

Harold Sturvin

“Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.”

-Tennyson

It's an important thing, being a Sturvin in this town. Sturvins have lived in San Inguon since its founding nearly one hundred years ago. And Sturvins have always been the richest people in town, making money as quickly as they could and using it to rule the town with an iron fist. But with that power comes a curse.

You carry that curse, and you were unfortunate enough not to have learned of it before it came down upon you. Perhaps you should have known something was strange from the beginning. Your father, Luke Sturvin, was always spending a weekend out of town every couple of weeks. Your mother, Sarah, was convinced that he was having an affair, but enjoyed a life of splendor despite the raging Depression around you. You wish that his secret was so simple.

You grew up amidst great luxury, and there never was a time when you were made to feel that the wealth of the Sturvins was undeserved, or that luck had anything to do with your birthright. Your father constantly talked about his father and grandfather, about their struggles for success that resulted in your immense wealth.

When you graduated from high school, you went east to Harvard to learn business from the hands of old masters. Good grades and your father's wealth assured you a seat. While you were gone, your father kept in close contact with you, constantly sending letters asking about your grades and your health, while talking about the businesses you were soon to run, and about his own health. While the missives were usually heart-warming and caring, there was an undercurrent of fear. You didn't really pick up upon it at the time; you were immersed in study and worrying about the trend of affairs in Europe. In addition, you were tending to your emotional state of health- writing love letters to Emma, your high school sweetheart.

When you came back to San Inguon in 1940, you and she married amidst great celebration. You never saw your father prouder. You began work as a vice-president in Stuviv Inc., overseeing the real estate deals and mining contracts the company did. Your father kept alluding to something he needed to talk to you about, but every time you were ready to listen, he was unavailable to talk, and whenever he was available to talk, you couldn't make the time to listen.

In 1942, you scored two coups. The first was only natural; your son Mark was born. Your father was overjoyed about that. The second was a result of your studies at Harvard. You had taken a physics class as part of your geology studies, and learned about

the possibilities of splitting the atom. After cajoling and bribing several graduate physics students into telling you the possibilities, you realizing that many countries were on the verge of making a powerful new weapon. One that required uranium. And after two years of sending men to excavate the desert, you had finally found a place that could mine great quantities. Since no one really knew the power of uranium, you bought what seemed to be worthless land for a minuscule amount. Extremely minuscule when compared to the government contract you received in 1944 to provide them with all the uranium they needed. It was wonderful.

All good things must come to an end, however. Emma left you in 1950 to live with her tennis coach. You flew off to Philadelphia to arrange matters with her lawyers. While in Philadelphia you received a telegram telling you that your father had passed on that morning. You were devastated. Mother had died only a few years prior, and with Emma demanding to be out of your life, Mark was the only thing you had. The rest of the telegram stated in no uncertain terms that you needed to come home immediately, with no delay. You knew you had to take care of your father's estate, but you were only a single step away from coming to an acceptable divide of goods with Emma. So, unfortunately, you waited.

You don't remember what happened the rest of the night. Looking back after learning of the truth of the situation, you know exactly what happened, and not remembering any of it is standard. Still, waking up the next morning with your nightshirt in tatters and blood all over your hands was a shock, to put it mildly. Dr. Ferngreen's missive to return immediately was suddenly a great deal more pointed now, and you flew back to Phoenix as soon as you could wash the blood from your hands.

Dr. Ferngreen, the family doctor, and C.J. Nickels, who was one of the few surviving people of the original San Inguon settlers, were waiting for you when you arrived. He saw the look of fear and confusion in your eyes, and began to try to calm you, explaining that what had happened the previous night was only to be expected. He and C.J. then traded off telling about the Curse of the Sturvins.

It seems that the original settlers, led by Joe Edwood, had chosen an unfortunate place to stay- an ancient Indian burial ground. The first month of the town's life was a string of disasters, plagues, and general misery. C.J. knew something of Indian lore, and felt he could allay the curse, but not stop it. The best he could do was to focus the curse upon a single family instead of the entire town. Your grandfather, Jedediah Sturvin, offered to take the curse upon himself. But being a true Sturvin, he used the offer of taking the curse as a reason to cajole many people of the town into giving him parts of their land, some of their goods, etc. From this, the Sturvin fortune began. In return, the eldest male of the first line of Sturvins (passing along sort of like the British monarchy) is cursed. And the curse is that upon every full moon, he turns into a werewolf.

It would have been laughable prior to that night in Philadelphia. That night had been a full moon. And waking up with the blood upon your hands... you now realize why

your father had never brought it up. You would have thought him crazy. But now you knew. You couldn't deny the evidence before you. You were a werewolf.

Dr. Ferngreen explained to you that only he, C.J., the sheriff, and the mayor were privilege to this information. The plan would remain as it had for your father; on the night of every full moon, you would go to an abandoned warehouse that Sturvin Inc. owned. You would be locked in, and there would be raw meat inside to sate your hunger. C.J. would keep quiet about the matter as long as you kept quiet about his original participation; Dr. Ferngreen would keep quiet as long as you continued to support his medical practice (for which he bilked you nicely, but what can you expect); Sheriff Barnes and Mayor Cunningham would keep quiet so long as you helped to insure their re-elections.

Now, the curse is not nearly as bad as it was made out to be. Perhaps the time since the event has lessen the effects. Or perhaps you're just getting used to it. Nonetheless, you have learned to control the curse. You have mastered the ability the force the change when you wish it, as well as to keep from changing upon the full moon. You need now change only once a month, any time during the month, for an eight hour session to keep the beast from raging out on full moons. In addition, you have been able to keep calm and rational while in werewolf form. In essence, being a werewolf now means merely being a much uglier, hairier version of yourself with a hunger for raw meat. You amused yourself highly once by managing to pick the lock on the warehouse, wandering over to the sheriff's house, and jumping out and yelling "Boo!" It did not occur to you at the time that he would still be wearing his revolver. Luckily, the old maxim about silver bullets seems to hold, and you and he had a nice laugh about it several days and several beers afterwards.

And with control of that, you've been able to focus your time upon Sturvin Inc. Unfortunately, things are not boding very well for the company. While outwardly, everything seems fine, and you still pull a salary high enough to have bought one of the two Theravoost Stones from Dr. Angela Bailey, inwardly the company is nearing trouble. Things are still profitable, but not nearly as profitable as they once were, and trends seem to indicate that within five years the company will have problems keeping its head above water. Other companies have moved into the uranium market, meaning your virtual monopoly has fallen apart; the government set up Ft. Lucas Rita and its adjuncting Research Labs upon prime property that they only paid minimal value for (and if you had fought that, you could kiss your uranium contract good-bye), and the development of vaccinations and cures for TB means that Arizona as a recovery spot is losing more and more luster.

And it's not that you're greedy. You used to be, but the curse has put things it line. Without the money that makes up the Sturvin fortune, you can't afford to support the people who know the truth, nor could you afford the luxury of a private place for the rages. And while you might not need it any more, what happens when you pass on and the curse falls to Mark? Eventually he'll learn to control it, but not without years of rages, and

he'll need a private place to do that. It's not for yourself that you've been lowering safety standards on the mines. It's for the family.

And that may cause you problems. Dr. Ferngreen retired and left his practice to Dr. Randall Rourke, an idealistic crusader. Dr. Rourke knows nothing of the curse, and you worry that were you to tell him about it, he would demand the same exorbitant payments that Dr. Ferngreen required. Unfortunately, his lack of knowledge means that you have no control over him, and he has been pressuring Sheriff Barnes to investigate the lack of firm controls over the mines. It seems that too many workers have died of cancer for his liking. And while the Sheriff is in your pocket, it won't be long until Dr. Rourke goes to a higher authority in the government.

And if Dr. Rourke can close down the mines, you can say good-bye to Sturvin Inc.

Stock Quote: "We Sturvins have a long tradition in this town."

Mannerisms: A nice, jovial guy who becomes extremely ruthless whenever money or the family is concerned. Overly ostentatious and ambitious.

People You Know:

Robert Sherman: A friend of your son's. He seems a bit too low-class for Mark; maybe you should talk to Mark about his class of friends.

Mark Sturvin: Your son. When it all comes down to it, he's the only thing of true importance to you. The main reason you're out to make so much money is to provide for him whatever you can. You'd like to see him get a little more interested in the family business, too. He'll need it to protect his secret when the curse hits him. He's too young to know about the curse, now, though; he'd think you were getting old and crazy.

General Hiram Cork: Commander of Ft. Lucas Rita. Stubborn old coot who's probably hoping for a war within the next five years. Unfortunately, if you want the government to do anything, you'll have to go through him.

Mayor Cunningham: Slimy little politician. Luckily, he's four-square in your pocket so long as you keep financing his re-election bids. You can always call the tune, and he'll always do the dance.

Sheriff Barnes: The law in San Inguon. Like the mayor, he's firmly imbedded in your pocket. Unfortunately, he's a little more independent than you'd like. Plus, he's a bit of a drinker, and you worry that he might say something about you when he's tanked.

C.J. Nickels: Runs the local 5 and Dime. There's much more to him than meets the eye. He knows about mystical things like the curse. You haven't really asked him what he's all about because he's responsible for saving the town. But you definitely wonder about him....

Harold Smith: A likable guy and a very good salesman. Maybe he could help you with Sturvin Inc.

Dr. Randall Rourke: Crusading young doctor and all-around pain in the ass. You've got to find a way to keep him quiet.

Dr. Angela Bailey: Archaeologist. She just came back from India, where she found the two Theravoost Stones, one of which you bought from her. She's staying in town to excavate the local Indian burial grounds. You might wish to keep an eye on her; she might find something profitable.

Goals:

1. Get Sturvin Inc. back on its feet. Talk to the scientists at the Research Labs to see if you can figure out some new market the government will get into. Watch to see what Dr. Bailey finds at the Burial Grounds to see if any of it is worth investing in. Keep Dr. Rourke from causing Sturvin Inc. too much trouble.

2. Protect your secret. Never let on that you're a werewolf. It would not do your business any good.

3. Protect Mark. Keep him out of trouble. Make sure things are going well. You just got back from a business trip this morning and this is really the first Saturday you've been able to spend in town in a long time. Spend time with him. See what he wants to do with his life. See if you can steer him towards business.

[Note on the entire werewolf thing: You did the change last Saturday, so you have no pressing need to become one again tonight. If you *want* to, go right ahead. But if you change, you're stuck as the werewolf for at least four hours.]