



Devil's Night



*Requires Deadlands
& the Savage Worlds
Horror Companion*





Devil's Night

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Doctor Herbert Langston knew something about ore. In the steel mills of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, he created a machine that could extract ghost rock from even the crudest raw materials.

The machine—he called it “the reducer”—worked well for almost two weeks. But on the 13th day it suffered a spectacular and catastrophic explosion that killed 17 workers and maimed dozens more.

Langston gathered the only other thing he'd ever cared about, his daughter Daphne, and fled town. The pair didn't stop running until they reached Wichita, Kansas. With the last of their savings, he bought an old house and a junkyard that used to belong to the Black River Railroad.

There Langston began to rebuild the reducer. In weeks he had a prototype and caught the attention of representatives from Dixie Rails. One of their most esteemed scientists promised to visit, evaluate the machine, and—Langston hoped—offer him a hefty sum for the design. Perhaps he would even offer Langston a chance to orchestrate the building of multiple reducers across the Confederacy.

The morning of the visit, Langston rose, ate a hearty breakfast, and walked outside—eager for the arrival of the representative from Dixie Rails.

Instead, he found his house and the giant reducer in his backyard had been vandalized by the local children.

It was a disaster. Crude insults about the “carpetbagger” and his daughter were painted on the sides of the reducer and even his house. Rotten vegetables, spoiled fruit, and smashed eggs were everywhere. Langston began to scream and go into a rage. Daphne attempted to comfort him but the mad scientist slapped her in blind anger.

Langston's horror at his own reaction only worsened when he saw the Dixie Rails carriage had arrived. His guest had witnessed the entire event—Langston's rage, the humiliation at the hands of local children, and striking his own daughter—the one “creation” he always believed he'd gotten right.

The representative sighed, shook his head, and left.

Shortly thereafter, Daphne left as well. Langston silently packed her bags, put her on a train, and watched her steam off to her aunt in Pittsburgh.

Langston went back to his lonely home. This wasn't his fault, the voices in his head whispered. It was those rotten children. The ones who'd destroyed his dreams on Devil's Night.



Das Ebon Schleier

Langston wanted revenge. Science had betrayed him, but the old house he'd purchased once belonged to someone named Cooper Whateley. Whateley had left in a hurry, it seems, or perhaps just vanished, because his belongings remained in the house when Dr. Langston bought it from the county.

In one of the many assortments of macabre collections was an old and dusty book called *Das Ebon Schleier*, or *The Ebon Veil*, written by a German sorcerer named Johannes Goetz.

Inside this blood-stained grimoire was forbidden lore concerning the summoning and control of demons.

Over the course of the year, Langston collected the components the book claimed he needed to call "The Black Coachman." On Friday, October 29th, he was successful in his ritual and the creature arrived at 13 minutes past midnight.

Soon after, Little Jimmy Peck, the ringleader of the teens who had vandalized Langston's house, was out at the Hangin' Tree with his two rowdies planning their mischief for Devil's Night—just two nights away.

From out of the darkness came the thunder of hooves and iron wheels, and the unearthly laugh of the coachman!

The boys fled in all directions but the Coachman was too fast. The next morning, the comatose forms of Peck and two of his cronies lay sprawled along the prairie.

Their relatives gathered the boys and took them to their homes, but the local sawbones couldn't explain their condition.

The Setup

This adventure takes place on the outskirts of Wichita, Kansas, but can be placed anywhere the Marshal is so inclined to move it.

The posse has arrived at the Dead Horse Road House on the outskirts of

Wichita the morning after the attack at the Hangin' Tree. As they enter, Doctor Reg Palmer, sawbones from Wichita, has just come from the Peck house. He sees the heroes and, on a hunch, asks them for help.

You look like folks who've seen a little trouble and maybe figured out how to deal with it. Well, these folks out here have got some. If you're inclined to help, I've got three boys lyin' lifeless in their beds because o' somethin' that happened last night. Somethin' I can't rightly explain.

Assuming Doc Palmer isn't turned away, he continues.

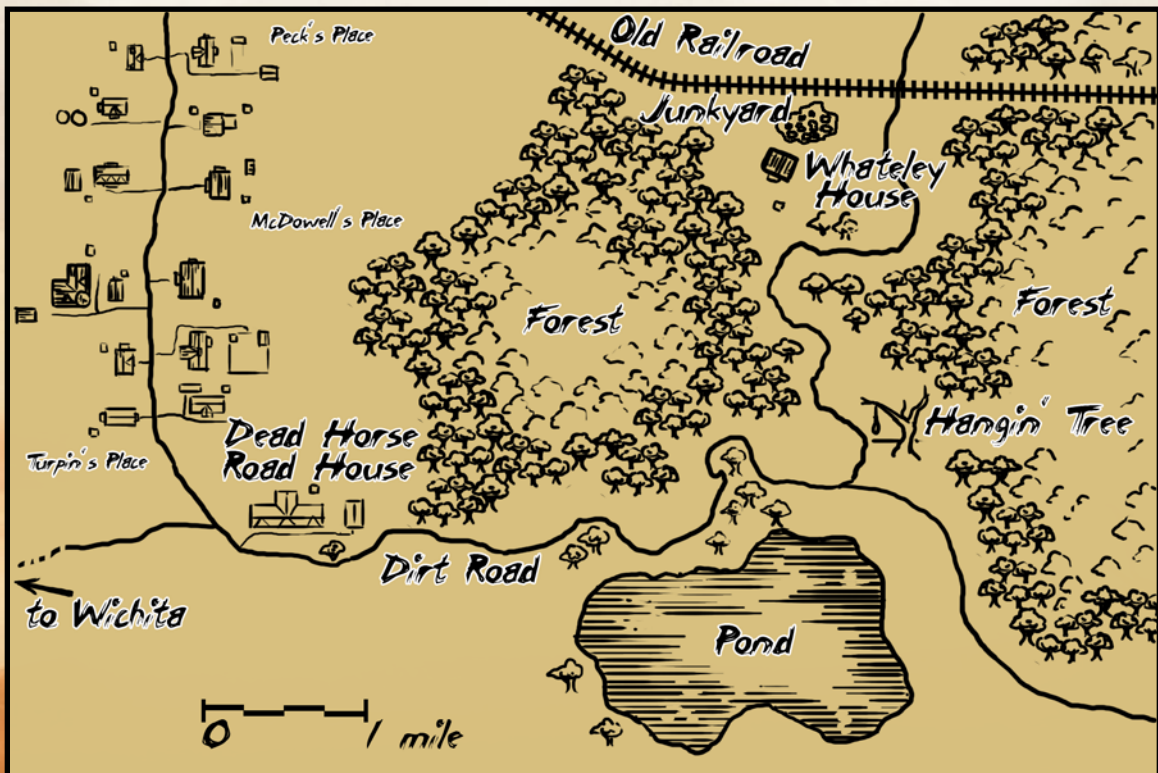
There's a group o' kids who—frankly—ain't exactly pillars o' the earth 'round here, but don't deserve what happened to 'em just the same. Best I can tell they was meetin' up at the ol' Hangin' Tree when something attacked 'em. Whatever

it was chased 'em in all directions but none of 'em got very far.

The Pony Express rider found 'em all face-down in the grass this morning as he was ridin' through. They're all alive—but in a kinda coma or somethin'. I've never seen anything like it. Nothin' at all. And I was at the Battle of Washington and the Cauldron.

They're all pale and cold—like they've had the life sucked right out of 'em but ain't dead yet. I have little doubt they will be soon though if I can't get to the bottom of this. Will you help?

Doc Palmer won't pay—he's doing a favor being out this far already—but he does have something he picked up at the Battle of the Cauldron, a cross worn by Father Pedro Valdez. Father Valdez fell in the service of Dixie Rails fending off some unnatural horror unleashed by Bayou Vermillion. Palmer took his crucifix and could swear that ever since



that day he's felt protected by the padre's holy spirit. In fact, the crucifix grants +2 Toughness to any basically good mortal who wears it.

If the posse will help these boys, Palmer believes the "heroes" can make better use of it than he as they continue their adventures.

The Investigation

Here are the places the investigators are likely to start poking around, and the events that happen when they do.

Around Town

The "town" is really a few dozen homes and the Dead Horse Road House on the outskirts of Wichita, which is about six miles northwest. If anyone questions the local farmers, they're relatively clueless and refer the strangers back to Doc Palmer.

At the Dead Horse Road House, a few travelers heading in or out of Wichita are playing cards. Most know nothing about what happened but rumors are starting to spread of witchcraft, demons, and even the plague.

One of the card players, however, is Harvey Crabb. He roams the West looking for junk to sell to the numerous "New Scientists" who have popped up in the West and might reveal a tale over a game or two of cards.

There use to be a Black River stockyard here. I came to see if it was still around and maybe make an offer on their scrap, but it had already been bought by someone.

I went to see him—see if he wanted to pass on whatever was left—but his house seemed abandoned.

If the barkeep, Hank Krumm, is asked about the house, he adds the following:

That'd be Doc Langston. Strange fella from Back East. Came out here two years or so ago with his daughter, but she up an' left him and we didn't see much of him after. I'm told he built some kinda big machine out by the old Whateley house he bought. It's right near the Black River scrapyard so I guess that's what he used to make his contraption.

The Whateleys are a notorious family of black wizards. Any huckster in the group can make a Common Knowledge roll at +2 to recognize the name. Hank Krumm doesn't know anything more about the Whateley House or Dr. Langston, but he knows someone who might—Doc Palmer.

See "Back to Palmer" below.

The Hangin' Tree

The old tree was used to hang a horse rustler once. No one knows what his name was, and he was left to rot until animals finally dragged his corpse down and devoured the remains. Most all the locals know the legend if asked.

The grass is disturbed around the tree and there are numerous cuts in the bark that bleed red sap (from the boys throwing knives at it). It's unnaturally quiet here—the ghost of the accused rustler doesn't rest easy—but that's a tale for another day.

There are numerous tracks around but it takes a professional to sort out anything of use. With a success on a Tracking roll, the investigator discerns heavy hoofprints and wagon tracks in a zigzagging pattern through the grass. With a raise, he also finds impressions indicating where all three boys fell. Two are fairly close to the tree while the third (Jimmy Peck's) is about 50 yards distant to the west.

There are no traces of blood or other physical evidence.

Peck's Place

"Little" Jimmy Peck is what you might call "ironic." The "kid" is 17 years old and big as a house. His father, "Big" Jim Peck, is even bigger. Big Jim served as a hired gun for Black River in the Rail Wars and is angry as hell since losing that very lucrative work. He's even more angry that something got his son's soul.

Big Jim saw a lot of strange things as an enforcer and knows all too well that magic and witchcraft are real. He thinks Little Jim was cursed by his former lover, Jezebel Harkin. He hasn't seen her since she caught him with one of the doves in Wichita, but "she always was a vengeful sort."

Of course Jez is a red herring. She is a witch, but she's off serving Mina Devlin in the Maze and has nothing to do with this particular deviltry.

If asked if his son had any enemies, Big Jim says:

Ah reckon there was a lotta folks 'round here didn't take so well to mah boy. He always was a rough sort. Takes after me, I guess. But he ain't done nothin' of late. I was workin' some discipline in 'im so he could maybe get work with Dixie Rails. I used to work for Black River 'til they moved on West. It's good pay, but a fella's gotta be ready to get his hands dirty, if y'know what I mean.

Big Jim doesn't know anything about Little Jim's tangle with Doc Langston.

The families of the other boys, Bill McDowell and Freddie Turpin, have no leads. Their ruffians weren't particularly loved around town, but they're more normal folk and don't believe in magic and monsters. They think their sons have caught some nasty disease and are hoping for a cure—perhaps from the snakeoil salesman who's been hanging out at the mill pond (see below).



Professor Mathias' Old Time Elixirs

Professor Mathias isn't the third doctor of this tale because he isn't a real doctor of any sort. He's a traveling snakeoil salesman. He hawks completely useless tonics and elixirs from the back of his fancy red wagon.

Mathias is currently parked out by the old pond, hoping to catch anyone passing by the crossroads and sell his wares for a few days before heading into Wichita.

Mathias knows nothing of the Coachman, though he certainly believes his miracle tonic should be applied liberally to the boys and that its amazing powers will eventually "rouse them to their full and natural state of consciousness and vigor!"

Mathias is, of course, another red herring, but since he has a coach, he's likely to be more of a suspect. When this subject arises, allow any character who examined the Black Coachman's tracks a Tracking roll. With a success, he thinks Mathias' wagon didn't leave the tracks

at the Hangin' Tree. With a raise, or if Mathias' wagon is taken to the site and compared, he's sure of it.

Back to Palmer

Information at the Dead Horse Road House (see above) reveals that a stranger named Dr. Langston now lives in the old Whateley House, and that Doc Palmer might know more about it. Here's what he says:

Cooper Whateley. Now there was a strange one. Had six daughters with three different wives—so folks say—and sent 'em all off to work for Mina Devlin's outfit.

He kinda disappeared, and then this fella from Back East moved in a few years later. Professor Herbert... something. Langston, yeah, that's it. Not sure what happened there. About a year ago his house and some contraption he was workin' on got vandalized. Next thing y'know, his daughter up and left. It was the strangest thing, 'cause he doted on that child like she was the most important thing in the world.

The Whateley House

Eventually, the posse will trip out to the old Whateley place. When they get there, it's locked and abandoned. Professor Langston has fled to the "safety" of the junkyard and a "friend" he has there who might protect him from the Coachman.

Inside the house are old but ornate furnishings—most left over from the Whateleys. A Tracking roll (or Notice at -2) reveals someone has been living here but seemed confined to a few areas of the house. The rest is covered in dust and shows stark disuse. A Tracking roll at -2 notes the thickest areas of dust haven't been disturbed in years.

The furniture and fixtures are quite valuable to the right buyer, but would be very difficult to sell locally due to the Whateleys' reputation.

Upstairs, two rooms have been used. One is obviously decorated for a lady but all personal effects have been removed in the last year or so. (This is where Langston's daughter slept.)

The other room was once a grand master bedroom with a canopied bed. The chest of drawers has a few articles of clothing—mostly black pants and white shirts—and the wardrobe holds a few moth-eaten jackets, dress coats, lab coats, and more shirts.

At the foot of the disheveled bed is a small trunk, lying open with numerous papers and trinkets lying around it. It's obviously been rifled through and the contents left lying where they happened to land. Among them are letters to a woman named "Amelia," Langston's ex-wife, discussing pleas for more money or arguments about someone named Daphne returning to Pittsburgh.

Other documents include a diploma from Pennsylvania Technical College in Metallurgy, various obscure patents including one for a clockwork man, letters of recommendation from superiors at various steel mills, and finally a once-crumpled notice of termination for gross negligence.

The last parcel of mementos is a loosely-bound collection of drawings bound together by a pink ribbon. These are drawings made by a younger Daphne of her family. Stuck to one of them with a bit of sorghum is a lock of silky blonde hair.

There are no further clues at this location, but as the party searches through the property, one of them happens to peer through the window and notices movement at the scrapyard.

THE SCRAPYARD

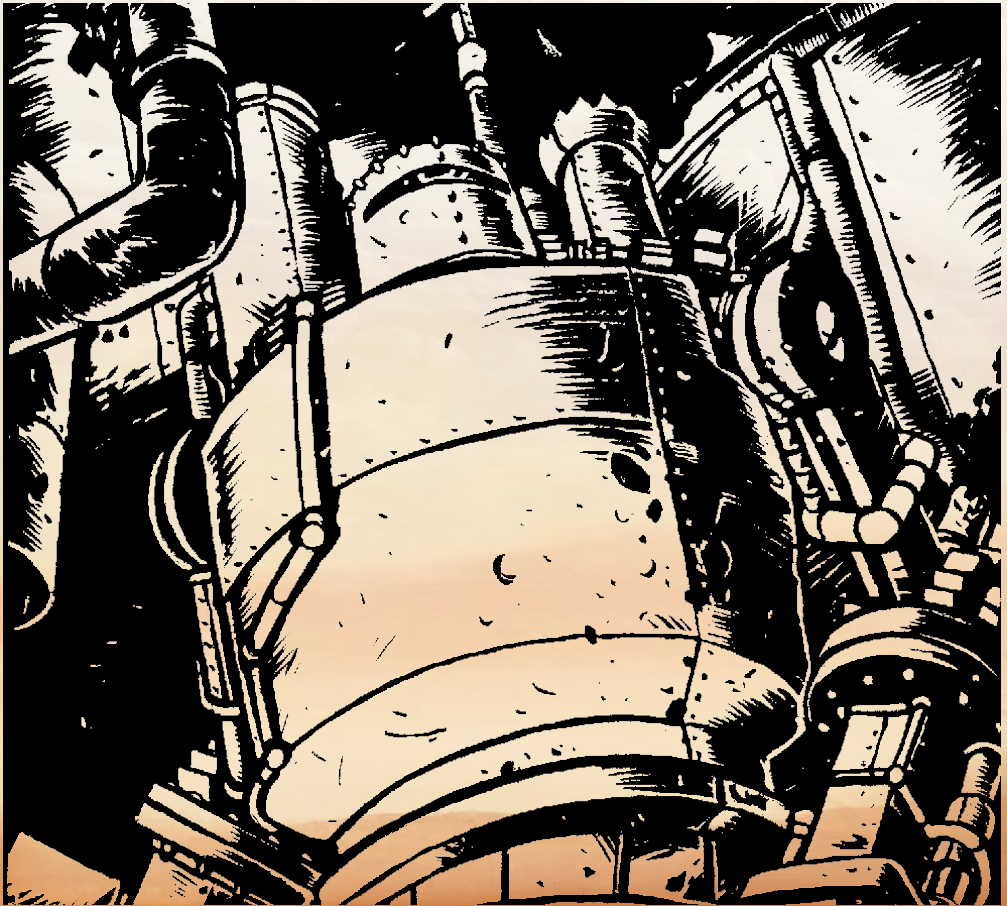
Some deeply buried and still-rational part of Dr. Langston's mind refused to believe the demon he spent a year summoning was actually real. When it arrived and carried out its grisly task, Langston fled in a panic to the scrapyard and the lone friend he had left in the world. While he had been waiting for the arrival of his summoning components, Langston spent his spare time in the junkyard creating a "mechanical man."

Unfortunately, while the "flesh" was strong, the "mind" was weak. Sometime earlier this very day, Langston collapsed in the large chair he'd dragged out to the

lot and fell into a deep sleep. The "scrap monster," left to its own devices, sat in the chair—imitating its beloved master—and crushed poor ol' Langston into a crunchy mess.

The scrap monster doesn't know what to do now. It has a vague awareness that something isn't right with its "father" and occasionally tries to move his limbs into some semblance of life, but this only causes more damage and more rage.

By the time the confused thing is found, it attacks to the death—either of itself or its prey.





Scrap Monster

The scrap monster is a construct of bits and pieces gathered from the former Black River scrapyards.

It's imbued with life via mechanical and arcane rituals performed by Dr. Langston. It isn't evil, but it is single-minded in protecting its creator. It won't stray from the confines of the junkyard, even if Langston's corpse is somehow removed.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 14 (4)

Special Abilities

- **Armor +4:** The thing is made of iron and steel.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; No additional damage from called shots; Immune to poison and disease.
- **Fear:** Anyone seeing the scrap monster must make a Guts check.
- **Pummel:** Str+d10.
- **Repair:** The creature can repair all its wounds if given an hour per wound and access to parts (such as those found in the junkyard).
- **Size +2:** The scrap monster stands seven feet tall.

The Bigger They Are...

Once the scrap monster is destroyed—or lured away—the posse can investigate the remains of Dr. Langston. Clutched in the mad scientist's broken and bloody arms is *Das Ebon Schleier*.

Das Ebon Schleier

The book is a grimoire and also contains forbidden lore as described in the *Savage Worlds Horror Companion*.

Das Ebon Schleier's forbidden lore pertains to demons in general, and provides intimate knowledge (+4 to Knowledge (Occult) rolls) of the legend of the Black Coachman.

The grimoire contains two spells. Both must be cast as rituals (see the *Horror Companion*), and require the gathering of components as detailed below. The spells do not require Power Points—they are powered by the magical grimoire, the ritual, and the components that must be gathered.

Summon the Black Coachman:

This is the *summon demon* spell with a few twists. If successful, no binding, bargaining, or warding is needed by the summoner. The Black Coachman seeks out its targets that very night. After that, it roams free for 13 nights, reaping the souls of anyone it chooses except those forbidden by the caster *by name*.

Thus Langston could say "Do not harm Doctor Palmer or my daughter Daphne," but he could not direct the coachman to ignore "the people of Wichita, travelers upon the road," etc., because they are not named.

The ritual must be cast between midnight and 12:59 a.m., and requires the eyes of two pure black stallions to form the hellish steeds, 13 pounds of wood from a blackened tree to form the coach, and the blood of the summoner to form the coachman.

When the demon arrives, the summoner may name up to 13 targets. The coachman begins to seek them out immediately, reaping the soul of one target each night. It is also more than happy to collect any other random souls it encounters as well—except those it is expressly forbidden to harvest.

Banish the Black Coachman: If a character spends some time reading this spell—in German, remember—he

discovers the spell doesn't actually banish the creature.

Instead, it calls it to the caster and makes it material. If it is then defeated within 13 minutes, the coachman is sent back to Hell. If it is not, it returns to its immaterial form and tries to slay whoever attempted to destroy it before fading back into the night or chasing after its next victim.

This ritual must be cast between midnight and 12:59 a.m. It requires something of great value to the summoner, the blood of the souls to be reclaimed, and the presence of the Coachman.

The thing of great value in this case is the lock of Daphne's hair found in the Whateley House. The blood of the souls to be reclaimed is a few drops of blood from the boys who the Coachman claimed. The presence of the Coachman occurs the moment the posse begins the ritual.

BANISHING THE COACHMAN

As soon as the heroes begin casting the *Banish the Black Coachman* ritual, they hear the sounds of hooves in the distance. Each round of the ritual (successful or not), the hooves sound closer and closer, until finally the Black Coachman arrives.

When it arrives it instantly begins reaping the souls of those it encounters and does not stop until everyone it can see is claimed.

Since this is Devil's Night, the Coachman has also been given a little help from the powers of darkness—a pack of five hell hounds.

The statistics for both the Black Coachman and the hell hounds can be found in the *Savage Worlds Horror Companion*.





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