

BROKEN EARTH

Fire Queen of Dover

A Tale from the Great Lakes

By Chris Costello



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Broken Earth: Fire Queen of Dover published by Sneak Attack Press, Copyright 2015.

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Fire Queen of Dover

A Tale from the Great Lakes



Word has spread from fishing village to fishing village about the Fire Queen protecting the town of Dover. She is a powerful mutant able to control fearsome dragons, and use them to fight off raiders.

Little does anybody know, while the Fire Queen influences her dragons, they also influence her, making her increasingly cruel and unpredictable.

Dover

Obvious

Population: 315 (Fisherfolk)

Buildings: Shelter

Port Dover, Ontario was a small unincorporated community that seemed a world away from the coming war. Lake Erie made for good fishing and the area had plenty of wildlife as well. The Canadian Raptor Conservatory was established nearby as a rehabilitation and captive breeding program focused on eagles and other great birds of the area. By the time of the Great War, its mission had changed

considerably. While the children's shows and exhibits continued above ground, more fantastical studies were taking place in a bunker below: exploring the possibility of transforming mundane raptors into weapons of war. However, the bombs fell before the project finished, and the Conservatory's secrets were buried.

A small community of farmers eventually established themselves in "Dover." Living off the lake and the land was easy, but the community was vulnerable to raiders who crossed the foothills looking for food. Dover would often have to give away more than half of its bounty as tribute, leaving the community with barely enough food to get by. This all changed when the Fire Queen arrived.

Susanne Steiner came to Dover as a refugee. She and her freak parents were driven out of an intolerant human community when she was ten. Her parents proved unable to cope with the savagery of the post-war world and died within a year. Susanne's telepathic abilities gave her the edge she needed to survive. She became skilled at mentally commanding beasts, and survived on her

own into her mid-teens. It was at this point that some combination of curiosity, desperation, and hormones drove her to seek out civilization.

The people of Dover were initially wary of the lone freak who wandered in from the wilds, but when she proved she could work, they let her stay. She established her residence in the Raptor Conservatory complex. Some families had set up in there before, but they became sick after staying there for too long. Susanne trusted in her freakish resistance to keep her safe. She never became ill, but Susanne did experience strange dreams, seeing through the eyes of a powerful predator. One night, her dreams showed her a view of Dover through those feral eyes. She woke with a start and rushed to the location of her dream. That was when the first dragon arrived. The second dragon—the first one's mate—came soon after.

Something from the abandoned projects within the Canadian Raptor Conservatory had given Susanne the ability to command the loyalty of dragons. Perhaps it was her latent ability to command wild beasts, or shared genetic markers due to the Extreme Radiation Resistance virus. Whatever it was, the next time the raiders came to collect their tribute, they were met with pyrokinetic saurian resistance. They rethought their arrangement and left Dover in peace. The fisher folk were ecstatic and crowned Susanne the Fire Queen (having found some supplies from a pre-war beauty pageant).

The Fire Queen Today

Susanne lies somewhere between a guardian and a mascot for Dover. Her dragons provide the security needed for the community members to lead their lives peacefully, and they are very grateful to Susanne for that, but many in the community are more ambivalent about her. After she fought off the raiders for the first time, the community elected her to lead them, but Susanne's initial attempts at leadership were disastrous. Her new innovations about agriculture lost more crops than the raiders. After that, the villagers quietly went back to the way they had done things before, leaving the Fire Queen as a figurehead.

In recent months, Susanne's behavior has changed radically. These changes in mood and disposition coincided with the arrival of a third, very aggressive and dominating dragon that many have come to call Rot Heart. Susanne has become anti-social and short with people. Her mood soured further, when her love, Fatima, left the community after one of Susanne's dragons attacked. Worse, and unbeknownst to the community, the dragons' influences have instilled a predatory side in Susanne. She's beginning to send her dragons to attack nearby villages and travelers.

Conflict with the Fire Queen

While Susanne is a very empathetic figure, the fact remains that she is using her power over her dragons to hurt people. Without intervention it is inevitable that she will turn her dragons on her own people. Heroes seeking a resolution other than an armed insurrection, will have opportunities to bring the Queen out of Rot Heart's influence. Giving Susanne a connection to her humanity—such as a reunion with Fatima or encouraging the community to embrace her more fully—could allow her to shake off the dragon's mental assaults. Needless to say, Rot Heart won't take this laying down. A full-on assault on the Fire Queen is a tall order; she has at least two of her dragons at her side at most times and typically Rot Heart is one of them.



Susanne Steiner, the Fire Queen

Race: Freak

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d8, Psionics d10, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Tracking d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 7

Hindrances: Clueless, Mind Slave, Quirk (preens herself)

Edges: Arcane Background (Psionics), Extra Power, Extra Power, Teep

Gear: Knife (Str+d4), canteen, blanket, Fatima's scarf

Arcane Powers: 15 Power Points, *beast friend*, *bolt* (2d4 ignores armor), *healing*, *mind reading*, *stun*

The Queen's Dragons

Susanne never named her dragons, but the citizens have assigned nicknames to them. Of the original pair the female was named "Clarabelle" (because she had the most likeable disposition around people) and the male was named "Bitey" (because he bites things). The community has not yet settled on a nickname for the newcomer; most simply refer to it as the Big One. The fisher folk have not shown the same enthusiasm to accept the larger dragon into the community (there was a contest to name Bitey and Clarabelle). In whispered conversations among intimates, some community members have begun to call it Rot Heart.

Bitey and Clarabelle use the standard dragon stats from *Broken Earth* (reprinted below for convenience). Rot Heart has gone through a disturbing metamorphosis since joining mentally with the Fire Queen. Rot Heart uses his emotional control to slowly erode Susanne's ego and superego to the point where her mental state is beginning to resemble the dragon's own. It can't take control of Susanne's mind, but it has a powerful influence on her fight-or-flight responses and can push her into an almost feral state for a limited time. Most unsettlingly, Rot Heart has demonstrated the ability to communicate telepathically using human words. It does not fully understand the language and uses no grammar. Rather it is able to transmit its thoughts into words in a susceptible

target's mind. So far it has only "spoken" to Susanne, but it is capable of reaching out to party members, particularly psionic ones. When using its *fear* power or intimidating, it makes disturbing broken statements of its predatory intentions such as "Die. Eat. Corpse." or "Murder. Friends. Drink. Blood."



Dragons

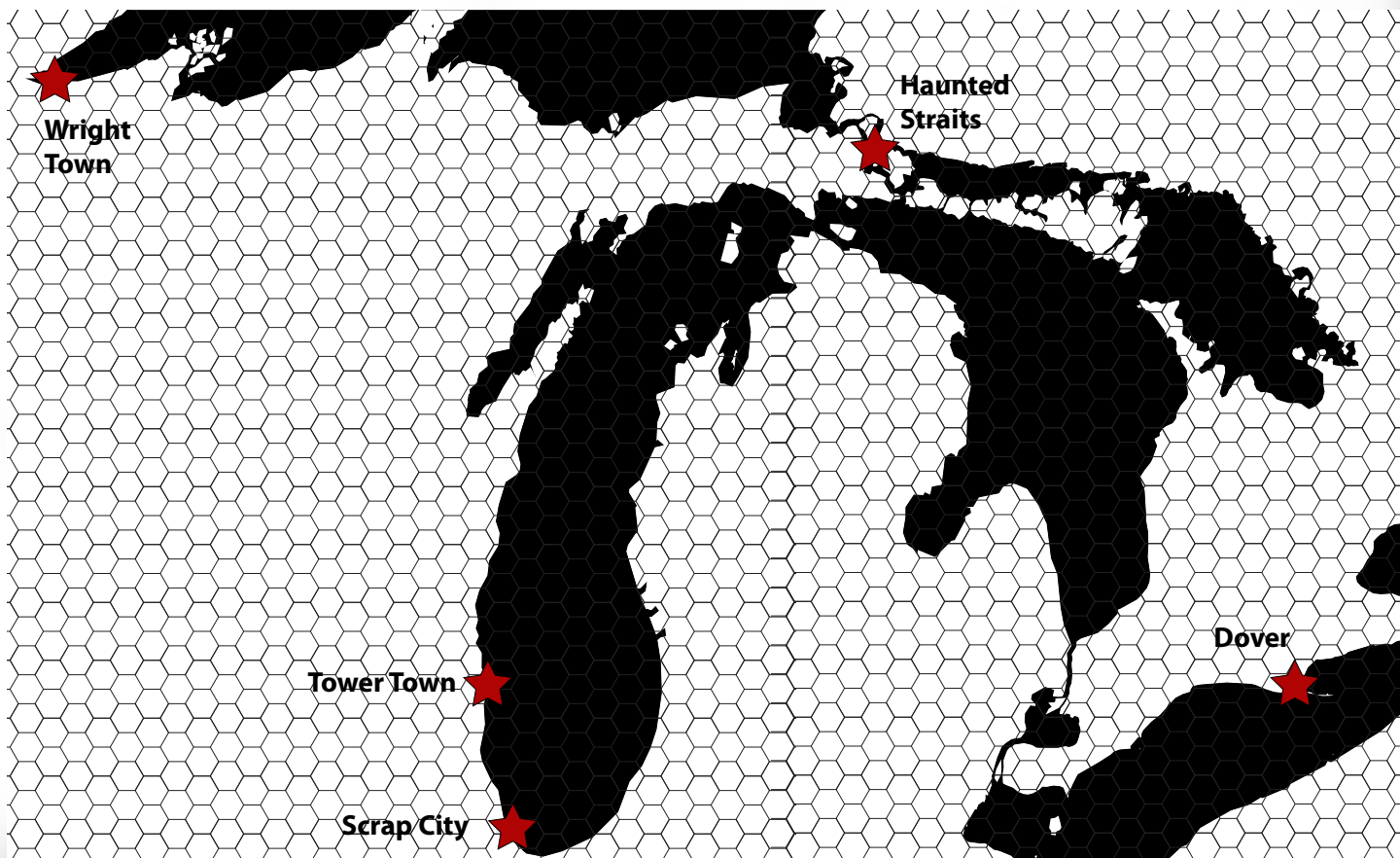
Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d12, Notice d12, Psionics d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 15 (2)

Special Abilities

- **Armor +2:** Thick hide.
- **Bite:** Str+1d8.
- **Extreme Radiation Resistance:** Dragons are immune to all but the strongest forms of radiation. They gain a +4 bonus to Vigor tests to resist radiation.
- **Psionics:** Dragons have 10 Power Points and know the following powers: *burst*, *blast*, and *damage field*.
- **Radioactive Fire:** All the powers used by dragons have a radioactive fire trapping. Any creature in the area of one of the dragon's psionic powers must also make a Vigor test or suffer a level of Fatigue. Characters incapacitated by Fatigue suffer permanent radiation sickness, a Long-Term Chronic, Minorly Debilitating disease (see core rulebook).
- **Size +3:** Dragons are about the size of a grizzly bear





Rot Heart

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d12, Intimidate d10, Notice d12, Psionics d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 16 (2)

Special Abilities

- **Armor +2:** Thick hide.
- **Bite:** Str+1d8.
- **Extreme Radiation Resistance:** Dragons are immune to all but the strongest forms of radiation. They gain a +4 bonus to Vigor tests to resist radiation.
- **Psionics:** Rot Heart has 15 Power Points and knows the following powers: *burst, blast, damage field, fear*.
- **Radioactive Fire:** All the powers used by dragons have a radioactive fire trapping. Any creature in the area of one of the dragon's psionic powers must also make a Vigor test or suffer a level of Fatigue. Characters incapacitated by Fatigue suffer permanent radiation sickness, a Long-Term Chronic, Minorly Debilitating disease (see core rulebook).
- **Size +4:** Rot Heart is even larger than most dragons.

Fatima — Traveling Scrapper

Fatima came to Dover after the Fire Queen had proven her lack of leadership and tensions were high among the community. While trading her scrap for food, Fatima met Susanne and the two quickly bonded. Fatima settled down and became something of a majordomo for the Fire Queen. Fatima had grown up in Freaky Town, and was much more accustomed to how a community worked than the orphaned Susanne. For several months, between Susanne, Fatima, and the community elders, Dover began to prosper. Susanne and Fatima also began the bumbling process of falling in love.

With the arrival of the third dragon and Susanne's mood change, Fatima became very concerned for her partner. Susanne pulled further and further away until a final confrontation resulted in a dragon attack, leaving the left side of Fatima's face covered in burn marks. Fatima left the community, ostensibly to search for ruins to provide scrap. She is now returning with the results of her journey. Fatima has a mutated prehensile tail which twitches when she's thinking. The left side of her face has several burn scars (although it isn't covered in them) which Rot Heart gave her the last time she tried to talk sense into Susanne.



Fatima

Race: Freak

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d8, Lockpicking d6, Notice d8, Repair d8, Stealth d6, Swimming d4, Throwing d4

Charisma: -2, **Pace:** 6, **Parry:** 7, **Toughness:** 8(2)

Hindrances: Curious, Loyal, Phobia (minor, fire)

Edges: Lucky, Prehensile Tail, Scavenger, Tail

Gear: Rapier (Str+d4), 2 daggers (Str+d4), leather armor (+2), backpack, sleeping bag, compass, rope, bicycle, canteen.

The Community

People in Dover have decidedly mixed feelings about the current situation with the Fire Queen. They understand and appreciate that the dragons keep them safe, but they're starting to worry about the implications of having all their power controlled by one unstable woman. While the community members in general keep their concerns to themselves, a few voices in the community have begun to speak up.

Stella Muñoz — Dover Elder

Stella was the leader of the community before Susanne's arrival, and continued to assist her after the "coronation." Stella is aware of concerns over Susanne's behavior after the arrival of Rot Heart, but she's committed to keeping Susanne and her dragons as part of the community. Being creeped out is a lot better than losing half your crop to bandits, in her opinion. Currently, she is treading a thin line of keeping things up and running without eroding Susanne's authority and position in the community.

Stella is an elderly woman whose once-black hair has now turned gray. Her skin is tanned and weathered from many years working in the sun. Her smile reveals that in all her years she's only lost six teeth, a fact that she'll happily share with anyone.

Stella Muñoz

Race: Human

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Healing d4, Knowledge (Agriculture) d10, Knowledge (Nature) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d10, Streetwise d8

Charisma: +2, **Pace:** 6, **Parry:** 4, **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Elderly, Loyal

Edges: Charismatic

Gear: Ballpoint pen, clipboard

Jason Bell — Instigator

Jason Bell never liked the dragons. It seemed like the peak of idiocy to make your bed next to a pack of monsters just because some lady promises they'll behave. He's always been vocal about his concerns and now people are starting to listen to him. If he sees his opportunity, he will try to rally a mob to deal with the dragon problem directly.

When he's not rallying against Susanne, Jason captains one of the most successful fishing boats in Dover. Jason is a young man with curly brown hair and a scruffy beard. His eyes are green, and his skin peach-colored. He has a tattoo of an anchor on his right bicep and one of a fish on his left.

Jason Bell

Race: Human

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Agriculture) d6, Persuasion d8, Tracking d6

Charisma: —, **Pace:** 6, **Parry:** 6, **Toughness:** 8(2)

Hindrances: Overconfident, Stubborn, Vengeful

Edges: Command, Natural Leader

Gear: Spear (Str+d6), leather jacket (+2), compass, pre-war map of Lake Erie.

Barbarians at the Gates

Before its draconic champions arrived, Dover was a favorite target for several bands of raiders in the area. One gang in particular, has its sights set on adding Dover back into its rotation. The gang's leader, Stim, has a spy in the community (a minor fisher) and is looking for opportunities to strike. His real hope is that the tension will continue to rise in the community and Susanne will either be ousted or just leave. He doesn't want to risk his men against the dragons directly, but if he can get one at a disadvantage he'd love to kill it off. Stim's gang is more than a match for Dover's non-draconic defenses and if the PCs decide that the Fire Queen needs to be deposed, they will have to deal with Stim or leave Dover to its fate. Stim commands a gang of eighteen raiders and keeps them in line

using his chemistry skills to offer them recreational and performance-enhancing drugs. He's fond of boosting up the abilities of a few minions and sending them to do the dirty work when faced with a new enemy. He is a formidable fighter himself though, and will use Extreme Chemistry to give himself the maximum advantage before engaging

Stim is a relatively young man with light brown skin. He has unkempt black hair and perpetual stubble on his face. His eyes are brown, and he wears an ancient pair of glasses, not because he needs them, but because he thinks they make him look more authoritative. He is perpetually smoking—usually something that he made himself.



Stim

Race: Human

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Chemistry d10, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Shooting d4, Survival d4, Throwing d8,

Hindrances: Arrogant, Greedy, Stubborn

Edges: Arcane Background (Extreme Chemistry), Command, Extra Power, Power Points, Sweep

Gear: Maul (Str+d8, Parry -1), breast plate (+3), throwing axe (Range 3/6/12, Damage Str+d6), Revolver Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1), various narcotics.

Arcane Powers: 15 Power Points, *armor, boost trait, healing, quickness*

Plot Points

The following plot points are designed to bring the characters to Dover from other lands described in the main *Broken Earth* campaign setting.

The Hand of the Fire Queen

Where: Begins in Wright Town or Geneva

When: After exploring most of Lake Superior and Lake Michigan

Rumors have come to Wright Town of the majesty of the Fire Queen. The tales describe her as beautiful, just, and above all else, powerful. A member of the Wright family has decided that the queen would make for an excellent



political marriage. The PCs are asked to treat with the Fire Queen and extend the proposal offer (with or without a representative of the Wright Family).

When the heroes arrive, they must contend with the fact that Susanne does not so much meet with the descriptions that are being spread around about her, and that her community is not overly impressive and in a volatile situation. If they want to call off the engagement, they have to find a way that allows the Wrights to save face. If they want to go forward they must convince the Fire Queen who, in addition to being mentally unbalanced, is pining for her lost love.

A lord from the Kingdom of Geneva could also be used in place of the Wright family.

The Madness of the Fire Queen

Where: Begins at a small community

When: Any time after the heroes have made it to Lake Erie

A small community has been ravaged by a dragon. Nothing was taken; the dragon simply ransacked the town and left. The community members suspect it is the results of the up-until-now friendly Fire Queen. They've had positive if distant relations in the past. In fact they're grateful to the Fire Queen for having driven several raiders out of the area. The heroes are asked to investigate the Fire Queen, and if necessary take her out. The characters face a moral dilemma as they learn that the Fire Queen was once peaceful, but is suffering under the influence of her new dragon.

The Bride of the Fire Queen

Where: Begins in any location with scrap

When: After the characters have explored Lake Huron.

The heroes encounter Fatima who is searching for scrap at their location. She has already collected as much as she can carry, and if the party is friendly she'll offer some tips on the area in exchange for staying with them for the night. Around the campfire Fatima gets melancholy and if pressed relates her version of events with Susanne to the party. If the party impressed her during the day, she wakes up mad as hell and recruits the heroes to help her win back the woman she loves. Fatima has a much more active role in this scenario and the PCs would mostly support her in her quest. If things slow down, the raiders return and threaten the community, forcing the community to unite against them, possibly with Susanne not completely in control of her dragons.





Drakonheim

City of Bones

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in the sewers, and worse waits
beyond the walls.

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