



# WHERE THE TRAIL ENDS

A Fastaval scenario by  
Anne Ratzer & Lars Kroll

# Welcome

Thank you for reading our scenario “Where the Trail Ends”. It is written as a premiere scenario for Fastaval 2021, but you are welcome to run it in outside of Fastaval as well.

Because Fastaval 2021 is digital, we have made modifications so the scenario can be played online as well. We hope you will enjoy it, no matter how you play it.

If you have questions, you can contact us through Facebook (Anne Vinter Ratzer and Lars Kroll Kristensen) or on email: [avratzer@yahoo.com](mailto:avratzer@yahoo.com) or [orkroll@ratatoskgames.com](mailto:orkroll@ratatoskgames.com)

Have fun!

Thank you to Kristoffer Apollo for writing the scenario “Jisei”, which this scenario is strongly inspired by. Jisei is one of the first storytelling scenarios, and still one of the best.

Thanks to our test players: Terese, Ingrid, Morten og Lea; Leon, Marie, Karsten og Jesper; Troels, Jost, Lærke og Mads, and to our game masters: Terese and Morten.

Thanks to the Fastaval organizers and in particular the scenario organizers, Mads and Marie, for keeping up the mood during difficult working conditions.

Thanks to the other scenario writers of 2021, who have provided support and input to us and each other along the way, and have helped us reach the finish line despite the circumstances.

## Playlists for inspiration

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/1mCtXcl5BdTTUz7uBKnfAs?si=Nx7Ad-QbAS1u2k8Hm6r7McQ>

## Duelscenen

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5mfxBC6lJ3eb73iJBGrIrr?si=Nw3MUKF-CRsm1yA1rs2w66A>

# Foreword - by Kristoffer Apollo

This scenario is the result of an idea that has simmered for a very long time. More than 20 years have passed since Kroll first mentioned that he thought it would be an obvious idea to do a Western remake of the Samurai Scenario “Jisei”, which I wrote back in the 90’s. I’m happy the scenario finally happened, because the idea has always been great.

Jisei is special to me. I have been involved in a lot of fun and exciting stuff in roleplaying, but Jisei was special, in that I have never in the same way brought a scenario to a convention without having any clue if it would work out. At the time, Fastaval had developed a playstyle in which the GM was the main responsible for the narrative, leading the players through a well defined storyline. Jisei was an attempt - not fully thought through - at breaking that tradition, by moving a lot of the narrative responsibility back to the players. Plus some inspiration from film theory, and Yazujiro Ozus conscious use of “off-screen space”, which is relatable to the shared storytelling space created in roleplaying games. But I really had no idea how Fastaval players would react to it.

It turned out that people enjoyed being responsible for a samurai committing ritualistic suicide. Of course - just trust your players. Other authors at the same time were working with similar ideas in their scenarios, so the term “storytelling game” quickly became part of the terminology surrounding role-play in the Fastaval tradition. Including the many possibilities included in storytelling: The gamemaster as an interviewer, helping the players express the inner life of their characters. The easy excuse for cutting backwards and forwards in time and place. The conscious use of perspective in the way the scenes are described. And so on - all of this is also present in “Where the Trail Ends”

I am convinced that you, and your players in particular, will have a lot of fun playing on all the spaghetti western cliches in this scenario. For me as a film geek, the scenario adds the extra dimension that I know it also builds on the relation between samurai movies and spaghetti westerns. One thing that differentiates the two genres, however, is that where the samurai movies and Japanese culture often takes the concept of Honor very seriously, spaghetti westerns in contrast are almost purely nihilistic. This is also why Tuco is the best character in “The Good, the Bad and the Ugly”

Kristoffer Apollo 2021

# Indhold

**Welcome**

**Foreword - by Kristoffer Apollo**

**Brief summary**

**Scenario structure**

**Genre and setting**

**Characters**

**Warmup exercises**

**Scene types**

**Scenario flowchart**

**The showdown I**

**Presentation scenes**

**The Showdown II**

**Scene 1: All-in!**

**The Showdown III**

**Scene 2: The Massacre at Blackwood**

**The Showdown IV**

**Scene 3: Siege in Blackwood**

**The Showdown V**

**Scene 4: You killed my brother - meet him in Hell!**

**The final showdown**

# Brief summary

- 2** “Where the Trail Ends” tells the story of four gunslingers and their path to the ultimate showdown. Over the course of many years they
- 2** meet again and again, building up hatred and grudge until the day
- 3** the score is settled.
- 4** The end is unavoidable: Some will die, others will kill. But who and how is decided by the players and the choices they make.
- 4**
- 8** The scenario is a tribute to spaghetti-westerns, with long, meaningful
- 10** silences, barren prairie landscapes, bottled-up feelings, intense shoot-
- 11** outs, and the smell of dust and gunpowder under the hot sun.
- 11** The main characters are gritty and dark, anti-heroes you only cheer
- 13** for because the alternative is worse. There are no villains in the sce-
- 15** nario outside of the group - the main characters are villains in each
- 15** others’ stories.
- 17** You do NOT need to be an expert in spaghetti-westerns, as long as
- 17** you enjoy immersing yourself in the atmosphere and bringing your
- 21** inner images to life. Genre and mood are supported by simple game
- 21** mechanics.
- 21** The end is given - some will die, others will kill. But the way to the
- 22** end is in the hand of the players, and the same is the final outcome.
- 22** The road to the showdown is told through flashbacks, in a combina-
- 24** tion of roleplaying scenes and storytelling. Secrets and betrayal take
- 24** place between the characters only – the players cooperate to create
- 24** the story.
- 26**

# Scenario structure

The scenario starts by introducing The Showdown - the scene that also ends the scenario, where the four main characters meet, ready for the final confrontation. It is clear that not all of them will leave the scene alive, but it is not yet clear who will shoot at whom.

The scene is left unresolved, and the scenario now follows the characters through a series of flashback scenes, uncovering the shared past of the characters and their relations to each other. At the end, we return to the showdown again, this time to find out how it all ends.

Each flashback scene must cover the relationship between at least two of the characters (often more). Every scene describes a situation with a built-in conflict which will end up triggering strong, negative feelings - hate, contempt, a need for revenge... The players take part in deciding who plays which roles in the scenes, and how the scenes unfold.

The outcome of every scene builds on top of the others, and help the players decide how the four characters see each other in the final scene.

## How to play

The story in Where the Trail Ends is a collaborative tale, told by the players together. The main characters may keep things hidden, and lie and cheat and deceit each other, but the players work together, and share all the information needed to tell the best story. The intrigues and conflicts are between the characters, not the players.

At the same time the players have to constantly increase the distance between the characters, make the gap harder to bridge, escalate the conflicts. Each flashback scene must make the relationship between at least two of the players worse than before, and at the end of the scenario it must be completely clear for each player who they will aim at when the four characters face each other in the final showdown.

As gamemaster you must help the players tell the story about the past - why are they there, facing each other, ready to kill? Why do they hate each other so much?

You must set the scene, keep the pace, create a good spaghetti west-

ern mood, and help the players dig into their roles and uncover their inner gunslinger and all the big emotions needed to tell the story. The scenario is played as a combination of storytelling and “classic” roleplay.

During tests the scenario has taken between 3,5 and 5 hours to play (incl. intro and breaks), and you should expect it to take 4-5 hours.

# Genre and setting

## Spaghetti westerns

Spaghetti westerns are a specific type of westerns, known from e.g. Once Upon a Time in the West and The Good, the Bad and the Ugly. The stories are often about tough, silent men - some of them gruesome villains, others are heroes, but not the nice kind of heroes. There are good and bad people in spaghetti westerns, and then there are all the shades of grey. The bad people get what they deserve, but not without a bitter fight, and the stories rarely have a really happy ending.

In a spaghetti western the camera dwells on the grand panorama shots as well as the smallest of details, creating a unique style of filming. Classic elements are the small pioneer town with the dusty main road and the familiar wooden store fronts, endless prairies with unbelievable rock formations, dust clouds from distant horses, the heat in the baking midday sun, sweat running down from a wrinkled face, the sound of spores and heavy steps approaching the creaky saloon door.

The genre is important for Where the Trail Ends, and will be supported by the way you run the scenes. As a game master you must focus on details and on taking your time, and you must help the players describe what happens around them. In other scenarios you would focus on what the characters say and feel, in Where the Trail Ends you need to express yourself in the way a person raises an eyebrow, squint their eyes or place their hands, and in all the unsaid that we know is hidden behind the facade.

## The Wild West in 1881: Racism and sexism

The scenario takes place in the Wild West, in the south-western states of the US in 1881. This was a time and place filled with racism and

sexism. We do not want this to play a key role in the scenario. There may be a Bully or two voicing their opinion about a female bounty hunter, but it will be easy for the Bounty Hunter to shut them up and move on. Between the main characters we do not want any discrimination based on gender, race or similar - this is not the story we want to tell, and you must make this clear to the players from the beginning.

### **The Civil War 1861-1865**

The scene “The Massacre in Blackwood” takes place during the American Civil War. The players (and you) do not need to know a lot about the Civil War, only the following is important:

- The main characters can be on both sides of the war without being automatically “villains” or “heroes”. People had many different reasons for joining the war back then, and there is no obvious side to choose for any of the characters to begin with.
- All characters could have a reason for becoming a soldier and following orders, even the Outlaw - it could simply be for a chance to earn money, or disappear from a place that has become too hot. That does not mean that they like being soldiers.
- After the war many people were willing to “reset” the relations between North and South, to make it possible to get along and rebuild the country. Although relations were still strained, this meant that even if you were a soldier in the losing Southern army, you would not be punished.

## **Game mechanics**

### **Character Traits**

One of the game mechanics in *Where the Trail Ends* are Character Traits. These are characteristics or facts about a person, accessible for the players to choose from during the scenario.

You can find the Character Traits under Handouts. Cut them out before the scenario and place them on the table, just before playing the Presentation Scenes. (If you are playing online, the traits will be in a separate file you can send to the players).

### **Using Character Traits**

At any time during the scenario, the players can choose a Character Trait if they think it fits their characters. They can have more than one.

The Character Traits can be used either directly in the flashback scenes to give more life and depth to the characters, and strengthen the emotions of the scene. They can also be used in a mini-scene - a spontaneous scene created by the player, to tell a bit of their background story. Or they can be used as “silent” background information by the players, helping them understand and express their character.



When a player chooses a Character Trait they should consider what it means for their character, what the story behind is, and how it can be used. You and the other players are welcome to suggest traits for others, and help coming up with uses and background stories.

### **Example from play test**

*The Bounty Hunter had the Character Trait “You had a child, but lost it”. In the scene “The Massacre in Blackwood” the player brought it into play by describing how the Bounty Hunter was driving through town with her daughter. When the shooting started, the child hid under some blankets in the back of the wagon.*

*The other players and the GM caught where the scene was headed, and supported the player’s story through their actions: As the Bounty Hunter decided to help the soldiers from the North escape, and they were driving away, the Gambler (as the officer from the South) shot after the wagon and hit the daughter, who later died from her wounds. The Bounty Hunter ended up, not surprisingly, aiming at the Gambler in the final shootout...*

## Film techniques

Spaghetti westerns are highly defined by their visual style, and the scenario needs a lot of attention to visual details to achieve the right mood. As GM, you must focus on making the scenes visually clear and rich with detail, and bring to life the right spaghetti western mood. Part of your job is to be the “photographer”, i.e. zoom in on details, pan across the landscape, and frame the action of the scene. As a GM, you play the main part in setting the scenes, but the players should also participate, with your help.

Note that it is important to emphasize that the scenario is NOT about making a movie - there are no retakes, lights or similar. The use of camera terminology and descriptions of “zooming” etc. is only a way of focusing on the visuals, and it only takes place outside of the fiction, not in the scenes themselves.

Sound is also important - creaking saloon doors, a gun being cocked, the sudden neigh from a nervous horse, slow footsteps on a dusty main street. Use sounds to support the scenes you are setting with your camera.

Example: The link below is a clip from “Once upon a time in the West”, probably the greatest spaghetti western of them all. It shows the first gunfight of the film, from the opening scene, where three gunslingers are waiting for a man to exit the train on a small train station somewhere on the prairie. Study the ways the camera (and sound) work together to create tension and action and tell a lot about the people in the scene, using only very few words, and consider how you can use these techniques in the scenario.

During the warmup exercises you will have an opportunity to practice using the camera techniques. See more in the Handouts section.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8XkHsinz7oU>

## Breakdown of the scene

Notice how the camera zooms in to show us how the gunslingers cast confused and anxious glances to each other as the man doesn't appear. The train's engine strikes a pulse that increases the tension, and as a door suddenly opens with a loud noise, we see the gunsling-

ers' hands fly down to their guns, nervously hovering there until they relax again when nothing happens. We wait with them, impatient as they are, until it seems that he isn't coming after all. The camera zooms in on their faces to show small signs of relief - a tiny hint of a smile, eyebrows relaxing.

Then, as the train leaves, we hear the sound of a harmonica. The three gunslingers stop and turn, and there, on the other side of the tracks, is the man they were waiting for, playing a harmonica, slowly and calmly. The camera switches between a close up of the man, revealing no emotions in the weathered face, a wide shot of the three gunslingers, dark against the brightness of the prairie, and the faces of the gunslingers, now nervous and tense.

The dialogue is sparse, the music is slow and eerie, the scene builds up to the confrontation by showing us the gunslinger and the man with the harmonica standing opposite each other, waiting, as we are (best framed shot at around 3:00).

Suddenly the scene explodes into action as they all draw their guns and fire, so fast that we can hardly follow what happens before everyone is down. The camera turns to the windmill creaking steadily in the wind, indifferent to the violence we just witnessed. Then we cut back to a close-up of the man with the harmonica as he opens his eyes again, wounded, but still alive.

## Genre characteristics

The scenario has a number of elements and guidelines, inspired by the spaghetti western genre. Explain them to the players before you begin.

### Types of people

There are three types of people in this scenario:

**Regular people:** Townspeople, passengers on a train, family members, etc. These will often just be part of the background setting, and shouldn't get in the way of the players - unless it will create a good story.

**Bullies:** Someone who has a more important role in the story as opposition to the main characters. E.g. the sadistic sheriff and his deputies, the gang who menaces the small frontier settlements, the rival bounty hunter. Bullies will get in the way of the main characters, and they will be competent enough to pose some challenge, but they won't be a problem in the long run.

**Main characters:** The player roles in the scenario. Main characters are always competent and cool, also when in trouble. If Regular people or Bullies get in the way, Main characters can almost always overcome the challenge, either by shooting their way out, or by clearly communicating that it would be best to leave them alone.

In some cases, a sufficiently large number of Regulars or Bullies can pose a real challenge for the Main characters. This will happen in some of the scenes in the scenario, and in some cases the Main characters will have to work together.

There will be conflicts between the Main characters during the scenario, and in some cases it may result in a minor shootout, but no one will die before the final scene, and no one will be clearly better than the others during the scenario.

**Example:** Study this scene for some examples of Main characters, Bullies and Regular people, and how they interact.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nhB7\\_1uix0o&ab\\_channel=GiusseppeDf](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nhB7_1uix0o&ab_channel=GiusseppeDf)

### Dialogue and silent communication

Main characters in a spaghetti western don't talk a lot. They are silent and tough, and able to express a whole lot of things without words.

Emotions aren't explained or verbalized, but expressed through body language, facial expressions and how they are filmed.

Use the warmup exercises in the Handout section to practice talking less and showing more.



### Trick shooting

The main characters are extremely competent with their firearms. They can shoot the gun out of someone's hand or the hat off their heads, or hit a glass in the hands of a person without them getting as much as a scratch (except from the glass shards flying around). Trick shooting can also be used between main characters, but will of course be perceived as an insult to make up for later.

**Example:** In this scene Clint Eastwood wants Lee van Cleef to leave town. They don't say a word to each other, but both know that no one is going to die in this scene - they are merely pissing off the territory, with Lee as the winner of this round.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sqZF8XD9Pk4>

# Characters

The players play the main characters in the scenario - the four gunslingers. They will create and live out the story through the flashback scenes, where the actions and choices they take will lead them to the end scene - the final shootout. The characters start as archetypes; scaffolding that will be expanded through the scenes and the selection of Character Traits. The characters are open for interpretation, and can develop in many directions during the scenario, depending on what the players choose to do.

In addition to supporting the game master in setting the mood, through descriptions, camera techniques, etc., the players can also play supporting characters during the scenario, where needed.

## The main characters

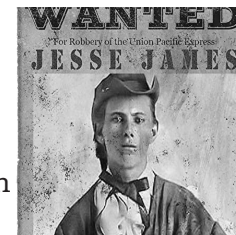
The main characters all know each other at the end of the scenario, in the final shootout. During the years before, they have met several times, some of them acted out as the scenes in this scenario. The players are welcome to refer to other times they have met if they want, and they can also come up with small scenes or stories to tell, e.g. to bring Character Traits in play, if there is time.

Here is a short intro to the main characters - you can use it during casting, if you want. The main characters themselves can be found under Handouts.

Note: As is often the case with spaghetti westerns we don't know the names of the four gunslingers, only their nicknames. The players can make up a real name for themselves if they want.

## The Bounty Hunter - "Bounty"

A woman in her early 40s whose primary source of income is bountyhunting. It isn't easy being a woman in a man's line of work, but she has shown her worth, and those who have met her know better than to question her skills.



## The Gambler - "Lucky"

A man in his early 30s. He gambles on anything that can be gambled on, takes all the chances he can, and lives his life on the edge. Nothing seems to be too dangerous or risky for him, and so far his skills (or his luck) have been able to get him out of the situations he has gotten himself into.

## The Veteran - "Grit"

A man in his early 50s. He has lived a hard life, participating in most of the many wars and conflicts the US have seen during the last decades. The Mexican War, the Civil War, the Indian Wars... He is getting old for his line of work, but is still a dangerous man to cross.



## The Outlaw - "Trigger"

A man in his late 30s. He has lived most of his life with a gun in his hands and the law on his heels. Is wanted in numerous states for many crimes, including bank and train robberies, kidnapping and murder.



## Casting

The main characters are deliberately kept very open for interpretation and can be developed in many directions. No character needs to be 100% good or bad. The Outlaw can be played as a cruel and vicious criminal, or an idealistic anarchist, like Robin Hood. The Bounty Hunter can be aiming for making a better world by catching criminals, or she could just be in it for the money.

All characters, however, may at some point have been in conflict with the law, even if they later chose a lawful path. This is important to emphasize to the players, to allow for flexibility in the scenes of the scenario.



Because the characters are flexible, so is the casting. The players have a high influence on what type of play they would like, so the casting is mostly about finding out which archetypes the players think they would get the most

out of. During the warmup you and the players should hopefully get an idea about how to cast the characters.

In every character description there is a handful of questions to inspire the players. They do not have to answer the questions to you or the other players, and they should not try to involve the other characters too much in their background stories - this will come during the scenario.

## Intro for the players

This section summarizes some points we think are particularly important to emphasize for the players during the introduction. Feel free to add your own.

- **Spaghetti westerns** are not fun family entertainment. There may be funny moments in the scenario, but avoid falling into slapstick or parody.

- **The conflicts between the main characters** need to start quickly and escalate during the scenario. The players must do their best to escalate conflicts during each scene, including those where the characters are forced to cooperate.

- **The players need to cooperate** to find the best story and the best way to create conflict. It is perfectly fine to stop the play and ask “would it work for you if I did this...?” or encourage others to do or say something to bring out a conflict. The characters are enemies and have secrets for each other, but the players need to cooperate openly.

- **The main characters are not heroes**, and they have lived a life with many shades of grey. When the scenario starts, the players should have an idea about how their characters are, but it is important that they do not see themselves as either 100% good or bad. Many of the scenes puts the characters in situations where their actions are not necessarily legal, so they need to stay open and flexible.

# Warmup exercises

Before you start to play, we recommend some warmup exercises to get in the right mood. If possible, you can show some of the clips we have linked to.

## Camera techniques

Imagine a typical western scene and describe the details. Move the camera around in the scene, use all your senses, take your time. Ensure that all players participate, and guide them to how to do it. The scenes should be short and packed with atmosphere, with as few words as possible.

## Ideas for exercises (or make up your own):

- \* A Main Character on horseback is approaching a small town. The camera starts with a wide shot, showing the prairie around the person. Describe how we see the landscape. The camera slowly zooms in, showing the person from the front. What do we see? Then we cut to the point of view of one of the townspeople. How do they react as the person rides into town? Describe the looks they send the person, details of the houses, the sounds of the town.
- \*
- \* A Main Character is hit in the arm by a bullet. The camera shows - in slow-motion - how the bullet hits the sleeve and passes through, the blood spraying a white wall nearby. Describe what it looks like, and how the character reacts.
- \*
- \* A gang leader enters the local saloon. Everyone fears him, trying to make themselves invisible at the tables. Describe what the saloon looks like, what the gang leader does, and what the camera focuses on.



## Silent communication

In this exercise you will practice counting to 10 before you react, and making your body language and facial expressions speak instead of your words. One of you will insult one of the others, and the other will react slowly and calmly, but clearly communicate that trouble is in the air, through their body and face. A few well-chosen words can also be used. Take turns doing the insulting, and help each other describing ways to respond.

## Examples (or make your own):

One of you sits at the table in a saloon. Another person enters the saloon, strolls over to the table, leans in and asks "Did you ask for permission to sit at my table?"

One of you enters a bank, surprising a bank robber in the middle of the robbery. The robber points his gun at you and say "You have 10 seconds to back out of that door again. Or else..."

After the warmup exercises you should be ready to do the casting and start playing the scenario.

# Scene types

This section contains an introduction to the different scene types in the scenario, and how to play them. The scenes themselves follow in later sections, and in the Handouts.

## Presentation scenes

Presentation scenes are brief scenes, primarily run as storytelling, where one main character is in focus, with the purpose of introducing the character to the others. There is one presentation scene per character, and they are the first in the scenario.

## Flashback scenes

The flashback scenes are the main part of the scenario. The purpose of them is to tell the story about the four main characters' paths to the final showdown. Why are they there? What have they been through? Who do they want to shoot the most?

There are four flashback scenes, and they are played in various play styles, described in the individual scenes. The descriptions of the scenes are handed out to the players, and the GM versions of the scenes (later section) contain extra instructions for how to play.

Before each scene, you introduce it and let the players distribute the roles in the scene.

Important: Every scene must make the relationship worse between at least two of the main characters. Emphasize to the players that they need to work together to INCREASE the conflicts between them, not solve them. Have them speak openly about how they feel about each other and what would be the best way to bring the conflicts out.

These scenes are also where you need to help your players bring out the spaghetti western mood, as you practiced in the warmup exercises.

## Mini scenes

Mini-scenes are non-scheduled scenes made up by the players during the scenario, typically to bring one of their Character Traits in play. It is entirely up to the players to invent and run these scenes, either as

roleplay or storytelling, and they can fit in anywhere in the scenario. Ensure, however, that they don't take more than a few minutes. It is also fine if no mini-scenes come into play.

## The Showdown

The Showdown is key to the scenario, and frames it as the first and last scene. After every flashback-scene you return to the Showdown scene, adding more details each time. The purpose is to make the scene come alive, to add more depth to the main characters, and to enhance the mood of the Showdown, to prepare for the final scene where all is settled.

In each take of the Showdown scene, the tension should increase. The players can describe their characters and the way they act in the scene in more detail, and you can ask questions to make the players think about the final outcome - that someone will die. But who? And why?

### Guidelines for the scene

- \* It only lasts a few minutes (except from the last time)
- \* Only the four main characters are in the scene - no other people are present.
- \* They only have their guns. No tricks up their sleeves.
- \* Noone draws until the final scene, and everyone draws at once.
- \* No words are spoken. You can spit, snort, laugh (briefly) or similar, but not speak. Everything that needs to be said has already been said, and if not, it is too late.
- \* The scene should be slow, lingering, intense, focusing on what the main characters look like as they are facing their death.

Before you get to the final showdown, it is important that all players feel they have a really good reason to shoot at least one of the others. Ask them during the scenario to keep track of it. They should NOT say out loud who they will shoot at - not even if it seems obvious. This is the only secret in the game.

Reasons for shooting someone could e.g. be:

"I hate A for having done this to me"

"I have to shoot A, or they will shoot me first"

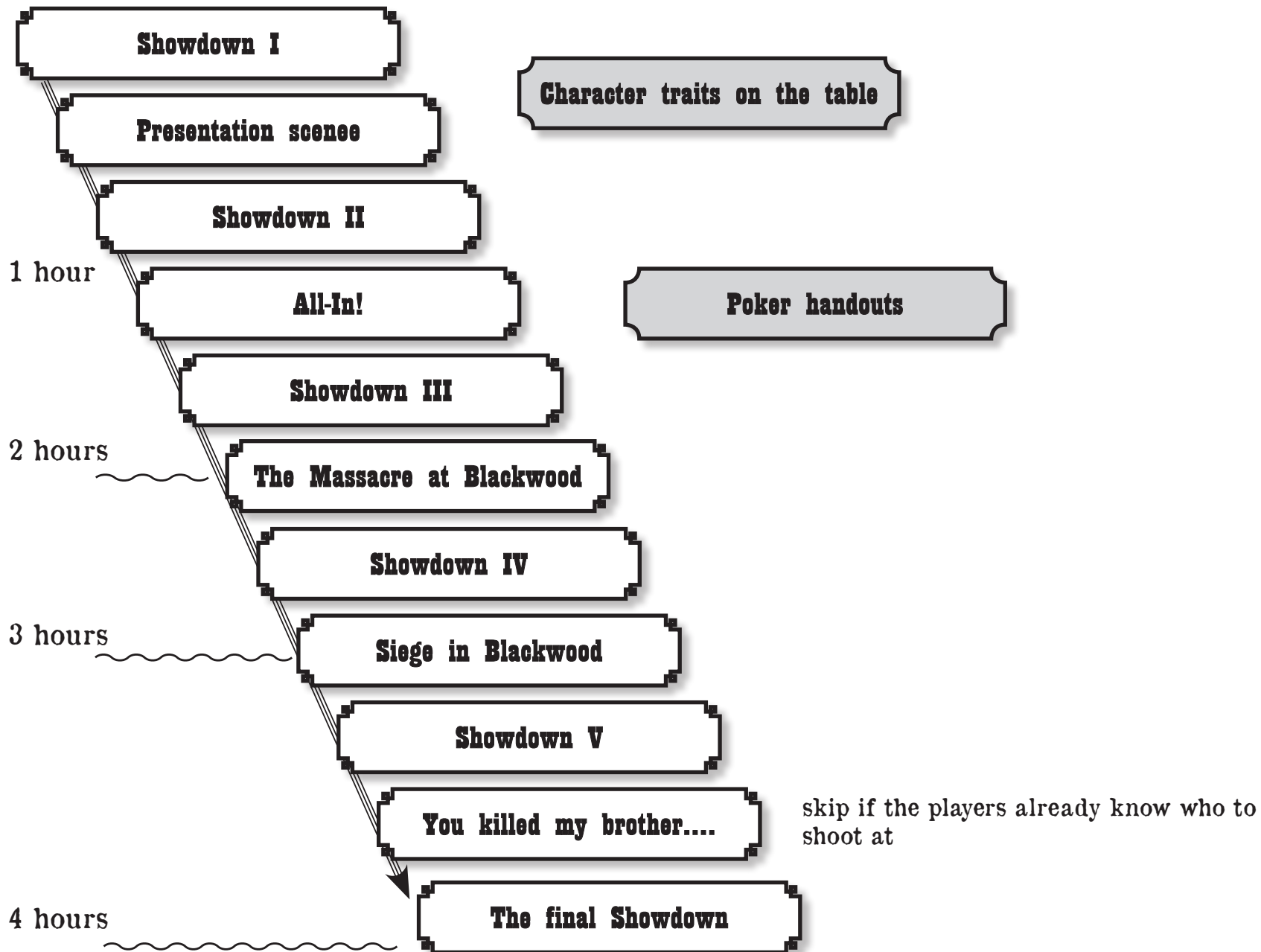
"I must shoot A, because they are a terrible person, and the world is a

better place without them”

“If I don’t shoot A, they will shoot B, and I want to be the one doing that”

If someone during the scenario feels that they lack a good reason to shoot, make sure they get the right role in the next flashback scene, and that the other players help. You can also use the Character Traits to get some emotions going between two characters.

# Scenario flowchart



# THE BOUNTY HUNTER

“Bounty”

“Lucky” :

“Grit” :

“Trigger”

# THE GAMBLER

“Lucky”

“Bounty” :

“Grit” :

“Trigger”

# THE VETERAN

“Grit”

“Lucky” :

“Bounty” :

“Trigger”

# THE OUTLAW

“Trigger”

“Lucky” :

“Grit” :

“Bounty”

# The showdown I

This scene is first played right after the players have received their characters, and should not take more than a few minutes this time. Only the GM speaks; the players should just absorb the mood and get into character, without saying or doing anything.



Describe the surroundings: The dusty prairie country around the town, the wooden store fronts, a sign that creaks in the wind. There are no people around, everyone has left the place to you. Describe how the four characters stand and watch each other. Let the camera zoom into details - a hand resting on the handle of a revolver, a hat being moved slightly to give better shade, a boot scraping on the dry sand, eyes squinting in the harsh light.

Take your time, and keep the descriptions open, so the players don't feel bound by what you say.

It is recommended to prepare well for this scene, since it introduces the genre, play style and mood of the scenario.

# Presentation scenes

The presentation scenes are run right after the first Showdown scene. The purpose of a presentation scene is to introduce each character in their own individual scene where they are the only main character, and where they can show us how cool they are.

The scenes also give the players an opportunity to get to know their character better. Are they merciless killers? Reluctant heroes? Cynical survivors?

The characters can grow and change during the scenario, but the presentation scene should help them find a good starting point.

Hand out the presentation scenes (the text is here as well as in Hand-outs). Give the players some time to read their scenes and consider how they should play out.

The scenes can be run in any order.

The Characteristics should also be made available now, so the players can choose between them, if they feel that any of them would fit in their presentation scene (they can always choose more later).

Before each scene you describe the setup of the scene. Then the player should tell what happens, and you and the other players should help describing the setting, the mood, camera as needed. The other players can also play supporting cast, if the main player needs it. Remember that the scene should make the main character appear as the player intends, and you and the other players are there to help.

A presentation scene should typically last around 5 minutes.

## **The Veteran**

A gang you have been chasing are trying to ambush you in a saloon. They threaten the guests and staff to keep quiet, and position themselves around the saloon, ready for your arrival. You discover the ambush in time to make your own plan. A confrontation is inevitable, but you, of course, end up in control of the situation.

Tell what happens. What plan did the gang have? How do you discover it? What do you do? Do you end up shooting everyone, or do you solve it without drawing blood?

## **The Gambler**

You are somewhere deep down in Mexico, in a small town, which is the gathering point for outlaws and low-life from near and far. Most of you are currently gathered on the town square, killing time with a risky game. Between tequila bottles and half-smoked cigars two large glass jars are placed, with a rattlesnake in each jar, and between the jars is a pile of gold coins. Two people put a hand in a jar, and whomever takes his hand out of his jar last has won the coins. You are of course playing along, and end up winning.

Tell what happens. How long do you sit there? Do you use dirty tricks to win? Do you get away with the money?

## **The Outlaw**

A group of gunslingers are chasing you for a bounty. You end up somewhere on the prairie, where one of the gunslingers wounds your horse with a lucky rifle shot from afar. The horse can't carry you anymore, so you are hiding out, waiting for your pursuers to catch up with you, so you can steal one of their horses and get away.

Tell what happens. Do you shoot them all? Do you wait until dark and steal the horse?

## **The bounty Hunter**

You arrive at a small town to pick up a man and bring him to another town for a bounty. When you arrive, the townspeople are preparing to lynch the man. You succeed in getting out of town again with the prisoner.

Tell what happens. Do you convince them to leave him to you? Do you trick them? Do you shoot your way out of the situation?

# The Showdown II

After playing the presentation scenes you return to the Showdown scene. This time the scene will take a bit longer, as the players participate in describing the scene, adding more details about themselves and the setting.

Help the players by guiding the camera and ask questions, e.g.:  
“The camera pans around and stops at you (e.g. the Bounty Hunter). It starts at the feet and pan up, taking in all the details. Describe what we see.”

Questions to ask:

“How do your boots look? Are they shiny and well-kept, or dusty and worn?”

“Is your coat long or short?”

“Where are your hands right now? What do they do?”

“Is the sun in your eyes or your back?”

You or the player moves the camera along after a while. The scene should not take a long time, but it shouldn't be rushed either. It should build mood and tension, and get the players settled in their characters.

# Scene 1: All-in!

*A high-profile poker tournament is underway on a riverboat in Mississippi. Three of you are participating, and one of you has been hired to guard the prize, which amounts to 100,000 dollars. Two or three of you have agreed beforehand to steal the prize from the winner after the tournament. You have planned to strike just as the steamboat reaches a railway bridge where your partner Eli is waiting with horses and a rope ladder that can reach the upper deck.*

*As the tournament develops and cards fall, the three of you who are participating in the tournament end up at the final table. As the finals progress, your hands get better and better, and each one of you believes that you are sitting with the winning hand, and can lure the others into going all in. Obviously, there can be only one winner... what happens when the winning hand is revealed?*

## **Start and finish**

*The scene starts at the finals table where the first hand has been dealt.*

*The scene ends when the money is gone – either brought into safety or stolen by one or more of you. All of you have probably also abandoned the river boat unless you manage to appear completely innocent throughout the whole shebang.*

## **Roles in the scene**

*Three of you are playing in the tournament. One of you has been hired as protection. Two or three of you have agreed to steal the money – note that the one who has been hired as protection can absolutely be in on the plan!*

*You all carry firearms at the finals table, even though it is against the rules of the tournament.*

## **Conflicts**

*One of you ends up as the winner of the tournament and would probably prefer to keep all the money, no matter what the plan used to be. Maybe the one hired as protection chooses to trick everyone and run off with the money alone. Maybe those who were in on the plan end up tricking each other (or at least try to). Somebody probably shoots at each other, and someone might try to frame the others for the job.*

## Notes for the GM

The poker game is meant to add atmosphere and increase the tension between the characters, and gives a good climax to the scene. It can be played with or without cards, depending on how well you know poker. Experience from previous runs is that it can be a good idea to give (or show) the cards to the players, even if they don't know poker, but then just tell them to play as if they have a really good hand (see details below).

### General walkthrough

The following walkthrough is the same with or without cards, online or offline. If you play without cards, you only need to follow this section. Whenever the text says "flip a card" or "cards on the hand", you should just roleplay this, and not mention specific cards. If you play with cards, read this first, then see further instructions below. Start by figuring out who should win. You can let the players decide in advance, or you can decide, and wait until the end to tell the players. It doesn't change the flow of the scene, but if you play with cards, it determines who gets which cards.

The scene starts in the final round, where the three players have their cards on the hand and the first three cards are laid out on the table (the "Flop").

The scene then proceeds like this:

1. The three poker players make their bids by taking turns putting poker chips into the "pot" (the pile of chips in the center of the table). Each player must decide if they want to raise the bid by putting more money in than the previous player, or just the same amount ("calling").
2. Continue until the players are done bidding (i.e. they have put the same amount into the pot), then flip the next card (the "Turn").
3. Players bid again as above.
4. Last card is flipped (the "River") and players bid for the last time. Some of the players should go all-in before the last bidding round ends, for dramatic effect. None of the players should fold.

Note: Let the players take turn starting to bid - this is technically not correct poker, but it makes it a more interesting scene.

When everyone is done bidding, the players lay out their cards so everyone can see. You explain who won, and await the reactions. Meanwhile, the river boat has reached the railroad bridge, and it is time for the planned robbery. But what happens when the winner is revealed? Is everyone still in on the plan? How does the character not involved in the plan react?

During the scene you and the players help describe the setting. What does the river boat look like, and the tournament room? Which other people are in the room?

When the poker players check their cards and consider their moves, zoom in on their faces and have them describe what the camera sees. Zoom in on the cards and the hand holding them. When a player raises or goes all in, pan around to the others to show their reactions. And when the winning hand is revealed, the camera is ready to capture the sudden action in the room.

### With cards, online:

Follow the walkthrough above, with the following additions:

Before the scene you prepare the cards, so you can show them as they are flipped. You can also use the pictures in this scene.

Send the handouts to the players - the winner gets "Player 1" handouts. Tell the players NOT to read ahead in the document.

### With cards, "offline":

If you play the scenario "offline" with real cards, we assume that you and the players are familiar with poker. Do the following:

Make three hands, one for each poker player.

Player 1 (the winner) gets Hearts 5 and Hearts 8. A weak starting hand, but it ends up being a Straight Flush with Hearts 5-9 - a really strong hand, and the winning hand.

Player 2 gets Diamonds 6 and Clubs 6. A good starting hand, but not super. It becomes Four of a Kind (6s) which is an exceptional hand, just not as good as the winning hand.

Player 3 gets Diamonds 9 and Clubs 9. A slightly better starting hand than player 2. It becomes a Full House with 9s and 6s, which in most

games would be a certain winner.

All three hands end up being so good that it makes sense for an experienced poker player to go all-in.

Pack the rest of the cards so they are drawn like this, from the top:

1. Hearts 6, Hearts 9, Clubs 7 (Flop)
2. Burn card
3. Spades 6 (Turn)
4. Burn card
5. Hearts 7 (River)

You can play the scene with or without chips. If you play without, the players can just say “I call” or “I raise a bit” or similar. If you play with chips, we recommend only using one kind of chips, to avoid losing track of the amount along the way.

Cut out the notes from “Handouts - Scene” and have them ready to hand out in the right order to the right players, hidden from the other players.

Before the scene starts, do the following:

1. Hand out the poker hands and the first note. Give Player 1 hand to the winner.
2. Hand out chips, if you are using them. Player 1 should have the most, and all should have between 20 and 40 chips.

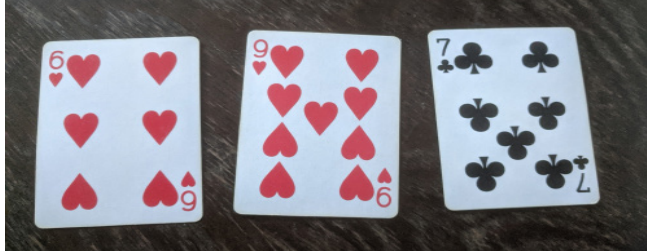
### **How to play the scene**

The scene starts at the Flop, so you start by turning over the first three cards. (If anyone asks, the poker players have already bid on their starting hand, so you don't need to spend time on that).

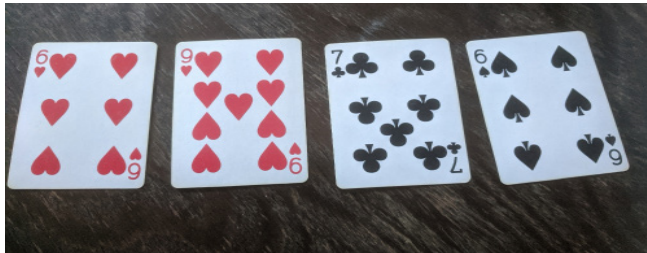
Proceed by bidding and flipping cards as described above.

## Gamemasters overview

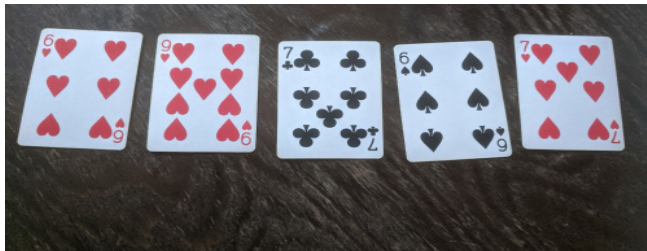
### Flop



### Turn



### River



#### Player 3

**Flop : Three of a kind, 9's**

**Turn: Full House, 9's over 6's**

**River: Full House, 9's over 7's**



#### Player 2

**Flop : Three of a kind, 6's**

**Turn: Four of a kind, *Leads***

**River: Four of a kind**



#### Player 1

**Flop : Straight 5-9 *Leads***

**Turn: Straight 5-9**

**River: Straight Flush, 5-9, hearts *Leads***

## The Showdown III

After the scene you return to the Showdown. Give the players a couple of moments to reflect on what happened in the flashback scene. How did it affect their view on the others? What are they feeling right now? How does this show in the Showdown scene?

Ask them to describe facial expressions, looks, movements. Focus in particular on the character who was treated worst in the scene.

## Scene 2: The Massacre at Blackwood

*During the Civil War, a group of wounded Union (North) soldiers and one of their officers (one of you) arrive at the little town of Blackwood and pressures the city into making a field hospital. A few hours later, a large company of Confederate (South) soldiers enter the city and take it over without much of a fight – the Union soldiers are too wounded to offer resistance.*

*The infamous Colonel William "Bloody Bill" Anderson is in command of the Confederate soldiers. He orders them to beat up the Union officer while he interrogates him about Union forces in the area. After a while he orders one of his officers (one of you) to execute the prisoners one by one to make the Union officer spill the beans, while the Colonel takes care of other business elsewhere in the city.*

### **Start and finish**

*The scene begins with Bloody Bill handing the interrogation over to his officer and leaving the scene. The scene ends with the Confederate troops riding off and leaving large parts of Blackwood in flames (as punishment for the locals having helped Union soldiers), and most of the Union soldiers executed (whether the officer talked or not).*

### **Roles in the scene**

*One of you is the Confederate officer who is ordered to execute the Union soldiers. One of you is the Union officer who is forced to either watch while his men are butchered or betray the other troops in the area. One of you is among the wounded Union soldiers, at risk of being executed. The last one of you lives in the town of Blackwood.*

*Note: The Bounty Hunter can be a soldier or officer in this scene, even though it is not historically correct.*

### **Conflicts**

*After the scene, the Union officer and the soldier blames the Confederate officer for causing the death of several of their comrades. There is also ample opportunity for the soldier to feel betrayed by his officer (whether that is fair or not). The one who lived in Blackwood has lost his home (perhaps also family and friends?) and blames the others.*

# The Showdown IV

After the scene you return to the Showdown. Give the players a couple of moments to reflect on what happened in the flashback scene. How did it affect their view on the others? What do they feel? How does it show?



Ask e.g.:

“Two of you are standing opposite each other. Who?”

“Is there anyone whose gaze you hold longer?”

“Is there anyone whose gaze you are avoiding?”

Focus in particular on those who were treated the worst in the scene.

## Scene 3: Siege in Blackwood

*(This scene requires a lot of guidance on how to play the different parts - see explanation below. Keep an eye on how much time you spent, and stay focused).*

*Some years after your last meeting, Blackwood is plagued by the Calvera gang who normally stays south of the Mexican border, but has now moved northwards to get a bigger territory. The citizens of Blackwood all chip in to raise money, and are now looking for gun-slingers to protect the city.*

*The four of you hear about the town’s troubles and choose to take on the task, either together or individually. You arrive at the town more or less at the same time, with the Calvera gang closing in on the town.*

### **Start and Finish**

*The scene starts when you meet at the outskirts of town and reluctantly realise that you have to work together. The Calvera gang is already approaching, there are many of them, and they are too close to the town for any of you to get away safely on your own.*

*The scene ends with two of you running away, letting down the two others who are taken captive by the gang and tortured. They later manage to escape.*

*The scene consists of several parts – the game master will explain the individual parts to you.*

### **Roles in the scene**

*You are all hired by the citizens of the town to protect them against the Calvera gang. Two of you will betray the others.*

### **Conflicts**

*The two who are taken captive by the gang will blame the two others who ran away.*

### **Notes for the GM**

The scene consists of the following parts, each stating the play style (storytelling or roleplay). Describe all of them briefly for the players before you start, so they know what they are aiming for.

### **Prelude - storytelling**

You meet at the edge of town. You all know that you have to work together. If the town falls in the hands of the Calvera-gang, none of you

get any money, and you also risk being hunted by the gang if you ride away know - they are very close to the town, and there are enough of them to be a problem, even for you, if you are on your own.

**GM Instructions:**

There are no words in this scene, just the characters meeting, staring each other down. Have them describe how they look at each other, and the thoughts that are going through their minds. What do they think about each other right now, and the prospect of working together? Why are they here? For the money? Excitement? Revenge over Calvera?

After a few minutes of staring, you cut to the next part - the players have agreed to cooperate, but you don't need to roleplay that happening.

**Ambush - roleplaying**

You get in touch with the townspeople, just in time before the Calvera-gang arrives. There are more of them than you thought. A lot more. The townspeople are not of much use, so it is mostly up to the four of you to fight back. The gunfight moves around the town's streets, on the rooftop, in the alleys. You are under heavy fire all the time, and several times in real trouble.

**GM Instructions:**

This scene is pure action. You put pressure on the players with the Calvera-gang, and the players control their own characters and the few townspeople who can actually use a gun. The Calvera-gang consists of 20-30 people, and the main characters should be under severe pressure - they stay alive, and take down a few people, but they will not get the upper hand in this part of the scene. Cut to the next part when you feel the time is right.

**Siege - roleplaying**

After the very long gunfight through town you are driven into the town's small bank. It is a solid brick building (the only one in town), and easy to defend. On the downside, you are surrounded and trapped, and the Calvera-gang can just wait until you eventually have to come out.

It turns out that there is a way to get out, but if you all do it at the same time, you will be discovered, and your horses are too far away. Two of you have to stay and keep the gang occupied, while the other

two sneak out through a roof window, get the horses, and then you can all escape at the same time.

**GM Instructions:**

NOTE: If the players or you have another good idea for how two of them end up betraying the two others, you should go with that instead of the bank, and skip this part. The important part is the betrayal.

Keep the Calvera-gang firing at the bank whenever something moves in there. The gang has lost a number of people in the gunfight, but there are still enough of them left to keep the characters busy.

The players must agree on who sneaks out and who stays, and then roleplay how this happens. The scene shouldn't take long, and it ends when the two remaining players realize that the other two have betrayed them, and aren't coming back.

**Betrayal - storytelling:**

The two remaining characters are captured by the Calvera-gang, who takes all their anger out on them. Against all odds they succeed in escaping, much later and after a lot of pain.

**GM Instructions:**

You and the two remaining characters tell the story of what happened to them and how they react. Then the other two tell the story of how they ran away.

# The Showdown V

After the scene you return to the Showdown. Give the players a couple of moments to reflect on what happened in the flashback scene. How did it affect their view on the others? What do they feel? How does it show?

Focus in particular on those who were treated the worst in the scene.

## Scene 4: You killed my brother - meet him in Hell!

*One of you had a brother. He was also a gunslinger, and good at it, until he met another one of who shot him. But what exactly happened?*

*In this scene we get two versions of the story – one told by a witness, the other told by the shooter. The two versions don't match entirely, and who knows what the truth is?*

### **For the brother**

*Consider what you want to ask the witness. What kind of story do you really want to hear about your brother's death? The truth? Or a story that will make you seek revenge?*

### **Start and Finish**

*The scene starts with the brother of the deceased and the witness sitting in a saloon in Blackwood. The witness starts his account.*

*As he's telling the story, the other main character of the story comments of the story, offering his version of events.*

*The scene ends when the brother of the deceased has heard enough – it is up to the player to decide when that happens.*

### **Roles in the scene**

*One of you plays the main character whose brother was shot. Another plays the main character who shot the brother. The third player is the witness (an NPC).*

### **Conflicts**

*After the scene, the one whose brother was shot feels a strong urge to avenge his brother. No matter how they felt about each other, no one else gets to shoot your family! The one who shot the brother knows that the other will probably want revenge.*

--

Notes for the gamemaster:

This scene can be left out - use it if you have plenty of time, or if one of the main characters are still not sure who to aim at during the showdown.

### Before the scene

Before the scene starts, the other players asks questions to the player whose brother is dead. The purpose is to give that player a clear picture of the brother who is now gone, and to create an emotional attachment. The player replies honestly to the questions as their main character would do, but it isn't a conversation with the others, more like an inner monologue.

Examples of questions (are also in the Handouts section) - feel free to come up with others:

Was he younger or older than you? By how many years? (Or was he a twin?)

What was his name?

When did you last see him?

Which one of you had the best relationship with your parents when you were kids?

What did he think of you?

What didn't you like about him?

What will you miss the most about him?

It is perfectly okay for the character to have had a complicated, or even bad, relationship with their brother - that doesn't mean that someone else can go around shooting him!



### How to run the scene:

After the interview questions, proceed to the scene. The scene is split up in two parts, running in parallel, with cross cuts back and forth. One part is roleplaying, where a witness tells the main character what happened when their brother was shot. They are in a saloon in Blackwood. The witness is nervous, since the main character is obviously angry that their brother was shot, and the witness doesn't want to say too many bad things about the brother.

The witness is played by one of the other players.

In the other part of the scene the other character who shot the brother tell their side of the story, as a kind of inner monologue, but responding to the story told by the witness. Their versions are not quite the same...

As a GM, you cut back and forth between the two where it feels right. The players can also pass the word to the other part.

For example:

*Witness: "So... you brother was playing cards with someone in the saloon, and... there was some discussion, I think..."*

*Cut to the other character: "He was cheating, and I called him on it. The idiot didn't even know how to cheat properly"*

*Etc.*

**Important:** The scene is not a discussion between the witness and the shooter - they are not connected in time or space. It is also not a competition about telling the "best" or most correct version. Instead it should feel like a confusing mix of half-truths where the main character will never know for sure how their brother died. One thing is still certain - it must be avenged!

# The final showdown

When all the flashback scenes are played, the scenario ends where it started, at the edge of Blackwood, with the four gunslingers facing each other, ready to shoot.

You should now have a clear picture in your minds of how people are positioned, how they look, and most importantly, what they feel. It is essential that everyone knows who they will be aiming at (but not necessarily who the others will be aiming at).

Before you start the final scene, give people a bit of time to sink into the scene and let them add a few more details, if they want, before the conclusion.

Here are the rules for the shootout - explain them to the players and make sure that everyone understands:

Everyone will have their hands lowered to their hips, as you would in a gun duel.

You count down from 3, and at the same time, everyone lifts their hands and point on the person they want to shoot at. (If you are online, people can write a name in the chat and press “Send” at the same time, or write names on a piece of paper and hold it in front of the camera).

You only have one shot, for one person. Even if you have more than one gun.

If you don’t want to shoot anyone, you can aim at the ground or the sky.

The rules are now:

You always hit the person you shoot at - it is not possible to dodge, or have a plate of metal under your shirt, or other tricks. You cannot choose to hit another person than the one you aimed at.

If you are hit, you die, and you do not get another shot. Wait with the death scenes until you are done with the shooting.

Note: If you and the players think that another outcome would be cooler, and you all agree, go with that instead, as long as you feel that it improves the scene.

Repeat the round with whomever is still alive - same rules as before.

Continue until they are done shooting, then resolve the death scenes in whatever order the players prefer.

In the death scenes, the players should describe how they die. The characters are not supposed to talk a lot. A few well-chosen words are okay, and it is also fine to crawl over to your mortal enemy and spit on them before you die.

Any survivors should describe how they react, and how they then mount their horses and ride into the horizon.

Describe how the camera remains behind and watch them grow smaller and smaller in the distance, with the dust blowing across the prairie, the sound of a train’s whistle in the distance, the hot sun baking down on the blood that slowly dries in the bright sand.

## THE END.

# HANDOUTS

## Presentation scenes

Cut out and give to the players. They decide the order

### THE VETERAN

A gang you have been chasing are trying to ambush you in a saloon. They threaten the guests and staff to keep quiet, and position themselves around the saloon, ready for your arrival. You discover the ambush in time to make your own plan. A confrontation is inevitable, but you, of course, end up in control of the situation.

Tell what happens. What plan did the gang have? How do you discover it? What do you do? Do you end up shooting everyone, or do you solve it without drawing blood?

### THE GAMBLER

You are somewhere deep down in Mexico, in a small town, which is the gathering point for outlaws and low-life from near and far. Most of you are currently gathered on the town square, killing time with a risky game. Between tequila bottles and half-smoked cigars two large glass jars are placed, with a rattle snake in each jar, and between the jars is a pile of gold coins. Two people put their hand in a jar, and whomever is the last to take his hand out of his jar win the coins. You are of course playing along, and end up winning.

Tell what happens. How long do you sit there? Do you use dirty tricks to win? Do you get away with the money?

### THE OUTLAW

A posse of gunslingers are chasing you for a bounty. You end up somewhere on the prairie, where one of the gunslingers wounds your horse with a lucky rifle shot from afar. The horse can't carry you anymore, so you are hiding out, waiting for your pursuers to catch up with you, so you can steal one of their horses and get away.

Tell what happens. Do you shoot them all? Do you wait until dark and steal the horse?

### THE BOUNTY HUNTER

You arrive at a small town to pick up a man and bring him to another town for a bounty. When you arrive, the townspeople are preparing to lynch the man. You succeed in getting out of town again with the prisoner.

Tell what happens. Do you convince them to leave him to you? Do you trick them? Do you shoot your way out of the situation?

## Character traits

Cut out and put on the table after first shootout

You smoke cigarillos whenever you can get away with it. They smell foul and everybody else hates them, but you love the taste.

You dress like a dandy - colorful shirt, nice vest, shiny boots with silver tips, a pocket square in sticking out of your breast pocket. Everything must be perfect.

You have a pocket watch that plays a tune when it is opened. You always take it out just before a duel.

You are always hungry and make sure to always have food handy.

You can't read.

The handles of your revolvers are made from silver and ivory.

You have a deck of cards that you frequently take out to do tricks with to pass the time.

You drink often and you drink a lot.

Among your belongings is a small chest with very personal items.

You own nothing besides what you have brought with you on your horse.

You never drink liquor.

Your boots have spurs that jingle when you walk.

You never cheat at card games and get furious if you are accused of it.

You think Colt is a bad brand of guns, preferring Schofield.

One of your parents or grandparents is a Native American.

Your horse has saved your life several times. You are very fond of it and has given it a name.

Your left shoulder isn't what it used to be after what happened at Muddy Creek.

You have an obvious scar on your face.

You are from a wealthy background – your father owns a big railway company.

You switched sides during the Civil War.

Your family lost everything during the Civil War.

You had a child, but it died.

You have killed a family member.

There is a grave at the churchyard in Blackwood that  
you always visit before doing anything else when you  
enter the town.

You keep a large amount of valuables hidden in a  
secret place.

## **All-in!**

*A high-profile poker tournament is underway on a riverboat in Mississippi. Three of you are participating, and one of you has been hired to guard the prize, which amounts to 100,000 dollars. Two or three of you have agreed beforehand to steal the prize from the winner after the tournament. You have planned to strike just as the steamboat reaches a railway bridge where your partner Eli is waiting with horses and a rope ladder that can reach the upper deck.*

*As the tournament develops and cards fall, the three of you who are participating in the tournament end up at the final table. As the finals progress, your hands get better and better, and each one of you believes that you are sitting with the winning hand, and can lure the others into going all in. Obviously, there can be only one winner... what happens when the winning hand is revealed?*

### **Start and finish**

*The scene starts at the finals table where the first hand has been dealt.*

*The scene ends when the money is gone – either brought into safety or stolen by one or more of you. All of you have probably also abandoned the river boat unless you manage to appear completely innocent throughout the whole shebang.*

### **Roles in the scene**

*Three of you are playing in the tournament. One of you has been hired as protection. Two or three of you have agreed to steal the money – note that the one who has been hired as protection can absolutely be in on the plan!*

*You all carry firearms at the finals table, even though it is against the rules of the tournament.*

### **Conflicts**

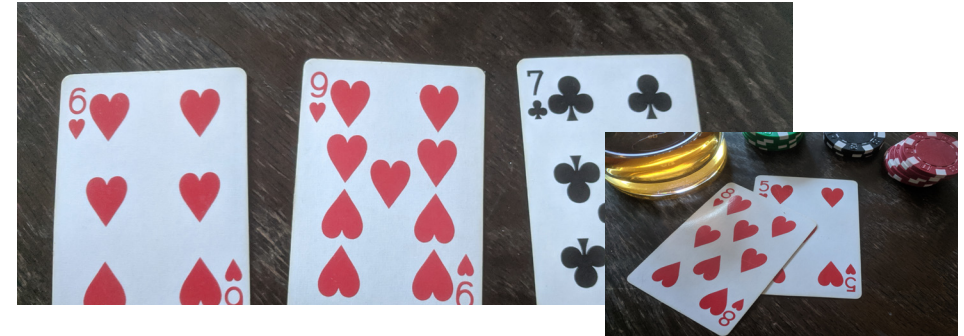
*One of you ends up as the winner of the tournament and would probably prefer to keep all the money, no matter what the plan used to be. Maybe the one hired as protection chooses to trick everyone and run off with the money alone. Maybe those who were in on the plan end up tricking each other (or at least try to). Somebody probably shoots at each other, and someone might try to frame the others for the job.*

## Starting hand, Player 1



You have a 5 of Hearts and an 8 of Hearts on your hand. Not a particularly good hand, but if you are a bit lucky, the others might not know if you are winning. It is possible to hit either a straight (for instance 5,6,7,8,9) or a flush (5 cards of the same suit, in your case Hearts)

## Flop, Player 1



You have hit a straight! This is very lucky, and you should be in the lead now. One of the others could have a straight ending in 10... but if not, your hand is the best one possible. You've even got four hearts! One more, and you have a flush! (which is better than a straight)

## Turn, Player 1



OK... an irrelevant card to you. The others are bidding high! They must have something good on their hands. There is a pair on the table, so someone could be lucky and have gotten a full house...

## River, Player 1



You almost can't believe your luck. That 7 of Hearts on the table just now means you've got a straight flush: 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of Hearts. It is the strongest hand that CAN be in play right now, so you know you've got the best hand. Now all that is left is to make the others bet all they've got left...

## Starting hand, Player 2



You have a pair of 6's on your hand. It is a nice hand, but if there are higher cards on the flop, it can easily lose its value. On the other hand... if you get another 6, it's a very strong hand.

## Flop, Player 2



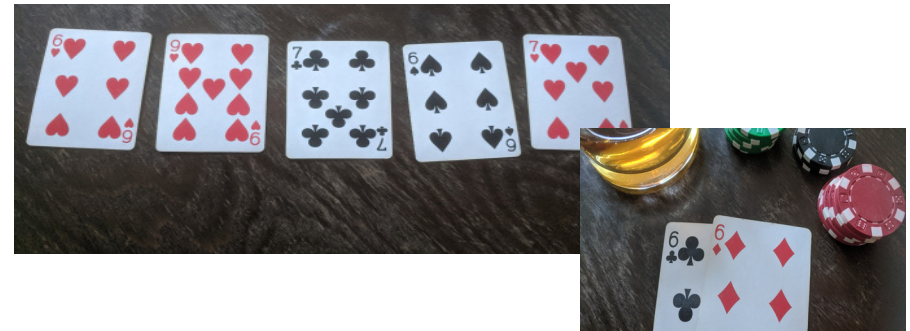
A 6 on the table! Now you've got 3 of a kind, and they are well hidden. The odds are good that you are in the lead right now. If one of the others has something like a high pair, you should be able to draw a lot of money from them.

## Turn, Player 2



You've hit four of a kind! Four 6's. It's one of the strongest hands in poker, only surpassed by a straight flush. You've got this...

## River, Player 2



Irrelevant card. There's a lot of Hearts on the table, so someone must surely have a flush by now? You hope so, because a flush is a strong hand, but not as strong as your four of a kind! Now all that is left is to make the others bet all that they have got left...

## Starting hand, Player 3



You have a pair of 9's on your hand. It is a good pair, unless there are aces or face cards on the flop. Worth betting on.

## Flop, Player 3



There is a 9 in the flop! You've got 3 of a kind now, and they are well hidden. It is even top set, meaning they are the highest form of three of a kind possible at the moment.

## Turn, Player 3



You've got a full house! It is a crazy strong hand, and the others need to have been REALLY lucky to win now.

## River, Player 3



Full house, 9's over 7's now. Another heart on the table, so surely someone must have a flush by now? No matter. Your house is better than a flush. Now all that is left is to make the others bet all that they have got left...

## **The Massacre at Blackwood**

*During the Civil War, a group of wounded Union (North) soldiers and one of their officers (one of you) arrive at the little town of Blackwood and pressures the city into making a field hospital. A few hours later, a large company of Confederate (South) soldiers enter the city and take it over without much of a fight – the Union soldiers are too wounded to offer resistance.*

*The infamous Colonel William "Bloody Bill" Anderson is in command of the Confederate soldiers. He orders them to beat up the Union officer while he interrogates him about Union forces in the area. After a while he orders one of his officers (one of you) to execute the prisoners one by one to make the Union officer spill the beans, while the Colonel takes care of other business elsewhere in the city.*

### **Start and finish**

*The scene begins with Bloody Bill handing the interrogation over to his officer and leaving the scene. The scene ends with the Confederate troops riding off and leaving large parts of Blackwood in flames (as punishment for the locals having helped Union soldiers), and most of the Union soldiers executed (whether the officer talked or not).*

### **Roles in the scene**

*One of you is the Confederate officer who is ordered to execute the Union soldiers. One of you is the Union officer who is forced to either watch while his men are butchered or betray the other troops in the area. One of you is among the wounded Union soldiers, at risk of being executed. The last one of you lives in the town of Blackwood.*

*Note: The Bounty Hunter can be a soldier or officer in this scene, even though it is not historically correct.*

### **Conflicts**

*After the scene, the Union officer and the soldier blames the Confederate officer for causing the death of several of their comrades. There is also ample opportunity for the soldier to feel betrayed by his officer (whether that is fair or not). The one who lived in Blackwood has lost his home (perhaps also family and friends?) and blames the others.*

## **Siege in Blackwood**

*Some years after your last meeting, Blackwood is plagued by the Calvera gang who normally stays south of the Mexican border, but has now moved northwards to get a bigger territory. The citizens of Blackwood all chip in to raise money, and are now looking for gunslingers to protect the city.*

*The four of you hear about the town's troubles and choose to take on the task, either together or individually. You arrive at the town more or less at the same time, with the Calvera gang closing in on the town.*

### **Start and Finish**

*The scene starts when you meet at the outskirts of town and reluctantly realise that you have to work together. The Calvera gang is already approaching, there are many of them, and they are too close to the town for any of you to get away safely on your own. The scene ends with two of you running away, letting down the two others who are taken captive by the gang and tortured. They later manage to escape.*

*The scene consists of several parts – the game master will explain the individual parts to you.*

### **Roles in the scene**

*You are all hired by the citizens of the town to protect them against the Calvera gang. Two of you will betray the others.*

### **Conflicts**

*The two who are taken captive by the gang will blame the two others who ran away.*

## **You killed my brother - meet him in Hell!**

*One of you had a brother. He was also a gunslinger, and good at it, until he met another one of who shot him. But what exactly happened?*

*In this scene we get two versions of the story – one told by a witness, the other told by the shooter. The two versions don't match entirely, and who knows what the truth is?*

### **For the brother**

*Consider what you want to ask the witness. What kind of story do you really want to hear about your brother's death? The truth? Or a story that will make you seek revenge?*

### **Start and Finish**

*The scene starts with the brother of the deceased and the witness sitting in a saloon in Blackwood. The witness starts his account.*

*As he's telling the story, the other main character of the story comments of the story, offering his version of events.*

*The scene ends when the brother of the deceased has heard enough – it is up to the player to decide when that happens.*

### **Roles in the scene**

*One of you plays the main character whose brother was shot. Another plays the main character who shot the brother. The third player is the witness (an NPC).*

### **Conflicts**

*After the scene, the one whose brother was shot feels a strong urge to avenge his brother. No matter how they felt about each other, no one else gets to shoot your family! The one who shot the brother knows that the other will probably want revenge.*

## **Questions**

- \* Was he your older or younger brother? How much older/younger than you?
- \* What was his name?
- \* When was the last time you saw him?
- \* Which one of you was your parents' favorite?
- \* How did your brother feel about you?
- \* What didn't you like about him?
- \* What do you miss about him?

# PLAYER CHARACTERS

# THE VETERAN

## "Grit"

*You keep your breathing calm and slow. Fear is almost as sure to kill you as a bullet, and over time you have taught yourself to stay calm, almost no matter what situation you are in, to control the fear and sense it in your enemies, never in yourself. So you keep your breathing under control, because it is the first place you can see and hear the fear.*

*Your gaze flickers for a moment, up and to the right. The sun is high in the sky, but the angle is in your favor, and the light won't be in your eyes.*

*You look around at the others, searching for signs of fear, overconfidence, nervousness, all the things that can decide the outcome of a duel before it has started. You don't find what you are looking for. The others are of a special breed, as you are, each and every one of them at your level, each of them different from the others.*

**The Gambler** - he lives and breathes for the thrill of the game, any game. For him fear is like that woman you really shouldn't be seeing, but you just can't stop. It is something he seeks out not despite the danger involved, but because of it. He is addicted to the thrill, the excitement, the fear, but unlike other people it does not make him weaker. On the contrary.

**The Bounty Hunter** - someone you do not make the mistake of underestimating. Many have done that, and they are now stuck in a cell, wondering how they got beaten by a woman, or six feet underground, not wondering about anything anymore.

**The Outlaw** - in many ways he is so different from you. In others, he is someone you envy. He makes his own rules, and doesn't take orders from anyone. A loner, independent of others, a free spirit. And clearly very skilled, if he can live this long with so many bounties on their heads.

*The others, like you, are waiting for the right moment. Who draws first? And more importantly... who will fire at you? You know what if any of them try to shoot you at this distance, they won't miss. So who should you shoot at? Maybe this is your final shootout. Maybe this is the time you die. You draw another breath, and it is just as calm and slow as before. Maybe it is about time.*



You have passed 50, and you start to feel old age approaching. Your body complains more than ever about aching joints and sore muscles, your reactions are slower, and you have to squint to see clearly at short distances, like when you have to read. On the other hand, you have an amount of experience that far exceeds most people you meet - an experience earned over many years, in some of the worst confrontations and hotspots: The Mexican War, the California Gold Rush, the Civil War, the Indian Wars... You have seen it all, been everywhere, and built up a reputation that has, over time, become almost a legend. Some see you as a hero, others as a villain, but when it comes down to it, lead and blood have the same colors, no matter what you fight for - or against. And maybe you are getting too tired to fight anymore. Maybe you just want peace.

## INSPIRATIONAL QUESTIONS

- **Why are you always drawn towards conflict and war? Is it for the cause? For the money? For personal reasons?**
- **Have you ever changed side in a war? Why?**
- **Is there something you would never do, even if it was a direct order, given in war time?**
- **Which dreams have you had for your life? Have you achieved any of them?**
- **Who will miss you when you die?**

# THE GAMBLER

## “Lucky”

*You feel the familiar rush of blood in your veins, all your senses are alert, all muscles ready to burst into action. Right now, face to face with death, is when you feel the most alive, when every part of you is at its best. You are ready. Very ready. The wait has already been long enough - how long are you going to stand here and stare at each other? You just want to get started, you want to feel the weight of the revolver in your hand, feel your finger squeeze around the trigger, hear the shot, see the bullet fly, and most of all you want to know how it ends.*

*You know you are the fastest, you always are. Your revolver will be the first one up, and your bullet will be the first to fly through the air towards your target. But where should you aim? Who is the most dangerous? Who do you hate the most? And is anyone going to aim at you? Does one of them hate you that much?*

*You look around at the others with quick glances, maintaining the overview of the situation. Here you are. The strongest cards in any hand. Ace, King, Queen, Jack.*

***The Veteran** is the King. The oldest of you, and also the most famous... or infamous, depending on who you ask, and which side you have been on in the many wars he has been in.*

***The Bounty Hunter** is the Queen, of course. So much more deadly than you would think. You have never been in a shootout with a woman, and the thought fascinates you, but you will not let that blind you to the fact that she is just as dangerous as the others.*

***The Outlaw** is the Jack. He only respects the law when it suits his own purposes, and you know that his skills with a gun have been enough to keep him alive so far, despite the countless bounties that are on his head. And the Ace? A smile flickers across your lips. The Ace is in your sleeve, where it belongs.*



For as long as you can recall you have sought thrills, excitement, the unknown, the dangerous. Life must be felt to the bone, it must hang by a thread, or you can never really appreciate it. You want to feel the blood rushing through your veins, feel your heart pounding. You have taken chance after chance all your life, betted it all on one horse, and so far you have been successful. Some say that you must have been born under a lucky star. Personally, you think that luck is something you make for yourself, so that is what you have done. Gambling, betting, duelling, impossible tasks that no one else has dared taking... You have done it all, and luck has been on your side, because you have had the skills and the guts to make it so.

Maybe now is when you will die. Maybe that is the hand that you have been dealt today. The thought makes your heart beat faster, but it does not scare you, on the contrary. It sharpens your senses, makes you even more deadly. You are ready. So ready.

## INSPIRATIONAL QUESTIONS

- **Is there anything (or anyone) you would not risk losing?**
- **Do you always play by the rules and the skills you have, or do you cheat when you can get away with it?**
- **What is the most dangerous thing you have done?**
- **What do you dream of in life? Have you achieved it?**
- **Who will miss you when you die?**

# THE BOUNTY HUNTER

## “Bounty”

*A lock of your hair moves in the sudden breeze and tickles you on the neck. Your eyes narrow briefly in irritation, but you don't let it break your focus. You can't allow that, not here, not with the company you're in. You can usually read others well, and determine how big a threat they are based on their reaction to you. To what you are. A female gunslinger. There is always a reaction. Something. A snort, a raised eyebrow, laughter, disbelief. The bigger the reaction, the smaller the threat. These men, however, know you too well, and they are too skilled to give away anything you don't already know.*

*You gaze at the others, study their faces, their body language, the small signs that can give you an impression of the situation.*

*The Veteran is not a young man anymore, but that only makes him more of a threat in your opinion. If you can live to his age the way he has lived, with all the wars and conflicts he has been involved in, you are a dangerous man. Very dangerous.*

*The Gambler is a wild card. Even now, right here, where you all stand on death's doorstep, you see a smile around his lips, a spark in his eyes. Signs that either means that he has a hand full of aces, or that he is bluffing. The same smile, the same face.*

*And the Outlaw. As your eyes run over his weathered face, it strikes you how many similarities there are between you, despite the obvious differences. He follows his own rules, his own code of honor, his own path, as you have done. Fate has placed you on opposite sides of the law many times, but it might as well have been the other way around.*

## INSPIRATIONAL QUESTIONS



Your path to this place today has not been like the others. Of course. A woman's path is never the same as a man's, no matter how much you have wished it to be. Men can do what they want, settle down in a town without any questions asked, move on without any raised eyebrows. A man with a reputation for being dangerous keeps most people away from making stupid challenges; a woman with the same reputation is a provocation.

Being a woman has, however, had some advantages. You can hide better, dress differently and assume a role, and no one will recognize you, no one will guess that the pretty lady with her buttoned-up dress and laced parasol is really a bounty hunter, with a revolver hidden in the purse. Or that the woman in the saloon, the one with the low-cut red dress and the heavy makeup, has a knife pressed into the back of the drunk she's dragging away.

You have cashed in numerous bounties because your target had no idea who you were before it was too late.

You have been a bounty hunter for many years, and you are good at it. Now you have passed 40 years. You have spotted the first grey hairs, the number of lines in your face is increasing, the long days on a horseback feels more strenuous than when you were younger. How long can you go on? What will you do once the revolver no longer feels like an extension of your arm, when your aim starts to waver and your reactions become too slow?

- **Do you like being a bounty hunter? Does the chase give you a kick, or is it just for the money?**
- **Have you ever been on the other side of a bounty hunt? Been the hunted instead of the hunter?**
- **Are there limits to what you would do to catch your target?**
- **What did you dream about when you were younger? Have you achieved any of your dreams?**
- **Who will miss you when you die?**

# THE OUTLAW

## “Trigger”

*Here you stand, the four of you, facing each other with piercing gazes and loaded guns. It had to end here, like this, with the four of you. There are things you can turn your back to and leave, and the Devil knows you have done that, more times than you care to think about, but there are also things you cannot run away from, if you want to stand by your name and call yourself a man. Things like those that are between you and the others. Things that have to do with death.*

*You look around to get a sense of the others  
The Veteran is older than you, but deadlier than a rattle snake. He has done this for so many years, fought battles you don't even want to think about, and he has yet to meet his match. You have to respect him, even if his view of the world is old-fashioned and will end up being his doom.  
The Bounty hunter has survived by being underestimated by men. You would never underestimate her. That she hasn't caught you yet is more luck than skill on your part. And maybe today your luck has run out.  
The Gambler smiles. Of course. He thrives on thrills and danger. He probably thinks he has a lot in common with you, because you both don't care much for rules, but deep down the things that drive you are not the same.*

*You struggle to control a growing sense of unease. The others are good, really good. You could most likely handle one of them alone, but there are three of them, and they probably all have good reason to fire at you first. If nothing else, then for the amount of bounties on you, that have accumulated over the years. You just hope some of them have better reasons to hate each other and pick a different target.*

## INSPIRATIONAL QUESTIONS



You have always hated rules. Any kind of rules. Laws, norms, expectations - they make you restless, breathless. Rules are like ropes. Ropes that end up tightening around your neck, in more than one way. As you see the world, there aren't many rules that are actually useful, so you prefer to follow your own. And it has brought you in conflict with the law more times than you can count.

You have tried to live a different life, one where you don't have to run all the time, looking over your shoulder. But everytime something has gone wrong. Either you have felt the rules sneaking up on you, winding around your hands, your feet, holding you down, or your past has caught up with you and shown you that you don't belong among ordinary, law-abiding citizens. So you pack your bags and move on. Sometimes without a fuzz, other times in haste, with bullets flying around your ears.

This day, with the other three, you feel for once a sensation of belonging. Despite the grudges between you, despite what will inevitably happen. The only rule that counts here is that the best of you will win. You can live with that. Also if the best of you isn't you.

- **What kind of outlaw are you? Are you a ruthless bandit, stealing for your own benefit? Or are you a Robin Hood who breaks the rules only to help those who deserve it?**
- **Can you work with others, or is it too hard for you to fit into a group?**
- **What have you done that triggered the biggest bounty on your head?**
- **Which dreams did you have when you were younger? Did any of them come through?**
- **Who will miss you when you die?**