

Dugan Ross, Elderly (and Grumpy) Manager of the Sunshine Falls Wilderness Retreat

Background

First off, you're not Dugan Ross. Your real name is Simon Winslow and you buried the real Ross in a shallow grave outside the retreat 48 hours ago.

You are also nearly 200 hundred years old, and a magician.

Your power comes from cities and towns, from the way man puts his mark on the land and bends it to his will. An occult scholar would probably call you a "variant Urbanomancer" or a "urban shaman". A regular person who probably call you nuts.

But you've never really cared about labels. All you care about is the small logging town of Winslow, Montana. Winslow is *your* town, in every way that matters. You helped found it in 1892. You gave it your own name for its own. You spilt your blood in the foundations of every building.

The effect of all this was to build a magickal link between you and Winslow, to make you reflections on each other. It's what's called a "proxy ritual" only writ large on a town planning map. But you didn't do all of this just because you could. You did it because you want to live forever.

By binding your life to the town, you ensured that you would continue to exist as long as it did. You were elected Mayor (of course) and carefully arranged that your "son" (who had been "studying abroad") would replace you periodically. Given your power over every aspect on Winslow and its townspeople, it was child's play.

There was one unfortunate side-effect. Winslow kept you alive, sure enough, but it did this by feeding off the lives of the people who lived there. Not literally, of course, but it ate away at their spirits, their potential energy, gradually sapping it to keep you young.

Hardly anyone could ever muster the energy to leave Winslow, and no one ever really achieved anything notable. They just lived their lives (mainly working in the local lumber mill) and then died their deaths. And their children did the same, all to keep you and Winslow strong. A necessary sacrifice.

The one thing you didn't see coming was your ruin. The state of Montana decided to pass a highway bypass which detoured around Winslow. The Winslow lumber mill, the heart of the town's small economy, was no longer able to easily load up lumber trucks passing through the town. Winslow's never-very-robust tourism dried up entirely.

And the town started to die. And so you started to age. As you and Winslow became more desperate, the town's feeding on its citizens became more blatant and more lethal. People disappeared. The streets moved at night. Gradually, Winslow became a ghost town, populated by nightmares. And you went from a hearty-looking man in the prime of his life to an aching old pensioner.

You've tried luring fresh blood to the town, but it doesn't seem to work. Winslow can't feed off them. It needs those who were born there - true residents. And all the current residents of Winslow are dead now, drained away by the town-turned-vampire. So you've been forced into a desperate course. Some people, usually the particularly strong-willed, managed to leave Winslow every few years. Outside Winslow, your power is greatly limited, but you can still nudge chance and coincidence in subtle ways and you've arranged to draw them to the Sunshine Falls Wilderness Retreat. The Retreat itself is nowhere near Winslow, but your bond to the town is so strong that you can actually cause it to manifest nearby. Then it's just a matter of luring them to the town and letting it feed upon them. The town has become too strange and haunted to pass for normal, but once they are within the borders it should prevent them from leaving. They shouldn't even realise where they are until it's too late. Winslow's landscape changes over time, and the town looks very different from when they saw it, years ago.

You've done this a few times through different means, gradually working down your list of ex-patriate Winslow folk, and now it's time to feed off a fresh crop.

The "Guests" - the Lost Children of Winslow

Brian Thomas, Amnesiac Stockbroker: Brian is a special one - your own flesh-and-blood, though he has no idea. You always fancied his mother, the local librarian, and she was loyal and never told anyone (even the boy) who his real father was, despite the damage it did to her reputation.

Maybe because of that, you went easy on the boy, and sheltered him from Winslow's deadening influence. As a result, he became quite the achiever, and earned himself a scholarship at Brown University. You even let him leave the town, confident he would return. After all, Winslow was in his blood.

When he took a job in New York instead, you were livid. But you had bigger problems on your hands by then - the bypass and the dying town.

Brian was the first of the current crop to answer your summons, feeling the pull of Winslow even stronger than most because of your relationship. You've already managed to lead him down to the town and into a trap, but you were forced to rush back to the Retreat when the other guests arrived, leaving him in Winslow.

Note to the Player: *Unknown to Dugan/Simon, Brian has escaped the town in a car. He joins the module slightly later than the rest of the party, after crashing his car. He ends up with amnesia. Dugan won't know he has amnesia right off, but it should be quickly apparent, so just bear that in mind.*

Shirley Fontaine, B-Grade Ex-Soap Star with an Overinflated Sense of Her Own Importance (Real Name Shirley Lawson): Little Shirley Lawson. Daughter of a drunk and a diner waitress who'd bang anything that moves. She was a self-involved little slut who ran away to LA to be an actress. She had one role in a minor soap opera that went bust, and it's been all downhill since then. Her smug, self-involved ego should feed the town for weeks.

Dylan Fontaine, Semi-Successful Hollywood Agent and Professional Lapdog: Shirley's sugar-daddy agent husband. He's not even from Winslow, so he could drop dead this second for all your care. But you couldn't get Shirley here on her own, without the little leech clinging to her.

Clyde Williams, Ex-Convict Looking for a Fresh Start: Clyde always was a bad seed, and you weren't sad to see him leave Winslow. Of course, this was in earlier, better times, when the town population was much higher and you could afford to pick and choose. His father had an accident at the mill, lost his hand to a saw, and Clyde used his father's injury as an excuse to run wild. He nearly killed a local deputy in a joyride gone wrong, and fled the town.

You weren't surprised to hear he ended up in jail for something even worse later. But they finally let him out, just in time for Winslow's needs.

Anthony Edwards, Nature Writer and Recluse: A little weirdo. Always running away from home and camping out in woods when he was a boy. His parents were good dutiful Winslow residents - you were sorry to suck the life from them. He writes books now, but he still has that crazy look in his eye.

Roleplaying Tips

That's right. You are playing the main villain of the module. Well, more accurately, Winslow itself (as played by the DM) is the main villain but you are its main ally. Your objective for the module is not necessarily to "win" as Dugan, but rather to collaborate with the DM to scare the other players. You can do this by acting old and a bit creepy (and throwing suspicion on the Retreat being bad news, rather than the town) or very friendly (until you betray them all). Try and be a bit grumpy - you hate being out of Winslow and you are craving to return like a junkie for a fix.

In order for the ritual to succeed, you need each of the party to be killed "by the town" - by one of the various supernatural events which the town causes. The only exception is Dylan. As he's not originally from Winslow, you don't really care if he dies or how he dies.

Try to avoid having too many suspicious asides with the DM, unless the rest of the party is paranoid and doing that too. A lot of sabotage can be done in sensible and subtle ways - like suggesting that the players seek help at the nearest town if something goes wrong. Or being decidedly skeptical of any supernatural explanations people concoct.

Once in the town, you should start to get more blatant with your powers and sabotage - the party is trapped after all, and you don't want to waste time toying with them, particularly after Brian was trapped. Best to let them get their guard down and then take them out after sunset when they're vulnerable.

Obsession: Living forever (though Winslow)

Rage Stimulus: The Ones Who Got Away (ie. the PCs)

Fear Stimulus: Being out of the town for too long

Noble Stimulus: Winslow. Simon/Dugan does really love his town, in a twisted way. He cares nothing for the residents, but the town itself is his lover, his mother and all he's ever needed.

Dugan/Simon has an Obsession skills called "Make Things Happen". He can cause small coincidences and events to flow in his favour. This power is notably stronger in Winslow. Outside the town, he's barely been able to twist events enough to bring the party together. In the town, he can cause lights to go out, doors to lock themselves and even cars to start on their own and go roaring down the street.

Body: 50 "Worn-out"

Surprisingly Strong (Struggle): 40

Ignore Pain: 50

General Athletics: 15

Mind: 70 "Brilliant"

Notice: 40

Conceal: 40

Local History: 55

Speed: 40 "Tired"

Dodge: 25

Drive: 25

Soul: 70 "Connected"

Act Concerned (Charm): 50

Lie like a Rug: 50

Make Things Happen: 60

Violence: 4H 1F

Unnatural: 6H 3F (Feel free to "fake" unnatural checks when confronted with weirdness so the party doesn't suspect)

Self: 4H 2F

Helplessness: 1H 3F

Isolation: 1H 3F

Notes on Skills:

Ignore Pain: Dugan can "pass pain on" of a non-fatal wound on to Winslow. If he is hurt, then he passes the pain on to the town, which incurs some corresponding damage. The wound may actually vanish on a good roll or simply hurt less. (eg. A PC figures out Dugan's betray and stabs him in the belly. Dugan passes the pain on and down the street a fire hydrant bursts in a spray of blood.)

This doesn't make Dugan immortal - it's more to give a sudden surprising comeback as needed, and it only works within the bounds of Winslow.

Note: You also have more skill points than other PCs, so keep your skills as confidential as possible, so no one gets suspicious.