

DEAD LANDS

THE THIRD HAND OF THE DEVIL





Deadlands: The Third Hand of the Devil
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The Third Hand of the Devil

*In loving memory of the good giant that helped us kids
become the adults we are.*

Bud Spencer, 1929-2016

THE SET-UP

The situation on the CSA/Mexico border was always pretty hot, but in the last few months it has grown incandescent.

The occasional disturbances have become more frequent, water or grazing land disputes are increasing in violence, and on both sides of the border a lot of people fears - or wishes for - a military confrontation.

The governments of both the Confederate States and Mexico are currently engaged in diplomatic talks to defuse the potentially explosive situation.

And yet, two meetings have failed to reach an agreement already.

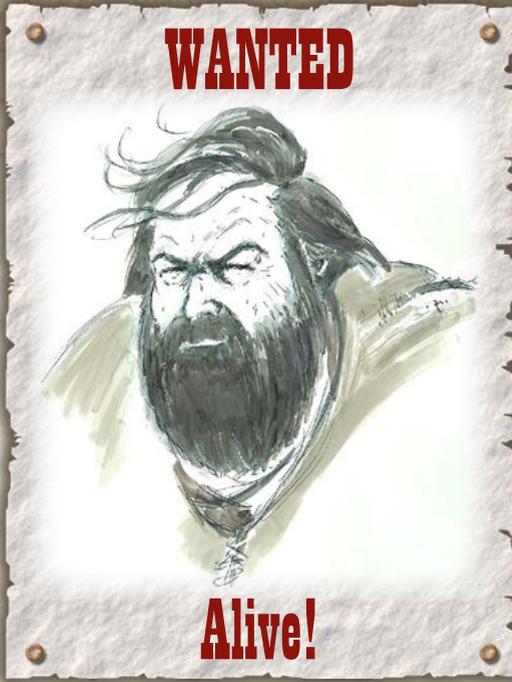
Next month, in the town of Roswell, the last chance will be played to avoid the confrontation.

The man handling the negotiations for the CSA is one of the President's most trusted men, senator Cyril Cornelius Warburton.

Despite his rough and belligerent looks, Warburton, the scion of an old Louisiana planter family, is a subtle diplomat and a peace-loving man. If there is a man that can defuse the Mexican border affair, he is C.C. Warburton.

But there is a problem: on his way to the peace talks, somewhere between Houston to Dallas senator Warburton disappeared. Should he miss the conference, this would be seen as an insult by the Mexican delegation, and the situation would further exacerbate.

The clock is ticking, the conference draws near, and the best minds in the CSA are looking for a solution.



stones with a mallet, for fraud, cattle-rustling, disturbance of the peace and resisting arrest. This, waiting for the state judge to make the death sentence for cattle-rustling official. Boy do they HATE cattle-rustles in Arkansas.

Bigfoot is a criminal and a troublemaker, but it could be possible to convince him to impersonate Warburton one more time, for the peace conference.

Everything Blutarski has to do is show up at the peace talks, shake a few hands, and then pretend a sudden sickness. The talks will then be handled by his secretary, Mr Rufus T. Flywheel, that will take care of pushing the peace resolution.

CUNNING STUNT

The players are the men (and women) that will have to recruit Blutarski's services and escort him from Little Rock to Roswell.

THE SOLUTION!

According to the archives of the Texas Rangers, senator Warburton has a perfect look-alike.

The thing emerged two years ago, when Thomas "Bigfoot" Blutarski impersonated the senator in a complicated scam played on the Chamber of Commerce of Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

The two men are like identical twin brothers.

And there's more good news: Blutarski - once called by the press "The Third Hand of the Devil" for his penchant for slapping people around - is currently a guest of the state prison in Little Rock, Arkansas; there he will spend the next few weeks, breaking

Their mission, should they accept it:

- a. Pick up Thomas "Bigfoot" Blutarski at the Little Rock jail
- b. Ride south to the Dixie Rail line and catch the train to Roswell
- c. Make sure that Blutarski shows up at the conference and meets the Mexican diplomats.

With the team will also travel Mr R.T. Flywheel, that will brief Blutarski along the way, so that the criminal will be able to convincingly play his brief part with the Mexicans.

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Rufus T. Flywheel - studied law in Harvard

Flywheel is a small man with thick mustache and thick glasses. He speaks in an affected manner, with a nasal voice. He spent his whole life studying the laws that govern international trade, a subject he finds absolutely fascinating.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (International Law) d12+1, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Shooting d4, Taunt d10

Charisma: -; **Grit:** 1; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Bad Eyes (Minor)

Edges: Professional (Knowledge: International Law)

Equipment: a suitcase loaded with clothes and accessories; a briefcase containing all the CSA/Mexico treaty and a Derringer gun; a silver hip flask filled with top quality whisky.

Now, really, what could go wrong with this simple plan?

HERE'S WHAT COULD GO WRONG

a. It was not bad luck hindering the peace talks.

General Donald Payne, an egocentric warmonger, sees a war between CSA and Mexico as a fine opportunity to gain fame and fortune as a (truth to be told, very poor) leader of men, and as a possible springboard for a political career. He has long been undermining the peace effort.

More recently, Payne has found a strong supporter in prof. Hellstromme, that considers a war between CSA and Mexico a good testing ground (and market) for some of his inventions.

Payne's men attacked Warburton on his way to the Roswell talks. They were instructed not to leave traces, so they left the man, rendered unconscious with a blow to the head, alone and without equipment in the desert.

As soon as the "senator" will appear again on the scene, Payne will again send his minions to take care of him and his companions.

b. Senator Warburton still lives. As he wandered in a confusional state in the wilderness, the man was helped by a family on its way to California, the McGregors. Called "Tom" by his rescuers, Warburton is currently suffering from amnesia.

The McGregors are on their way to Dallas, where they will sell their poor nags and their wagon, and will board the Dixie Rail to travel as far east as they can.

c. While he is a decent fellow at heart, Bigfoot Blutarski is above all a cheating crook, and he will try and run for it as soon as the opportunity arises.



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WELCOME TO THE C BLOCK

The C Block of the Little Rock prison is where the “problem guys” are kept. Heavy iron gates guard the corridors where rats and roaches fight for a living space with the convicts.

The posse, Flywheel in tow, will be led down to the C Block by prison director, Mr Skinner and by a guard. Blutarski is currently in confinement due to a brawl in the canteen two days ago.

Skinner describes Bigfoot in the worst possible terms, and is firmly opposed to the idea of freeing him, but will admit he has no longer any voice in the matter.



Thomas “Bigfoot” Blutarski - The Third Hand of the Devil

Blutarski is a mountain of a man, and his taller than all the PCs. Black haired and with a big bush of a beard, he looks rough and sarcastic, and has hands as big as shovels.

The prison uniform is too small for him, and he wears monk’s sandals on his feet because no uniform shoes were found large enough for him.

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

Skills: Fighting d12, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

Charisma: -; Grit: 5; Pace: 5; Parry: 10; Toughness: 11

Hindrances: Obese, Yokel*

Edges: Brawler, Bruiser, Improved Block, Improved Tough as Nails, Martial Arts, Strong Willed

Equipment: cheap clothes

** New Hindrance introduced in “Messico & Nuvole”: in all circumstances in which good manners are essential, the character suffers a -2 modifier to Charisma, unless he succeeds in Common Knowledge roll. In case of failure, on the other hand, his pathetic attempt at “acting up” turns against him, making the Charisma penalty -4.*

No test is necessary to see that any Intimidation or Taunt attempt on this brute would be a bad policy.

A Persuasion Test is therefore necessary to convince Blutarski to join the mission.

The players are free to decide how much of the overall plan they will reveal to Blutarski here in jail, and what to explain later, far from unvetted listeners.

Marshall’s Note: Blutarski may look like a troglodite and a refined gentleman he is certainly not, and yet he is a smart, intelligent fellow. He will need no time to see that his fine opportunity to escape is being offered him.

He is therefore all for the plan from the go, but will play “hard to get” to get some more perk in the deal.

Such as stopping in town for some proper dinner, as the prison food makes even the rats sick.

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OPTIONAL: A GOOD DISH OF BAKED BEANS

If Blutarski was granted a stop in a restaurant, the players will have to find a suitable place and spend one hour watching the giant as he goes through twelve ample servings of baked beans, together with abundant bread and “vino tinto” (red wine), the whole while mumbling and grunting happily.

Blutarski’s table manners might offend some other diner.

Which might cause the situation to get... confrontational (the enraged customers are “Citizens” in terms of stats).

We’d like to point out here that a restaurant offers a wide variety of improvised weapons for a brawl, from roast forks to sizzling pans to bottles.

Oh, an then there are the chairs... and the table!

CATCHING THE TRAIN

Riding hell for leather, it takes three days to get from Little Rock to the Dixie Rail line.

During the trip, Blutarski will try at least once per day to run away.

He could attempt one of these tricks:

a. During a stop, Bigfoot scares the horses away, jumps on one of them, and runs away leaving the characters stranded.

b. During the night, Bigfoot tries to tiptoe away while everyone’s asleep.

c. Along the way, Bigfoot asks for some privacy behind a bush or a rock, and then does a runner.

The posse has ample choices about how to stop the prisoner, or get him back.

And yet, it is important to waste as little time as possible, and avoid any act that could permanently injure Blutarski or incapacitate him.

They can’t simply kneecap him, in other words.

Even if it would work just fine.

OPTIONAL: FIRST STRIKE

There is a 50% probability (that goes up to 80% if there was a stop at the restaurant) that some man on Payne’s payroll spots “Warburton” in Little Rock.

After a frantic telegram exchange, Payne calls his men, and orders them to set up an ambush along the road.



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WELCOME IN BRISCO, ARKANSAS, POP. 179

A town just like any other, normal people not looking for trouble, Brisco, Arkansas, is the nearest Dixie line station the posse can reach.

Depending on the time wasted along the way, the character will have to wait for the train from a minimum 12 hours ("You're lucky, mister, the train will be here tomorrow morning...") to a maximum of 36 ("Damn pity, mister, you just missed the train by two hours. Now you'll have to wait till Monday...")

THINGS TO DO IN BRISCO DURING THE WEEKEND

Cheerful and friendly Brisco offers the following entertainment:

The attack takes place on the third day.

There is a total of two attackers per player character, plus two to round up.

Minions (2 per PC, plus 2): Anonymous cheap crooks on their mastermind's payroll, they don't carry guns. See Outlaws in Deadlands.

In this first attack, the minions will try and intimidate the characters, and will use non-lethal attacks.

If caught and interrogated, they turn out to be common rabble, their actions paid for by a "Mr P" that wants Warburton out of the picture.

- **The Comet:** the saloon, that also offers fine rooms for the night. The local specialty is Beer and Sausages.

The bartender, Mr Luke Wilson, wants no trouble in his place.

The saloon girls, Ginger and Mary Ann, are happy to have a drink offered to them.

After dinner time, a poker table is usually set up in a corner. The stakes are low and the players are honest (treat as "Citizens" for stats purposes).

- **Rudy:** the barber, dentist, occasionally surgeon; he owns a bathtub, that can be rented for ten cents.

- **The Church of Saint Judas:** reverend Owen Wilson preaches love and justice every sunday. He also

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plays poker every night in his brother's saloon. A lot of people find it odd they chose such different careers.

The stop in Brisco (especially if extended for 36 hours) would be a nice occasion to play an interlude (as per page 101 in the *Savage Worlds handbook*).

SECOND STRIKE

The stop in Brisco is a good opportunity for Payne's men to attack and try to put "Warburton" out of the game. This is also a great opportunity for some honest rumbling.

As usual, the attackers are two for each PC, plus two to round up the number.

Minions (2 per PC, plus 2): anonymous cheap crooks on their mastermind's payroll, they don't carry guns. See Outlaws in Deadlands.

BIGFOOT RUNS

...or at least he tries to.

Marshall's note: now, wouldn't it be fun should Bigfoot try and do a runner just as Payne's minions start their attack?



TO ROSWELL

The Jackson-Dallas-Roswell train includes:

- locomotive and tender
- postal car
 - five passenger cars
 - sleeping car
 - first class
 - dining car
 - second class 1
 - second class 2
- two freight cars (carrying four horses, two donkeys and a dozen sheep).

The posse has been provided with first class tickets (it's Senator Warburton we are talking of, after all), including three sleeper compartments, but the players might decide to convert them into second class fares to keep a low profile.

In second class, there's wooden benches for sitting and sleeping.

The train makes a fifteen minute stop every three/four hours in small stations along the line.

Unless the posse has impressed on Bigfoot that:

- a. running away is impossible
- b. running away is wrong

good old Blutarski will try and jump the train as soon as it's feasible.

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STATION TO STATION

1. The first noteworthy station is Brompton, on the Louisiana/Texas border. In Brompton, a band of killers in Payne's pay boards the train with the order of killing Warburton and anyone that gets in the way.

These are hired killers without compunction.

Minions (5): anonymous outlaws carrying an assortment of weapons (see Outlaws in Deadlands)

2. The second noteworthy station is Dallas, where the McGregors will board one of the second class cars.

The McGregors:

- **Angus, the father:** a serious, God fearing man
- **Clotilde, his wife:** kind and compassionate
- **Belinda, the senior daughter:** a very serious twentysomething
- **William, aka Bill, the son:** a cheeky teenager
- **Stella, the junior daughter:** a twelve years-old in pigtails
- **Our Poor Tom:** as to say C.C. Warburton, CSA Senator and currently suffering from amnesia.



Senator C.C. Warburton,
a.k.a. Tom - amnesiac politician

He is perfectly identical to Bigfoot Blutarski (or the other way around), but he is kind and peace-loving, and currently suffers from a bad form of amnesia because of a hit to the head.

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

Skills: Fighting d4, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d4, Taunt d8

Carisma: -; **Grit:** 2; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 9

Hindrances: Obese, Pacifist

Edges: Improved Tough as Nails

Equipment: cheap clothes.

The McGregors travel on the second second class car, and are obviously too poor and dignified to use the dining car.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

To recap: we have on the same train two men with the same face. And they both respond to "Tom".

And they dress more or less the same.

One is a happy crook that could knock down a bull with a slap.

The other is a very confused gentleman that wouldn't hurt a fly.

Can we resist the temptation of mixing the cards?

Of course not.

At this point in the adventure, the players have probably learned the hard way that losing sight of Bigfoot is bad for business - so it is likely that there will be always a character along with Blutarski.

And yet, the service restrooms is an excellent way to allow Blutarski and Warburton to unwittingly trade places, thus confusing the players.

The private compartments in the sleeper car also work fine.

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And should the team decide to split (to look out for suspicious faces on the train, e.g.), it will be easy to have them separately meet “Tom”, causing confusion.

“What are you doing here?”

“Who, me?”

“But I left you in the other car!”

“Do I know you?”

As soon as peak confusion is reached, it’s time for Payne’s men to make their move.

FIGHTING ON A MOVING TRAIN

Moving trains make things more complicated.

As a quick reminder:

- the train has not the best suspensions in the world, and counts as Unstable Platform

- the confined space penalizes pole weapons and similar (-1) but offers lot of Concealment

- you can move in the car, but also run on the roof

- during curves, you can shoot from one car to the other through the windows

- cars are not so hard to separate

- you can always fall (or jump) off

- if you fall off, you have to be damn fast to run and catch the train again.

OPTIONAL: FALLING OFF

There’s a lot of good reasons for the posse to jump from the train (falling damages are found in *Savage Worlds* handbook), or lose the train anyway:

- they could jump from the train to chase a running Bigfoot

- they could be pushed off the train during a fight



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- they could stay down at a stop (maybe because they followed “Tom” mistaking him for Bigfoot)
- they could end up stranded in the middle of nowhere on a detached car.

If the team is together and they have Bigfoot, the easy solution is waiting for the next train.

And of course, should this happen before they are in Dallas, the McGregors will board this new train.

And in Dallas also a new band of killers will board the train.

If Bigfoot stayed on the train, no matter if the team is together or split, following the train becomes a necessity.

Ideally, the team should:

- a. get to the nearest town
- b. get some horses
- c. give chase.

BUT in this case it’s not so easy: the whole procedure requires too much time (half an hour if they are left in a station, a few hours if they are in the wild).

Racing the train is a Riding based Dramatic Task. The goal, get back on that damn train!

WHAT IF THEY CAN’T?

Just two options: wait for the next train, or ride hell for leather to get to the next station before the train does.

If Bigfoot remained on the train, the chief fear for the players is he will make himself scarce.

A good idea would be to telegraph to the next station to check if a man matching Bigfoot’s description got down the train. Otherwise, it might be required to check every station by stopping there.

And yet, unbeknownst of the players, this would be superfluous: Bigfoot is a criminal and a crook, but when bullets started flying, the giant decides to stay on board and protect the McGregors.

If there’s something Bigfoot hates, in fact, is people being mean to kids.

If he’s left alone on the train, Bigfoot will join the (dumbfolded) McGregors until they disembark in Roswell.

IF TODAY’S THURSDAY, THIS MUST BE ROSWELL

No matter how they get to Roswell, the characters should have realized by now someone’s interested in making the peace effort fail.

With a little luck, the team should also have both Bigfoot and Warburton at hand. If possible, this makes the CSA government cunning stunt even easier: soon after Bigfoot meets the Mexican diplomats, he’ll say he is unwell, and he’ll be free to go, while the really unwell Warburton takes his place.

In Roswell, the posse, Bigfoot, Warburton and Flywheel have an en-suite apartment on the top floor of the Roswell Excelsior Hotel.

Now they just have to hold on for another 34 hours, until the opening ceremony.

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ENTER HELLSTROMME

Tired of the fool Payne's messy attempts at Warburton, doctor Hellstromme has decided to take the situation in his capable hands, using smarts and science to achieve what brute force and violence have failed to achieve.

Hellstromme's plan has been in motion ever since the doctor discovered that Warburton would be the CSA man in Roswell.

Hellstromme has obtained the collaboration - more or less voluntary - of an unsavory character called Steve Mulinski.

Mulinski, a mass murderer with a death penalty in California, has the same general build of Warburton. It's not been hard, for the surgeons serving Hellstromme, to change the facial traits of Mulinski, and make him a serviceable copy of Warburton.

And right now Mulinski is in Roswell, ready to make his move. And he has two Hellstromme automatons with him.

The plan is simple: on the day of the peace talks, while the automatons engage the posse, making dead meat of them, Mulinski will gatecrash the conference room, and will send the whole proceedings to hell in a handbasket.



Steve Mulinski - a psicho with another man's face

Mulinski is a dangerous psychopath, and the pain from the surgery he underwent in the last few weeks have not made hi any saner. He intends to boycott the peace talks by killing everybody, no mater if Mexican or American.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d12, Guts d8, Intimidation d12, Notice d6, Shooting d10

Carisma: -2; **Grit:** 5; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 11

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean, Obese

Edges: Brawler, Bruiser, Improved Tough as Nails

Equipment: fine clothes.

There are two of Hellstromme's automatons with Mulinski.

One has been programmed to attack the Excelsior hotel before the conference starts. The second waits for the right time to come and help Mulinski in his mission in the conference hall.

Automatons (2): See *Deadlands - Marshal's Handbook*.



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THE FAMOUS FINAL SCENE

From here on it will be easy, right?
The posse should "simply":

- a. defeat the automatons
- b. get to the conference hall with Blutarski an/or Warburton
- c. get what the heck is happening

"Another one? But how many are there of them?!"

- d. stop Mulinski and thwart Hellstromme's plan.

MAKE AN OMELETTE WITHOUT BREAKING THE EGGS

Of course, in the conference hall we'll also find:

- two Mexican diplomats - and should they die, it would be then very hard explaining their government that it was an accident (treat them as Citizens for stats purposes)
- a guard of honor of six Mexican soldiers - and it would be nice to return them to sender undamaged (treat as Soldiers)
- a guard of honor of six CSA soldiers - and these are our own boys, we can't punch them too hard, really (treat as Soldiers)
- the two commanding officers of the guards, a Mexican and an American - and these boys are really just doing their job (treat as Soldier, Officer).

And please notice that in the conference room NOBODY can carry a weapon - non even Mulinski, not even by subterfuge.

The final confrontation will therefore be a big brawl, using improvised weapons and punches, and the Third Hand of the Devil will probably do his job.

...until the second automaton steps in.

And at this point the situation will be such a mess, this will degenerate into a free-for-all.

I SEEM TO REMEMBER...

A solid whack on the head will bring back Warburton's memories, and stimulate his long-sleeping self-righteous fury. He's good with a punch.

AFTERMATH, FRIENDS AND FOES, AND A LONE MAN RIDES INTO THE SUNSET

Bringing the peace talks to a peaceful conclusion among the ruins is the final goal of this scenario.

Warburton needs to find his memory, or his secretary Mr Flywheel must survive the ordeal.

Considering the generalized devastation, the presence on the battlefield of two Hellstromme automatons and Mulinski should he

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be caught, it would not be hard to demonstrate that someone's profiting from the winds of war.

We leave the accountancy of experience and bennies to the Marshall.

For sure, the posse now has a powerful ally in Warburton, but they have also acquired a dangerous enemy: general Payne is still plotting in the shadows, and the mysterious Mr P. might one day decide to settle old scores.

And as the dust settles, Thomas "Bigfoot" Blutarski just vanishes: he cleaned up the safe in Hotel Excelsior, stole a horse, and rode into the sunset.



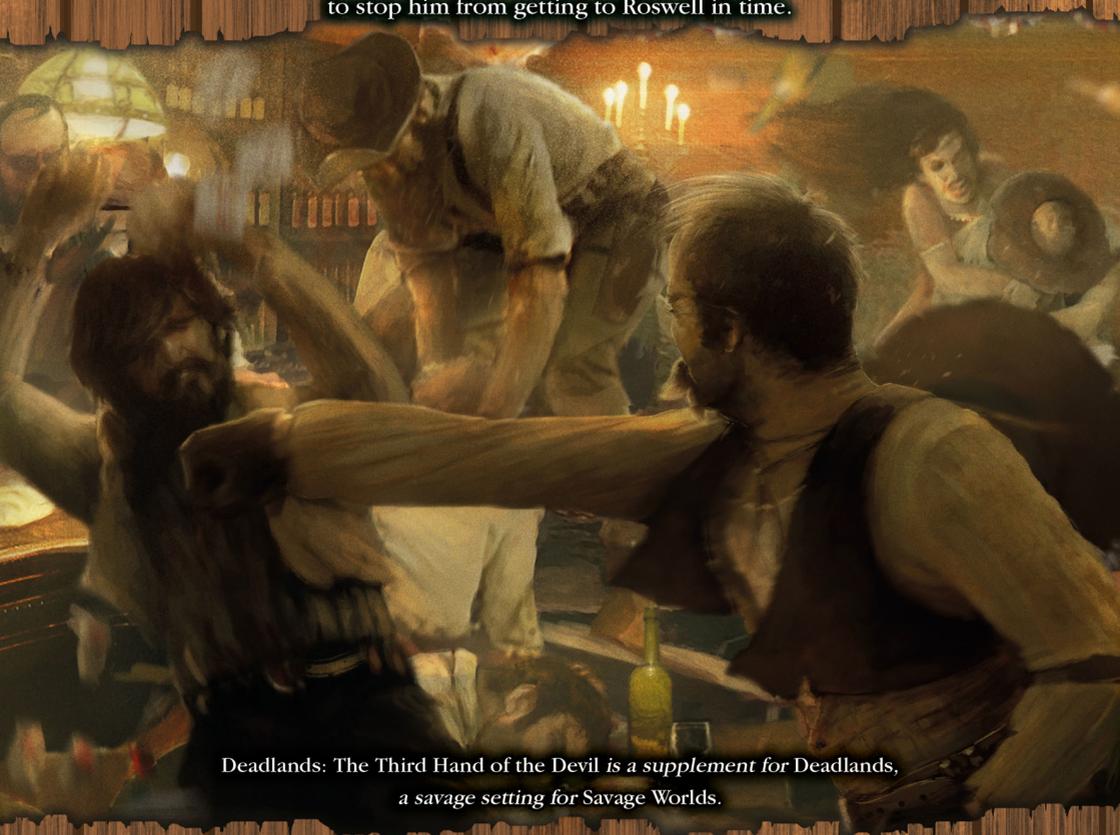
Dark clouds gather over the CSA/Mexican Border

Senator Warburton was the only hope to avoid a military confrontation - but now he's gone missing, somewhere between Houston and Dallas, while he was on his way to the Roswell peace talks.

Only one man could still save two nations from a mindless war.

But Bigfoot Blutarski, *The Third Hand of the Devil*, is locked up in an Arkansas jail, waiting to be hanged as a cattle-rustler.

And even should someone pull him out of there, there's people ready for anything to stop him from getting to Roswell in time.



Deadlands: The Third Hand of the Devil is a supplement for *Deadlands*,
a savage setting for *Savage Worlds*.

