

NEVER SPLIT UP THE POSSE

By Dave Crokaert

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The Premise: The town of Marvel has been torn to shreds by an all-consuming war between two rich but ruthless families. Thinking that decent citizens have hired them, our heroes are hired by one family to help them dispose of the outlaws that are threatening their businesses. Problem is, the same thing happened to a bunch of their friends, and they're hired by the opposition! This one gives little time for plannin', but has plenty of blastin' and backstabbin'!

The Setup: At the start of the adventure, the characters are split up into two separate posses. One half works for the Summers Family (Father Greg and sons Pete and Will) who made their fortune in both legal and illegal gun trading. The other half works for the Cullen brothers (Steve, Dave, Mike and Kenneth), who are officially in the liquor business, but have a hand in about every robbery that takes place in the vicinity. Both families own big homes at the opposite sides of Marvel.

The Meetings: Both initial meetings will be remarkably similar. The first group is greeted by Greg Summers, who welcomes them and hopes they will rid him and Marvel of those Cullen outlaws. He'd do it himself if they weren't so many of them and they weren't such ruthless people. An additional five 'heroes' as he calls them have also answered his request. After he introduces them, he points them in the right direction asking for immediate and decisive action. The second posse gets the same story and an identical mission from Mike Cullen, only this time pointed at "that Summers scum!" They also get additional help in the form of four more 'hired guns'. Note that all the other hired help in both cases look like real desperados.

Showdown At High Noon: In classic Western style, both groups of hired guns happen to walk into each other on Main Street. Of course the players will immediately recognize each other. However, the other gunslingers figure the entire opposing posse for their targets and start blasting away. It

is likely that the players won't fire on each other but, as soon as it becomes apparent that they know each other, the others will suspect some kind of betrayal and flee back to their respective bosses.

No Rest for the Wicked: Only a couple of minutes after the hired guns made a run for it, the ones hired by Cullen attack the heroes but with an additional four gunslingers. A successful Knowin' check by one of the characters will identify the leader as Ian 'Scars' Ballrog, a notorious outlaw wanted in at least three states. They should figure that the Summers family was right and that the Cullen family is the real criminals. If the players get the upper hand, their opponents will run for the hills. Scars will retreat to the Cullen mansion. If they follow them, they can have a showdown right there. If they don't, the Summers family with their remaining help will join them along with another previously unseen helper, a blond longhaired fellow who turns out to be very good with his guns. If they do, the reinforcements will join in the assault. The Summers family will fight, but will always stay behind the heroes.

Hey! You Were Supposed to Be the Good

Guys! As soon as they defeat the Cullen Brothers, the Summers family turns on them. Luckily for the players, initially it is only Will who was impatient. More shootin' will occur. When things start to look grim, they will get unexpected help. A group of citizens have suddenly grown a backbone and are joining in the fight and helping the battered heroes. This should enable them to emerge victorious... or maybe not.

The End: The posse or their replacement characters win and the good citizens of Marvel are very grateful. They offer them the obviously vacant position of sheriff. The reward on Scars is \$400. The blond guy was wearing a wig. Removing it will reveal his short black hair. A successful Knowin' check will reveal him to be 'Black Bart Madison', who is wanted for murder and has a bounty of \$500 on his head.

