

Land of Ill Harvest

*A Roleplaying Game of Brutal Horror and
Quiet Miracles by Noah R. Trammell*

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Introduction

Northwest Kansas is a bare, flat land. Fallow fields stretch out mile upon mile, occasionally marked by an oasis of thick, twisting trees or sparse grass. Here, the sun heats up the highway like a griddle that stretches on forever.

This land is open, horizons broadening out like an endless sea even in the towns that cling to the ever-shifting dust, always dwarfed by the clouds that sail in monolithic fleets through the dark blue sky.

There is a tinge of the eternal in this land, like you could walk the roads for a lifetime and still find yourself lost in the flat Purgatory of the plains. This is a place where men and their works seem smaller somehow, where it seems

like the hand of God could reach down at any moment and sweep away a town in a roar of winds and blare of trumpets.



This isn't a strong place. The towns are small and dirty, still suffering from not becoming railroad stops during the Wild West days. Most of the shops have been closed, their paint beginning to peel and their boarded-up windows squinting forlornly out onto grey skies. Lonesome farms dot the landscape, sheltered by a few trees and occasionally connected by dirt roads.

Small windmills turn in the wind, almost an anachronism when one thinks of the towering windfarms not two hundred miles away. Everything about the land seems to be leaning forward, as if waiting for the seasons to change or the rest of the world to slow and let this place catch up. In the winter, the fields lie fallow, waiting to be turned and reborn in golden horizons.



Seasons change quickly around here, however, and a new age was ushered into these people's lives not with a party or prayer, but with a storm. Called the Freak Storm, the Storm of Judgement, and a thousand other names, this outpouring of nature's fury appeared out of nowhere, defying all weather predictions. That was not the only thing that was strange about this storm, though. On that fateful night, green lightning flashed through clouds that seemed set alight with white fire. Unearthly choruses accompanied the howling wind, rising in a swelling crescendo until, just before dawn, the storm vanished in a final, ground-shaking clap of thunder. Later on, when the storm had ascended to the place of legends, there were even tales of the dead rising from their graves.

Regardless of the whatever legends surrounded the storm, one fact was obvious to everyone when they emerged from their homes: they had entered a new world. Televisions, computers, and cell phones had simply stopped working. Cars gave a last sputter and died, the small, essential parts within them simply ceasing to turn. The constant roar of the highway had been cut off. Empty husks of automobiles littered the once-great thoroughfare, already rusting away. Even the barbwire fences, boundaries that had been there for a hundred years, were disintegrated, leaving behind lines of wooden posts standing like dozing sentries.

The fences were not the only boundaries to be destroyed. It seemed as if the pounding rain of the Storm had somehow softened the laws of the universe. Mysterious Miracle-Workers wander the land, catalysts for strange power. As you get farther from towns you find time flowing slower and slower, till finally there's nothing but a red sun hanging eternally in a hard blue sky. Shadows are creeping to tear off another bite from the ragged edge of civilization.

Will you stand strong and united against all odds, or will you be swallowed in the ringing vespers of a world? It's up to you.

Chapter 1: Those Who Would Live

As you may have gathered, the world's gone to pot. Stuck in an agricultural land as flat and exposed as a pancake, stripped of government, technology, and even the assurance that the supernatural is the stuff of children's stories, you've got to learn how to survive and, above all, live. This game is all about answering these questions.

The first thing you need to do to play is create a character. Unlike in most games, the GM will not be creating the world you play in for you. It is up to

the players to create an area and characters that they are interested in, and up to the GM to find the conflicts inherent in this world.



The first step to knowing who you are is knowing where you've been. Who were you before the Storm hit? Spend a few minutes talking to your fellow players about the kind of area your characters inhabit. Is it a town, adjoining farms, a trailer park? After you've figured that out, consider what you want your character to be, and how he fits into the area. Were you a farmer, a businessman, a drifter?

Seth, Jayden, and Adam are playing their first session of Land of Ill Harvest. They discuss the kind of place they're playing in, deciding that the area they inhabit is a town that is going through hard times, its inhabitants wondering if they can go on. After that, they each spend a few minutes thinking and then jot down the following summaries onto a piece of scrap paper.

A small-time farmer, afraid that he might lose his land.

A grandson visiting his grandparents as he searches for a purpose in his life.

A minister of a small town, feeling fiercely protective of his flock, frustrated because he can do nothing about the economic crisis slowly pulling the town under.

Once you've figured out who your character was before the Storm, come up with a name for your character and record it on your character sheet.

Seth decides his small-time farmer is going to be named Sam Howell.

Jayden decides his visiting youth will be named Daniel Nel.

Adam decides his spiritual shepherd will be named Pastor Inkfist.



Now you must find out who your character is. What effects did the Storm have on your character and on his surrounding environment? Did it present new opportunities or destroy an old life? At this point you've probably started to figure out that things aren't as they should be. You've probably started hearing rumors of dark things in the woods and strange, supernaturally-gifted people called Miracle-Workers beginning to filter in from out of the Wilderness. You may have even encountered something yourself. You can determine the effects the Storm had on your character on your own, or you can discuss it with your fellow players, helping each other find out what's going on.

Seth, Jayden, and Adam decide to figure out what is happening to their characters on their own.

Seth decides that the Storm presents a new opportunity for his character. Now that he no longer has to worry about money or taxes, he is free to keep his land with nothing but the his own strength.

Jayden decides that the Storm was a disaster for Daniel, who is now cut off from his parents, friends, and old haunts.

Adam decides that for Inkfist, the Storm is a double-edged sword. He no longer has to watch his town slip under, but he now feels he must protect it from darker forces than a dip in the economy.



To bring your character into focus, you must now discover where your character is going. How does he deal with the cards fate has dealt to him? What does he do about things he doesn't like? How does he protect the things he loves?

Seth decides Sam is going to do anything necessary to keep his farm and bring in the harvest, whether it costs him in tears, sweat, or even blood.

Jayden decides Daniel's goal is to stay alive, but only so he can make it home. He'll seize any opportunity to get back to his familiar city, if only he can tell his parents he's sorry for the pain he's caused them.

Adam decides Pastor Inkfist's goal is to protect his congregation. Whether it means whispering soothing words or raining down the judgment of God, he'll be sure they stay safe against any and all threats.

To finish your character, you must record everything you've discovered so far. Write it as if it were a story, the life story of your character.



Once you've done this, you're ready to move on to the mechanical side your character: his Methods and Motivations.

Looking over your character sheet, you've probably got a pretty good idea of how your character does things and what he's good at. These are his Methods. **Methods** are what tools a character uses to accomplish his goals. They can be skills, physical characteristics, or even items that are intrinsic to your character. From the description you wrote of your character, extract at least one or two Methods and record them on your character sheet.

Looking over his story, Seth decides that Sam, being a farmer, is probably pretty good at farming. He adds "Farming" to his Methods. He also decides the continuous work on the farm has made him strong and tough. He adds "Short, Stumpy, and Chiseled" to his Methods.

Jayden's having a hard time figuring out what his character's good at. He thinks about how in his story his character is sorry for hurting his parents. He decides his

character is good at pushing people's buttons and getting under their skin. He adds "Poisoned Barbs" to his Methods and leaves it at that.

Adam envisions his character as an older man with few defining physical strengths but many people-oriented abilities. He adds "The Double-Edged Word of God" and "Inspiration" to his Methods to reflect his ability to use the Bible as a balm and a whip and his talent for moving people to action.

While how you do things is important, it's even more important why you do things. What drives you to keep on living in a world you don't understand any more? What keeps you toiling even when you want to fall down right there and sleep? These are your **Motivations**. Look over your character sheet and decide the reasons your character acts the way he does.

Seth looks over his character sheet and finds Sam's first Motivation easily: his want to keep his farm. He adds "Hold On To My Place" to his Motivations. He imagines his character as a fairly gentle person. He records "Stay Out of Trouble, If Possible" as his second Motivation. Moving on, he thinks that Sam probably wants to expand his farm and use it as a base for a better life. Seth, however, doesn't yet have a very clear idea of what that future is, so he settles for "Bring In the Harvest" and decides that he'll find out Sam's future soon enough.

Jayden immediately writes "Get Back Home" on Daniel's character sheet as his first Motivation. Also, he decides that Sam was bullied a bit back home, so he'll "Step Up for the Weak."

Adam has an easy time figuring out his Motivations. He immediately jots down "Protect My Flock" and "Crush the Darkness" as his Motivations. Pastor Inkfist may be old, but he's full of fire.

All right! You're almost finished with you character. Now that you've figured out how and why you're character does things, it's time to assign

values to your Traits. Each player gets **15 points** to distribute between his Methods and Motivations. Mark how many points your putting into a Trait beside it on your character sheet.

Sam Howell's Traits look like this:

Methods

Farming 2. Strappin' Farm Boy 2.

Motivations

Hold On To My Place 5. Stay Out of Trouble, If Possible 2.

Bring In the Harvest 4.

Daniel Nel's Traits look like this:

Methods

Poisoned Barbs 5.

Motivations

Get Back Home 7. Step Up For the Weak 3.

Pastor Inkfist's Traits look like this:

Methods

The Double-Edged Word of God 4. Inspiration 3.

Motivations

Protect My Flock 5. Crush the Darkness 3.



Now your character is completed, free to explore the world and himself. And there is a world to explore, a world of brutal horror and quiet miracles. What will you discover?

Chapter 2: A World

Without Mercy

This isn't a nice world. The boundaries society and civilization imposed have been stripped away. Human reason doesn't have as many answers as it once did, and it looks like there are a couple of good reasons to be afraid of the dark. What kind of hazards will you face as you venture out to burn or rebuild? Here's a few.



Throughout all of human history there have been those who have lived according to the laws of a different universe. They've been called barbarians and demons before, but here they're **the Mad**. When everything fails, there's always a few people who turn to cannibalism to survive or whose mind's can't take the strain, whose sanity snaps. These people, if you can call them people,

may be clever or stupid, fast or slow, but they are always dangerous because they think in a way you can't predict. You've just got to go along with the flow and try to take them down.

A few Mad you might find are...

A broken town where Madness has swept up the survivors, transforming them into cunning flesh-eaters hunting for their next meal.

A sensuously beautiful Calypso who persuades weary travelers to stay the night in her house on the edge of the Waste. No one knows what happens then, but there are rumors she drags heavy bags out to the woods every morning.

Worse perhaps than the Mad are **the Predators**. Predators can be packs of wolves or bands of men. Either way, they're those who turn on their fellow creatures to survive. Whether they're a pack of bandits hiding out in the mountains and attacking defenseless towns or a corrupt official leeching life from the surrounding farms with unjust taxes, Predators are thoughtful creatures who will do anything to further their own goals, whether it means bloodshed or even worse.

A few Predators you might find are...

A bandit lord spreading fire and fear throughout the land.

A pack of wild coyotes, wild with hunger, stalking the edge of the Wilderness.

A landowner sitting in his wealth like a spider in its web, slowly drawing the threads tighter and tighter around his renters.

The Afraid are perhaps the most dangerous of all human entities. They are ruled by fear and superstition, willing to burn a woman at the stake because the cows' milk has begun to curdle. There's an Afraid lurking in everyone, and it just takes the right words or the slightest push to send a normally reasonable human being plummeting over the edge into a world of fear.

A few Afraid you might meet are...

A cult seeking the answer to their existence, their fear and mistaken belief in their own righteousness causing them to hunt down those they accuse of Witchcraft.

A crowd of people crouched around the fire, waiting for the final provocation to drive them to an act of rash anger and, later, perhaps even Madness.

The Environment's out to get you, too. Whether it's a storm trying to drown you or the frost strangling your crops, the surrounding world is as much an adversary as anything else in the world. As if weather weren't enough, seems like the Storm messed with time some, too. The farther you get from towns and the closer you get to **the Wilderness** the more tattered physics and logic gets. Sun starts to sink slower and slower, grass starts to vanish, and the horizon seems to be one endless band of sky. After you've walked long enough, direction and time start to matter less and less, and the next thing you know you're trapped in a plain of nightmares, just you and the flat earth and the endless sky. There is nothing beyond.

Then there's the other things. **Miracle-Workers** wander the land, performing feats of healing and regeneration that defy all logic. Some say they were touched by God, others that they are slaves of the Devil. There's even a rumor that Miracle-Workers wandered out of the Wilderness, somehow escaping out of that eternal Purgatory and returning to the natural world. **Sorcerers** seem to be around, too, lurking in the shadows at the back of mankind's imagination. Where Miracle-Workers perform their actions openly, Sorcerers are so secret it's likely even if you do have a real Sorcerer on your hands you'll never find out you're true identity, or how they do what they do.

There's also things from **Outside**, the things that make all the fear and superstition seem worth it. Almost look's like madness is a pretty good idea once you've glimpsed what stands just beyond the boundaries of the candle, the true evil that's biding it's time like a black cobra, waiting to strike.



Well, there's what you're up against. In the next chapter, you'll be learning how you contend with your foes or even your friends, and after that you'll be on your own. Good luck.

Chapter 3: The Thud of Fists, the Heat of Lead

All right, you've got a character and a whole host of enemies to fight with words or steel, so what do you do now? It's time to learn about scenes, choices, and conflicts.



A session of Land of Ill Harvest is played out through a series of **Scenes**. There are two types of Scenes: Narration Scenes and Conflict Scenes.

Narration Scenes are the simplest type of scene. They have two elements: Location and Characters. The Location of a Narration Scene is simply the physical place the scene starts in. It is the GM's responsibility to set the

Location of Narration Scenes. The second element of Narration Scenes are Characters. Characters are the participants in the scene, and may include any number of player characters and GM-controlled characters.

Once Location and Characters have been determined, the participants should play out the scene until the GM decides to end the scene or cut to another, or until the scene turns into the second type of scene, a Conflict Scene.

Conflict Scenes begin when two sides decide they're willing to put something at stake to get something they want. Conflict Scenes are made up of five elements. Like Narration Scenes, Conflict Scenes must have Location and Characters. They also consist of Sides and Stakes.

To start a Conflict, determine **Sides**. Sides are, quite simply, who is fighting against who.

Once you've determined Sides, it's time to determine **Goals**. Goals are what the Sides are hoping to win in the Conflict. Goals are statements of what happens if a Side wins a Conflict. Goals can consist of purely narrative consequences, or the risk of being Scarred by a Conflict. Scars will be explained shortly.

If a character involved in a Conflict thinks that the risk entailed by his opponent's Goals are too high, he can choose to negotiate with the other person involved, or appeal to the GM to pass judgement on the stakes of the Conflict. If the other person is the GM, then all the players should vote on the nature of the Goals.

The GM decides to transform a Narration Scene involving Sam Howell and a drunken bum who Sam's trying to get rid of into a Conflict Scene when the emotions begin to rise high enough to drive the pair to blows. The Sides consist of Sam and the

Bum. Sam Howell decides that if he wins the Conflict the bum will move along. The GM declares that if the bum wins, Sam will be knocked unconscious (a narrative effect) and that he will acquire a “Bruised” Scar ranked at 1. Sam has no problem with this Goal, so the GM quickly jots down a few Methods and Motivations for the bum and reaches for the dice.

Once Sides and Goals have been determined, it’s time to move to the real meat of the Conflict. Each participant should choose a Motivation and, if they have an appropriate one, a Method from their character sheet. Each player should have in front of them a pile of ten to fifteen dice. These dice are their **Inactive Dice**. At the start of the Conflict, draw a number of dice equal to your relevant Motivation and Method Traits from your Inactive Dice and move them over by your right hand. These dice are your **Active Dice**. If a participant has no applicable Motivations or Methods, then they begin the Conflict with two Active Dice.

After you’ve drawn your Active Dice, the GM will grant one to three dice to whichever character has the Advantage in the Conflict. The Advantage is given to the party who has the momentum, element of surprise, or superior equipment in the Conflict. It is up to the GM to decide how extreme the Advantage is.

Once you’ve determined your Active Dice, roll them and get ready to fight.

Sam’s player decides he’ll use “Hold on To My Place” as his Motivation and “Short, Chunky, and Chiseled” as his Method. He draws seven dice from his Inactive Dice and moves them over to his Active Dice. The GM draws five Active Dice for the bum and hands Sam’s player one Advantage Die to add to his Active Dice, explaining that the guy’s just drunk enough to make him clumsy.

Sam rolls his Active Dice, coming up with:



The GM rolls his Active Dice, coming up with:



Now it's time to actually play the Conflict out. The character with the Advantage goes first by putting forward one or two of his Active Dice as a **Challenge**, narrating an action that moves him closer to winning the Conflict and realizing his Goal. Once the Challenge has been issued, it's up to the Challenged to **Answer** by matching the numbers shown on the Challenge Dice and narrating the way he opposes the Challenger's action.

If the Challenged is able to match the Challenge Dice with less Answer Dice, then the Challenger is required to move a number of dice equal to the difference between the Challenge Dice and Answer Dice over by his left hand. These dice are his **Pain Dice**. The Challenged also **Takes the Advantage**. This means that the GM is required to hand him one to three Advantage Dice. Also, the Challenged is able to narrate the way that he successfully opposed the Challenger's action and reversed the momentum of the Conflict, so long as that narration does not include a decisive end to the Conflict.

If the Challenged matches the Challenge Dice with an equal number of dice, then no Pain is inflicted on either Side. Also, the Challenged is able to narrate the way he successfully opposed the Challenger's action, so long as that narration does not include a decisive end to the Conflict.

If the Challenged is forced to match the Challenge Dice with more Answer Dice, then he is required to take Pain equal to the difference between his Answer Dice and the Challenge Dice. Also, the Challenger is able to narrate

how the Challenged was unable to oppose the Challenger's action, so long as that narration does not include a decisive end to the Conflict.

If the Challenged is unable to match the Challenge Dice, then the Conflict is over, and he takes Pain equal to the difference between his remaining Dice and his opponent's Active Dice. Also, the Goals of the winner are realized, and he is able to narrate a decisive end to the Conflict that also includes the realization of his Goals.

Once the Challenge has been resolved, then it is the other player's turn to put forward a Challenge. Play continues until a character runs out of Active Dice and loses the Conflict.

Sam has the Advantage. He puts forward a , narrating "I walk forward and grab the guy by his collar, hoisting him up and growling 'Get off my land.'"

The GM matches Sam's  with one of his own, narrating "The bum scrambles out of your grasp and takes a step back, his face full of drunken fury." Not it's the GM's turn. He pushes a  forward as his Challenge, narrating "The bum winds back and punches you in the stomach, driving the air out of your lungs."

Sam Answers by putting forward his last , narrating "The drink has made you clumsy. Your punch makes contact, but the impact is absorbed by a rib and your fist glances off harmlessly. He Challenges by putting forward a  and narrating "I put all my weight behind a blow to your face, accompanying it with a grouch 'Get off my land!"

The GM Answers by putting forward his last  and narrates “The bum just manages to sway away from your punch. It clips him on the ear and he howls, but he’s still in the fight.” The GM Challenges with a , saying “I try for a kick.”

Sam answers with a  of his own and say “I step aside easily.” He Challenges with a . The bum is unable to match the Challenge. The GM doesn’t think it’s worth it to keep track of this particular bum’s Pain, so he discards his last die. Sam’s Goal of getting the guy to leave is realized, and he triumphantly narrates “I catch your leg and use it to put you on the ground. I give you a nice, solid kick to the abdomen, and then another one as you stumble back onto your feet and start to run to speed you on your way.”

This Conflict didn’t necessarily need to be a fistfight. Sam could just as easily have tried to convince the bum to leave, or have gotten him so drunk Sam could have dumped him out onto the road.

Now, in a Conflict there’s one last option open to you. If you’re desperate, you can **Sacrifice** yourself by acquiring a rank one Scar or increasing the rank of an existing Scar by one to bring in another of your applicable Motivations or Methods.

Once a Conflict is finished, there’ll probably be quite a bit of Pain lying around. As a player, you have two options to deal with that Pain.

The first thing you can do to deal with the Pain is to **Contain the Pain**. If you decide to Contain the Pain, don’t touch your Pain Dice, just leave them there. You may decide to Contain the Pain so you can deal with it later or because you want to put off the consequences of the Pain for as long as possible, but Pain does put you at a disadvantage. Before any Conflict, a

player may draw one Pain die from your Pain Dice and add it to their own Active Dice. The GM can draw any number of dice from your Pain Dice to add to his own Active Dice. Containing the Pain may delay the consequences of losing Conflicts, but it will put you at a big disadvantage later on. Also, you cannot have any Pain Dice left by the end of the session. If you do, you must immediately deal with them by taking Scars.

The second thing you can do to deal with the Pain is to take a **Scar**. Scars, like Traits, are named and numbered. They represent problems that your character is dealing with as a result of his actions or as a result of being harmed by other people. Scars can be literal, physical scars or emotional damage. For every Pain Die you decide to get rid of by Scarring, record a new Scar at rank 1 on your character sheet or add another rank to an existing Scar.

Scars are a real problem. You should view them, in some ways, as a different type of Motivation. Every time you begin a Conflict where a Scar could hamper you, you must immediately take Pain equal to the Scar rank. That Pain is now open for the GM to scoop up and hit you with. If a Scar is of an emotional or spiritual nature, your GM could rule that you must take Pain every time it interferes in a scene, even if that scene isn't a Conflict.

Let's say the fight with the bum went against Sam. Not only was the bum's goal of knocking Sam out and inflicting a Scar named "Bruised" and ranked at 1 realized, but Sam was also forced to take another Pain die. Rather than Contain the Pain, Sam decides to get rid of that Pain Die by adding another Rank to his "Bruised" Scar. Now, every time he enters a Conflict where his bruises could put him at a disadvantage, like a fistfight or a chase, he is forced to take two Pain Dice.

Let's say that Sam got rid of that Pain Die by taking a new Scar called "Bruised Pride." Later on in the session, Sam enters a debate with a high-falutin' landowner over what the best crops are. The GM rules that Sam's bruised ego inflicts one Pain Die on him as he stands in front of a gathering crowd of people.

Now, remember that Scars act as a kind of Motivation? Motivations act like Scars, too. If you go against one of your Motivations, you've got to take Pain equal to the Motivation's rank. But why would you ever need to go against your Motivations?

Scars are trouble. If a Scar's rank exceeds four, then the character suffers a **Consequence**. A Consequence is something bad that happens due to the damage inflicted on the character. Players should talk to their GM about the nature of the Consequence to make sure it's appropriate to the situation. Usually a Consequence will involve the character being removed from the story for a while. For example, if Sam's "Bruised" Scar got to five, the consequence might be him falling unconscious from the beating he took. If a Scar that the GM deems to be lethal reaches five, then the character may even die.

Consequences don't just have to be death or unconsciousness, though. It might be a raged-fueled act of violence or a complete emotional breakdown. It may even involve the character succumbing to madness.

Of course, Consequences can be avoided by preventing your Scars from getting too high. At any time, a player may attempt to rid himself of a Scar by **Forcing the Question**. The GM may also Force the Question at any time.

To Force the Question, the player initiates a Conflict with the GM. While the Conflict is played out as usual, Forcing the Question has a few key differences. First of all, the character the GM controls is the character's Scar

itself. The amount of Active Dice the GM has is equal to the Scar's rank. Also, the player should only pick one Motivation to drive him during this Conflict.

The Goals for the Conflict are simple: if the player wins, then his Scar's rank is reduced by the amount of Pain Dice he inflicted during the Conflict. If the GM wins, then the Scar's rank is increased by one.



And there's how to combat the forces besieging civilization. Whether you are blasting away at a dark horror or just trying to haggle with an ornery merchant, I'm sure they'll come in handy.

Chapter 4: Outside the City Walls

Being the Gamemaster is very important. It's up to you to frame scenes, keep the momentum of the game moving forward, and create interesting foes. However, it must be stressed that the GM is a fellow creative participant in the game. He is not the author of the story, but the director.



As the GM, you have several responsibilities. You must find opposing interests among the player characters and try to exploit them. Make them question whether their friends are as important as their Motivations. Continually put choices in front of the players that make them pick between their Motivation and something precious.

Don't resort to combat unless the tension between the players is beginning to run low. The point of the game isn't bashing the forces of evil, it's wondering whether you can overcome those forces of chaos and entropy that dwell in your own community.

As a GM, you also have several abilities. First, you can hand out the Advantage Dice in a Conflict, and use character's Pain Dice to buff up your own supply of Advantage Dice. These are powerful abilities that assure you an edge in any Conflict. You are able to create characters on the fly. Don't let them become mindless mooks, though. If you go to all the trouble of giving them screen time make sure they're interesting. If you find an evocative or particularly horrifying villain, don't just kill him off during that first Conflict. Make sure you tell his story and follow it all the way to its logical, satisfying conclusion.

Don't go soft on your players. If you decide to force them into a violent situation, going soft means that it devolves into the characters mindlessly plugging away at enemies just because they're there. If you do put blood on the line, make sure your players have something to lose, even if it's their lives.

Remember, you are not the players' ally. While you are helping them create a story, the story this game is trying to tell is not one of everything being peachy. You are the forces outside of civilization, the cracks beginning to appear in the damn of human sanity, the darkness at the edge of the candlelight.

You are the fire that will forge the characters and their community into a cohesive whole or shatter them like so much glass. And they'll need to be strong to face the darkness that's coming to destroy them.

