Hospital & Sanatorium



THE SECRETS OF BUGSWALLOW CITY
NPC AND VEHICLE STATS

SCENE 1
MURDER IN THE BOXCAR

Cultist Sorcerer

Archetype: Occultist Motivation: Power
 Style: 2 Health: 6

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 Charisma: 2
 Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 3
 Strength: 2 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 5
 Move: 5 Defense: 5
 Perception: 6 Stun: 3

Skills

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Athletics	2	3	5	(2+)
Drive	2	3	5	(2+)
Firearms	2	3	5	(2+)
Larceny	2	3	5	(2+)
Sleight of Hand			6	(3)
Melee	2	1	3	(1+)
Knives			4	(2)
Necromancy	2	4	6	(3)

Talents

Magical Aptitude

Resources

Rank 1 (Hermetic Order of the Rode Cross)

Flaw

Fanatical

Weapons

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Special .38	2 L	0	7 L	(3+) L

SCENE 2
WELCOME TO BUGSWALLOW

Bugswallow Police and Fire Truck

Size	Def	Spd	Hnd	Strc
2	6	55	-2	12

Structure

Structure	Effect of Damage
12 - 7	No effect
6 - 4	Hnd: -4; Spd: 40
3 - 1	Hnd: -6; Spd: 25

SCENE 3
HIGH SPEED CULTISTS

Cultist Minion

Archetype: Occultist Motivation: Duty
 Style: 0 Health: 4

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 Charisma: 2
 Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 2
 Strength: 2 Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 4
 Move: 4 Defense: 4
 Perception: 6 Stun: 2

Skills

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Occult	2	2	4	(2)
Athletics	2	2	4	(2)
Drive	2	2	4	(2)
Firearms	2	2	4	(2)
Melee	2	2	4	(2)

Talents

Alertness

Resources

None

Flaw

Fanatical

Weapons

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
12-gauge shotgun	3 L	0	7 L	(3+) L

Ford Model A

Size	Def	Spd	Hnd	Strc
2	4	65	0	8

Structure

Structure	Effect of Damage
8 - 5	No effect
4 - 3	Hnd: -4; Spd: 40
2 - 1	Hnd: -6; Spd: 30

Chevrolet Series FB Pickup

Size	Def	Spd	Hnd	Strc
2	4	65	-2	10

Structure

Structure	Effect of Damage
10 - 6	No effect
5 - 3	Hnd: -4; Spd: 40
2 - 1	Hnd: -6; Spd: 30

SCENE 4 HIGH NOON SHOWDOWN

Zombiesaur

Archetype: Abomination Motivation: Survival
Style: 0 Health: 12

Primary Attributes

Body: 8 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 0 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 8 Willpower: 0

Secondary Attributes

Size: 4 Initiative: 0
Move: 8 Defense: 4 (8*)
Perception: 2 Stun: 8**

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
--------	------	--------	--------	-----------

Brawl	8	4	12	(6)
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Talents

Alertness
Skill Aptitude: Brawl

Resources

None

Flaw

Bestial (Character cannot communicate or use tools)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
---------	--------	------	--------	-----------

Bite	4 L	-4	12 L	(6) L
Stomp	4 N	-4	12 N	(6) N

* *Zombiesaur's armor plating grants +4 passive defense*
** *Zombies cannot be stunned and do not suffer from non-lethal damage*

Supreme Leader (Mayor Feldspar)

Archetype: Occultist Motivation: Greed
Style: 4 Health: 7

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 Charisma: 4
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 4
Strength: 2 Willpower: 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 8
Move: 6 Defense: 7
Perception: 8 Stun: 3

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
--------	------	--------	--------	-----------

Con	4	5	9	(4+)
Diplomacy	4	3	7	(3+)
Drive	4	2	6	(3)
Firearms	4	2	6	(3)
Larceny	4	3	7	(3+)
<i>Sleight of Hand</i>			8	(4)
Melee	2	1	3	(1+)
<i>Knives</i>			4	(2)
Necromancy	4	3	7	(3+)
Ride	4	3	7	(3+)

Talents

Magical Aptitude

Resources

Rank 2 (Hermetic Order of the Rose Cross)
Followers 1

Flaw

Phobia: Insects

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
---------	--------	------	--------	-----------

Tommy Gun (burst fire)	4 L	0	10 L	(5) L
Tommy Gun (full auto)	6 L	0	12 L	(6) L

Professor Chase

Archetype: Scientist Motivation: Power
Style: 4 Health: 7

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 Charisma: 3
Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 6
Strength: 2 Willpower: 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 9
Move: 1* Defense: 6
Perception: 10 Stun: 3

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
--------	------	--------	--------	-----------

Con	3	3	6	(3)
C:Engineer	6	4	10	(5)
C:Mechanics	6	4	10	(5)
Firearms	3	2	5	(2+)
Autogyro	3	3	6	(3)
S: Biology	6	4	10	(5)
S:Engineer	6	4	10	(5)

Talents

Weird Science: Biology
Weird Science: Engineering

Resources

Artifact 1 (Autogyro Wheelchair) (see below)
Rank 1 (Order of Prometheus)

Flaw

*Crippled

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
---------	--------	------	--------	-----------

W&S RIC	4 L	0	10 L	(5) L
Bulldog .455				

Autogyro Wheelchair (Artifact 1)

Personal Pack. This appears to be a clunky, smelly, diesel powered wheelchair, but it has the capacity to sprout rotor blades and attain low altitudes

Enhancements: Special motion: ground travel (+2); weapon mount: twin grenades (+1); improved handling (+2)

Limitations: Decreased speed -25% (-1 enhancements); requires maintenance difficulty 3 (-2 enhancements)

Autogyro Wheelchair

Size	Def	Spd	Hnd	Crew	Pass
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-1	4	45*	0	1	0
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* Ground speed: 25

Requires a Mechanics (difficulty 3) roll each day to remain operational.

Armament: Two rocket-propelled grenades (Pilot roll to aim, damage: 8L, area of effect: 5 feet)

GAMBLIN' FOOL SOLDIER

Archetype: Soldier Motivation: Duty

Style: Health: 6

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 Charisma: 2

Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 2

Strength: 3 Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 4

Move: 6 Defense: 6

Perception: 4 Stun: 4

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Athletics	3	3	6	(3)
Brawl	3	2	5	(2+)
Drive	2	2	4	(2)
Firearms	2	4	6	(3)
Melee	3	1	4	(2)
<i>Knives</i>			5	(2+)
Survival	2	2	4	(2)
<i>Tracking</i>			5	(2+)

Talents

Snapshot

Diehard

Resources

\$1 pocket money

Flaw

Addicted to Gambling

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Colt M1911	3 L	0	9 L	(4+) L
Fighting Knife	1 L	0	6 L	(3) L
Hand Grenade*	0 L	0	6 L	(3) L

*Hand grenades explode with an area of effect dealing 8L damage

SPECIAL TALENT: SNAPSHOT

You may gain -1 bonus to the Action Speed of any ranged attack. Spend 2 Style to get -2 bonus for one scene. Spend 4 Style to get a -3 bonus for the remainder of the scene.

SPECIAL TALENT: DIEHARD

You cannot be knocked unconscious from dropping below 0 health. You do not die until -7 health (most other people die at -5). At 0 health or below, you are Exhausted (may either move or act or actively defend, but not all three at the same time) and you suffer a penalty to all actions equal to your health rating. Spend 2 Style and for one scene you will not die until -9 health. Spend 4 Style and for one scene you will not die until -11 health.

You were a darn good soldier, but not quite as good a gambler. You convinced your buddies to bet on everything from cat races to hand-grenade tosses, but when you won the bet that the colonel's dress uniform could be dyed pink, you got yourself drummed out. Since then, you've become a bit of a hobo. To make a few dollars, you signed on with Professor Mortimer of Burroughs University in Bugswallow City, who was seeking extra security for a "very dangerous experiment." To your surprise, the boys from Army Intelligence also got in touch with you, promising that they could reinstate you if you reported back to them about the activities of "certain organizations which may possess technology, weapons, and/or information that could be used by or against the U.S. Military."

MOTIVATION: DUTY

You earn Style points when your character acts responsibly or convinces someone to keep their word.

FLAW: ADDICTED TO GAMBLING

You earn a Style point when your character's gambling costs something valuable, causes him to do something foolish or reckless, or causes someone else to do something foolish or reckless.

GRANNY GONE BAD

"Of all the gin joints, in all the world, trouble always walks into mine."

Archetype: Criminal

Motivation: Fame

Style:

Health: 4

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 Charisma: 3

Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 2

Strength: 2 Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 6

Move: 6 Defense: 6

Perception: 4 Stun: 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Con	3	3	6	(3)
<i>Fast Talk</i>			7	(3+)
Drive	4	4	8	(4)
Firearms	4	1	5	(2+)
Larceny	4	2	6	(3)
<i>Lock-picking</i>			7	(3+)
Stealth	4	2	6	(3)
Streetwise	3	2	5	(2+)

Talents

Reckless Driver

Resources

Wealth 1: \$250 pocket money

Flaw

Compulsion: Breaking the rules

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
.357 Magnum	1 L	0	5 L	(2+) L

In the early days of Prohibition, you racked up 198 counts of bootlegging, smuggling, and reckless driving, but the eighteenth amendment was repealed 3 years ago, and you were expected to stay on in prison. So you busted out. You really are a sweet lady at heart, but you can't get over the feeling that society owes you a big one. You figure your best bet for a happy retirement is to settle down in some backwater town, muscle out the leading underworld figure to earn yourself a reputation, and then set up a modest little criminal empire, which you will rule with an iron apron. When Professor Mortimer of Burroughs University in Bugswallow City contacted you about transporting something dangerous and probably illegal, you realized your opportunity might be at hand.

MOTIVATION: FAME

You earn Style points whenever your character does something noteworthy or increases her reputation.

FLAW: COMPULSION: BREAK RULES

You earn a Style point when your character causes trouble by breaking rules or laws or when she convinces another to break the rules.

SPECIAL TALENT: RECKLESS DRIVER

You may gain +2 to any Drive maneuver (such as stunts, car chases, etc) if you perform the maneuver in a reckless manner. The strain of a reckless maneuver causes 1 point of structural damage to the vehicle.

Spend 2 Style to get +4 Drive skill when performing a maneuver recklessly (lasts until end of scene). Spend 4 Style to get +6 Drive skill when performing a maneuver recklessly (lasts until end of scene).

LUNKHEAD BOXER

Archetype: Criminal Motivation: Duty

Style: Health: 7

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 Charisma: 2

Dexterity: 1 Intelligence: 1

Strength: 5 Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 2

Move: 7 Defense: 6

Perception: 3 Stun: 5

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Athletics	5	2	7	(3+)
Automechanics	1	2	3	(1+)
Firearms	1	3	4	(2)
Intimidation	2	3	5	(2+)
MA: Boxing	5	4	9	(4+)
Melee	5	1	6	(3)

You're a good boy because you do what Grams tells you. Grams asks you to fix he car, and you do. Grams tells you to get the cookie jar off the top shelf, and you do. Grams tells you to rough up a shopkeeper so she can extract protection money, and you do. Then one day the cops came and put you both in jail. That wasn't so bad for you—the other guys left you alone after you won some prison boxing tournaments. But you were very happy when Grams busted you out so you could get back to work.

MOTIVATION: DUTY

You earn Style points when your character acts responsibly or convinces someone to keep their word.

FLAW: GULLIBLE

You earn a Style point whenever your character is taken advantage of because of his trusting nature.

SPECIAL TALENT: STAGGERING BLOW

Your boxing attacks have an increased ability to knock back or knock down your opponent. +1 bonus to knockback. Spend 2 Style to gain +2 knockback; 4 Style to gain +3; 6 to gain +4. These bonuses remain in effect until the end of the scene.

SPECIAL SKILL: BOXING

+1 to punching (already calculated), +1 to blocking; -1 to grappling and throwing

MELODRAMATIC MAGICIAN

Archetype: Occultist Motivation: Fame

Style: Health: 5

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 Charisma: 4

Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 3

Strength: 1 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 6

Move: 4 Defense: 5

Perception: 6 Stun: 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Academics:Occult	3	3	6	(3)
Investigation	3	2	5	(2+)
Larceny	3	3	6	(3)
<i>Sleight of Hand</i>			7	(3+)
Melee	1	1	2	(1)
<i>Knives</i>			3	(1+)
Firearms	3	1	4	(2)
Theurgy	4	4	8	(4)

Talents

Attractive
Magical Aptitude

Resources

\$5 pocket money

Flaw

Melodramatic

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Double Derringer	2 L	0	6 L	(3) L
Ritual Dagger	1 L	0	4 L	(2) L

Not only is your life far more interesting than anyone else's, you also have amazing powers which you have used to perfect a vaudeville magic act which has been dazzling audiences for more than a year. Your innate ability to detect mystical occurrences and sort out true magic from mere malarkey led you to discover the Hermetic Order of the Rose Cross (HORC), which is a (usually) benevolent organization dedicated to the research and development of mystical knowledge. As an initiation task, they have sent you to Bugswallow City to assist Professor Mortimer of Burroughs University. There was a chapter of HORC in Bugswallow, but some kind of recent shake-up occurred and now the Bugswallow Lodge seems to have fallen into charlatanism and/or black magic, which would drag down the good name of the organization as a whole. Your job is to pull the curtain on the pretenders' little act—either discredit them or drive them out, or both. After all, you are far more deserving of center stage.

MOTIVATION: FAME

You earn Style points whenever your character does something noteworthy or increases his reputation.

FLAW: MELODRAMATIC

You earn a Style point when your

character's need for attention causes trouble or when you steal the spotlight from a rival.

SPECIAL ABILITY: MAGICAL APTITUDE

See *Secrets of the Surface World* for Theurgy rituals.

PARANORMAL INVESTIGATOR

Archetype: Spy Motivation: Mystery

Style: Health: 4

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 Charisma: 3

Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 4

Strength: 2 Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 6

Move: 4 Defense: 4

Perception: 6 Stun: 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Academics: Law	4	1	5	(2+)
Brawl	2	2	4	(2)
Con	3	2	5	(2+)
Drive	2	1	3	(1+)
Firearms	2	3	5	(2+)
Intimidation	3	2	5	(2+)
Investigation	4	3	7	(3+)
Streetwise	3	1	4	(2)

Talents

None

Resources

Artifact 1: Amnesia Gun (6 shots)*

Rank 1: FBI

\$5 pocket money

Flaw

Fanatic

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Amnesia Gun	2 L	0	7 L	(3+) L
W&S MP 9mm	3 L	0	8 L	(4) L

Professor Mortimer of Burroughs University in Bugswallow City contacted the FBI to request extra security for his experiments due to the presence of a secret organization of self-proclaimed sorcerers. Your superiors have assigned you to the task, but with the following addition: the professor is also suspected of being a member of a separate, secret organization. Your mission is to collect information on all potentially subversive organizations in the vicinity and to prevent the public from becoming aware of any paranormal activities. Provide plausible explanations where possible, coerce or purchase silence as necessary, and confiscate evidence at every opportunity.

MOTIVATION: MYSTERY

You earn Style points when your character protects a secret or convinces someone not to go looking for the truth.

FLAW: FANATICAL

You earn a Style point whenever your character's devotion causes harm or he converts someone else to his way of thinking.

SPECIAL RESOURCE: AMNESIA GUN.

Score more successes than target's willpower to erase recent memory. Roll more than twice as many successes to erase memory as far back as you choose. 6 shots.

SPECIAL RESOURCE: FBI RANK.

+2 social bonus within the law enforcement community.

PROMETHEAN SCIENTIST

Archetype: Scientist Motivation: Hope

Style: Health: 4

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 Charisma: 2

Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 5

Strength: 2 Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 7

Move: 4 Defense: 4

Perception: 7 Stun: 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Craft: Medicine	5	3	8	(4)
Diplomacy	2	3	5	(2+)
Firearms	2	1	3	(1+)
Investigation	5	1	6	(3)
Medicine	5	3	8	(4)
Science: Biology	5	3	8	(4)

Talents

Weird Science: Biology

Resources

Rank 1: Order of Prometheus
\$5 pocket money

Flaw

Merciful

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Dart Gun*	2 L	0	5 L	(2+) L

* Ammunition: 6 special darts (see text), 6 tranquilizer darts, and 6 antiseptic darts (heals 2 lethal wounds).

The dart gun has a Range of 50 and a Cap of 1.

SPECIAL ABILITY: WEIRD SCIENCE; BIOLOGY

Given time and resources, you can make all kinds of wild things. Today you come prepared with several injections. Each injection requires one action and the effects last for 1 minute (10 combat rounds). The effects of multiple uses stack. These injections may be used with the dart gun.

Select six doses of any combination of the following:

- Hypo-Stim (Strength +1, Body +1, Intelligence -1)
- Neural Accelerator (+1 Intelligence, +1 Dexterity, -1 Willpower)
- Pheromone Serum (+1 Charisma)
- Fortuna Virum: (+2 to any one roll of player's choice)
- Trauma Vaccine (cannot be knocked unconscious due to health level; no wound penalties until health = -3)

You are a member of a semi-secret organization called the Order of Prometheus. Some people call you mad scientists, but you are visionaries who seek to build a better world through technology, and you believe that the future will see human kind lifted from its barbarous behavior and primitive systems to a new, golden era. When Professor Mortimer (a colleague of the Order of Prometheus and a researcher at Burroughs University in Bugswallow City) contacted you because a group of unscientific and unethical people was trying to steal his research, you immediately agreed to help.

MOTIVATION: HOPE

You earn Style points when your character's optimism is justified or she convinces someone not to give up.

FLAW: MERCIFUL

You earn a Style point whenever your character shows compassion to an enemy or refuses to retaliate when wronged.

SPECIAL RESOURCE: RANK IN THE ORDER OF PROMETHEUS

+2 social bonus when dealing with scientists of the Order.

ROOTIN' TOOTIN' COWBOY

Archetype: Adventurer Motivation: Fame

Style: Health: 5

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 Charisma: 2

Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 2

Strength: 3 Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 5

Move: 6 Defense: 6

Perception: 4 Stun: 3

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Athletics	3	1	4	(2)
Brawl	3	2	5	(2+)
Firearms	3	2	5	(2+)
Melee	3	5	8	(4)
<i>Lasso</i>			9	(4+)
Ride	3	4	7	(3+)
Survival	2	2	4	(2)
<i>Tracking</i>			6	(3)

Talents

Quickdraw
Skill Aptitude: Melee

Resources

\$5 pocket money

Flaw

Overconfident

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Colt Peacemaker	3 L	0	8 L	(4) L
Lasso	1 N	0	10 N	(5) L
Punch	0 N	0	6 L	(3) L

You've got a reputation as the craziest rodeo dude ever to hog-tie a critter or grip the saddle of a bucking bronco. But now you're finding it a little harder to pull new, wild stunts to further your reputation, so when Professor Mortimer of Burroughs University in Bugswallow City contacted you about working with some extremely rare, dangerous animals, you strapped on your ten gallon hat and hit the trail.

MOTIVATION: FAME

You earn Style points whenever your character does something noteworthy or increases his reputation.

FLAW: OVERCONFIDENT

You earn a Style point when your character's bravado gets him in over his head.

SPECIAL TALENT: QUICKDRAW

You may ready a weapon as a reflexive action (does not take an action to draw a weapon).

SPECIAL ABILITY: LASSO

Make a melee attack, range 10 feet. Target may use only Active Defense (dexterity). If you net more successes than target's strength, then target is immobilized for a number of turns equal to your net successes. If you net more than double the target's strength, the target is stuck indefinitely.