



# For Whom the Whistle Blows: Night Train 2

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# Introduction

Welcome back, Marshal, to the return trip of one of the Weird West's most feared creations—the Night Train. We probably don't need to warn you, but the adventure contained in these pages might wear a little rough on your posse, so we don't recommend it for characters of less than Seasoned rank.

## A LITTLE HISTORY

Most folks who've spent much time wandering the Weird West have heard stories about vampires, specifically nosferatu—or “nose ferrets,” as they call 'em south of the Rio Bravo. Now, nosferatu aren't your fancy-schmancy cloak-wearing vampires like they have over in the Old Country. They're more like a cross between a hairless weasel and an undead wolverine that walks on two legs and sucks blood. Not really the sort for formal dress balls and the like.

Fortunately, they're not all that common an occurrence in the West. A few years ago, the owner of the Bayou Vermilion Railroad, Baron Simone LaCroix, got his hands on a nosferatu Ancient One. If you were making a list of folks you wouldn't want to get a hold of one of these monsters, LaCroix's name would cover most of the first ten spots. You see, he had been playing with dead—or undead—things

since before that sort of behavior became fashionable, or at least heard of at any rate.

Initially, the Baron saw the nosferatu as just another troop for use in his rail gangs. The creatures were virtually invulnerable to harm and their predilection for gratuitous throat-ripping was actually a plus on the battlefield. Unfortunately, while the nasty blood-suckers don't have many weaknesses, he quickly learned that the things went up like pine needles tossed on a campfire when exposed to sunlight.

That little drawback might put a lesser practitioner of the black arts out of sorts, but Baron LaCroix has always had a knack for finding a use for murderous undead.

## The Night Trains

LaCroix loaded the monsters up on a few trains and let them loose onto his rivals' railroads. The sleeper cars protected the nosferatu from the sun during the day while the train carried them from town to town across the Disputed Territories and beyond, like a gang of gluttons at a Sunday buffet. The populace of more than one town disappeared literally over night following a visit by one of LaCroix's Night Trains.

It didn't take long for trainloads of abominations riding back and forth across the West to draw the attention of the Texas Rangers

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## TURNABOUT'S FAIR PLAY

If it works better for your campaign to set the adventure on Bayou Vermilion's rail line, you've got to tweak the backstory a little. After all, it's not likely that LaCroix would want to sabotage his own railroad.

In this case, St. Martin isn't a loyal henchman, but a disgruntled former enforcer. He's gotten his hands on one of his former boss' most powerful minion and has slipped on board a Bayou Vermilion train to muck up the works as much as possible. None of his own henchmen are Bayou Vermilion hired guns; he's using freelance talent there as well.

Best of all, since all of this occurs behind the scenes, the players may never even realize the changes you've made.

and their Northern counterpart, the Agency. Over the next few years, both groups invested no small amount of effort—and bullets—in tracking down and eliminating the Night Trains. A few pockets of nosferatu infestation remain in the Disputed Territories now, but most of the trains themselves are believed to have been hunted down and destroyed. That's what they tell themselves, at least.

### Second Time's the Charm

To say the Baron was pleased by the effect the Night Trains had on his rivals would be an understatement. The nosferatu wreaked

havoc on several communities along the Black River and Union Blue lines. Better yet, at least as far as he was concerned, most of the folks slain by the vicious critters had an unpleasant tendency to crawl out of the ground as nosferatu themselves. Cleaning up the leftovers, so to speak, kept the two government groups too busy to take too much interest in some of—okay, most of—his other activities.

The first wave of his Night Trains depleted more of his resources than he'd planned. Filling more trains with nosferatu wasn't a problem. Not too long ago, LaCroix's agents had located another Ancient One.

The monster was being carted around the West by a traveling carnival, billed as an "Aztec mummy." The nosferatu, unfed for centuries, had gone into a perpetual hibernation and its flesh had dried and drawn up tight around its bones, so you really can't hold that mistake against them. The henchmen purchased the creature for a tidy sum and shipped it back to New Orleans.

LaCroix's problem was more mundane. Contrary to what you might expect, custom trains outfitted to transport a small horde of undead don't exactly grow on trees. The Rail Wars hadn't been particularly kind to Bayou Vermilion and LaCroix didn't have the resources to put together another batch of trains on short notice.

This time, he decided he'd let his rivals do the heavy lifting.

### An Unwelcome Passenger

LaCroix placed the Ancient One in an innocuous crate and, through a succession of middle men, slipped it aboard a Union Blue train headed west. He sent one of his most experienced men, Jean-Charles St. Martin, and a handful of less-obvious Bayou Vermilion enforcers along to keep an eye on it.

You see, St. Martin has an edge in dealing with nosferatu. He's not only a powerful *houngan*, he's also Harrowed. The sludge that

oozes through his veins now holds little temptation for the neck-biters the Ancient One will spawn.

Once the train was deep into the “enemy territory”, St. Martin was to awaken the Ancient One by feeding it blood, then step back and let the abomination ravage the train’s passengers. Within hours, another

Night Train would be rolling the rails, and this time with very little effort on the part of Bayou Vermilion.

### Money Train

St. Martin discovered that the train on which the Ancient One was traveling was also carrying a payroll for Union Blue enforcers



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on the front lines of the Rail Wars. Although not heavily protected, the presence of armed guards did pose a complication for his mission. Fortunately, St. Martin has always been good at thinking on his feet.

He raised a fairly formidable force of bandits, outlaws, and outright killers from the surrounding area, teasing them with tales of a virtually unprotected load of cash. St. Martin omitted the minor addendum about an undead bloodsucker also being aboard the train, of course. He quickly sold his impromptu gang on a scheme that would leave them filthy rich, while he and his Bayou Vermilion cronies made off with the real treasure—at least in their minds.

## THE SETUP

The adventure is set on the Union Blue railroad, but with very little tweaking you can switch that to just about any of the other major rail lines except Bayou Vermilion, just by changing a name or two. It's just as likely that LaCroix would set this horror loose on Iron Dragon as it is that he'd pick on Mina Devlin's operation.

We've deliberately not used compass directions in the descriptions or on any of the maps. This leaves you free to orient the train's direction of travel in whatever way best suits your own campaign, Marshal.

