

Beneath the Full Moon

You wanted to do something a bit more adventurous for Spring Break. The trip was great until last night, when something mauled your guide and stole your food. Can you make it back to civilization?

Premise

The characters are a collection of college students taking an adventure camping trip in the Grand Canyon for Spring Break. They've only known each other for this trip, and don't necessarily get along. When their guide is badly mauled in the night, they are forced to fend for themselves.

Unbeknownst to the characters, the creature that attacked the guide is a werewolf. He stopped before utterly destroying the guide because of the guide's silver pendant. The werewolf, however, will continue to stalk the group, but will only attack with the element of surprise, and only at night.

Prior to filling out the character questionnaires, the players should be filled in on the current situation. Game play will start moments after the characters have found the guide's badly-mauled body, so any information up to that point is germane. The trip started out (on Saturday) with a half-day journey down the Canyon to a ranch near the river. There, they spent a day (Sunday) getting to know each other and learning basic hiking, camping, and rafting skills. The trip proper started out with two days of hiking along the river, primitive camping as they went. At the end of the second day (Tuesday), they reached the a landing where two river rafts had been left for them, and camped there. They then rafted downriver for a day and a half, and beached the rafts well above the river. Most of yesterday (Thursday) was spent in a day hike up one of the side canyons, to see some different biomes. The day ended by making camp about an hour's hike from the river. This is where they are when the attack occurs.

The itinerary for the rest of the trip was to have been two more days of rafting, including some rapids, which they haven't previously dealt with, except during the crash course in rafting, and those were fairly tame. The end goal is another ranch/resort near the floor of the canyon, where they are expected Saturday night, but no one will worry about them until the middle of Sunday morning.

Actual mileages don't matter, but figure that a day of rafting downriver is equal to five days' hiking, and that rafting upriver is no faster than hiking. So they are ten days' hike from the pull-out point, and about eight days' hike from where they started. Where they are, hiking up out of the canyon would be nearly impossible—more climbing than hiking—and would, at best, take three days, if they had all the right gear and no guide to transport. Also, if any of them check the maps, they will be able to clearly see that the canyon narrows between where they are and the pull-out point, so that hiking there won't be possible without climbing.

If the Tower Tumbles

Given both the subgenre and the lethality of the situation, a character that is removed from the game will almost certainly be killed in some manner.

This scenario is dependent on 3 primary themes:

- Lack of wilderness/survival skills and equipment
- Caring for the guide
- Fear of the pursuing beast

Isolation is paramount for this story to work – all three of the core themes are dependent on it. The characters must not have access to easily communicate with the outside world, nor an easy way to physically escape. Moreover, it should be clear that they can count on no one to come to them in sufficient time. “Sufficient time” can be delimited by running out of supplies, the guide needing medical attention, and/or how long they feel they can evade the beast.

Lack of Wilderness/Survival Skills and Equipment

A balance must be struck in order to maximize tension. If you take away too much of their equipment, or limit their survival skills too greatly, the players may reasonably decide that they have no chance of making it, and simply stay put – which makes it very hard to plausibly keep them alive long enough for a good game. If you give them too much equipment, or accept too much wilderness knowledge, the trip won’t be difficult enough to be exciting. Worse, you might find yourself making fairly arbitrary calls in order to force pulls.

Ultimately, how much equipment they have, and how under-prepared they are, will be dependent mostly on your players – the more they know about such matters, the tougher you’ll need to make it on their characters to compensate. As a good baseline, in the absence of detailed knowledge of your players:

- 2 whitewater rafts – which are not large enough to fit all of them in one safely/comfortably
- 1 fewer tents than is comfortable (because guide’s tent was shredded)
- 2-way radio
- flashlights (no more than 2)
- emergency flares (generally 2)
- hatchet
- plenty of water, and water purifiers
- a limited food supply – plenty if they head for civilization, but only one day more than their trip was scheduled for, so they’ll run out one day after people **start** looking for them
- first aid kit, possibly including morphine, and definitely including a snakebite kit
- matches
- backpacks and camp knives all around

Further supplies (such as spare oars or rain ponchos) should require pulls, unless they’ve already been established as not being there. The trip is an “adventure camping” trip, so technological devices, except for basic safety or as emergency back-ups, are forbidden. That means no GPS, no computers or PDAs, no lighters, no cell phones, no firearms, etc. Also, no drugs/booze. Consider the ramifications before you allow any character to have any of these items due to questionnaire answers.

The goal of limiting wilderness survival skills and equipment is not necessarily to make nature a deadly threat in its own right, but simply to prevent them taking even basic survival for granted. They should already be tired and stressed and maybe a bit irritable or uncomfortable when the real challenges show up. Other than possession of equipment, most pulls related to the environment should be to avoid complications, not injuries. The players should want to make the pulls not because of the immediate personal consequences, but because of the fear of the situation they might end up in further down the line if they don’t.

The Characters

Character 1 (a philosophy major) has a phobia, and may have issues due to a hazing incident and/or their pet's death. They believe they should be in charge in the guide's absence, and should be encouraged to play this up.

Character 2 (a freshman) has a bit of a death obsession, and believes that they are due for a deadly karmic backlash.

Character 3 (an English major) has a forbidden item along, and did something bad to a loved one sometime in their past. They have a problem with a common animal in the area. They are convinced that they should be in charge, but won't say so, and know something that makes them very pessimistic about their chances.

Character 4 (an economics major) grew up with a controlling father, and doesn't trust one of the others. Character 4 is physically limited in some way, but has been entrusted with the maps and compass. They got in trouble for bringing beer. Their parents are dead. They believe that they must receive absolution for something before they die.

Character 5 (a fashion design major) was the first to the guide's tent, and knows something they're not telling. They have a young child back home. The others apparently don't think much of character 5's capabilities, but character 5 thinks they are the most valuable member of the group, and believes they should be the new leader.

Character 6 (an engineering major) used to camp, but doesn't any more, and believes in werewolves. They have a bad history while drunk, and an abusive father. They, too, are trying to become the leader of the group.

The guide starts out the game badly mauled, and is only as aware as the host needs him to be.

The werewolf, who is really more of a plot element than a character—see the section on the theme "Fear of the Pursuing Beast" for more about this.

Keep in mind that there is much more to the players' characters than just the above summaries. When reviewing the completed character questionnaires, be on the lookout for more elements to tie into the story, particularly fears and worries, hopes and desires.

Caring for the Guide

This is perhaps the trickiest theme to get right. It is important to incapacitate the guide, so as to facilitate the survival theme, but there are several pitfalls to avoid. The obvious one is making him too useful—if he is conscious and lucid, he can solve too many of the problems, despite being a burden due to his physical condition. Less obviously, it is possible for the guide to be too badly injured. He should not be comatose: a semi-conscious guide can be a source of all sorts of frustratingly-incoherent information, as he passes in and out of lucidity. On a more practical note, he can provide the host a perfect conduit for dropping the players some hints or direction, if the game gets really frustrating or too much tension dissipates for other reasons. Finally, if the guide is in too rough of shape, one of the players may decide that euthanasia is the most ethical solution: the guide is going to die anyway, because they don't have the skills or equipment, and caring for the guide is likely to get one or more of them killed, too. (If this happens anyway, see the appropriate scene, below.)

There are two ways to use the guide: as a burden, and as an ethical dilemma. The ethical dilemma basically boils down to considering euthanasia, and should not be easy—euthanasia should be, in the short run, the costly choice (i.e., more pulls). Though, it probably will save them pulls in the long run -- but don't let the players know that. Again, see the appropriate scene, below, if this occurs.

The other, better way to use the guide is as an ongoing burden. Basically, the guide can turn almost any situation into one that requires pulls, and can make mildly-tricky situations into downright troublesome ones. And, unlike pulls for their own characters, players will very rarely forgo a pull on the guide's behalf. With the guide's help, you should be able to guarantee the tower is ready to tumble by the time the climax arrives.

Fear of the Pursuing Beast

It is important to imply the beast strongly enough to make the players nervous, without making its presence so strong that the characters can be sure of what is going on. You want to provide enough clues that the **players** are all but sure there is a werewolf involved. But you want to do it in such a way that any "normal" rational person would dismiss the possibility. Use all the standard monster-horror tricks:

- At first, only evidence of the monster is found. Make this evidence suspicious, but not outright amazing/supernatural. It is, of course, the night before the full moon when the guide is attacked.
- Early on, any looks they get at the monster are from a distance, fleeting, and/or obscured, so that it's hard to judge size and other important qualities.

- Use decoys. Some other creature that fits the evidence turns up. In this case, they might deal with a coyote, or even a normal wolf (which would be out of place here). It might be particularly vicious and bold—less afraid of humans than is normal. They could even kill it, leading them to think that they’ve dealt with the beast.
- Use red herrings. Provide evidence to mislead. All the wounds can be accounted for by a wolf, for starters. Feel free to imply that the werewolf is discouraged or stopped by the river, too. It is equally useful to drop hints that make the players doubt their assumptions—if they start to wonder that maybe it’s some other sort of beast, the climactic encounter will be that much more surprising.
- The werewolf is as much a plot device, as a literal creature. Therefore, it can show up wherever the plot demands it—such as clinging to sheer cliff faces or swimming comfortably.

Of course, ultimately, it should all hold together. Once they do find out what is going on, there shouldn’t be any earlier clues that don’t make sense. Be careful in your use of red herrings, especially, so that the players don’t feel cheated at the end.

The climax of this theme is, of course, the climax of the whole scenario. It should occur when the tension is at its climax. Your goal is for the tower to already be rickety by the time the fight starts—you want every pull to feel life-threatening, regardless of how minor an action it is. Once the final fight starts, the players need to be convinced that they are all about to die—and, ideally, at least one person will perish before the werewolf is vanquished. Because it is a supernatural beast, it is likely that even if the tower has to be restacked after a death, another person could die—**every** action involving the werewolf will require a pull, and once they’ve suffered a death in the group, the psychological impact should make even such actions as running away pull-worthy. It should take **very** clever planning, or a heroic sacrifice, to actually defeat the werewolf.

And if, for some reason, the werewolf is defeated while the night is still young, you are likely to have the option of continuing the story by turning the guide into a werewolf. If this catches them off guard, it will basically be a recap of the latter half of the first werewolf stalking. If they know what’s going on, it becomes a very different sort of story, more suspense than horror, as they try to out-think or out-fight the beast.

Conversely, you may find yourself needing to tone down the werewolf a bit, making it less intelligent or less powerful, in order to stretch out early encounters or make the final battle something the characters have a chance at. First, consider very carefully before you do this. For horror in general, and supernatural-monster-with-undertones-of-the-ruthlessness-of-nature horror in particular, pulling punches is often not a good idea. Much of the point is the uncaringness of nature (and doubly so for the beast, as metaphor), and the high price of underestimating nature. In most situations, it would actually be better to turn the danger **up** a notch, hastening a character’s removal, so that the tower can be restacked and properly rickety by the time the climax comes around. If they behave stupidly or carelessly, it just means that many more won’t make it through the week. It’s a werewolf story, after all.

That said, you may be in a situation where killing off a character very early in the game—or even half-way through a game—just isn’t a good option. Perhaps your group just wouldn’t accept one player having to essentially sit it out for half the game. Maybe you’re at a convention, and it just doesn’t seem fair for someone who took the time and money to play the game to be eliminated too early. In those situations, you may need to tone down the deadliness of the werewolf, especially if they foolishly decide to stay put and wait for help. To do this without undermining the threat of the werewolf, you’ll need to keep it more off-screen at first. You can also justify the werewolf more easily being driven off early in the story, because it’s just had a big meal, so it’s not as bloodthirsty. Finally, it’s perfectly in genre for the creature to be uncharacteristically shy early in the story, and bold to the point of recklessness at the end, so most players won’t even notice if it behaves inconsistently in that particular manner. Also, if they stay put, they will have avoided a lot of pulls by not being on the river, etc., so the extra threat of the werewolf might merely balance that out.

Another solution that you could draw upon is the “doomed” option: if someone topples the tower at a time that it is just impossible to justify removing them due to the situation prompting the pull, or it would be socially unacceptable to remove the character at that point, you can instead declare that they are doomed – their time has come, but they cheated death, *and, on some level, they know it*. That player may no longer make pulls, and the Host may declare that Fate has caught up with them at any suitable time – usually the next time the werewolf shows up, in this scenario – thus removing them from the game, just as if they had only at that moment toppled the tower.

Opening Scene (survival, guide, monster)

Once the characters are created, and the players have introduced them to one another, the game begins mere moments after they have found the guide. It is the wee hours of the morning (around 2:30am), and the characters have been awakened by screams and other sounds of the struggle – animal noises, nylon shredding, maybe aluminum tent poles snapping. The guide is badly mauled and dragged a dozen feet or so from his tent, with the shredded remains of his sleeping bag, tent, sleeping pad, etc., strewn along the way. At this stage he should definitely be unconscious, bleeding, but breathing. He is a fairly hippy sort. The one “modern” item on his person is a silver pendant – on a hemp cord, of course – around his neck. The only way any of them will see the beast in this scene is if the character who was first on the scene includes that in her answer to the appropriate question.

His tent and sleeping bag are useless. His backpack is, luckily, untouched. Inside are an emergency radio, one of the group flashlights, a flare gun with two flares, a compass, a small first aid kit, small waterproof box of matches, and his personal possessions.

Possible Pulls

- maintaining composure around the guide
- getting back to sleep (so as to be reasonably well-rested)
- noticing that it looks like the beast started to attack his throat, then went for the gut instead
- triage
- knowing what to do, medically
- knowing what to do for survival/rescue
- finding the beast’s tracks
- following the beast’s tracks
- identifying the beast’s tracks
- calming/comforting others
- figuring out how the radio works

Not all (or any) of these need be used – in fact, some of them are mutually exclusive; they are just suggestions to inspire you. Depending on what the characters do and how the questionnaires were filled out, many of them might not even make sense.

Suggested Scenes

The following are just suggested scenes – there’s no need to use all or even any of them. You could just improvise in response to the characters’ actions, following from the opening scene. Each scene identifies what themes it most-strongly supports, and suggests some likely reasons for pulls during the scene. Remember to tailor how the scenes go, and what pulls are required to your group. Characters’ abilities may obviate the need for some pulls suggested, while clever planning may avoid others. On the other hand, they may need extra pulls for tasks that these scenes assume are automatic. It is important to be consistent in the pulls asked for, but also to tailor to individual characters’ strengths and weaknesses. Also keep track of your available time, so that you can end with a good climax, and so that the tower is properly rickety by that climax – you may need to adjust the “threshold” for demanding a pull if they aren’t making enough pulls.

Breaking Camp (guide): They need to figure out how to carry the guide back to the rafts, an hour hike over rocky terrain, unburdened. They’ll probably think to use the shredded tent as a make-shift stretcher, but it will still be rough going.

Possible Pulls: stabilizing the guide, making a stretcher, keeping their cool, making it down the path without any injuries (twisted ankle, etc.) or dropping the guide at any point, making it down to the rafts unscratched (they’ll almost certainly forgo this pull, if offered, but it helps establish the mood)

Delirious Guide (guide, maybe survival or beast): At some point during otherwise-uneventful time, the guide regains partial consciousness. He may mumble about some “beast from hell” or “nightmare of teeth and claws”, or whatever is convenient. He can put the players more on edge, or give them a false sense of security, or regain lucidity just long enough to help with some wilderness lore. Or just fill their heads with red herrings – he’s delirious and may have suffered a psychotic break due to the attack, so he could say anything, regardless of how wrong or irrelevant it is.

Possible Pulls: understanding the guide, getting *useful* info from the guide

Camping (survival): The first night (Friday), the characters will have to make camp. The best they’ll be able to find is either a gravel bar backed by a cliff, but with no vegetation, or an area with good visibility and vegetation, but no natural barriers. The werewolf should make some sort of appearance during the night, but none of the characters should be sure – just a fleeting glimpse of a shadowy shape, or glowing eyes in the dark, or a splash in the river.

Possible Pulls: finding a campsite that isn’t too soon or too late, gathering enough firewood before nightfall to keep the fire going all night, starting a fire with tough green vegetation, sheltering the guide effectively, keeping the guide alive through the night, staying awake/alert, falling asleep, noticing/identifying strange noises (which might or might not be the werewolf), resisting the need to take a midnight bathroom break

Sighting on the Shore (beast): During the day, the group clearly sees a large black wolf on the shore as they are floating past. It appears to be intently watching them, and it might be apparently pacing them on the shore. Use this early on the first day to lull the players into a sense of false security, as it is “clearly” just a wolf (or coyote), and they will pass cliffs and other terrain a wolf couldn’t easily traverse, later in the day. Use it later on the second day to instill panic, since they’ll know a normal wolf would’ve had trouble keeping up, is unlikely to be that persistent when chasing non-easy prey, and couldn’t have tracked them by scent in any case.

Possible Pulls: keeping their cool, determining how big it really is, knowing enough about wolves to realize that it can probably pace the raft all day over relatively flat ground

Alternate Story Structure

If you find yourself a little lost looking at all those scenes and trying to put together a compelling game, perhaps you simply think better in terms of plot rather than theme. In that case, here's a suggested three-act structure built out of those scenes. In each act there are two key scenes, and then two more optional scenes, to be used depending on time. Of course, you can still use any of the other scenes, just relying on this structure for the basic story direction and taking the players' lead for the rest.

Act I

- Opening Scene (key)
- Breaking Camp
- Using the Radio
- Sighting on the Shore (key)

Act II

- Camping (key)
- Plane
- Rapids (key)
- Delirious Guide (probably between sets of rapids)

Act III

- Shadows on the River (key)
- Rainstorm (or you could save the second set of rapids for here)
- Bonfire
- Fight Around the Campfire (key)

Rainstorm (survival): A thunderstorm blows in, requiring them to either hole up, or get wet. They probably have rain gear, but it will be difficult to keep the guide dry and warm. Also, visibility will be significantly reduced, and the noise of the rain will make it all but impossible to hear anything beyond their rafts/campsite.

Possible Pulls: seeing to the shore, identifying splashes in the river, keeping the guide dry, avoiding hypothermia, avoiding river hazards, drying out afterwards before night comes

Plane (survival): During the day, a small plane, possibly a tour plane, flies overhead. This is a red herring, to try and make them use up pulls – they can't possibly get noticed by a plane at that altitude in the daylight with just a flare gun or mirror. At best (with several pulls), they will get noticed, but it will take a day to mobilize, and a day to find them – no sooner than just proceeding to the take-out point.

Possible Pulls: noticing the plane, digging out the flare gun (or mirror) in time, successfully firing the flare gun, getting noticed, having the pilot recognize that they are in distress, operating the radio

Shadows on the River (beast): In twilight (just after dusk, or early dawn when only one or two characters is up), the werewolf makes a fleeting appearance as it stalks the characters. It could be on a ridge, or in the water, or obscured by some scrub. One or more of the characters – ideally, no more than two, so it can't be verified – should see it, but be uncertain what they saw.

Possible Pulls: noticing movement nearby, picking the werewolf's shape out of the shadows, recognizing that it's canine, realizing it's too big to be a coyote or wolf, keeping their cool

Sleeping on the River (survival, beast): The players might get the bright idea that they're safer on the water – that the beast can't scent them or can't swim (or both). To this end, they may choose to spend the night on the river, too. They might try and continue traveling at night, but most, if not all, of the characters should be aware this is a very bad idea. More likely, they will try and figure out how to anchor the rafts at night. Let any reasonable plan work – with enough pulls. The best solution is probably to wedge a sturdy branch into some river rocks or a cliff face, and use that as a tie-off. This is a good time for the werewolf to make an appearance. As when they camp on land, it should not give away the game – it should only be a pair of shining eyes, or a large form in the water, or something furry brushing a leg after someone falls overboard. Werewolves can, of course, swim excellently and scamper across sheer cliff faces with ease. Once noticed, it will retreat, effectively disappearing for the night – possibly quickly enough that the character doubts her senses.

Possible Pulls: finding a suitable cliff face, finding a suitable crack, successfully wedging a branch into the crack as they go by, the branch not breaking under the sudden weight, finding an outcropping of rocks that is rough enough but not in rapids, tying off properly, staying alert through the night, sleeping in an awkward position, overcoming the embarrassment of going to the bathroom over the side of the raft, not falling in when going to the bathroom over the side of the raft, seeing any dangers when rafting at night, steering around rocks at night, noticing the werewolf, not panicking, not rocking the boat too much when panicking, yanking the oar aboard before it gets a bite taken out of it, whacking the shape in the water with an oar

Fortifying the Camp (beast): If the characters decide to stay put, they're in fairly rocky terrain, with more vegetation than they'll encounter anywhere else if they travel onward on the river. They can try and fortify their campsite, in order to better defend themselves.

Possible Pulls: finding enough usable wood to make some spears/palisades, setting up look-out points, gathering several days' worth of firewood, improvising a large water storage facility (most of their water is in larger jugs on the rafts, not easily moved)

Bonfire (survival, beast): On the second night, unless they choose to spend it on the river, they will be in friendlier terrain, and be able to find a campsite with plenty of either vegetation or driftwood. If they want to, they can build a sizable fire, and keep it going all night, but it will take some pulls, depending on the situation they're in when they get there.

Possible Pulls: to gather enough driftwood/dropwood before dark, to uproot/chop down the tough little trees with inadequate tools, to stay awake tending the fire

Spotting Another Group (survival): This doesn't happen. The characters haven't seen any other groups since they left the ranch, and if they think they would have asked the guide before, he would have told them that the groups are deliberately spaced out in different areas and times, since part of what people want from the experience is to get away from it all.

Climbing Out (survival, guide): If the characters decide to climb out, don't stop them, but it won't be easy. They are in a steep part of the Canyon, away from any mapped (or, really, traversable) trails, and under the North Rim (all the roads and National Park buildings and people are on the South Rim). Unless they're creative, they'll eventually get to terrain too steep to climb without proper gear. The most likely result is to make slow progress for half a day or a day, and then realize they won't make it this way and have to double back to the rafts and use the river to get out. Net result: wasted a bunch of pulls and time, made it easier for the werewolf to find them, and have nothing save perhaps some injuries to show for it.

Possible Pulls: climbing when it gets steeper, not falling, not falling badly enough to get hurt, carrying the guide safely (multiple pulls), dealing with other challenges while transporting the guide, remembering that there is basically nothing on the North Rim, finding a semi-suitable route

Rapids (survival, guide): The characters need to negotiate rapids with an incapacitated guide, and only minimal training. Ideally, put them through rapids twice, with some recovery time in between. Since they have the burden of the guide, minimal training, and no real experience, there will be consequences if they don't make some pulls. To operate properly, each river raft requires a minimum of three people: one on each oar, and one on the tiller. All oars are in oarlocks, as is the tiller, which is actually just another oar. Generally, they also have a 4th person, up front to be the lookout and decision maker. The reason for a second set of rapids is not just tower attrition, but because they are likely to be in worse shape specifically for dealing with rapids: it is likely that the first set of rapids will cost them an oar or some confidence.

Suggested Pulls: If the crew of a raft don't make any pulls, it will capsize. Any member or members of the crew can make one pull to prevent capsizing, and a second pull to prevent anyone or anything going overboard (due to a near-capsize). If they make neither of these pulls, they must make pulls to avoid broken oars—one for each oar (but not the tiller). If they capsize, the guide will drown unless they make a pull to rescue him. If he was strapped in (a very sensible precaution), an additional pull will be required to first cut him free or untie him. Even if they don't capsize, they will lose (that is, break) an oar unless a pull is made (by any member of the crew).

Possible Pulls: to make up for being short oars or tiller (or people to man them), to make up for not having a lookout, to not lose valuable equipment

Killing the Guide (guide, survival): Especially if you describe the guide as being in particularly bad shape, the characters may decide that the best solution is to not even try and take the guide with them. There are rational reasons for this – he won't survive the trip anyway, he's more likely to die if moved, they don't have any real medical skills, the beast/monster will come back for him, he'll leave a bloody scent trail, trying to transport the guide makes it more likely one or more of the others will get killed, they'll have to move slower and will run out of food – but it is still a cold, difficult task. It must cost one or more of the characters to pull this off. And if they do, be sure and bring it back to haunt them later in the scenario, whenever possible (such as extra pulls any time they want to do something that might endanger another character or take a major chance).

Suggested Pulls: Any character who is in on the decision will require a pull to overcome their natural aversion to killing someone. It should take at least two pulls each to simply leave him to die. If someone decides to actually kill him, it should take a pull for the intestinal fortitude, a pull for the physical act, and maybe a pull to do it subtly/quickly so that the guide doesn't make too much fuss and/or no one notices.

Possible Pulls: persuading the others that the guide died naturally, persuading the others that he is already dead and there is no need to check on him, persuading the others that moving on and getting the authorities is more important than burying the guide

Using the Radio (survival): The characters realize that the radio isn't getting a signal partly because they're down in a canyon, and decide to climb up as high as they can and try again. They can more-or-less hike upwards for an hour or so, before it becomes climbing. They can proceed this way for maybe another hour before it gets too steep to manage without climbing gear. Total altitude gain will be around 10% of the depth of the canyon, but they may be able to find an outcropping to get them away from the wall of the Canyon a bit. At best, they will make poor contact, almost buried under static, and be able to make themselves heard poorly. Any responses will be garbled by the static just enough to make them useless ("Whatever you do, <static> moving; it is imperative <static> stay put!" -- was there a negative or an emphaser under each of those static breaks?). Further pulls should add more advice that is sufficiently garbled to be contradictory or ambiguous, and they should lose all contact before they can get proper advice.

Possible Pulls: any unfit or phobic character may need pulls to make the climb, to find a suitable outcropping away from the canyon walls, to operate the radio properly, to make some contact, to understand through all the static, to know that radio waves travel better at night

Fight Around the Campfire (beast): This is one possible climax for the story. By the second night, the characters should be good and paranoid, making it difficult to sleep, and one or more will likely want to stay up and watch out. They are likely also tired and exhausted. Pulls to sleep **and** pulls to stay awake are fair—it's just a lousy situation to be in. It is quite likely that one of the characters will need a bathroom break at some point (add nerves to basic biology, and maybe some coffee for those trying to stay up...), and this is the perfect time for the attack. Or, those on watch could hear a noise and investigate. Or the werewolf can simply come out of the darkness at a quiet run, charging into the camp faster than anyone can really react. Whatever the case, the characters finally get a good look at the massive (as in goat- or even pony-sized) wolf, with its jet-black fur, huge fang-like teeth, and glowing blood-red eyes—they should no longer have any doubts that this is a supernatural creature. For starters, it is not in the least bit afraid of fire, even a flaming brand wielded by one of the characters. Secondly, it is impossibly fast and tough. Probably the best the characters can manage is a hatchet to the skull or a flare in the eye, and neither of these will, on its own, do more than enrage it. The werewolf wants blood, and not even self-preservation will dissuade it. Make the fight exciting. Anything they try will have some effect—it should not be hopeless—but it should be clear that they are unlikely to drive it off or kill it before it gets at least one of them. Any task in opposition to the werewolf, whether avoiding its attacks, or attacking it, will require a pull. It is likely that one or more of the players will do the math and rapidly realize that they'll run out of pulls before they run out of werewolf, and try something drastic (i.e., a heroic sacrifice). Whether through the attrition of many pulls, or a heroic sacrifice, the players will likely manage to defeat the werewolf. Whatever happens, it will manage to drag itself back into the river before it dies, where the body will be washed away, removing all evidence.

Possible Pulls: to dodge the werewolf's attack, to notice the werewolf in time to warn the others, to notice the werewolf in time to be able to react at all, to keep his or her cool, to move fast enough to land a blow, to make a blow into a telling blow

Fight On the River (beast): This is another possible climax. By the second night, the characters should be good and paranoid, and may even try sleeping on the river, either by anchoring the rafts, or by paddling at night. Sleeping in the rafts is uncomfortable, and the combination of his and paranoia will make it hard to sleep. Exhaustion will make it hard to stay alert. Pulls to sleep **and** pulls to stay awake are fair—this is a lousy situation to be in. The werewolf will attack in the wee hours of the morning, rocketing from the water like an angry porpoise—an angry porpoise with jet-black fur, huge teeth and claws, and glowing blood-red eyes. It is out for blood, and will not hesitate to attack, but will use hit-and-run tactics, emerging to try and grab a character, then disappearing under the waves again. It will be all but invisible when under the waves. While it is driven by bloodlust, it is still smarter than any animal. If they put up any kind of real resistance, the werewolf will attack the rafts, first tearing them, then trying to capsize them. Any character in the water basically won't have a chance, though with enough pulls they might conceivably make it to shore, since the werewolf will be more interested in prey that fights back.

Possible Pulls: to dodge the werewolf's attack, to notice the werewolf in time to warn the others, to notice the werewolf in time to be able to react at all, to keep his or her cool, to move fast enough to land a blow, to make a blow into a telling blow, to not fall overboard, to patch the raft, to break free of the werewolf's grasp, to figure out what is attacking them, to swim towards shore

Unlike most philosophy majors, you chose your major for practical reasons. How do you intend to use your degree outside of academia?

Why did you choose to join, and live in, a Greek house?

While your Greek experience has been almost entirely positive, one initiation rite crossed the line into hazing. How does it still haunt you?

Why did you decide to do an adventure camping trip instead of the usual Spring Break beach party?

What is your filth threshold? How do you respond when things aren't clean enough for you?

How did your first pet die?

Now that your guide is dead, why do you expect the others will start looking to you as the leader?

How did you get that scar?

Other than the events of last night, what was the most surprising part of this trip so far?

How did you cheat on your last botany midterm?

Part of this trip is harder for you because of what phobia?

What childhood hero has let you down?

What is your name?

This is your freshman year, so you haven't picked a major yet. What degrees are you considering?

What hobby do you have that surprises everyone?

What's so great about being 19 years old?

Why did you decide to do an adventure camping trip instead of the usual Spring Break tropical escape?

What book have you read more than 20 times?

When do you feel most alone?

Why do you always wear that pendant, and what does it mean to you?

What's the worst way you could die on this trip?

Why do you wear glasses (with non-prescription lenses) despite having perfect vision?

You're the first member of your family to go to college. How do you feel about this?

What part of your appearance would you most like to change?

If you die, you know it will be karmic retribution for what?

What is your name?

You didn't so much choose English as a major, as it chose you. How did you end up being an English major?

What item did you bring on this trip, despite it being forbidden?

What favorite hobby did you use to pursue, but gave up when you came to college?

Why aren't you spending this Spring Break like your last one?

What's the worst thing you've ever done to a loved one?

What's the best part about being in the wilderness for a week, with no modern amenities, and only 6 other people around?

You'd make a better leader for the group than the current de facto leader, so why aren't you pressing the matter?

What animal that is found in the Grand Canyon gives you the creeps?

Did Shakespeare actually write all of his plays?

You know that, without your guide, you're all going to die unless rescuers happen to find you. What do you know that the others don't?

What unusual feature do you use to pick up dates?

What common habit nearly drives you up the wall?

What is your name?

You decided to major in economics because you saw it as the antithesis of what your controlling father wanted. What degree had he planned for you?

What upbeat children's show frightened you as a kid? How or why?

As part of dividing up the duties for the trip, you were entrusted with the maps and compass. Why?

Why did you decide to do an adventure camping trip instead of working to earn some extra money?

It only took you a day to realize that when they referred to "challenging" in the trip brochure, they were referring to physical challenges. How are you dealing with your limitations?

Which of the others don't you trust, and why?

You were busted last night for bringing some beer on the trip, and really resented the guide for making you dump it. Now how do you feel?

While your school isn't in a particularly large city, you come from a very small town. How do your small-town sensibilities sometimes get you into trouble with other students, who see the school as being in a small town?

If you die on this trip, you will go to Hell unless you get absolution for what sin?

What habit do you have that generally offends others?

What do you pretend to feel passionately about, just to impress people?

How did your parents die?

What is your name?

How is a fashion design major a lot harder than most people think it is?

What skill do you have that makes you the most useful member of this group for a backpacking trip like this?

You wanted to manage the group's food, but the others voted for someone else. How do you feel about that?

What is your favorite recurring dream?

Why did you decide to do an adventure camping trip instead of getting the jump on your studies?

What made you laugh yesterday?

Why should the rest of the group look to you as their leader, now that the guide is gone?

Who's taking care of your two-year-old while you're gone?

When the going gets tough, how do you respond?

You were the first to get to the guide's tent when the noise started last night. What did you see, and why haven't you told the rest of the group the whole truth?

What is your pet's name?

What do you do to entertain guests?

What is your name?

You've known since before you were in high school that you'd be what kind of engineer?

As a child, you went camping with your family frequently. Why haven't you been camping in more than 8 years?

What's the most regrettable thing you've ever done due to being drunk?

Why don't you like being the age you are?

What project are you blowing off by taking this trip for your entire Spring Break?

While the rest of the group dismisses it, you're worried that your guide might have been attacked by a werewolf. Why do you believe in werewolves?

Why are you uncomfortable around strangers?

While on this trip, you realized that you don't want to be an engineer. What happened to change your mind?

What have you been doing or saying since the guide died to try and subtly persuade the others to treat you as the leader?

What's your sexiest feature?

Before he left home, your father beat your mother. Why didn't he ever beat you or your sister?

What are you wearing that the others at first complained was too impractical?

What is your name?