

Marshal Maxine Hadland

Delegation: Matters' Folly

Nationality: Badlands

The Badlands Marshal is something of a romantic figure to many– the loner with a quiet authority, all that stands between the people she's sworn to protect and whatever varied troubles the deserts and the town itself might throw their way. What few take the time to realise is that being a romantic figure is often far less fun than the movies make it out to be. You know this as well as any, because you fit that image of the Marshal to a tee.

You grew up moving from town to town in the Badlands, your parents journeyman mechanics. You had little formal education but learned a lot from your travels, things they don't teach in schools – how to shoot, to track through the desert wastes, engines, dealing with people. In a town somewhere – it doesn't matter where now, and you've tried to forget – you met Oskar Hadland, owner of a mining supplies shop, originally from the United Mercantile Federation. He was thirty cycles old and you only eighteen, but you fell in love and when your parents moved on you stayed with him. You were happy and carefree in those days.

When Earth invaded, Oskar immediately resolved to return home to sign up with the Northern Guard to fight the invaders. You were shocked – a pacifist, you felt sure there must be a solution other than going to war. Oskar was determined, however, and eventually you had to relent and allow him to follow his own path. You married in a hurried ceremony the day before he left, and then got down to dealing with the War your own way.

For someone keeping out of it, the insanity of war reached out and shook you hard. With many of those fit to fight out of town, the CEF forces quelled any resistance and used the town as one of their bases in the area for two cycles, administering harsh punishments to any they saw as a threat. When they were forced to retreat by the Peace River Army (where was that two cycles previously, many questioned) further atrocities were committed by the townspeople themselves on their neighbours they believed had been collaborating with the Earthers. Worst of all for you though was when in the closing days of the War you received word that Oskar had been killed in a “friendly fire” incident by Southern Republic Army troops. You later learned that this wasn't entirely unheard of – with the War won and the Alliance no longer strictly necessary, some opportunistic commanders from both Poles were striking at their erstwhile enemies while their backs were turned. Sickened, you left the town and never looked back.

You moved from place to place, drinking hard and starting fights before being moved on by the local authorities. You had had your fill of your fellow man, seen the ugliness of which he's capable and felt disgusted by your association with your own species. You worked variously as a mechanic, a guide, a trapper and even a brief stint as a prize-fighter in Peace River before drifting into Matters' Folly, then a small town quickly growing due to a recent water discovery, and with all the inherent boomtown problems.

Drinking and fighting hardly made you stand out in a place like that, but you were noticed by a merchant called Dellasanta for your knack with people. Certainly, you're not fond of people, but you're adept at hiding it, and people like you and tend to respect your judgement. Dellasanta campaigned for you to be instated as the town's Marshal, something it badly needed, and sure enough you were voted in. Over the cycles you've become good at the job, trusted by the populace because of the friendly openness you've perfected putting on.

The position of Marshal brings with it membership of the town council, and you've used your influence there

to make your own job easier and therefore keep the town more peaceful – giving yourself command of the militia in matters of civil emergency, for example, or having the final say on banning likely troublemakers from town altogether. It was when you were trying to push this one through that the head of the farmers' association (and therefore fellow councillor) Shad Kolkman asked you out. Although you were disinterested in a romantic sense, you could plainly see how you could use this opportunity to gain supporting votes on the council (the merchants were against you banning groups of thirsty labourers and miners from their establishments) and so went along with it. With your artificial sensitive and empathetic facade, he shortly fell in love with you, and because there didn't seem to be any major disadvantage to it, you continued playing along. You do still drink too much sometimes on your days off and have been somewhat abusive to Shad from time to time, but you've always managed to smooth it over the next day.

Lately you've noticed that Milan Kopier, the owner of the prosperous water company, seems to be interested in you too. You visit his house weekly for a drink and a chat, and wondering where this might be headed, you've hinted that your relationship with Shad isn't going well and that he treats you badly. This could potentially make your life on the council easier again, but of course it could cause a lot of problems if not handled carefully.

So now Dellasanta, who's been mayor now for several cycles, has decided that the only way Matters' Folly can weather the current storm of the Interpolar War is by allying with one of the major powers. You argued long and hard against that, did what you could to convince Dellasanta to overturn the decision to hold these negotiations but in vain. But you know well what these big powers are like, the hideous acts they're capable of. They don't care at all about a little town like this, they'll use it for what they can and throw it to the dawgs when they're done. North and South are the same, short-sighted squabbling children. Port Arthur is not to be trusted – they're still Earthers, regardless of how often they claim otherwise – and Peace River is driven by profit only. No, this town, like yourself, has to put itself first and look after number one. Because nobody else can be trusted to do that.

About Your Delegation <

- **Mayor Dellasanta** – A competent mayor and businessman, although less good at looking after his own affairs, what with his children having abandoned him. Obviously doesn't know what the big powers are like though.
- **Shad Kolkman** – A nice enough but very naive guy who's fallen in love with you. You string him along for now. He secretly (and naively) employs a few GREs on his farm, and you believe you're the only one he's told about that. That could prove useful information.
- **Milan Kopier** – A self-obsessed fat-cat who reckons the world owes him, even though he's the richest man in the area. He's had a tough life though, his wife ran out on him with their kids after the War. He's taken an interest in you, which could also be of use to you.
- **Rabbi Gonzales** – The town's Jerusalemite preacher and therefore representative of the majority of the town's religious sentiment. You're not religious yourself and find the Rabbi a tad mercenary.
- **Frank** – A caravan trader who's been knocking around town from time to time since before you showed up. Suspicious how he manages such good prices, and you wonder where he's from...

About Others You Know <

- **Marna Kounkel** – An assassin from Peace River. Not sure if he's freelance, government\corporate, organised crime or revolutionary, but his sister was married to Mayor Dellasanta. Until one day when he was visiting her and some unfinished business of his followed him into town and started a gunfight. When the smoke cleared his sister was dead. He wasn't technically guilty so you let him walk, but Dellasanta blames him 100%.

Resources <

You have two deputies you can summon if necessary. They're not great fighters but have access to some reasonable equipment.

Goals <

- Ensure the town remains independent. You may have to cut some pretty strange deals to arrange this, but you do have as much of a vote as anybody else on the council – and if you can keep Shad and Milan doing your bidding, you practically have a majority all of your own.

Additional Player Info: Marshal Hadland <

She really does seem like a sensitive and caring person. Certainly, she's obviously confident and self-assured, as befits a Marshal, but the first thing that people think when they meet her is how nice she is. Which of course she actually isn't, but people don't know that and couldn't guess it to look at her friendly, accommodating face. The truth is that she just doesn't trust anybody apart from herself, and is willing to take whatever measures are necessary to see her own ends met. Those measures in that case will probably involve gaining and abusing others' trust, and that's something at which she's expert.