



A Custom Minecraft Adventure v1.8

<http://www.minecraftforum.net/viewtopic.php?f=1034&t=328438>

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001 – Foreword



*What are the roots that clutch what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,
You cannot say, or guess, for you how only
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
And the dry stone no sound of water. Only
There is shadow under this red rock,
(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),
And I will show you something different from either
Your shadow at morning striding behind you
Or shadow at evening rising to meet you;
I will show you fear in a handful of dust.*

- T.S. Eliot The Waste Land

Greetings! Welcome to my latest Adventure Map for MINECRAFT. This introduction section relates my inspiration and goals for the custom map. If you are eager to get on with it, you can skip to section 002 – Gameplay Rules.

The first influence for this map came from a failed attempt at an adventure map with multiple portals to and from the Nether. After researching what was wrong with my map – I discovered that I would essentially have to scrap a huge zone that I spent hours building. Frustrated, I temporarily put that map aside rather than redo that effort, and I decided I was going to try an adventure map with a much simpler portal mechanic first. I settled on the idea that the character would have to travel into the Nether to complete the game's tutorial and receive their starting equipment (an homage to starting areas in my all-time favorite MMO, Asheron's Call) before starting the actual storyline. I immediately got the idea that this would be like a 'vision quest', where the character is followed by an ethereal voice walking them through the first mission. Vision Quest led me to think of something like "Dances with Wolves" where a "white man" goes to live with the "natives" and grows to become part of the tribe. Still linked to my Asheron's Call influence, I was thinking this would take place in a desert setting, and the Old West was a natural extension. After a cursory Google search, I felt that the Old West theme hadn't been overdone yet.

I started looking for examples of Old West town features that I could recreate (saloon, oil derrick, train platform, general store, jail...). And then I put that aside and looked for a seed with the right land shapes I was looking for. I started doing mass //replaces with sand and let the map grow in different directions until I felt like it would take you a long time to actually wander through this desert from end-to-end. After flying around the map for about 8 hours, I was fairly satisfied that I created a vast desert that is sprinkled with variety of outcroppings. It ended up not being the heart of the desert, but more like the last foothills on the edge, struggling to keep from being consumed by the scouring sands. And it was beautiful.

991 x 879 block surface area (871,089 square blocks)!

I then used the Cartographer_G tool to render an external map and start sketching out the 'points of interest' around the map, so that any direction the character went there is a chance of coming across something. During this process, that Old West town started to become the loWest thing on my priority list. The main character evolved as well, and I spent a lot of time tackling simple, yet big problems ; how to make something that looks like a real-scale wagon wheel with 1-meter cubes? How do you make a decent looking honky tonk piano? How do I create dried out animal bones in the sand? Ok – so these might not be solved to my 100% satisfaction, but they did make the final cut.

All the while I've got one of the most difficult tasks cooking in the back of my mind... what to call this thing? I was looking through my music collection for some inspiration, when I saw Augustana's "Wasteland". And it clicked. Through that famous poem, I realized that Stephen King's Dark Tower (my favorite book series) had inserted itself into the story. "The man in black fled across the desert, and the gunslinger followed." That was exactly the "mood" I wanted to create, and you will see a good number of references in the 'background' of the actual storyline I created.

I take a lot of pride in the details that I put into my map. I spend a significant amount of time working through ideas and story elements on paper, and everything has to be in line with my overall goals for the map. Building on concepts and learnings from my prior maps, I hope that I was able to...

- Tell a core story, with side quests and 'points of interest' if you are inclined to explore
- Minimize the points where you are 'taken out of the story' to pause and read quest text
- Add a slightly more formal 'scoring system'
- Provide balanced but increasing level of difficulty with spawners, light levels, and loot progression
- Offer high quality custom skins if you are inclined to role play
- Offer intriguing audio 'narration' that you can play instead of reading text
- Minimize the number of 'rules'

If you've read this far, you have my gratitude. I hope you find this map to be challenging and enjoyable, and I look forward to your feedback!

002 – Gameplay Rules



1. **Stay within the bedrock** wall. At least until you complete the main storyline.
2. You are welcome to **break/mine blocks**. However, I hope you respect the ‘storyline’ and don’t break down man-made structures (such as steel doors) unless the story justifies it.
3. You are free to **craft anything** you like.
4. You are free to **burn or explode anything** you like!
5. Only use **mods and texture packs that are realistic** to the themes of the map (e.g. Dr. Zhark’s “Mo’ Creatures” horses, or Spitfire4466’s “Steam Locomotive”!)
6. Only **count records from Checkpoint Chests** in your final score, not dungeons. See **003 – Checkpoints and Scoring** for further explanation
7. I recommend that you **listen to the audio ‘narration’** at each checkpoint, but you can also read the text in 004 – Narration
8. You may **play on any difficulty setting**. Note: as you listen to the main storyline’s chapter narration, I will recommend changing the difficulty at certain points, to better fit the storyline.
9. You may find yourself running low on inventory space. Feel free to **find/create a base camp where you can store your records** and other items.

003 – Checkpoints and Scoring



As you play through this map, you will come across Checkpoints that are intended to guide you through the main storyline, or provide you with 'side quest' flavor. All checkpoints consist of a Jukebox and Chest in the ground.



I tried to make them inconspicuous so that they do not interfere with the visual landscape (e.g. as a signpost in the middle of nowhere that says 'read note 6'). This does mean that some of them may be overlooked if you aren't paying attention. It's part of the challenge!

Inside of each Checkpoint Chest will be a RECORD and a pile of SAND. Records represent your score. GOLD RECORDS are used for (13) main storyline checkpoints, GREEN RECORDS indicate (18) side quest checkpoints. The number of sand blocks tell you which "narration chapter" to listen to. For example...

Main storyline chapter 2



Side Quest chapter 41



Note: Any records found in non-Checkpoint Chests (e.g. dungeons) should NOT be counted in your final score. Sand does not need to be kept once you have listened to the chapter.

004 – Narration



In the save folder for this map you will find a sub-folder called “Narration”. As you come across Checkpoint Chests for the main storyline, you can play the corresponding .mp3 file and hear the story unfold. You can also read the narration in the corresponding .txt files or this section. Side quest narration can only be found in .txt files or below.

Chapter 00 – Preface (no checkpoint chest – read first)

Narrator: Welcome to FEAR IN A HANDFUL OF DUST. An adventure map for Minecraft. As you are reading or listening to this text, you have probably found the read me file in the main folder. But just in case you haven't, please review the Gameplay Rules, Checkpoints and Scoring instructions. Thank you in advance for trying out this map – and good luck!

Main Storyline (Gold Records)

Chapter 01 – Big Winds Mesa (*difficulty recommendation: Peaceful*)

Narrator: Upon their sixteenth naming day, youths of the tribe are sent to Big Winds Mesa, to fast and meditate. Those who will become warriors have visions, and few may return with a spirit companion. Others do not return – they disappear into the Western sands. You have spent three days on Big Winds Mesa without food or water. Staring into the fire, the words of Chief Red Cloud echo in your memory...

Red Cloud: Albarel, son of my son, child of Meredith Rising-Moon. Albarel, of the two peoples. Raised to know the ways of both people, now seeks to become man in the eyes of our tribe. Open your heart and mind to the spirits. Three handfuls of angered earth to feed the flames. Pass through the fire and into the spirit world. Take nothing with you. In the spirit world, you will face several trials. But be vigilant, and do not be tempted from your path. Keep watch for the sign of your spirit companion. Every man's vision is his own – I cannot guide you further.

Narrator: You have prepared yourself as Red Cloud instructed. For three days, you fasted and dug a deep pit. At sundown, you remove your leathers and toss three handfuls of red powder into the flames. The powder gives off an acrid smoke that seems to scratch its way into your eyes and lungs. Your mind wanders again, until you notice a strange hum fill your mind and a purple color dances among the flames. Enter the fire and begin your journey!

Chapter 02 – In the Footsteps of His Ancestors (*difficulty recommendation: Peaceful*)

Narrator: Your vision swims in whorl of purple light and you feel as though you are flipped inside out through your navel. Even before your vision clears, you hear an ethereal voice.

Spirit: (softly) Comes ye now an infant, crawling on hand and knee, the desert devours his path with sand and wind. This one must not look back, where there is no trail. This one must choose to walk in the footsteps of his ancestors. This is your first trial.

Narrator: A thin path of sand stretches out before you through a hellish world. After studying the grains, you can just make out ... footprints leading forward.

Chapter 03 – The Sacrifice of the Earth *(difficulty recommendation: Peaceful)*

Spirit: (louder) Comes ye now a boy with the power to create, but the need to destroy. The earth gives of itself, but he must not waste any portion of the precious sacrifice. A boy must arm himself and ferry the bones of his ancestors lost, back to the waking world. This is your next trial.

Narrator: The land here is twisted and incomprehensible. In a low cave, a sickly tree trunk stands before you, yet at its heart beats a seed of hope. Tear down the tree to construct a bow and arrows. You must use all materials that you find. Nothing can be wasted. Then take the bones of your ancestors and carry them (do not convert them into bone meal).

Chapter 04 – The Symbol of Evil *(difficulty recommendation: Peaceful)*

Spirit: (louder!) Comes ye now a man to accept destiny! Destroy the symbol of evil and return to the land of the living!

Red Cloud: ... be vigilant, and do not be tempted from your path...

Narrator: Across a gap is a vision that fills your empty stomach with a cold, clenching sensation. You stand there for an unknowable amount of time trying to make sense of it. A... geode of... oily rock gives off uneven pulses of sickly light. At its center is an undulating rip in the air. Something between a rain-washed window looking down on the street below, and the heat warped air over sun-baked sands. Through this shimmering window, you see an enormous skeleton. The sun-washed bones of some nightmare creature.

Fire your weapon at the vision to complete your quest! Then return to the waking world and use sand to douse the flames.

Chapter 05 – Spirit Companion *(difficulty recommendation: Peaceful)*

Narrator: Upon returning to the waking world, you toss handfuls of sand on the campfire. As the flames die, so too does the purple connection to the spirit world. You have passed your test. But now your true journey begins. There is a piece of paper tucked under your sleeping furs. The letter reads...

Red Cloud: Albarel... it has been many moons since you went to Big Winds Mesa, and I fear you may never read this. But I must warn you, should you find this letter.

There is a corruption in the land. Your mother's people have not heeded our warning. They cut deeply into the Earth and take from her without offering. Our people are no longer safe here. We have heard the angry earth rumbling and scouts warn of strange creatures in the night. It is time for me to lead my people out of this land. Albarel... it falls to you. Your mother raised you as a boy among the white men – you have seen their greed. But now you are a man and a warrior of the tribe. You must stop the white man from their actions and set right what has been damaged. If you are able to heal the wound, we can return. Albarel, this is why you have been allowed to seek the vision quest – to save both peoples.

Narrator: The sun climbs across the sky as you re-read the letter. A harsh bark comes from the pit. Could this be your spirit companion Red Cloud mentioned? Tame the wolf, and then follow the footprints South until you find the railroad, then continue East back to town.

Chapter 06 – King's Contrivance (*difficulty recommendation: Easy*)

Narrator: As you approach the town of your childhood, it is somehow different. Smaller. More worn-down. Then a bark from your companion snaps you back to focus. There's something wrong. There are no people hustling through the streets. No workhands toiling at the train platform, the pony express, or the oil derrick. The town is silent. There are no hymns wafting from the church, no honky tonk melodies or clinking glasses tumbling out of the saloon. Only the sound of sand in the wind, scouring the wooden boardwalk and scratching at the sides of buildings.

How long have you been away?!

From the main street, you count three new graves in the churchyard. There is no sign of the towns inhabitants, yet lamps still burn here and there. It is as if humanity simply vanished, some days ago. Only one building shows any sign of recent usage. The door of the drugstore, at the far end of main street, creaks slowly in the wind. And you can just make out footprints in the dust, leading to the back store room.

Chapter 07 – Beneath these Streets (*difficulty recommendation: Easy*)

Narrator: Why would the druggist have a hidden passage beneath his shop? It appears to lead North toward the butte. Could this have something to do with the strange goings on?!

Chapter 08 – The Secret (*difficulty recommendation: Easy*)

Narrator: It makes no sense, but the glowing powders in the druggist's secret chest were somehow creating a doorway for evil to enter this world. You are sure of it. Dispose of the powder as best you can – at least moving it from this location seems to have weakened its effects. But a voice in the back of your head tells you that this isn't the root of the evil. You must trace it back to its source. Looking around again, you begin to wonder why the druggist has so many pick axes... and determine to head to the mining camp to the North of town.

Chapter 09 – The Mining Camp (*difficulty recommendation: Normal*)

Narrator: The Mining Camp is deserted of human life, and there is no evidence of any glowing powder among the Miner's possessions. You do find the foreman's log book, filled with dates and times of all worker activities with precise and measured penmanship. The second-to-last entry indicates that the druggist had been to the camp to tend to an outbreak of fever. The final entry is written in a hasty scrawl, and ink splotches cover part the page – a new pocket has been found and the men are raving about being rich – some kind of accident, and the druggist has gone into the mine – a fight has broken out and the foreman is on his way to break it up.

Chapter 10 – Gold Fever (difficulty recommendation: Normal)

Narrator: As a boy growing up near a mining camp, you've seen small pockets of minerals inside a shaft. But the vein of precious metals and stones before you is staggering. It's clear that the miners blasted through to this cavern and in their excitement, hadn't even taken the time to construct a safe descent. Looking around, you find ropes that were used to lower the first miners down into the new discovery... cut and tossed down to the bottom, most likely stranding men below. A cold wind surges up from below, standing up the hairs on the back of your neck.

Chapter 11 – The Edge of Madness (difficulty recommendation: Normal)

Narrator: A low vibration emanates from the massive glowing sphere in the chamber below. This close, you can feel it in the roots of your teeth and behind your eyeballs. Your stomach is a hard knot of ice. There can be no doubt – THIS is the core of the evil gripping the land. A larger version of the symbol from your spirit quest – grown like a cancer in this cavern. A black crack has been blown in the side of it by the miners. Fools. And even as you know it is wrong, the pulsing light seems to be calling you... drawing you in. SOMETHING inside that sphere should not have been exposed.

Chapter 12 – Sealing the Pillar (difficulty recommendation: Peaceful)

Narrator: You manage to neutralize three rips in the air, stopping the flow of creatures into our world. But you cannot damage the black pillar in the middle of the sphere. Your blows slide off of it as though it is not part of this world. And the longer you try, you feel the air becoming charged as though lightning is about to strike. The very air seems to be growing... thinner. As if the pillar is about to create new rips in the air. There is no time to waste. You cannot destroy the pillar – you can only hope to bury it – seal it away from the world above. A few bricks of TNT in the entrance to this cavern look like it will be enough. Hurry – you can hear more creatures ripping through into this world. Once you seal off the tunnel, listen to "Chapter 13"

Chapter 13 – An End (no checkpoint chest - follows chapter 12)

Narrator: Looking back toward the sphere tunnel, all you see is a wall of rocks. The sickening vibration in the air is barely noticeable now as you make your way back to the surface. It may take you several days to collapse the rest of the mine shaft, but you have plugged the hole for now. Then to find Red Cloud and his people, and you need to head to Susannah to see how

far the corruption had spread... and clear out any creatures that made it to the surface... and warn the government about this so that it can be avoided in the future... you push the enormity of the quest to the back of your mind and focus on the task at hand. This isn't "The End", but it is...

AN END.

Thank you for playing through this map, I hope you enjoyed it. Please leave any feedback on the minecraft forums thread, or feel free to email me at smalecr@gmail.com. If you haven't already done so – you can explore the rest of this map as there are numerous side quests and points of interest to be found. Until next time... farewell!

Side Quests / Points of Interest (Green Records)

Chapter 30 – Red Cloud's Village

Narrator: Red Cloud's people built their village on the walls inside the canyon, surrounding a central gathering place. The homes are made of natural stone, high up on the walls, accessible only by ladders that can be withdrawn in times of danger. The village is empty. A few meager possessions have been left behind, that could not be carried when the tribe departed. There is no way to tell how long they have been gone, but judging by the untended garden it has been several days, if not weeks. Even your well-honed tracking skills cannot tell you which way they went. The sand has scoured all traces of their footprints.

Chapter 31 – The Wall Painting

Narrator: Most of the homes are small, with only a sleeping mat and a space for storing goods or crafting personal items. One home, however, extends further into the rock wall. Here, a painting has been made on the rock wall. The mysterious red paint gives off a faint sparkle when brushed. The painting is familiar enough; depicting the Angered Earth a small way to the North of the village. A harsh landscape, pock-marked with quicksand pits and cracks that spew sulfur and sometimes magma to the surface. But a new feature seems to have been added to this map in a black ink. A lone warrior standing in the middle of the Angered Earth, looking North.

Chapter 32 - Angered Earth

Narrator: A harsh landscape, pock-marked with quicksand pits and cracks that spew sulfur and sometimes magma to the surface. Even the desert lizards avoid going too far into the churning area. Near the middle of the region, you find a beaded necklace hung on a cactus. You are convinced that Red Cloud and his people passed this way when they left this land, heading North. Encouraged by this, you now know in your heart that you will one day find your tribe, after you have rid the land of the evil taint.

Chapter 33 – Among the Bones

Narrator: You come across the bones of some enormous, long-dead beast sticking out of the sand. This is the way of the shifting sands – what is once buried rises to the surface, and is again covered at the will of the winds. But the size of this creature gives you goosebumps.

Chapter 34 – Ol Timer's Camp

Narrator: You happen upon a well-laid campsite. Calling out gets you no reply, but you can almost feel a pair of eyes watching you from somewhere nearby. Whoever made this camp doesn't want to be bothered – perhaps they too are wary of the creatures that haunt the land.

Chapter 35 – Hot Springs

Narrator: Water is scarce in the desert. Here, it is abundant, but undrinkable. It bubbles up in pools and every few hours a geyser jets up into the air. The ground is crusted with sulfur and other minerals.

Chapter 36 – Abandoned Camp

Narrator: The campsite seems to have been disturbed recently. Small splotches of blood have soaked into the sand, leading off in one direction.

Chapter 37 – Eastern Rail Tunnel

Narrator: Here, the railroad flows into a large, dark tunnel, continuing through the mountain to the East, in the direction of Susannah. As much as you want to follow the tracks to "civilization" and "safety", your work is not yet done here.

Chapter 38 – Western Rail Tunnel

Narrator: Beyond this tunnel, the rail tracks continue into the heart of the desert. The rail team that built this line three years ago lost more men than in the history of any other line. It almost bankrupted the town. Only a fool would go West into the desert on foot.

Chapter 39 - Wrecked Wagon

Narrator: A wagon, similar to the one that mother used to deliver goods in, has been tipped over on the side of the trail. Many of the crates and barrels are burst open from the accident, but it doesn't seem that bandits made off with the goods in transit. Something else must have driven the wagon off the road.

Chapter 40 – Bandit Hideout

Narrator: Following the footprints from Chambers Gorge Bridge, a run-down, wooden shack is tucked in the shadow of the rock. Inside are items typical of outlaws, but the shack seems to have been abandoned for some time.

Chapter 41 – Chambers Gorge Bridge

Narrator: The bridge itself seems to have been detonated hastily. Much of the charge is still unexploded, and the primer and wiring was never dismantled. Where once you would have suspected bandits, now you wonder if this wasn't done intentionally to keep something else from crossing the gorge. Far down below you can just make out some of the iron girders among the rushing water.

Chapter 42 - Shaft 1

Narrator: This mine doesn't go very far into the hillside before it ends in a deep shaft. Kicking a rock over the edge, you count and strain your ears for a sign of its depth. But you step back quickly as a different sound echoes up... the sound of scrabbling hair legs?!

Chapter 43 - Abandoned Mine

Narrator: This area is dotted with failed mine shafts, but this one has an inordinate number of warning signs and appears to have been collapsed on purpose. What could be back there to warrant such a thing?

Chapter 44 – Southern Trail

Narrator: The trail here runs South, to the town of Tull – the dirtiest, meanest little border town. If the creatures make their way South, good riddance to Tull. You've got more important people to save than to head South just now.

Chapter 45 – The Red Wall

Narrator: A wall of reddish stone. As a boy, Red Cloud climbed to the top of this rock on a dare and stayed there for two days with a sprained ankle before climbing down. Thus earning his name.

Chapter 46 – The Bank Vault

Narrator: The bank vault can only be opened by state-of-the-art, 3-digit combination dial. Unfortunately, that combination is written on a slip of paper in one of the teller drawers (use stone button).

Chapter 47 – The Sheriff's Gun Locker

Narrator: You are surprised to find the holding cells open and the Sheriff's Gun Locker unlocked. The firearms and ammunition have been taken. A few grains of gunpowder can be scraped out of the bottom.

Chapter 48 – Eld Tomb

Narrator: In an unmarked crypt beneath the church is a small chest. Within the chest is Excalibur, fabled golden sword of Arthur Eld. And a single red rose.

005 – Soundtrack



1. Hey Jude, The Beatles
2. Hurt, Johnny Cash
3. Footsteps, Pearl Jam
4. Be Yourself, Audioslave
5. Dust, Augustana
6. Lightning, Counting Crows
7. Lakini's Juice, Live
8. Arc – Pearl Jam
9. Something in the Way – Nirvana
10. Can't Keep – Eddie Vedder
11. The Wolf – Eddie Vedder
12. Rise – Eddie Vedder

006 – Installation Instructions



Simply find your .minecraft/saves folder and “extract” the contents of this archive. You should end up with a folder structure that looks like: **.minecraft/saves/Handful of Dust**

(If you've found this map on forums, I'm assuming this isn't your first custom game!)

That folder will contain all of the save data needed to start your game. If you need to “reset” the map, simply delete that folder and re-extract the archive.

In the “narration” sub-folder, you will find .mp3 audio files that can be played at each of the checkpoints to increase the ambience of the storyline.

In the “skins” sub-folder, you will find custom skin files to help set the mood! These are the characters that appear in the official video and/or narration text.

- Albarel_Rising.png – Young man raised by his mother in the town. Now trying to prove himself a grown man and warrior of his father's tribe. Main character
- Red_Cloud.png – Tribal chief. Albarel's grandfather and mentor
- Young_Jake.png – Townsperson. Survivor of the monster attacks
- Ol_Timer.png – Reclusive frontiersman. Comes into town (too late) when the wilderness becomes too dangerous

Also in that folder is this .PDF read me file.

007 – Acknowledgments and Credits



I would like to thank the following people, without whom this map would not be possible.

Matthew, David and Lyn: for Playtesting, and invaluable support

Minecraft: Notch and the entire Mojang team. <http://mojang.com> and <http://www.minecraft.net>.

“Single Player Commands” mod. simo_415.

<http://www.minecraftforum.net/viewtopic.php?f=1032&t=100267>.

“WorldEdit” mod. sk89q. <http://www.minecraftforum.net/viewtopic.php?f=25&t=156902>.

“MCSkinEdit” tool. Swedman. <<http://www.minecraftforum.net/viewtopic.php?f=27&t=4843>>.

The Yogscast. <http://yogiverse.com>. 2011.

Stephen King. The Dark Tower: The Gunslinger. Grant, 1982.

Asheron’s Call. <http://asheronscall.com>. Turbine, Inc.

Narration and Music mixed with: Audacity. <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>. Dominic Mazzoni and Roger Dannenberg.

Video mixed with: Windows Live Movie Maker 2011. <http://explore.live.com/windows-live-movie-maker?os=other>. Microsoft.

Doghouse Systems. <http://www.doghousesystems.com/>

A number of custom skins were modified/combined for this map and are available at <<http://www.minecraftskins.com>>:

- “Clint Eastwood” by cv5_yorktown
- “Cowboy 10970” by max227
- “Desert Explorer” by that_guy_phil
- “Exploring the world, one blue coat at a time” by wisdomtooth8
- “Indian” by tefan
- “Indian” by mogg
- “Native Brave” by sioux-six-four
- “WOW Human Boy Orphan” by selarah

All of the musicians noted in the 005- Soundtrack section.