

WOD:

Wyoming



By

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WoD: Wyoming

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Contents

Opening Fiction: The Evil that Men Do
Wyoming Overview
Secret Conflicts
 The Pure
 The Forsaken
 Mages
 Vampires
 Cults and Others
Points of Interest
 Cheyenne and Laramie
 Devils Tower
 Shoshoni
 Wind River Indian Reservation
Closing: Hope
Index

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Maps from Google Maps or the websites listed below.

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Any questions, comments, or ideas?
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The Evil that Men Do

She was sweet looking.

Derek had the best idea ever, in his mind, for this year's spring break week. Why go to some tourist trap like Cancun or Florida, with other girls from other colleges, who were all so sure of their 'uniqueness as a snowflake', making it all that much harder for a guy too hook up, when he could go somewhere where a college boy would seem rare and exotic.

So, he had gone to Wyoming.

Plus, with the communities so far apart and so isolated, it would be so much easier to engage in his more... unusual... appetites. Easy enough to pick up some local girl at a bar, impress her with his wit, some drinks, and talk her into going camping with him. It was the perfect plan.

And here she was, in his tent. Wearing only her underwear and tied up so sweetly, with the happy spots exposed for easy access. It should be perfect, but it wasn't.

She was not begging.

He needed the begging, the admission of power, the proof that he was more of a man than those stupid frat guys back in NYU. But she did not beg, or cry, or even try 'the eyes' on him. She just glared. No matter how much he used her, abused her, she just glared.

It made no damn sense.

They had been out here for two days now. Soon, the fun would need to end so he could clean up and return to school. But she wouldn't beg.

He came in the tent, with her breakfast. Probably her last breakfast, but he at least figured she deserved a last meal.

And now she was smiling! Smiling at him!

“What the hell, you like scrambled eggs that much?”

“No, I'm just happy to be done with you.”

“The hell, done with me? Are you into some serious kink girl, or what?” Ok, he might not get rid of her... she might be worth keeping if she was into this kind of thing.. except, she would not give him satisfaction. No, she had to go.

“Yep, I'm done with you. My period was supposed to start two days ago. I've missed it. I got what I needed from you. Your seed.”

“My seed? What the hel.... “ He trailed off, noticed movement outside the tent. Wolves. Large ones.

“Yes, we can't breed among ourselves after all. So, I took you, I used you, I let you think you were having your way with me when I was having my way with you. And now that I'm done, that I've used you up and spit you out, my brothers are going to dispose of you the same way you've disposed all of your women in the past, you pig.”

And she grew bigger, more feral, more alluring, in the way that any prey is somewhat taken by the predatory instrument of its demise. Then the wolves entered, large, primal wolves, the kind Derek had only seen before in movies.

His screams, short as they were, were heard by no one.



Wyoming Overview

Wyoming is the most confused state border in the nation, being along with Colorado the only states that have almost perfectly square borders, based upon the lines of latitude and longitude when the state was being surveyed and founded. Wyoming, for its small population (being the least populated state in the continental United States) has a lot of historical firsts for the nation. The state also has a diverse history of its own. A few of these key dates¹ are highlighted below.

1860-Pony Express started. Second school in Wyoming established at Ft. Bridger by Judge William A. Carter, with Miss Fannie Foot as teacher.

1861 -Transcontinental telegraph completed and Pony Express discontinued.

1868-Wyoming Territory created July 25. Wind River Reservation for Shoshone Indians created by treaty. Ft. Fred Steele (1868-1886) established.

1869-Wyoming Territory organized. John A. Campbell, first territorial governor, on December 10, signed the "Female Suffrage" bill giving Wyoming women the right to vote. Camp Augur (later Camp Brown and then Ft. Washakie) established.

1872-Yellowstone Park, first national park, created.

1890-Wyoming Territory admitted into Union as **44th state**, July 10.

1894-Mrs. Cort F. Meyer (Estelle Reel) elected State Superintendent of Public Instruction, one of the first women in the U.S. elected to a state office.

1906-Devils Tower National Monument, first in U.S., created September 24.

1925-Mrs. Nellie Tayloe Ross (1876-1977), first woman governor in U.S.; first woman director of the U.S. Mint (1933-1954). Teapot Dome scandal.

1978-Largest radio telescope in the world built on Jelm Mountain. Operated by University of Wyoming.

1995-Wolves reintroduced in Yellowstone.

With a history that diverse in the real world, it should come as no surprise that in the *World of Darkness*, there are probably other, even more interesting things that has happened over the history of the state. A few key dates are highlighted below.

1868- US Government decides on location of the Wind River Indian Reservation in part due to outside influences from the Seers of the Throne. To this day their reasoning is unknown.

1872- Yellowstone area is made a national park. It comes as no surprise to the supernatural residents of the state that a monument to conquest is erected in the boundaries of the park.

1906- Devils Tower is made into a monument by influence of the Seers of the Throne to help limit the influence of the site on sleepers by making it 'just a tourist site.'

1978- Radio Telescope on Jelm Mountain Completed. The first thing seen through it is immediately classified by the US Government. University of Wyoming is instructed to 'carefully monitor' the use of the device.

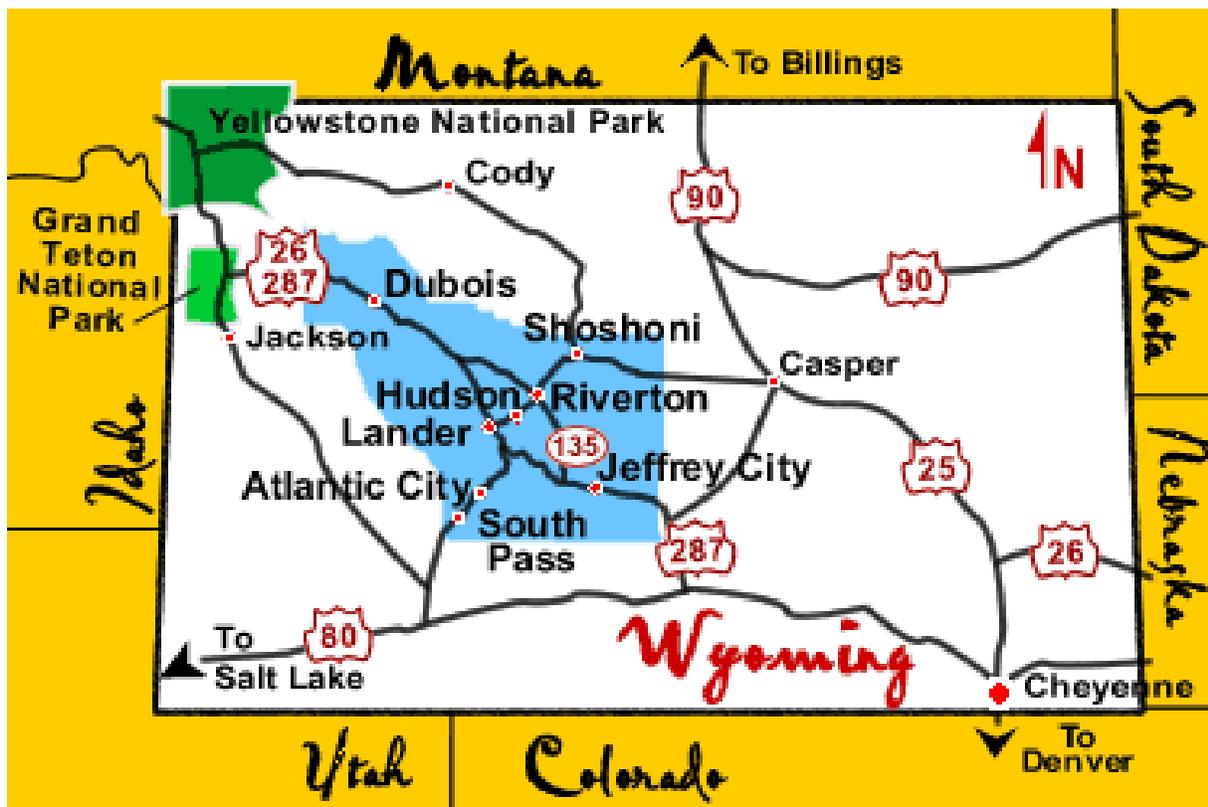
1995- Both Pure and Forsaken tribes are pleased with the reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone, as it makes it easier for them to both protect and fight over this sacred area.

¹ Taken from wyoming.gov website

Wyoming is an almost perfect area for Uratha and Mages to settle in. The low population, wide open spaces, and minimal influence of government makes it an ideal place to live their (admittedly unusual) lives with little fear of outside discovery. Vampires do not frequent the state as much, and mostly stick to Cheyenne when they do, as the population of the state is in their case a hindrance to disguising their feeding habits. However, the state holds potential for a group of the undead who wish to get away from the usual politics of unlife.

Werewolves and Mages, however, have almost ideal (or as ideal as it can get for them) conditions in Wyoming. Werewolves have almost unlimited ability to roam and stake out territory, while Mages can become 'hermits' to practice their art in private and with little chance of paradox caused by witnesses.

But as with all things in the *World of Darkness*, everything comes with a price. Wyoming has its share of things what should not be, things that would prefer that the state stay largely unsettled. And many of these things will not give up their ground easily.



Secret Conflicts

Wyoming has a rich history. Rather than attempt to retell it all here, the author instead wishes to refer you to any one (or more) of the fine sources cited at the beginning of this document. They can provide a much more detailed version of the history than the space of this writing can. What this section will focus on instead is the 'secret history' of Wyoming, the history of supernatural influence and conflict within the state.

Tribal Days

Wyoming had a history long before the coming of the Europeans and Christianity. That history is largely lost to us due to the verbal nature of Native American lore, but much of it still remains, carried on by the oral traditions of the people who lived there before.

In the *World of Darkness*, those histories take on a darker tone. When the Shoshoni speak of spirits that took the flesh of man, they may very well have meant it. As the state of Wyoming was beginning to take shape, the Seers of the Throne, and their unwitting agents in the US Government, took steps to put the Native Americans of the area into a very specific region. Their reasons for it are still not clear to this day, but the Seers and their agents seem to take pains to make sure that any other supernaturals stay out and keep their head down in this region. Since the settlement, the Seers have also oddly stayed out of the affairs of the Reservation. The possible reasons for the Seers leaving an area to be supervised by an ancient culture gives the Pentacle Orders no end of worry, but so far, no one has been able to figure out the secret.

The Pure

As long as the Forsaken can remember, the Pure have ruled over Wyoming. While small, specific pockets of territory have been carved out by Forsaken packs, the Pure are accepted as the true rulers of the wilds of Wyoming. While conflict is constant over the Rocky Mountain Ranges of Wyoming, the Forsaken just have not had the resources with the recent events in Denver to worry about the rest of Wyoming in any large part.

The Forsaken

While the Pure tribes may hold most of the territory, by the same regard Wyoming is large and even the most attentive of Pure packs can not watch it all at once. That leaves a lot of potential for young packs of the Tribes of the Moon to gain Honor and Glory by taking from the Pure what they so unwisely think is theirs by right.

Recently, some have taken those steps. A pack of Forsaken going by the name "Luna's Lost Wisdom" have managed to carve out their own territory, right in the middle of the University of Wyoming campus in Laramie. Led by a Irraka Iron Wolf who goes by the name "Red Haxor", they have managed to set up a base of operations on a locus found in the middle of the Commons. Posing as landscapers and custodial staff (and in a couple cases, actually working as such) this pack of 5 have managed to clear the Pure out of most of Cheyenne and keep the locus found in the U of W Union clean of undue spirit influence. Red Haxor keeps in touch with Max Roman in Denver for the purpose of serving as a staging area for any new packs in Denver looking to acquire territory in Wyoming. So far it has been working, but how much longer before either the Pure or an upstart Forsaken pack decide to take Cheyenne for themselves remains to be seen.

Mages

For reasons known only to them, the Seers of the Throne have taken an as active as they can role in the formation of the state of Wyoming. At the same time, they oddly then stay out of affairs one things are up and running. The reasons are both unclear and unsettling. The Orders fear that Wyoming might be some kind of large scale experiment in keeping the masses asleep, or that they are trying to hide something far more dangerous here than themselves. In either case, due to the layout of the state, Mages of all kinds are attracted for the ability to work their magic far from sleeper eyes and fear of paradox. Thyrusus mages are especially fond of the state, regardless of if their alliance is with the Orders or the Seers.

At any given time, Wyoming might be hosting some 100 or so Magi, scattered across the state doing their own research or experiments. Only about 30 or so of these actually call Wyoming home for the long term however. Wyoming calls to mages for reason other than privacy. Some of the nations most powerful Hallows and oldest legends can trace their way to Wyoming. Add in the legends of the indigenous peoples, and the chance that those legends can lead to artifacts or secrets of great powers, and at least some Magi might be interested at all times in poking their noses (or just their projected senses) where they are not wanted.

Vampires

Out of the 'big three', Vampires have the least interest in Wyoming. One of the core rules of the Kindred is to keep themselves hidden, and the smaller the local population to feed off the harder that gets. The local Pure population, as well as the scattered Thyrsus mages also makes it hard for them to establish a power base.

Regardless, they have a small one. Until the shadow war between the Pure and Forsaken over Laramie, they had a decent organization within Cheyenne, but the recent fallout of the battles have left the kindred population devastated, and now only about 15 vampires exist in Cheyenne, with no official organization since their 'prince' was torn to shreds by an enraged Ivory Claw werewolf.

Scattered single vampires can be found in the small towns dotting the landscape of Wyoming, but it will be many years before they have any significant power in the state. A small, subtle coterie could be the start of that power.

Cults and Others

With the small and scattered population, it should come as no surprise that various unsavory groups and cults make their way to or originate in Wyoming. Many of the frequent and popular ghost stories told by the locals could easily be traced to any number of happenings from psychics to Cults of Things which Should Not Be. A specific example comes later in the Shoshoni town section, which can also be used to link a Wyoming based chronicle to the fan setting of Silent Hill.

One of the biggest threats that occurs statewide is the cult dedicated to 'The Wanderer', a half spirit-half man amalgam that wanders the roads of Wyoming seeking chiminage or blood. The cult of the Wanderer is little more than a loose affiliation of people that have benefited from having met his conditions for chiminage and wish to keep the secrets of their good luck and the price for it to themselves. Anyone attempting to expose the Wanderer to the world will have to deal with these people.

The Wanderer

Virtue: Fortitude Vice: Gluttony

Attributes:

Intelligence 3	Strength 5	Presence 3
Wits 4	Dexterity 4	Manipulation 3
Resolve 4	Stamina 6	Composure 1

Skills:

Craft: 4
Occult: 3
Athletics: 3
Brawl: 4
Firearms: 1
Survival: 4
Animal Ken: 3
Expression: 2
Intimidation: 4
Persuasion 3

Merits:

Direction Sense
Danger Sense
Unseen Sense
Fame 1 (Local Legend)

Special Abilities:

Legend 2

- This counts as a supernatural Advantage trait. It only aids in supernatural resistance and use of the Absorb power.

Absorb (Stamina + Survival + Legend, 1 essence)

- The Wanderer can repair damage done to his body by touching any inert matter and absorbing it into his body, the matter replacing the wounds. Over the years, this has led to him having a truly bizarre appearance, as various minerals and man-made items make up the majority of his body now. How he continues on as a living thing is a mystery. Each use of this power takes a point of essence.

Grant Luck (1 essence)

- To those who meet the Wanderers demands of chiminage, he does grant good luck. For the next lunar month, these people will have the effect of 9-again on rolls related to either their profession or random chance.

Essence 10 (10 max, 1 / turn)

Combat Traits:

Size: 5 Initiative: 5 Defense: 4
Armor: 2/1 (various and sundry metal bits)
Speed: 16 Health: 11
Attacks:

Fist/Strike, 9B
Old Colt SSA, 8L, 35 range, 6 shots

Points of Interest

Wyoming has many places of interest, to both mortal and supernatural alike. A few choice ones are highlighted here, including ideas for story hooks.

Cheyenne and Laramie

Cheyenne is the capital city and largest city in Wyoming. It is also the home of the Frontier Days event, the worlds largest outdoor rodeo. As the capital city, it is of strategic interest to any supernatural group that wants to establish a power base.

A pack of Ivory Claws maintains a locus near the old Union Pacific rail station that now serves as the Cheyenne Depot Museum. The museum attracts many spirits of technology, both old and new. The younger spirits frequently show up to try and devour the older, more powerful, but now less influential spirits of the old railways. The Pure pack keeps these conflicts to a minimum for their own interest, but still generally allow nature to take its course. This is the same pack that decimated the Vampire population after the prince tried to declare the community college campus 'his territory.' The Pure disagreed.

Laramie is the home of the University of Wyoming. The University of Wyoming is the only baccalaureate and graduate level college in the state, and as such it gets a lot of attention from the state government. UW competes at the NCAA Division I-A level for sports, and also has a distinction among colleges for offering Rodeo as a sport.

Laramie also has other cultural icons and landmarks as a result of the UW influence. The University maintains an art and a geological museum, as well as assists in the running of the State Museum, the Historical Society, and others. The American Heritage Center is a favorite stop for Mages looking for clues to lost artifacts or wisdom.

MAP OF AREA:



Devil's Tower

Devil's Tower National Monument is the first of its kind. Made a National Monument in 1906 by Theodore Roosevelt, it has long been a sacred site for Native Americans. Also known as Bears Lodge, the site is a powerful spiritual locus and hallow. The following Crow legend explains some of this power:

Once when some Crows were camped at Bears House, two little girls were playing around some big rocks there. There were lots of bears living around that big rock and one big bear seeing the girls alone was going to eat them. The big bear was just about to catch the girls when they saw him. The girls were scared and the only place they could get was on top of one of the rocks around which they had been playing.

The girls climbed the rock but still the bear could catch them. The Great Spirit, seeing the bear was about to catch the girls, caused the rock to grow up out of the ground. The bear kept trying to jump to the top of the rock, but he just scratched the rock and fell down on the ground. The claw marks are on the rock now. The rock kept growing until it was so high that the bear could not get the girls. The two girls are still on top of the rock.

This legend was told to Dick Stone by Rides the White Hip Horse. Goes to Magpie, Interpreter.²

Many spirits watch the Tower. Many more fight over it. And while they let the humans police themselves around it for simplicities sake, the Pure call the site theirs, and woe to any who would take it. During the day, people wander through and around, they take their pictures and do their research, but at night, when the moon is high, the site belongs to the Pure and the Pure only.

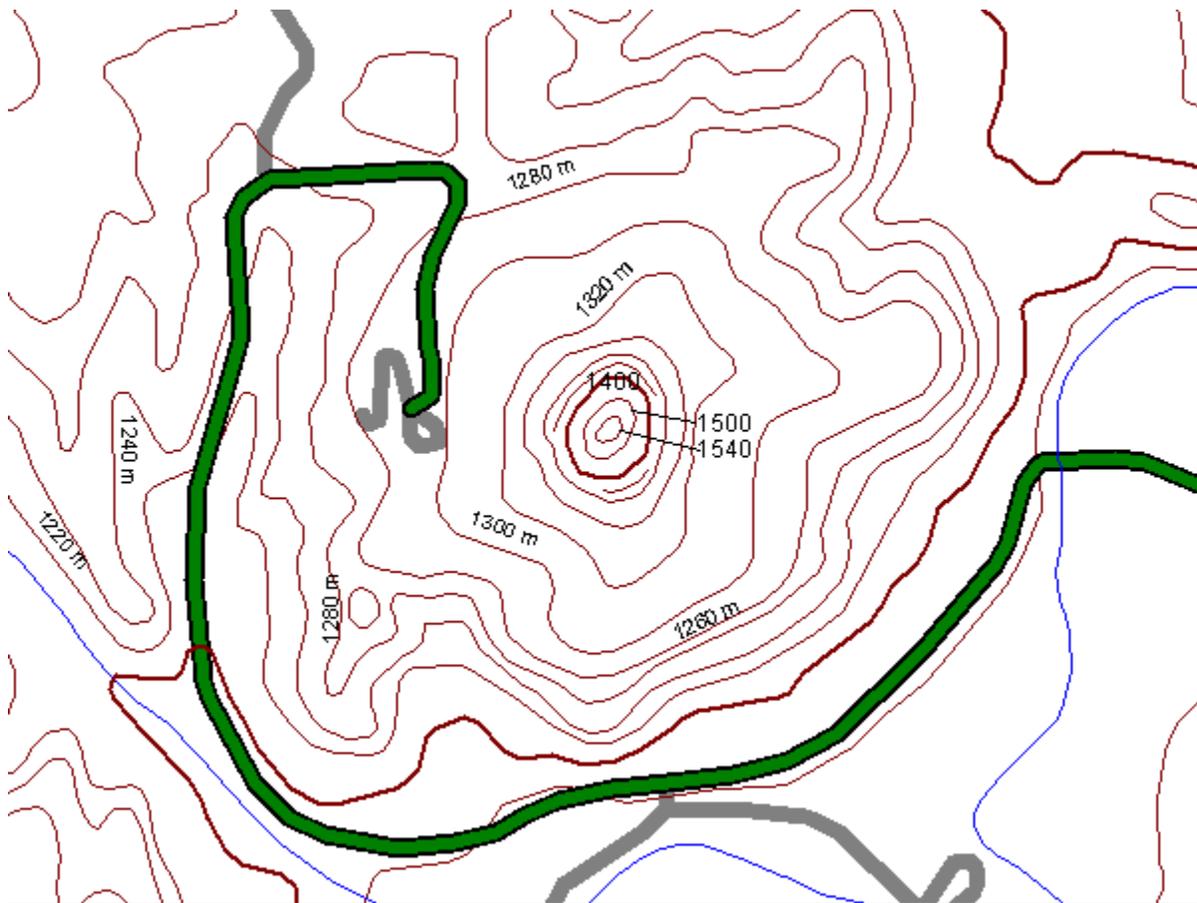
Of course, Mages have different ideas. While some of their research can be done during the day, some of the uses they have for the Tower will not work in front of people, or at least not well. As a result, on some rare nights, battles of claw and flame and spirit can be seen at the tower. Lucky viewers will get to leave with only the memories intact.

The Devil's Tower itself is a rank 3 Hallow, and rank 3 Locus of great power. While not a Verge in itself, the Gauntlet is low enough to almost be one and the strength of it varies depending on the time of day and the phase of the moon. The Gauntlet is rated at a -2 during the day, a -1 at night, and during a lunar eclipse, it is rated 0 (which makes it a Verge on those nights).

Needless to say, the National Park Service keeps the sheer number of apparent bear mauling here quiet, as to not hurt the tourist trade.

2 From <http://www.nps.gov/archive/deto/stories.htm>

MAP OF AREA:



Source:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/geo/projects/geoweb/participants/dutch/VTrips/DevilsTower.HTM>

Shoshoni

Background

Shoshoni, Wyoming is a small (real) town just east of the Boysen Reservoir, south of Thermopolis. It is also close to the Wind River Indian Reservation to the west, which makes it a popular college town for those seeking to get away from big city life, but still have big city vices close at hand.

From the town webiste:

“In the summer of 1904, the Pioneer Townsite Company laid out the plan for Shoshoni. Shoshoni is an Indian word, which translates into "little snow". The first business to be erected in the town was the Elkhorn Hotel, built in September 1905. In less than a year, the town had become a tent city and had grown in population to approximately 2,000.

Lack of building material in the very early days was a problem, since the railroad - Chicago and Northwestern - was 100 miles away, but the town gradually grew in size. Unfortunately, Shoshoni was devastated by fire in 1907 and 1908. During the reconstruction, brick buildings took the place of flammable wood.

Five miles north of Shoshoni, a little burg named Bonneville was constructed on the CB&Q Railroad, which had been extended along the Badwater Creek. The town was almost totally destroyed by the flooding of Badwater Creek in 1923. Twenty miles of railroad track, several rail cars and one motor car were never recovered from the flood. They remain buried deep in the sandy mud of Badwater Creek.

During its boom days Shoshoni boasted 23 saloons, two banks, two large mercantile establishments, several livery and feed stables, a lumber yard, drug store, two physicians, several lawyers, a newspaper and more lodging houses and restaurants than any town of equal size in the state of Wyoming.

Thirteen miles to the north is Copper Mountain. It is dotted with old abandoned mines and prospector diggings. Copper was the most abundant, but gold and silver were also found, along with chalcocite, malachite, axurite, cuprite, lepidolite, chryscolla, calcopryritre, dolomite, feldspar, garnet, magnesium, tungsten, volcanic ash and pumic. Uranium can also be found on Copper Mountain. The area offers a gold mine for the rockhound in petrified wood, agate, tourmaline, and quartz. Some mercury has been found near Bonneville.”

The town had a fairly simple and uneventful history from it's original founding, but in the mid-80's, there was a fairly large migration of people to the town from a town that had a 'catastrophe', some unspecified disaster. These people had their oddities and quirks, but were still quickly accepted into the town.

That may have been a mistake.

Whatever happened to their original town, the new settlers had their own version of a small, exclusive faith. A faith that led to a very odd restructuring of the city leadership. While a few dissenters proclaimed that the sudden changes were odd and out of place, they were quickly silenced by the new mayor and city council making moves to open a new liberal arts college in the town.

Only open almost a decade to the week now, that college will be the focal point of a most unusual event...

Shoshoni State College

The college, with full transferability with both the Wind River Tribal College and the University of Wyoming, is a small liberal arts 2-year college near the northeast end of town. It consists of 2 buildings, one large dormitory, and further south towards the middle of town is one fraternity house (the 'Delts) and a sorority house.

While mostly a liberal arts college, it also includes courses in business, computers science, pre-law, and the requirements for entering the state police academy. The college has helped to keep the town from becoming a ghost town, but the town is still far from huge. [In the real world, the population is just under 600 people, in the WoD, with the addition of the college and the new settlers, the population is just under 1,200 and most of the houses are owned or rented.] This suits the new high class just fine. While they need a steady influx of money and people, they don't need too much attention brought to them.

The New Settlers

Coming in the mid 1980's, the new settlers came from a town that had a catastrophe. The town has never been named by any of them, and when asked, they generally try to change the topic or outright refuse to answer. They were relocated by the federal government, which also sealed the records of the disaster that caused the move. In the early days, the people of Shoshoni wondered what had happened that was so bad that no one will speak of it, and there was never any mention of a disaster on that scale on the news. However, after about 2 years, the questions stopped and the residents just accepted the new bodies and new ideas to revitalize the town.

Two of the most influential settlers, James Cain and Father John Malrony ran for and achieved the offices of Mayor and Councilman, respectively. Mayor Cain was the one who suggested a college at Shoshoni, the near center of the state, to take advantage of the quiet and location as a good marketing ploy to students. Father Malrony has pretty much taken over all the 'spiritual' needs of the town, his simple Baptist church serving over 700 of the town's 1200 people easily.

Both have been serving in city government, almost unopposed in elections, for 13 years now. It would appear that they might very well serve until they retire or die.

It may not come to that.

The Cult of the Living God

Father John and Mayor Cain are just the public faces of the power behind the scenes. 'Old Mac', as he is called by the favored ones, is the real power. Old Mac is the last remnant of true power for the Cult of the Living God. Forced out of Silent Hill by Alessa, the cult seeks a way to return to the city, bypass the monsters, and find the way to Paradise that they feverently believe the city acts as the guardian of. [see WoD: Silent Hill netbook, pg. 27, 'The God's Decent']

Old Mac is roughly 60 years old, but one could not tell that by the way he acts. He acts, moves, and speaks as a healthy man in his 30s. The powers of the cult have made him so. And when he is enraged, his strength is very impressive. As is his ability to survive damage and assaults that would kill a lesser man.

But most impressive is his ability to enter and influence dreams. He uses this to guide his

fellow cult members (now, a good third of the town belongs to the cult), and also runs the town via his face men of Cain and Malrony. It was the idea of these three to open the college. It has both served the town's economic needs, and the needs of the cult.

But now they think that their need is almost at an end. They are almost ready to return home.

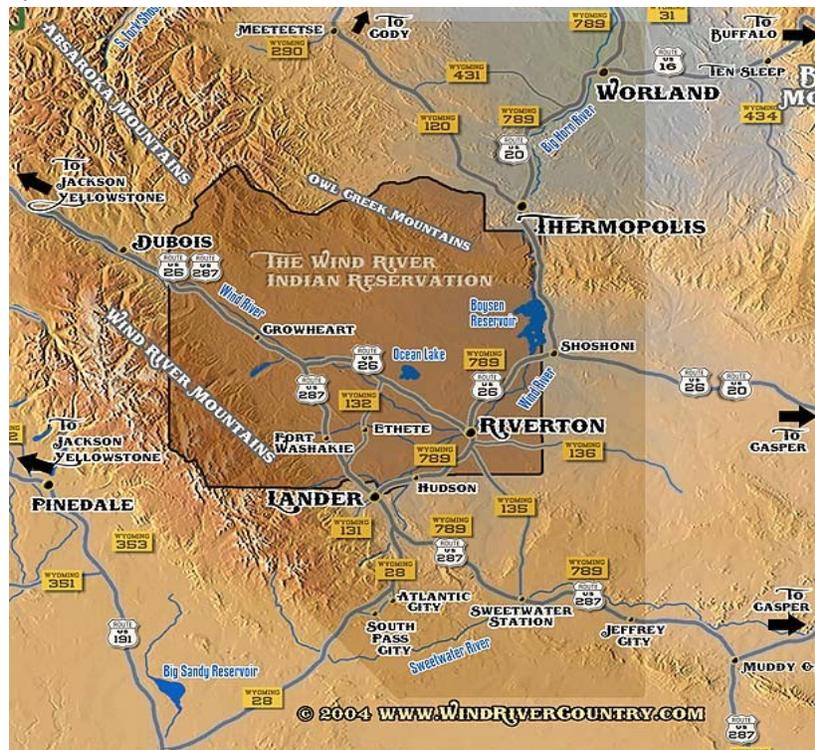
The Plan of Old Mac

The college would have an effect beyond the monetary, Mac knew. The things that stalk the world like to hide in the masses, to cloud their perceptions, and hunt a well contained and already addle-minded herd. A college provides that.

And it provides Old Mac with a small assortment of Vampires, Werewolves, and even a mage or two. If they can not be used, it still provides a steady stream of kids, easily converted to the cult, to send into Silent Hill to scout out the area, and find the right path. If the supernaturals can not be used, perhaps instead the chosen pathfinders of the Cult can be molded to their purposes with the right kind of trials...

Old Mac's attributes and abilities are left to the storyteller to devise. Keep in mind that he is a beneficiary of the *Rite Infused Mantle of the God's Chosen*.

MAP OF AREA:



Cult Rituals

Unlike some rituals, these rituals can be done with anyone with the required level in occult. They work less because of an innate understanding of the arts (or any real power like mages) but more because their 'Living God' will grant these gifts to anyone who asks with the rites. It is because this tainting of humanity only serves the goals of the God further.

Power of Righteous Anger (Occult ●●●)

This ritual gives someone who has been wronged (at least in his eyes) the power to strike back at the one who wronged him. In a half-hour ritual, in which the subject must sacrifice another living thing dear to them (dogs and cats being the most common choice) the performer gains the power to strike back at his enemies.

Once the ritual is done, the caster has 24 hours to find the target of his revenge. Upon seeing the target, he gains the following bonuses:

- Strength increases by 3
- Health increases by 2 beyond the wound penalties. Wound penalties are ignored, and they do not fall or die until the health boxes are filled with lethal damage.
- Speed increases by 2.

Additionally, if the ritual was performed with a human being dear to the caster, he can not die unless the health boxes are filled with aggravated damage. If the 24 hours passes with no chance for revenge, the caster loses his humanity (humanity 0) and becomes a Vengeance Beast (see related file)

Infused Mantle of the God's Chosen (Occult ●●●●●)

This allows the cult leader to manifest some of the gifted traits of their living God. The ritual takes 3 hours, and requires the heart's blood of three innocent humans (usually children are chosen). Upon completion, the ritual leader gains the following benefits:

- A plus one increase in size, as well as an additional 2 to both Strength and Stamina.
- A maximum Essence Pool of 5. Essence can only be regained by drinking heart's blood of a human (one adult human provides 3 essence).
- The Twitch, a 2 ranked trait that is rolled as possible extra defense every time the subject is attacked.
- The ability to control any one animal for 2 essence, lasts one day.
- Cursed Hide, a +2 armor vs. firearms.
- Nightmare Suggestion, (4 Essence, 1 Willpower); can make nightmares so real to a sleeping victim that any damage taken in the nightmare is taken in real life.

Beasts of Vengeance Lost

These beasts used to be human, once. But they lost their soul and humanity in one flawed bid for total vengeance. If the time for the ritual *Infused Mantle of the God's Chosen* runs out, the subject of the casting loses his humanity (drops to 0, complete with any and all chances for derangement) and the unused magic backlashes within the body of the user.

Most become a twisted mockery of humanity, looking like someone who has been living in the wilds for their whole life, except there are other changes... bones on the outside, joints where in a normal man there would be none, lusts for vices both insane and inhuman.

The Beast template adds the following to the victim:

- Add 2 to Strength and Stamina
- Add 1 to Dexterity
- Subtract 2 From Wits (not lower than 1)
- Reduce all other mental and social attributes to 1
- Claws/Bones/other pointy bits make all unarmed attacks lethal damage.

- Add one to size.
- Add 2 to base speed.
- Reduce all social and mental skills to zero.

Recalculate health, speed, and willpower accordingly. As a result of being more beast than man, the highest of Dexterity or Wits is now used for Defense.

In general, the cult captures those who failed to achieve victory with this ritual and keeps them in safekeeping, as an easy way to dispose of enemies.

Wind River Indian Reservation

The Wind River Reservation is found in the Wind River Valley, and is home to one of the largest Indian reservations in the country. Encompassing more than 2.2 million acres the tribal government seeks to use the resources of the landscape and national parks to avoid the traps of many modern reservations and thus preserve their culture and traditions. The results have, of course, been mixed.

Unique among reservations, the Shoshone were able to choose the place of their reservation due to the efforts of their great chief, Washakie. Later, the government changed the deal:

“**T**he Eastern Shoshone were joined in the Wind River Valley by the Northern Arapaho in 1878. As traditional enemies, neither tribe was particularly happy with this arrangement, but the federal government assured both that the Arapaho were there temporarily. Fifty years later, the Arapaho were still living on the eastern side of the reservation. The two tribes made their peace and the Shoshone were compensated for the loss of land by the government. Today the Shoshone and the Arapaho share the land and govern the Wind River Reservation jointly. “

While there is a small casino in Riverton, most of the reservation is dedicated to preserving the past and the natural state of the land. Due to the effort of the tribes, the Pure and the Forsaken tend to leave the area alone, rather than take the risk of causing harm with their conflicts. Whether this is an act of accident or design is hard to say, but both sides seem to accept the end result.

Among the activities that the reservation hosts (and gets fees for from licenses) are fishing, camping, climbing, hunting, white water rafting, as well as numerous chances to acquaint one self with the culture of the native peoples. The petroglyphs carved into the rocks of the cliffs at Castle Gardens are one of the most visited sites in the area.

In the *World of Darkness*, the traditions of the Native Americans take on a darker slant. Their legends of shamans are very often true, and it would not be out of the ordinary to find that some of the older wise men and women are actual thaumaturges.

What reasons the Seers of the Throne had for making sure that the original reservation plan was honored, and just how involved they really were is a mystery. All that is known is that there is something of great power hidden in the reservation, and the Native Americans of the area seem very intent on keeping it hidden.

Closing: Hope

Toby “Snark” Jackson looked out over the valley. The river below was beautiful, and one of his favorite reasons for making the climb up here. He looked back at his pack. They had taken wounds, but all had survived the raid, and the Pure had permanently lost two of their number. Toby figured that another 2 or three raids, and they could take Rawlins for their own territory.

The odd thing was the wizard getting involved.

Toby had been told that they preferred to be called mages, or some such, but he didn't care. All he knew was that they did things he could not, and vice versa. Normally, you never knew they were there, and their kind and Uratha had very little in common.

But out of nowhere, in the middle of the battle, lightning rained down upon the Pure as if the very sky had rejected them, and for a moment, Toby thought it had. Then he saw the woman, dressed like some kind of Indiana Jones meets urban tribalism, waving a knife around at nothing and chanting in a language that had some very remote similarity to First Tongue, in much the same way that binary has a relation to C++. She stuck round through the battle, using her magic to survive the fury of the Pure, but not unmarred. She had healed with her power, but the scars would be with her for life. She has said they were, “part of my pattern now,” or something.

She was still around. Looking out over at the same river Toby was.

“Do you have a name, lady?”

“You can call me Taggart, but I'm no lady.” She then proved it, sitting down for comfort, not caring that the (now even shorter) skirt she was wearing gave Toby a clear view of the carpet, so to speak. “And your name is?”

“Toby, though my brothers call me Snark.”

She gave a chuckle. “I see. Are they really family?”

“Yes and no. Why did you help us? What's in it for you?”

“For once we had a similar enemy. I've been tracking them. About 8 would be young professionals have gone missing, 6 found dead, and that pack is responsible.”

“So why was it your problem.”

“One of the kids that went missing was my brother, once, in another life. He was a bastard and a rapist, but he was still blood. If anyone was going to bring him to justice, it should have been me.”

“Ah, revenge, that I can understand.”

“Not just revenge. My magics keep me attuned to the spirit world at least as good as your kind is. I know something went down in Denver, something big, and it's left a mess in the spirit realm in the surrounding states too. And whatever it is, I fear it could happen again.”

“Oh, where?”

“You ever hear of the Seers of the Throne?”

“The seared of the thorn?”

“So no. Mages, like myself and my fellows, except they are cheering for the wrong team. They have had a hand and interest in keeping the status quo on the Reservation, and I'm not sure why.”

“What does that have to do with us?”

“Nothing. Everything. Who knows. What I know is that stuff is going to happen. Big stuff. And I prefer to have as many allies as I can in those cases.”

Toby considered, mulling it over in his brain.

“Well, I assume you have secrets. So do we, so here's what I propose. We exchange notes on goings on in the spirit world, and keep an eye out for this big thing you speak of. But otherwise, for the sake of both of our sanities, we keep our safe distance. Agreed?”

She nodded. “Agreed. Do we seal it in blood or something?”

“No, no need here. We're just trading information.”

“Good. I'll see you around.” She got up and started walking in the direction of town. As he watched her go, his beta came up beside him. Sally looked at the woman leave with interest.

“So, what did you find there Toby?”

He considered. With everything going on around here. In Denver. In Chicago. Maybe something big was coming, and if it was big enough to make different power groups come together like in Denver, maybe it was big enough to need multiple angles.

“Hope.”

Index

The Evil that Men Do.....	3
Wyoming Overview.....	5
Secret Conflicts.....	7
Tribal Days.....	7
The Pure.....	8
The Forsaken.....	8
Mages.....	8
Vampires.....	8
Cults and Others.....	9
The Wanderer.....	10
Points of Interest.....	11
Cheyenne and Laramie.....	11
Devil's Tower.....	12
From http://www.nps.gov/archive/deto/stories.htm	12
Shoshoni.....	14
Background.....	14
Shoshoni State College.....	15
The New Settlers.....	15
The Cult of the Living God.....	15
The Plan of Old Mac.....	16
Cult Rituals.....	16
Beasts of Vengeance Lost.....	17
Wind River Indian Reservation.....	18
Closing: Hope.....	19