

## **Lillian Van Valzak, AKA "Bedelia Derrick"**

### **Distressed Saloon Owner**

This saloon here, the **Lucky Saloon**, it's your joint. Workmen built the building to your requirements, from some shady money you had brought from back East. You own it outright, and you manage it all personally. You've worked hard at keeping the place in business, but it's still going, and you're proud of what you have accomplished. With the Lord's help, of course.

You just wish you had picked a different town to start it in.

See, the town of **Providence Junction** is bedeviled by a corrupt sheriff. **Sheriff Roy Slade** doesn't care how much he hurts the town or drives away business so long as he can keep extorting bribes and satisfying his every whim. And that means he's often in your bar, drinking for free and hassling the help. And it means he expects a cut of your profits, even though he ain't done you a lick of good in the decade or so you've been in town. You once tried to deny him his bribe, and he locked up your barmaid on a trumped up horse-thieving charge. Course, Slade's not the real problem: he's just the pawn of **Lulu Kingsbury**, the real power in town. Everyone in town fears Kingsbury, cause nearly everyone owes her huge debts or rent money. And because Kingsbury always seems to know what you're doing, even if there ain't no way she could know. Why, she knows about your criminal past back in Boston, and you ain't told no one in town about that. You'd be terrified if anyone found out about that; they might run you outta town, or worse. You haven't done anything criminal or illegal in years, since you found the Lord's way. But the townsfolk wouldn't care about that anyway. Criminals always say stuff like that, before the sheriff hangs them.

Now this Sheriff Slade has some damn fool plan to hold a poker tournament in your establishment. You don't cotton why a corrupt small town sheriff would want to do that, but he threatened to burn down your saloon. So you went along with the plan anyway. So now you're supposed to be hosting a poker tournament, despite not knowing much about poker to begin with.

Making things worse, **Hannah Brownfield** is staying in your bar. That doesn't sound like trouble, but it is. Hannah worked with you back East, when both of you worked for a criminal gang in Boston. Following a successful con job together, the two of you got to talking and decided you'd rather travel westward than give a cut of your profits to the local crimeboss. You split the take, headed west and you didn't see Hannah again until yesterday. That's when she rolled into your bar, eager for the proposed poker tournament. While you have settled down in the last decade, Hannah seems to have gotten more wild, more violent and less stable all around. You're accommodating her for the moment, in the hopes that she'll go away quietly after the tournament is over. Hopefully without blabbing about your criminal past. You're a good honest Christian now, and don't want her ruining what you got here in town talking about the distant past.

Failing that, you hope that your first headache (the corrupt sheriff) will take of the other (old criminal friend). Or maybe vice versa. Or that you can get the **Watchdogs of God** who came into town can sort this out - isn't that why the Lord sent them?

Bar patrons are spreading rumors that the "**Black Hood Bandit**" is coming to town, perhaps to steal the tournament's prize money. You been reading about the Bandit in the newspapers, and he only robs from bad people. This doesn't comfort you much (what if he knows about your past and judges you a "bad person"?) but maybe he could help you with the corrupt Sheriff Slade, or something. If the stories of his heroism aren't just tall tales, that is.