

The Plummer Coat

Description: a leather-like, grey-blue colored overcoat in the Western style, circa 1864. The material is slightly slick to the touch, remarkably supple for its age and apparent composition, and will turn a knife blade and/or a black powder bullet. There are no tailor's tags on the Coat, but there is a small tattoo or defect on the outside of the coat, just below the left armpit.

This was the coat that they hanged Sheriff Henry Plummer in, back in 1864. Fellow was either a victim of the lynch mob or its proper prey, depending on who you ask; there had been a gang doing robberies and murders in the Montana gold fields, and when the chief suspect for the gang leader ended up being the sheriff itself, people got agitated. They're still arguing today whether or not Henry Plummer was guilty, not to mention where all the gold went, and that suits some people just fine. Better they wonder about the gold than about the Plummer Coat.

The Plummer Coat first got the attention of Those People (if you don't know who Those People are, relax: since you **don't** know, you don't have to do all that extra work that comes from knowing. And that work isn't always safe)

back in 2006, when some idiot thought that they could track down the gold via the time-honored method of raising Plummer's ghost and then asking. Which isn't so much dangerous as it is stupid; if necromancy could work in this case, somebody would have tried it back in 1866 and then gone and gotten the gold. Of course, people who make the dead talk to them are not always the people who think things through. Anyway, during the inevitable cleanup operation somebody noticed that Plummer's coat had survived a century of being buried without a hint of decay or even staining. Since the sanctity of the grave in this case had long since been gut-shot and trundled into a shallow one *anyway*, the cleanup crew decided to have the Coat analyzed.

Morbid curiosity? Intuition? Basic boredom? Whatever the reason, the analysis turned out to be worth it. The Plummer Coat is made out of a mundane organic substance that has absolutely nothing like terrestrial DNA in it. It has something, and that something was definitely alive at some point, but that something never came from Earth. It's also kind of bulletproof, to a degree better than Kevlar.

And that's all anybody knows! No supernatural aura, no interdimensional signature, the stuff doesn't match any of

the databases, and regular psychometric tracing went full entropic fast; this Plummer fellow was walking around with a coat made out of alien, and nobody knows why. Which means that it looks like somebody's going to have to do a deep necromantic dive, after all. And that's never fun. But, hey, it beats waking up one day to discover that an alien fleet has shown up and wants to know why one of us was wearing one of them to keep the rain off, hey?

Oh, and if you're grateful that you don't have the skill set necessary to do a necromantic deep dive, let me make you less grateful. You are correct: your team *doesn't* have that skill set. You all *do*, however, have the skill sets that help keep the people doing the deep diving alive. But you already suspected that, right? Yeah, of course you did. This situations have a sort of rhythm to them; and, with enough experience, you can even start to be able to pick out the tune.

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