

# DEAD LANDS

All the Purty Little Horses







# DEADLANDS

## ALL THE PURTY LITTLE HORSES

BY OWEN LEAN

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# Nightmares Alive

*So your cowpunchers think they got the grit to ride the range for Smith & Robards? Well, let's see if they still feel so full of sand after this nightmare.*

*Saddled up, Marshal? Let's ride!*

## THE STORY SO FAR

The town of Fairfield, nicknamed "Frogtown," grew up around Camp Floyd back in 1858. The base was established to suppress a rumored Mormon rebellion, but was abandoned when the War Between the States broke out. Since then Fairfield has been a quiet little backwater – mostly serving as a rest stop for the Pony Express.

Recently, Dr. Jacob Smith and Sir Clifton Robards bought the site of Camp Floyd for a song and started building a factory. The construction has brought hope of prosperity to the town's citizens, and dreams of a technological future to its children.

One such child was 12-year-old Jimmy Furlong. His dad hoped Jimmy would join the Pony Express, as he himself had done when he was Jimmy's age. But Jimmy, full of ghost-rock-

powered fantasies, has applied to join the Smith & Robards express delivery service.

About a month ago, however, a chance encounter turned Jimmy's dream into a nightmare. And he's taking the rest of Fairfield with him!

After arguing with his dad about his future, Jimmy snuck out of church on Sunday morning. In the deserted town square, Jimmy saw a rider in an old black duster littered with marshal's badges, a feathered hat's brim pulled low over his face. Jimmy ran up to him, thinking the rider might be there with news his application was accepted.

But the rider wasn't from Smith & Robards – far from it.

When Jimmy tugged on his duster, a vial of silver liquid fell and broke over the child. As the liquid fear coated Jimmy, he swooned into a



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terrified sleep. His parents found him and took him home, but it was already too late.

The dreams brought on by the infernal concoction took hold of the town. They began to transform it into a horrorscape in the image of Jimmy's fevered nightmares.

Now Hell has come to Frogtown, and if the posse doesn't do something quick, it's going to be a full-blown Deadland!

Still, you got to keep the customer satisfied. Right, Marshal?

## THE SETUP

If you're using the Plot Point Campaign in *Deadlands: Good Intentions*, this adventure takes place while the posse is employed as a delivery team between episodes five and six. It's especially helpful if the group includes a blessed with the *exorcism* or *sanctify* power.

Otherwise, during an especially busy time for the company, Smith & Robards hires the group to deliver a velocipede (see *Good Intentions*; it's basically a steam-powered motorcycle) to a Jimmy Furlong in the town of Fairfield, Deseret. The heroes must convey the delivery directly to the recipient, and Jimmy himself must sign for it—the manager at the Smith & Robards warehouse makes sure to stress that fact.

Fairfield is about 50 miles south of the City o' Gloom. The posse is offered \$200 each for their troubles, a good payday for such a short trip. (If you're using *Good Intentions*, Marshal, that's \$200 per week, inclusive of hazard pay.)

The reason Smith and Robards's offer is so generous is that they are fully aware what's happened to Fairfield, and its damn tricky building a factory next to a flourishing Deadland.

They don't know exactly what caused it—Hellstromme himself is oblivious to this accidental experiment with his liquid fear—but they figure the posse, with the reputation they've earned, can clean things out. If so, Smith and Robards get a big problem sorted for the price of a slightly expensive delivery.

To Sir Clifton Robards, that's just good business right there, amigo.



# Special Delivery

It's a 50-mile journey from The City o' Gloom to Fairfield. Draw for encounters on the way as usual.

## THE STAGECOACH INN

*Fear Level: 3*

Unless the buckaroos take a roundabout route, the first thing they come across is a two-story inn next to the Smith & Robards factory construction site. The factory is described a little later on in the adventure, *Marshal* (see page 7), so skip ahead if the curious cowpokes go snooping.

Inside the inn, the owner sits behind the bar. He's delighted to see customers, but is terrified of what's happened to the town.

If the posse succeeds on a Persuasion roll or Test of Will at -2, he reveals he knows something "mighty strange" has gone on in the town. On a raise, he tells them nobody who's passed through the town recently has come out the other side!

He is far happier to discuss his opinions on the new factory. He shoots a glob of tobacco juice into the spittoon and says,

*"Oh sure. It'll bring custom to the town. But at what cost, eh? They used to call this place Frogtown. Reckon they'll be callin' it Smogtown before the year is up."*

- **Owner:** Use the Townsfolk profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*.

## FAIRFIELD

*Fear Level: 5*

As the posse nears the town, read them the following:

*Night has fallen. When did that happen? You could swear it was daytime just a few moments ago. Yet all light has gone out of the sky. A sliver*



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*of a moon hangs downward, like a fang about to bite into the earth.*

*The stars shine red, and some of you find your imaginations turning to your Worst Nightmares...coming at you, reaching for you...*

The town is surrounded by a thin white mist. A taste of bitter fruit fills the saddletramps' mouths as they approach, and on the wind they hear the sound of children singing:

*"Hush-a-bye*

*Don't you cry*

*Go to sleep, my little baby*

*When you wake*

*You shall have*

*All the pretty little horses..."*

If the posse rides out of town, daylight returns – but they can't remember when. At some point the time of day just changes. In Fairfield it is always night.

The buildings of the town loom overhead. The doors slam and creak open in nonexistent wind. Occasionally a suspicious sodbuster hears the sound of a child's laugh or cry behind her.

## A Child's-Eye View

Everything in Fairfield is part of Jimmy's nightmare, towering unnaturally high. Doorknobs are just out of an adult's reach. And any encounter the posse has to deal with gets a +1 Size bonus (see the Monstrous Ability in *Savage Worlds*).

## First Encounter

Whether the cowpokes decide to explore the town a bit or go straight for Jimmy's house, call for Notice rolls before they get to any location. Anyone who succeeds hears the sound of hoofbeats behind them in time to react. Read the following:

*Approaching from behind at a full canter is a horrifically huge horse. Its light brown coat resembles a palomino until it gets close.*

*Then you see it isn't a coat at all. Cracks form and splinters fly from the wooden creature as its hooves clatter in the dust. Its painted eyes stare*

*at each of you in turn, and a puff of hot sawdust snorts from its nostrils.*

Deal from the Action Deck right away, Marshal. Anyone who failed the Notice roll doesn't get an action the first round.

Luckily for our heroes, the horse is on a mission and speeds right past them. If they choose to give chase, the horse leads them to any part of the town of your choice before it vanishes.



**The Wooden Horse:** See page 11.

## JIMMY'S HOUSE

Most likely our delivery team tries to reach their destination as quickly as possible. If they do decide to explore a bit first, see the section Exploring the Town below.

The two-story home seems to stretch infinitely over the posse, atop a colossal hill that rises high above the ground. Around the hill, the picket fence has grown tall and razor-sharp. The path winding up to the house seems to carry on forever as the heroes travel upward. There are no rolls necessary here, but play this up for all the weirdness and creepiness it's worth, Marshal.

The door of the house is some 20 feet tall, the knocker far above the posse. But just a little push on the door opens it.

The front door opens into a large kitchen and living room. A flight of stairs leads upward. Mr. and Mrs. Furlong sit in the corner of the room, shaking in terror. As the pot rattles on the kitchen stove, from upstairs a flurry of animated letters flies down to attack!

The letters are all addressed to Jimmy and carrying Pony Express stamps. They read, "DO AS YOU'RE TOLD."

On the first round, also deal an Action Card for the stove. On its action, the pot tips and boiling water flies out in a Cone Template toward the closest heroes (treat this like the *burst* power).

- **Haunted Letters:** Use the Swarm profile in *Savage Worlds*, but stomping has no effect.
- **Mr. and Mrs. Furlong:** Use the Townsfolk profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Mr. Furlong has Riding d8.



## Jimmy's Room

Mr. and Mrs. Furlong are pretty much incoherent. They can only mumble about Jimmy and his dreams. A Persuasion roll at -4 calms them down. Mrs. Furlong says,

*"Jimmy's upstairs in his room. We found him asleep in the square after church. Please...do not wake him, lest you make things worse. And whatever you do, please don't hurt him. He's a good boy and we love him so."*

Mr. Furlong adds in a cold whisper,

*"If he dies, this nightmare will never end."*

As the heroes approach the door to Jimmy's room, have them make Notice rolls. Anyone who succeeds hears a ethereal whinnying from the other side.

The door to Jimmy's room is locked; it can be opened with a Lockpicking roll at -2 as the lock shifts and changes. Alternatively, buckaroos might opt to break down the door (Toughness 6).

Read the following:

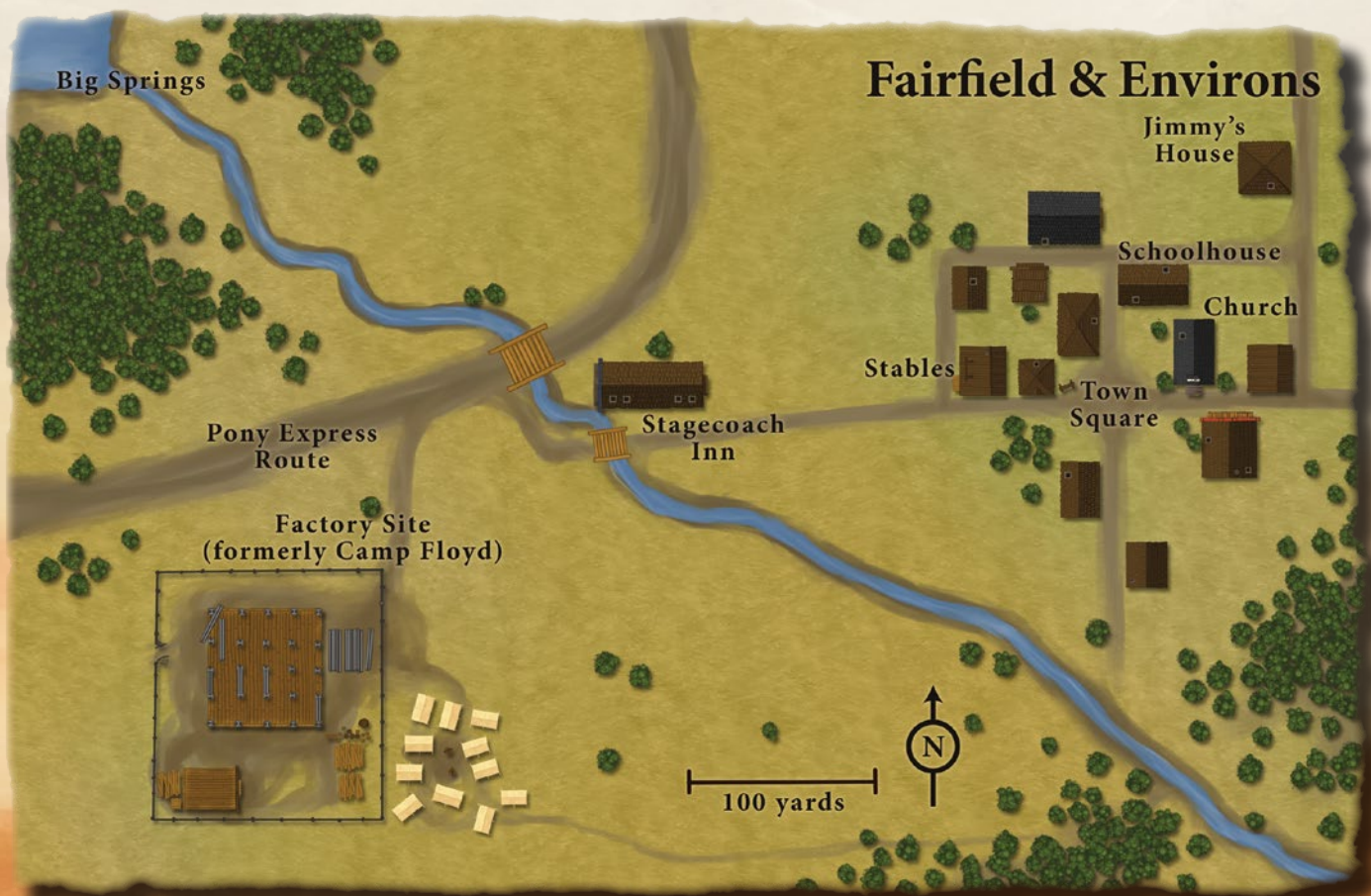
*Inside the room, candles light and extinguish themselves. The floorboards and the ceiling creak and rumble. The window is wide open, and the curtains open and close in front of it.*

On the bedside table, several dime novels about rodeo star "Colt McKracken" surround the latest *Smith & Robards Catalog*. Jimmy has circled several items he hopes to one day own. A Notice roll reveals a small, discarded wooden horse in the corner of the room, an old toy of Mr. Furlong's he passed down to his son. It resembles the abomination the heroes encountered earlier.

The bed is empty; Jimmy was asleep in it just a moment ago. From outside the window comes the same whinny. Anyone who looks out sees the same horse, now with a sleeping child on its back. It gallops away toward town.

If a sodbuster decides the best way to give chase is to jump out the window, remind him the house has grown impossibly tall. If he insists, it's a 60-foot drop (see **Falling** in *Savage Worlds*).

Have fun with that, Marshal!





# A Horse and His Boy

A Tracking roll outside Jimmy's house shows fresh hoofprints leading to the town square. From the square, the tracks head off in almost every direction. A Tracking roll at -2 finds fresher tracks that lead toward the major buildings, and a raise finds the freshest of all leading out of town, back toward the factory site.

## EXPLORING THE TOWN

Whether the posse rides into the town in pursuit of Jimmy, or they chose to do some exploring earlier, there are several areas of potential interest. Consult the map on page 5.


### Town Square

This is where Jimmy was doused with liquid fear. Now the square is distorted and enormous; the further the posse walks into it, the more the square stretches out in all directions.

The sound of metallic hooves clatters around the posse, like bells ringing out a funeral march. Slowly, the Rider approaches.

Don't deal out Action Cards unless the posse actually attacks. Otherwise, the Rider simply copies Jimmy's memory. He rides past, throws a vial at one of the posse, and then laughs as he

gallops away. He won't stay and fight. However, after they have met the Rider once, draw a card for every hour our perilous postmen spend in town. On a face card they bump into him again, and in this case he fights. Unless this happens, or the dudes deliberately seek him out, he does not return.

 **The Rider:** See page 10.

- **The Rider's Horse:** Use the War Horse profile in *Savage Worlds*, but its Size is +4.

### Church

There's a sound of children singing as the posse approaches the church: the same line from "Once in Royal David's City," repeated again and again:

*"Christian children all must be  
Mild, obedient, good as He  
Christian children all must be*



*Mild, obedient, good as He  
Christian children..."*

Inside, a group of spectral children surround the altar. When they reach the end of the verse, they shake their heads and start again. In the pews, several rotting corpses are propped up. They are Nauvoo soldiers from before Camp Floyd was deserted, who rose as walkin' dead when the town became possessed.

The children are apparitions and cannot interact with the world. But the congregation can.

Deal Action Cards as soon as the players get too close. The undead congregation rises slowly from the pews and the children shout,

*"WHERE'S JIMMY? JIMMY'S SNUCK OUT!"*

If any members of the posse wear something that identifies them as Mormon, the walkin' dead target them exclusively.

When the combat is over, the ghostly kids stay there, stuck repeating the same lines of their song. Nothing the posse does seems to be able to remove them.

- **Walkin' Dead (2 per hero):** See profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Add Size +1 (with the attendant Toughness increase of +1). They are armed with old cap-and-ball rifles (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, AP 2).

## Schoolhouse

Inside the schoolhouse, screams of an angry teacher echo:

*"JIMMY! YOU'RE LETTING YOURSELF DOWN!"*

*"JIMMY! STOP DAYDREAMING!"*

*"JIMMY FURLONG! YOU'RE A BAD BOY!"*

On the giant blackboard, the words **SO SCARED** are scrawled. Next to the blackboard hangs a child's drawing. It depicts a young boy, riding a velocipede. In the background is a factory with "Smith & Robards – Fairfield" on it.

When the amigos try to leave the school, they hear loud, mocking laughter. A group of bullies come in through the door. They look like giant

14-year-olds, hideously obese, with huge fists and vicious smirks on their faces. They shout:

*"Let's get them. Then let's kill Jimmy!"*

*"Yeah! If he dies, we can live forever!"*

When the characters leave, they hear the teacher's spectral scream once more:

*"JIMMY! GO TO THAT FACTORY YOU LOVE SO MUCH!"*

- **Bullies (2 per hero):** See page 10.

## THE NIGHT MARE'S END

The heroes have most likely worked out their final destination by now: the factory.

### Smith & Robards Factory Site

*Fear Level: 4*

This section assumes the posse has already been to Jimmy's house and seen the Wooden Horse steal the child. If they investigate before they visit the house, the Fear Level is 3 and the number of guards at the entrance is doubled.

The factory site is still under construction. It's surrounded by a barbed wire fence, grown twice as tall since Jimmy and the horse arrived. There are two guards stationed on the gates and they aren't letting anyone through.

- **Guards (2 or 4):** Use the Gunman (Veteran) profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. They have the Vow (Serve Smith & Robards) Hindrance and hold Gatling shotguns (Range 12/24/48, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 2).

### Fairfield Girders Falling Down

Fortunately, the Wooden Horse has trampled a hole right through the fence at the back. It takes a Notice roll to find it, and then a Stealth roll to get into the construction site without detection.

If it is still daytime, then night mysteriously falls as soon as the heroes enter the factory. Read the following to the heroes as they snoop around:

*All around you, girders stretch into the sky. Twisted and bent like so many gnarled trees, they create a tunnel of steel toward a metal stable. From inside comes a faint whinny. It echoes off*



## CALMIN' JIMMY DOWN

Trying to calm Jimmy is a Social Conflict (see *Savage Worlds*). Use the following table to determine the results after three rounds:

**1-2 Successes:** Jimmy becomes braver and calmer, and the horse loses its Invulnerability.

**3-4 Successes:** Jimmy stands up to the monster; it becomes Shaken and unable to recover for 1d4 rounds.

**5+ Successes:** The liquid fear's hold on Jimmy ends completely. The Fear Level drops by one and the Wooden Horse disintegrates into sawdust.

## RELIC: LIQUID FEAR

A side effect of Hellstromme's experiments was the creation of pure distilled fear in liquid form. It looks like quicksilver in a thermometer, and absorbs instantly into exposed skin.

**Power:** A cowpoke infused with distilled fear has a certain knack for telling terrifying tales... the kind that cause an area's Fear Level to rise. When the infused character uses Persuasion for the purpose of tellin' a tale, apply a +2 bonus. If that buckaroo also has the Tale Teller Edge, apply a +4 bonus. With a success, the local Fear Level rises by 1, or 2 on a raise.

In this adventure, little Jimmy Furlong being doused with the liquid has an altogether different effect...one not even Hellstromme could have predicted.

**Taint:** While infused, a dude's as scared as a rabbit in a wolf's mouth. He gains the Yellow Hindrance and suffers a -4 to Fear tests. A successful *exorcism* purges distilled fear from a person's system, as does entering a *sanctified* area.

*each girder. With each echo it grows in volume until it is almost deafening.*

Then the noise turns into another verse of the lullaby the cowpokes heard earlier:

*"Way down yonder*

*In the meadow*

*Lies a poor little lamby*

*Birds and butterflies*

*Plucking out its eyes*

*Poor little thing is crying mammy."*

If the heroes charge on ahead, the girders shake and fall down on them. An Agility roll at -2 gets a hero to the other side safely. Anyone who fails is hit by a girder and takes 3d6 damage, or 5d6 on snake eyes!

## The Velocipede Store

The only part of the factory near completion is the storeroom intended to hold the finished velocipedes for delivery. It's here that Jimmy's subconscious—as it tries to fight off the nightmares—has made the horse take him. It's somewhere he might feel safe.

The room is laid out like a livery stable, with metal clamps in the floors to keep the velocipedes in place and barrels reinforced to contain ghost rock instead of water. In one of these bays at the end, Jimmy sleeps.

The moment the heroes reach him, however, the building's large metal gates slam shut. In front of them stands the Wooden Horse!

Fasten your Action Deck, Marshal, this one's gonna kick like a mule.

🌀 **Jimmy Furlong:** Use the Townsfolk profile in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*. Add the Young Hindrance and Driving d4.

🌀 **The Wooden Horse:** See page 11.

## Ending the Threat

So here's the predicament: The Wooden Horse is completely invulnerable as long as Jimmy imagines it. If the posse wakes Jimmy, then he sees the horse—the toy he hated—transformed into a monster, and screams in terror. The Fear Level instantly rises by one and Jimmy tries to



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run. If he hits a wall, he takes a wound—and the horse suffers one as well.

This may suggest to the cowpokes, despite all the clues, that the solution is to harm or kill Jimmy. But besides this obvious yet unspeakably evil option, there are several other ways to save the day.

First, if the posse has come across liquid fear before, and someone knows how to cure the effects of the hideous elixir (see sidebar on page 8), doing so saves Jimmy and destroys the Wooden Horse immediately. If the shootists manage to get Jimmy out of the factory, the Wooden Horse chases them all the way to *sanctified* ground.

If Jimmy becomes completely unconscious, then the Wooden Horse vanishes until Jimmy comes around again. This gives the heroes a bit of time to play with.

If a smooth-talker tries to calm Jimmy down, then treat it as Social Conflict—see the sidebar

on page 8 for details. But bear in mind the Horse keeps fighting for the duration.

Of course if the posse comes up with their own ingenious plan, and it provides a satisfying conclusion, then let it ride, Marshal.

If the heroes do the unthinkable and kill Jimmy, the horse is destroyed. But if that terrible act is consummated the town, inn, and the factory grounds all immediately become a Deadland with Fear Level 6. Jimmy's ghost becomes the new Fearmonger, with a herd of a dozen wooden horses at his command.

With the Wooden Horse defeated and Jimmy safe, the heroes can finally make their velocipede delivery. The town returns to its normal appearance and size, and the memory of the past few weeks fades like a bad dream. If the posse successfully tells the tale (as described under **Lowering the Fear Level** in the *Deadlands Marshal's Handbook*), then they can lower the Fear Level by another point as well.





# Encounters

Here we present profiles for the abominations and foes your posse faces as it navigates Frogtown's bad dream.

## Bullies

These toughs look like giant children, with angry, round faces and huge fists.

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

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Guts d4, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Throwing d6, Taunt d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

### Special Abilities:

- **Big Fists:** Str+d4.
- **Strong Willed:** Bullies receive +2 to Taunt and Intimidation rolls, and add +2 to resist Tests of Will.
- **Too Many to Handle:** Bullies are better at Ganging Up than other foes. Each additional adjacent foe adds +2 to their Fighting rolls, to a maximum of +8.

## The Rider

In case you hadn't guessed, the mysterious rider who appeared in town was Stone himself. This hideous apparition appears as Jimmy's fevered imagination remembers him.

The Rider appears as a human figure riding a horse as black as night, and wears a black duster so long it nearly touches the ground while he's on horseback. Razor-sharp guns hang from his belt, and on the duster's lapels hang several fiery stars. In his hat is a burning feather, and his face is an grimacing skull with skin stretched over it.

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

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Guts d8, Notice d10, Stealth d10, Intimidation d8, Riding d10, Shooting d8, Throwing d12+2

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



**Edges:** Ambidextrous, Steady Hands, Two-Fisted

**Special Abilities:**

- **Fear:** The sight of the Rider is enough to provoke a Fear test.
- **Fiery Stars:** The Rider's flaming stars deal 2d6 damage to anyone who touches them
- **For Whom the Bell Tolls:** As an action, the rider makes its horse stamp its hooves into the ground, making a sound like an almighty bell tolling. Treat this like the Rebel Yell Edge (see the *Deadlands Player's Handbook*).
- **Sharp Guns:** Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+2, RoF 1, AP 4. These weapons fire bullets sharp as daggers. As melee weapons they inflict Str+d8 damage.
- **Silver Liquid:** The rider can throw vials of silver liquid (Range 4/8/16), each dealing 2d10 damage in a Small Blast Template.
- **Size +1:** Like everything in Jimmy's nightmare, the Rider is much larger than it should be.

 **The Wooden Horse**

Jimmy's father gave him a toy wooden horse when he was younger. He used to love it, but now he'd rather have a velocipede. The effect of the liquid fear was to create an abomination in the form of Jimmy's toy.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Guts d8, Notice d6

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 14

**Special Abilities:**

- **Construct:** +2 Toughness, +2 to recover from Shaken, immune to disease and poison, never suffers wound modifiers.
- **Coup (Sawdust Breath):** A deader who absorbs the Wooden Horse's essence can use its Sawdust Breath ability once per day.
- **Fleet-Footed:** The Wooden Horse rolls a d8 when running instead of a d6.
- **Invulnerability:** The Wooden Horse can be Shaken, but can't take any wounds as long as Jimmy is afraid of it.
- **Kick:** Str+d4.
- **Size +5:** The Wooden Horse is enormous. Attacks against it gain a +2 bonus.
- **Sawdust Breath:** The Wooden Horse can exhale a blast of hot sawdust from its nostrils. Anyone standing in a Small Burst Template adjacent to its front takes 3d6 damage.
- **Weakness (Child's Imagination):** If Jimmy stops imagining the Horse entirely, it vanishes. If he overcomes his fear, it loses its invulnerability.

