



## SPENCER'S CROSSING

by Chaos Steve Todd

### Spencer's Crossing

It's getting on towards late afternoon when the posse crosses over a small rise and sees a wooden bridge spanning a lazy, but good-sized river. On the far side sits a rambling, single story building and a small barn. A sign declares this to be "Spencer's Crossing: Dry Goods and Wet Ones Too!" A man comes around the side of the building carrying a board and a hammer. He sees you, drops the board and hurries out to the trail to intercept you when you cross the bridge.

As the posses' horses clomp across the bridge, the sound startles a small creature and it dashes out from under the bridge. It's a rabbit...with antlers. It makes a zig-zigging dash across the ground until it finally disappears from sight. On a successful Common Knowledge roll the posse will know that superstition has it that jackalopes are omens of bad luck. Those with raises have heard that a jackalope's foot will bring the owner good luck. True to the superstition, the posse has walked into a whole lot of bad luck. They may not use any bennies until they kill the little critter or until it loses interest in the party.

The man turns out to be Albert Spencer, proprietor of Spencer's Crossing. His fancy tinhorn clothes are covered in dust and sweat. He's very excited to have some

customers and in an effort to get the posse to stop and look at his wares (and listen to his problem), he'll offer them a drink on the house. Approaching the store the posse will see that all of the windows are boarded up and a few other spots on the building have been repaired as well. On a successful Notice roll heroes will note that under the hasty repairs looks to be deep scrapes or claw marks.

### The Offer

Mr. Spencer hails from back east and runs his store just like the finest ones in the big cities. His store is amazingly clean and his shelves are well stocked with goods. He thinks the jackalope is a "cute little critter." He doesn't know about the superstition. After pouring the drinks for the posse, he'll tell them his problem. He has recently been plagued with bears coming around at night trying to get inside at the food larders. He'd like the posse to bed down at the store tonight and when the bears come around looking for some easy food, he wants help shooting them. He's tried scaring them off, but that hasn't worked. And truth be told, the bears scare him more than a little. "You don't see many of them back east." He says. He'll give each hero \$10 or \$20 in store credit for the night's work.

### Night of the Grizzlies

When night falls the posse can station themselves wherever they want. If the jackalope wasn't killed in the first scene, give the posse another chance while they are waiting for the bears to show up. As the night wears on Mr. Spencer becomes more and more unsettled. His hands shake so much he can hardly hold onto the bottle of whiskey he's nursing. About midnight (of course) the bears attack—one for each posse member. It won't take long for the posse to realize these ain't no bears. For one, bears don't howl. The Gabriel Hounds are after Mr. Spencer, but they have no qualms about killing any who try to stop them.

### Spencer's Confession

After the Hounds are killed, Spencer's conscience gets the better of him and he tells his story. Spencer's real name is Nathan Baltimore. Back east he was once a rich and powerful businessman. But after some business deals with the wrong people went sour, he lost everything and barely escaped with his life. But its how he became rich that's at the heart and soul of the matter—or just the soul actually. You see, when he was a young man, he sold his soul to the devil. Sure, the man's name was Stone, but Nathan knew who he really was...and made the deal anyway. He got his wish and was, for a time, rich and powerful. He is

## Albert Spencer

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d6, Knowledge: Business d10, Riding d4, Shooting d4

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

**Toughness:** 4

**Gear:** double barrel shotgun (12/24/48, 1-3d6, 2 shots, +2 shooting)

## Gabriel Hound

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

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Guts d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d10, Stealth d8, Tracking d12

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

### Special Abilities:

**Bite:** 2d8.

**Curse:** Gabriel hounds are summoned and sent after a specific target. When the victim sees the hound, he automatically suffers from the Bad Luck Hindrance until the hound's master is destroyed. Destroying the hound has no effect on the curse.

**Fear:** A Gabriel hound forces any who see it to make a Guts roll.

**Howl:** As an action Gabriel hounds may make an Intimidation check against anyone within earshot.

**Immunity:** Gabriel hounds take half damage from normal weapons.

**Improved Frenzy:** The horrors may make two Fighting attacks each round at no penalty.

**Weakness (Holy Water):** A pint of Holy Water does 2d6 damage to a Gabriel hound.

**Weakness (Silver):** Gabriel hounds take normal damage from silver weapons.

## Jackalope

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d10(A), Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d8, Stealth d10, Taunt d10

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 3

### Special Abilities:

**Antlers:** 2d4.

**Bad Luck:** A party stalked by a jackalope suffers from horrible luck. They cannot spend Fate Chips until the thing loses interest (usually after a death) or is killed.

**Sixth Sense:** Jackalopes sense danger, making them very difficult to hit. Direct attacks against them (but not area effect attacks!) suffer -4 to the attack roll.

**Size -2:** Jackalopes are very small, and suffer a -2 to their Toughness.

**Small:** Attackers must subtract 2 from attack rolls against these creatures.

**Coup:** The jackalope's coup is good luck. A Harrowed who absorbs its essence draws an extra Fate Chip each session. This coup can only be claimed once.



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convinced those beasts were sent by Stone to hurry his death along. Now after the fight Nathan has been inspired by the posse's heroic stand against the beasts. He says "You're the type of men the west needs right now. I saw you take on those nightmarish hounds and not a one of you backed down. I've decided to stay here and run my store, just like before. If the devil wants me, he'll find me waiting for him like a man."

## What Now?

It's up to you, the GM, what happens next. Maybe Stone did send the hounds or maybe something else is heading this way and the hounds are just the heralds for what's to come. Or were the hounds just the bad luck drawn to Spencer by the jackalope? Whatever happens next, it's sure to keep your posse hoppin'.

## More To Come!

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