

## **Thaddeus Q. Lynch - Gossip**

There are rumors and gossip about each of the characters at the party. Some is true, some might not be. Below are all of the rumors about your character, plus one or two tidbits about others.

You're being told the rumors about you so that you won't be surprised when someone mentions them. You can decide whether the gossip is true or not (although others may believe it's true regardless); your decision will affect your reaction (you can indignantly deny it, stammer and change the subject, freely admit it...whatever you like).

During the course of the evening, you should try to mention the gossip you know about others. Try to work it casually into the conversation: Don't walk in the door and blurt out, "She's a diabetic, and he's addicted to morphine, and she's having an affair with a circus midget." Instead, you might notice that someone has refused dessert and ask if that's due to her diabetes, or mention an acquaintance of yours that you know is the other fellow's pusher (you're on your own with the circus midget).

Also, please try not to share your clues with others before the party. The puzzle is more fun if everyone has only a few pieces.

### **What Someone Knows About You:**

Some of your wealth has been gained by less-than-ethical means. You once told a local widow that the tarry deposits often plowed up in her fields made the land worthless for growing crops and thus almost valueless. After she sold it in a transaction you brokered, the enormous oil reserves underneath rewarded you richly.

You're particularly keen on treasure-hunting...not only is it fascinating archaeology, but it's easy to under-report your profits. More than one private collector knows about your "sideline."

### **What You Know About Others:**

"Emerald Jim" Calhoun - The Spindletop deal wasn't the first time Calhoun has acquired property by somewhat shady means. He somehow persuades reluctant tenants to sell their homes, and the prices he pays for land are often surprisingly low. It isn't unusual for landowners who stubbornly refuse to sell to meet with calamity--livestock stolen or killed, wells poisoned, anonymous tips to the local authorities about past misdeeds.

General Grant - When he was a cadet, each student was required to research a battle of his choice and give an oral report on military tactics. He used a little-known Civil War battle (the Siege of Hilltop House) as his example, and was in the middle of discussing the fact that nothing was plundered by the troops. He suddenly stopped, exclaimed, "Then that means the gold is still there..." then shook himself, apologized for his outburst, and finished his report. He refused to elaborate any further on his comment.

The Von Bluchers - You know that they're not as wealthy as they pretend to be. The Countess inherited the house. As soon as the inheritance paperwork had cleared, the Count came to you asking about mortgaging the property (it unfortunately isn't worth much; it's been closed for

nearly 60 years, and hasn't had any improvements such as electrical wiring). Although they put on a façade of wealth, they're nearly broke.

The Help - No one ever sees Cook. She's shy and suspicious of strangers. There are rumors that she spent some time in an asylum, but she's much better now. Really.