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THRILLING TALES

**GAMEMASTER'S
GUIDE
TO
PULP
ADVENTURE**



GAMEMASTER'S GUIDE TO:

PULP ADVENTURE

The fiendish Manchurian doctor casually kicked over the wicker basket, and three deadly vipers slithered out, winding their way across the marble floor towards the chair where the young woman was bound, helpless to the danger that approached.

"Your time is running out, Ms. Van Meter," Tsung-Chi Sin said, his voice like a silken strangling cord. "I cannot control my pets once they've scented their prey. Tell me: Where is the Green Falcon?"

Suddenly the window shattered as a green-clad

figure burst through, twin 45s blazing. The snakes were obliterated in an instant, blown like rubber toys across the floor. "Right here, Doctor Sin," the Green Falcon laughed. He levelled his guns at the insidious devil of Chinatown.

Suddenly, he felt the sting of a bullet grazing his shoulder, slicing through the green overcoat, and moments later heard the crack of the pistol's report...from behind him! He spun to see Rita Van Meter, his own girlfriend, standing by the chair, ropes pooled at her feet. In her hands she clutched a smoking revolver, and her eyes were glazed in a vacant stare.

A chilling laugh filled the chamber. "You fool...you forget that I am a master of mesmerism. This entire scene was a trap, played purely for your benefit. Now, you will die at the lovely hand of Ms. Van Meter...or you will be forced to kill her!"

The Green Falcon's mind raced, as Rita's finger tightened on the trigger....



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the **GM's Guide to Pulp Adventure**. In these pages, we present an overview of the various genres that appeared in pulp fiction, as well as some tips on using Pulp elements in your role-playing game adventures. We then devote the rest of this Guide to a Random Pulp Adventure generation system, based in part on the secret formula used by pulp writer Lester Dent to craft the famous Doc Savage stories.

So, hang on tight, because the first thing we're going to tell you is that there is no such thing as the "pulp genre."

WHAT IS PULP?

Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as the "pulp genre." Pulp was a medium, a method of delivery, not a genre in and of itself. Saying "pulp genre" makes about as much sense as saying "television genre" (or, for that matter, "cinematic" as a genre, which is another misnamed term used by gamers, but I digress).

The Pulps were the magazines of popular fiction, delivering stories of adventure, action and romance in several genres from their birth in the first years of the twentieth century to their demise in the mid-1950s. They represented the greatest explosion of mass entertainment by way of the written word that had been seen until the creation of the Internet.

There were pulps for every taste. Detective pulps, science-fiction pulps, western pulps, sports pulps, romance pulps and more. There were pulps devoted to the exploits of everyday heroes, and pulps that were spiced with the macabre and unusual. They all had one thing in common: they delivered escapist entertainment, printed on cheap pulp paper sandwiched between slick, gaudy color covers. There was something for everyone.

The pulp magazine was a twentieth century

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publishing sensation, the roots of the form can be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century, with the invention of the dime novel: serial fiction printed on newspaper that was aimed at the middle and lower classes. "Low-brow" entertainment that offered lurid stories full of action, suspense and thrills.

With the birth of the new century, and the growing literacy of the public, the market for serial fiction exploded, leading to the creation of the pulp magazine, with brightly-colored covers designed to lure potential readers in a market that quickly became filled with competitors.

The pulps reached their heyday in the years between World Wars One and Two, especially during the Great Depression of the 1930s. In a world that seemed increasingly hopeless and hard, the pulps offered an escape from the bleakness of everyday life, priced so that anyone could get away for a few brief hours. Gone were the breadlines and the dust bowl of their hard-scrabble lives, replaced by the thrill of soaring through the clouds with air aces, or travelling to far-off worlds, or galloping after a band of desperadoes, guns blazing.

The most popular of the pulps featured crime fighting heroes. The average American saw during Prohibition (1920 to 1933) the rise of a powerful criminal class that could flaunt authority as they wished, becoming rich and powerful in the process. They saw government and business become corrupted by these new criminals and their money....and most importantly, the average American felt helpless to stop it.

The lure of the crime-fighter in pulp stories was obvious: a simple wish-fulfilment of fighting back, of taking control of a situation that seemed out of control. It is the same basic human need that later fueled the popularity of superhero comics and even later still, action

movies. Putting oneself in the imaginary role of a hero who takes action against those things which you feel helpless to affect.

The pulps, along with radio (which often produced dramatic presentations based on the stories printed in the pulps) became the prime source of entertainment for the American people before the advent of television. Stories which relied upon the audience's own imaginations to envision. In some ways, a purer form than the passive process of watching television or a film.

The pulps didn't last, however. Paper shortages during the Second World War dealt a crippling blow to the form, which limped along for another decade or so after the war had ended, and finally died out, replaced by the television, the comic book and the mass-market paperback novel.

So, if there is no such thing as the "pulp genre", then what are we talking about?



PULP GENRES

When gamers speak of the “pulp genre,” what they’re really talking about is an amalgam of several genre elements taken from the various genres of pulp stories, radio shows, cliffhanger film serials and later “post-modern pulps” like the *Indiana Jones* films and *The Rocketeer*.

The following section is a breakdown of the most popular genres from which these elements are lifted. It is not an exhaustive list of every pulp genre--only those that often provide fodder for the RPG interpretations of the pulps. For example, Sports pulps were very popular, but you don’t often see gamers clamoring to play a golf pro in a tense tournament!



CRIMEFIGHTING

By far, the most common and popular genre in the pulps was the crimefighting genre, which itself can be broken down into several distinct sub-genres, the most popular of which were the Detective Mystery and the Hero pulp.

The Detective Mystery has survived into the present day as a staple of the mystery section of every bookstore--A hero or heroine whose purpose is to solve mysteries, usually involving murder.

The formula of these tales usually involves a detective (either private or official) brought in to puzzle out a baffling crime. The tale progresses with the detective figuring out the answers to the questions of Who, What, Where, Why and How, most likely facing peril of some kind as they get closer and closer to The Truth, which they inevitably do by the end of the tale.

Detective stories of the pulp era usually ended with the criminal brought to justice. It was later that the focus shifted and the unravelling of the mystery became more important than the result.

Hero pulps are the tales that most gamers think of when they hear the word “pulp,” and as such make up the majority of the RPG-created “pulp genre.” They are tales of larger-than-life heroes, proto-superheroes, if you will, facing larger-than-life villains and solving bizarre and unusual crimes. *Doc Savage*, *The Shadow*, *The Spider*, *The Avenger*, all of these are famous examples of the Hero pulp.

Since the hero pulps led directly into the creation of the superhero comic book, it is easy to see the genre as, essentially, low-powered (or no-powered) superheroics. There are, however, major differences. Believability, for one. The Hero pulps, however strange or unusual the topic, held at their core a level of “this could happen.” Superhero

comics, with their demi-godlike powers and huge battles, are by their very nature more farfetched. Think of the difference between early James Bond films and more recent ones--the early films, even with the gadgets, had an air of reality about them, albeit stretched, to be sure. The later films, with orbital heat-rays and spy-car duels have ventured far into the realm of superheroics.

The byword of the Hero pulps was "exotic." Strange crimes, far-off locations, cutting-edge (for the 1930s) technology, etc. The Hero pulps were the pinnacle of escapism, and the more exotic things that they could show the reader, the better. This wasn't limited to pure fiction, either. The writers would be careful to include real elements as well--for example, Walter Gibson, the author of most of *The Shadow* novels was a part-time professional magician, and would often include real magicians tricks in his fictional hero's arsenal. If *Doc Savage* author Lester Dent had recently read some interesting things about the Yukon, you could be sure that Doc and his men would be visiting the Yukon in an upcoming adventure.

As mentioned previously, the Hero pulp provides the largest amount of inspiration to pulp RPGs, and so will form the basis of the Random Adventure Generator later in this product.

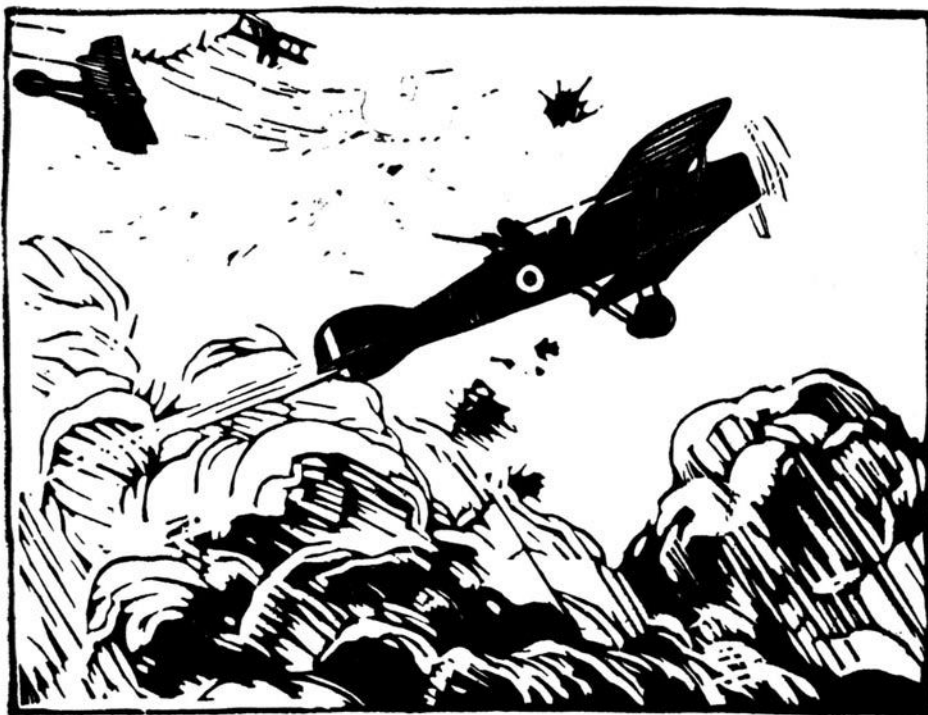
AIR HERO

For readers in the early twentieth century, air travel was a novelty. It was seen during the Depression as a romantic escape from earthbound problems. The pilot was a dashing heroic figure, and the pulps provided many such heroes to thrill readers.

Many of the air heroes of the pulps were World War I flying aces, fighting against the Germans in what at the time was known as "the Great War." These pulps were adventure tales set during wartime, and provided enough actual aeronautical detail to whet the appetite of would-be pilots.

There were tales set in the present as well. The contemporary air heroes flew aircraft at the cutting edge of aviation (and beyond)--the period equivalent of a Tom Clancy technothriller.

Air hero pulps weren't limited to simple adventure tales of the air war, or tales of daredevils touring air shows, however--the most popular of the air hero pulps, *G-8 and His Battle Aces*, combined the Air



hero formula with the Hero pulp and even Horror, featuring the World War One aces fighting off flying armies of zombies, giant bats, supervillains and more.

FOREIGN ADVENTURE

Similar to the exotic elements of the Hero pulps, but without the focus on crime-fighting, this genre tells tales of action and adventure in distant locations. These tales could be stories of globe-trotting fortune hunters, military adventures of the Foreign Legion, or rough-and-tumble tales of life as a merchant seaman in the South Pacific.

The focus of these stories was always on the location, and the strange things and people that could be found there. By today's standards, a great deal of this genre's tales are not exactly enlightened in their viewpoints--the stories are full of ignorant, animalistic savages, shifty, untrustworthy foreigners, seductive half-naked women, and the like. The hero is the embodiment of the "civilized white man in a world of danger", and to modern eyes, it can be pretty offensive.

That said, though, the *Indiana Jones* films and *Tomb Raider* games draw heavily on the elements of this genre, so it is more than possible to remove the insulting elements and retain the heart--adventure and excitement in far-off lands.

ESPIONAGE

The period between the World Wars was rife with intrigue. Some historians have said that the World Wars can be viewed as a single conflict, with an intermission where nations gathered their strength and maneuvered for the next round.

The Espionage pulps were often reluctant to deal with real-life politics, and so usually shrouded their tales behind fictional nations. Bolsheviks from places like "Bulkavia", rather than Russians.



Fascist leaders of secret world-spanning empires, rather than Nazi Germany. As the thirties drew to a close, however, and war seemed more and more imminent, the gloves came off and real-world issues appeared on the pulp pages.

Whether they were facing real or fictional menaces, the heroes of the Espionage pulps are a familiar archetype to modern readers. James Bond is their direct descendant, and the usual Espionage pulp could, with very little tinkering, be made into a serviceable 007 adventure.

HORROR

The horror pulp genre has gotten quite a bit of attention in the RPG hobby, due to games based upon one of the most famous horror pulp writers, Howard Phillips Lovecraft.

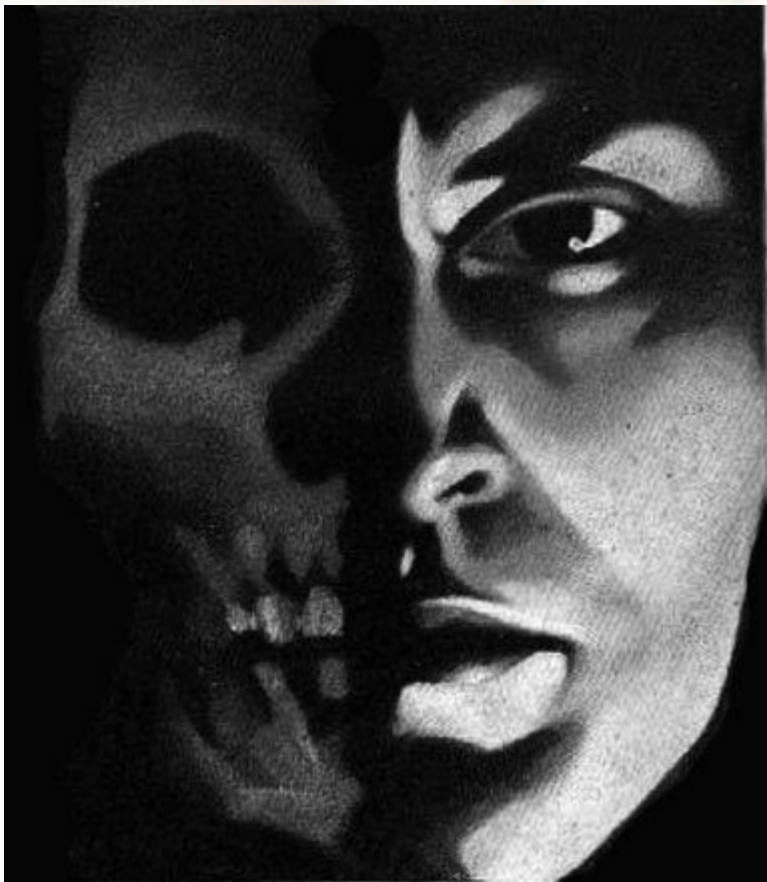
Not all pulp horror was concerned with mind-shattering nameless things from beyond space and time, however. Even that particular variety (which has been termed Lovecraftian, for obvious reasons), was limited largely to the pages of a single magazine: *Weird Tales*. There were other horror pulps, though: *Terror Tales*, *Strange Stories*, *Ghost Stories*, among others.

The stories ran the usual gamut of horror elements: vampires, ghosts, werewolves, mad killers, voodoo, gothic castles, etc. Tales were usually one-shots with no recurring characters—it's easier to kill off protagonists that way, increasing the scare factor. There were, however, the occasional series of tales that would center around an occult investigator of some sort, who would encounter a supernatural threat and defeat it by the end of the tale, ready to move on to the next. This form of story is ironically much more “game-able” than the Lovecraftian variety, and yet Lovecraft still forms the basis of most pulp-horror gaming.

WEIRD MENACE

Everybody loves a good villain. This was also true of pulp readers, and so it was inevitable that magazines devoted to villainy would start to appear.

Inspired by the gothic romances of the 19th century,



and the infamous Grand Guignol theatre of Paris (which shocked audiences with realistic scenes of horror and bloodshed), these pulps were dark reflections of the Hero pulps. The magazine would focus on the exploits of the featured villain, who would always be defeated by the often bland, unremarkable hero, yet would always escape justice at the end, to return in the next issue.

The stories delighted in detailed descriptions of torture and fiendish plots, usually performed on a scantily-clad damsel in distress, or on the hero himself. Mild by today's standards, they were shocking stuff at the time, with stories that flirted with sadism and “adult themes.” They were often sold “under the counter”, rather than displayed openly, and were definitely part of the reason that pulps began to develop a reputation for salacious thrills.

The villains of these stories were the draw: always brilliant and unredeemably evil, and usually given some sort of weird gimmick, whether a costumed secret identity (*Doctor Satan*) or being inscrutable and foreign (*Doctor Fu Manchu*, the most famous alumnus of this particular school).

SPICY

Another “under the counter” genre, Spicy pulps were simply tales from any of the other pulp genres with “adult themes” added. Usually this involved women in various stages of undress (prominently displayed on the cover, naturally), and often threatened with a sado-sexual “fate worse than death.” Again, almost laughably tame to twenty-first century eyes, but scandalous in the thirties.

The “damsel in distress” element of Spicy pulps certainly finds its way into the other genres, albeit with less of a concentration on whips!

One of the best things about this genre was the magazine titles, which put “Spicy” in the name to let prospective readers know that titillation awaited within. This led to such stalwarts as *Spicy Mystery*, *Spicy Detective*, and *Spicy Western*. Pulp fans have often joked about an imaginary entry into this field, *Spicy Zeppelin Stories*!

JUNGLE STORIES

This genre was made famous by the Tarzan stories of Edgar Rice Burroughs, which first appeared in *All Story Magazine*. There were plenty of imitators, however, and soon the market was flooded with tales of Ki-Gor and Kazar and Sheena, Queen of the Jungle.

Not all Jungle stories were tales of Noble Savages, however. There were tales of intrepid explorers, big game hunters, treasure hunters and more, crossing over with the Foreign Adventure genre. Remember



that at the time, there were areas of the globe that were largely unexplored--and many of those were in the tractless interiors of the jungles of Africa, South America, the South Pacific and Asia. These unknown regions were ripe for adventure in the minds of the readers of the Thirties.

The Jungle Story pulps also crossed over quite a bit with the Lost World genre (q.v.) -- Lost cities and secret civilizations were a common staple of this genre.

SCIENCE FICTION

Science fiction was, essentially, an invention of the pulps. Born of the earlier form, the "scientific romance" of the nineteenth century, the science fiction story (a term coined by pulp publisher Hugo Gernsback in his *Science Wonder Stories* magazine in June of 1929) was tailor-made for the pulp format. Of all of the pulp genres, it is the one that has thrived beyond the medium that created it.

The science fiction stories of the pulps leaned heavily toward spectacle. There weren't a lot of thoughtful examinations of the impact of technology upon human civilization and culture... but there were a lot of rocket ships, alien invasions, two-fisted scientists blazing away at Bug Eyed Monsters with ray-guns, etc. In most cases the science made no sense, but the readers didn't care. If it sounded like it had the ring of science to it, that

was good enough!

That is the biggest difference between pulp science fiction and modern variety. Even in the most far-fetched space operas of today, attempts are made at a certain degree of "realism"--perhaps not scientific accuracy, but at the very least internal consistency of the genre elements. We all know that "Warp drive" is ridiculous, but we also know that there is a consistently stated exposition of how it works within the fictional world. Not so with pulp sci-fi. There was no attempt made to justify anything. The science was often flat-out wrong, but breathlessly described nonetheless. The rocket is powered by "Atomic Radio Turbines" --- what the heck does that mean? Who cares! On to the next exciting chapter!

As with all pulp genres, there was a great deal of cross over. You could see science-fiction meet horror in tales of alien invasion and body-snatching, or thrilling to the exploits of science fiction heroes like *Captain Future*.

WESTERN

Westerns were a popular pulp genre as well, and not just period tales of gunslingers and Indian raiding parties. In one of the stranger creations of the pulp era, the western magazines would occasionally print contemporary westerns, set in the 1930s.



This strange mix of Cowboys, Indians, Radios and Tommyguns was especially evident in the cliffhanger serial films of the time, and naturally was reflected in print as well. For a jaw-dropping experience, track down a DVD copy of the 1935 Gene Autry serial *The Phantom Empire*, which featured the singing cowboy star fighting the super-science of the underground city of Maurania!

LOST WORLD

The Lost World genre also grew out of the scientific romances of the nineteenth century. These stories usually featured a location that, by virtue of its isolation from the rest of the world, developed separately. Lost Worlds could be found within the hollow earth (reached by caves), in jungles inexplicably found in the middle of the Antarctic (warmed by the presence of active volcanoes), hidden islands in the South Pacific, or deep within primordial African jungles.

Lost Worlds are often populated by remnants of Earth civilizations long past...Ancient Rome, Vikings, Lost African tribes, Sunken Atlantis. Some are populated by creatures whose evolution progressed differently than their more familiar cousins (intelligent, talking species of apes were always a popular choice here). Naturally, Lost Worlds almost always featured dinosaurs, who have survived extinction due to the isolated environment...and, let's be honest: because they're cool.

The stories of Lost Worlds usually involved the adventures of a member of our society upon finding themselves in this strange place, but on occasion (in tales that crossed-over with the Jungle Stories genre), would be tales of Lost World natives.



OTHER GENRES

Other genres from the pulps are also useful for RPG purposes, but usually form the basis of entire games already: Notably the Swords & Sorcery genre, which thrived during the pulp publishing era, and directly led to the creation of the role-playing game hobby in the first place!

PULP GAMING

Now that we've discussed what the pulps actually were, we can get to the meat of the matter: using pulp elements to run a "pulp genre" role-playing campaign.

This section discusses pulp elements that are essential to the pulp gaming experience, with guidelines for how to use these elements within the modern d20 rules.

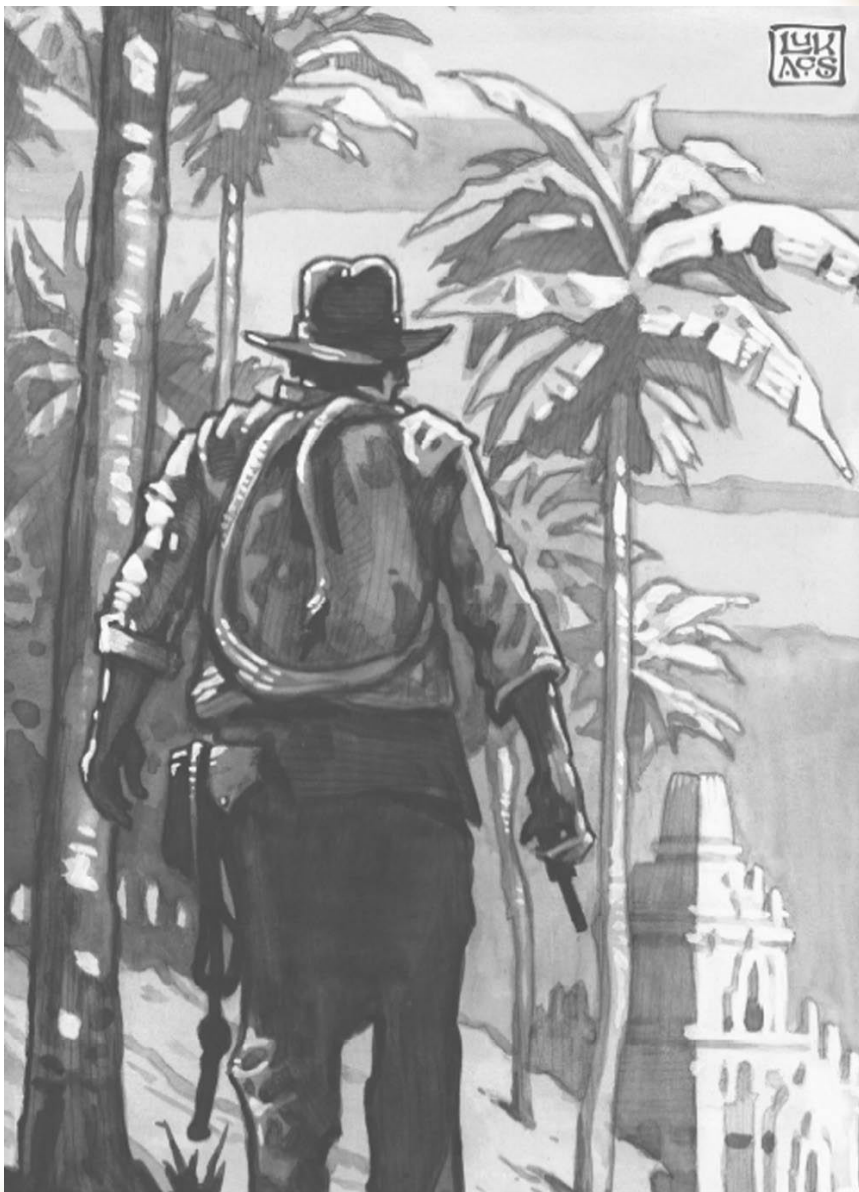
Heroes & Sidekicks:

Most pulp tales were devoted to the exploits of a single hero, often with a cadre of assistants. This can make things problematic in a role-playing setting. Gamers usually prefer to play heroes, not sidekicks.

There are two ways to address this in your game. One way is to go ahead and put together a group of heroes working together. While it is true that you never saw teams featuring Doc Savage, The Shadow, G-8 and Tarzan teaming up to fight evil together, there were hero groups in the pulps--the Secret Six, for example. The trick to putting together a group is to ensure that each character is a specialist, with as little cross-over with the other characters as possible. Give everyone something that they can do that the others cannot. If you have one investigative

specialist, then don't allow someone else to create a character who focuses on investigation. Give everyone their chance to shine. Specialists also make more sense in a group than a haphazard collection of polymath heroes, each of whom is a brilliant Jack-of-all-Trades (One wonders why such heroes would need to team up at all).

Generally speaking, the Advanced Classes presented by Adamant Entertainment in this game



line are intended for story-focus heroes. They don't really work for team play, although individual GMs make make exceptions in certain cases. Classes like the Paragon and the Man of Mystery, however, are nearly impossible to work into a team setting.

The second method is a bit closer to the source material: run a hero and his assistants. In the Doc Savage stories, Doc's assistants are all experts in their individual fields--specialists who each are heroes in their own right. The Spider stories often featured his assistants going off on their own--and on more than one occasion saving The Spider himself!

The only difference between this and the group advice given above is that there is one character who is everything the others are, and more. In this sort of campaign, a hero should be at least 3 levels higher than the assistants, and usually has levels in one of the THRILLING TALES Advanced Classes.

The players will have to be comfortable with the fact that one character is going to be placed above the others. However, this really isn't that different than playing a game set in a military hierarchy (whether a World War II game, or a game set on a Starfleet vessel), which gamers do all the time. If the players have no problems with that, just go ahead and do it.

If they bristle slightly at this, another solution is to have every player create an assistant (following the guidelines for groups) and then have the main hero created as a character that is shared--played by all players. The hero is run by a different player in each scene (usually a scene where their regular character is not present).

In a Hero & Sidekicks campaign, the sidekicks should be rewarded, in-game, for behavior that reinforces the common elements of this genre:

If a sidekick gets captured, or otherwise manages to find themselves in a situation where the main hero will need to come to their rescue, the hero will receive a temporary action point (which must be spent during this adventure), and the sidekick will

receive a bonus experience award of 425 XP. This system rewards not only the sidekick, but gives the hero a direct bonus as well.

Villains, Henchman, Minions and Mooks:

Villains in pulp RPG should be the equal (and preferably more powerful) than the PCs. They are the equivalent of the Evil Wizard or the Dragon in fantasy d20--the big threat, the focus of the adventure. As such, they are created as Heroic characters, as described in the Modern d20 rules.

A Villain will typically have one prized Lieutenant (occasionally more, but usually one). In THRILLING TALES, we refer to this character as the Henchman. Henchman are the "level bosses" of the game--they are also created as Heroic characters. The Henchman will usually be encountered by the PCs long before they ever get to the Villain...occasionally before they even realize that the Villain exists!

Minions are the rank-and-file of the Villain's loyal subordinates who follow his orders. They are created as Ordinary characters, as described on the Modern d20 rules.

The ability to attract Minions is a class ability of the Mastermind Advanced Class, bestowed at 1st level. For that reason, most pulp villains should have a level of Mastermind. A GM can decide instead to bestow this ability to all Villains, in which case it differs slightly from the Mastermind class ability.

The number of minions available to the Villain, and the NPC level of those minions, can be found on the table on the following page.

Minions are gained based on the sum of the Villains's total character level and his Charisma modifier, modified by the factors listed below:

Reknown feat: +3

Infamy feat: +3

Leadership Feat: +1

Provides room, board, equipment +2

Wealthy (16+ on Wealth): +1

Rich (21+ on Wealth): +2

Regardless of the Villain's total level and Cha mod, they cannot have any minions with a level greater than their level, minus one (so, for example, a 4th level character could not have any 4th level minions, even if their modified score was 17 or better). Minions can be of any class.

Minions that are lost are replaced with new ones by the next adventure only in the case of the Mastermind class ability. Non-Mastermind Villains have non-replaceable minions.



Total Level + Cha mod	Minion Level					
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
9 or less	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	5	-	-	-	-	-
11	6	-	-	-	-	-
12	8	-	-	-	-	-
13	10	1	-	-	-	-
14	15	1	-	-	-	-
15	20	2	1	-	-	-
16	25	2	1	-	-	-
17	30	3	1	1	-	-
18	35	3	1	1	-	-
19	40	4	2	1	1	-
20	50	5	3	2	1	-
21	60	6	3	2	1	1
22	75	7	4	2	2	1
23	90	9	5	3	2	1
24	110	11	6	3	2	1
25	135	13	7	4	2	2
26	150	15	8	4	3	2
27	165	17	9	5	3	3
28	180	19	10	5	4	3
29	200	20	11	6	4	4
30	220	22	12	6	5	4
+1	+20	+2	+1	+1/2	+1/2	+1/2

Mooks are a new type of character for THRILLING TALES. They are the level below Ordinaries. Mooks are the faceless cannon-fodder who get thrown at the PCs in combat. Use the 1st level Minion entry on the Minion table to determine the number of Mooks that a Villain has available per adventure. Mooks are renewable for every villain, regardless of class.

Mooks have:

- * Entirely Average ability scores (every score is 10 or 11, giving a +0 bonus)
- * No hit points. If they are hit, they're down (either dead or unconscious, depending upon the attack used).
- * No action points.
- * No class features.
- * No levels in any advanced class
- * 1 level only in one of the Basic Classes.

The primary purpose of the Mook is as cannon fodder. The Villain will throw these at the PCs in an effort to slow their progress, with the off chance that one or more Mooks might get lucky and do some damage.

Mooks do not have to be limited to only the service of a Villain. If a GM wants to, he or she can throw Mooks at the PCs in any situation where a large-scale combat is called for. A Fortune Hunter, for example, might face a horde of cannibals, all of whom are Mooks, led by an Ordinary. A Man of Mystery might find himself ambushed by Mook gangsters completely unrelated to the current Villain, who are simply taking the opportunity to strike at someone who has plagued their operations!



Stunts & Action Points

Action points are a useful part of Modern d20 play, giving players the ability to alter rolls in dramatic situations. In a pulp campaign, players should have access to more action points than they would under the normal rules. This is addressed by stunts.

Any character who attempts a stunt action should be rewarded with 1 temporary action point. Temporary action points are spent just like regular action points, but must be spent during that adventure. They do not carry over between adventures.

What is a stunt action? A stunt action is any action which is performed in a flashier manner than one would normally observe. Get on board a train before it pulls out of the station is an action. Leaping from a moving car onto a moving train is a stunt action, and should be rewarded.

In game terms, a stunt is an action where the player purposefully makes the action more difficult for themselves. In the above example, the player would have had the option to get on board the train, but instead announced that the character had gotten there too late, and instead described the stunt action. In a way, the player is taking on the role of the GM for a moment, changing the situation for his or her character in such a way that a more difficult solution is required.

A stunt action should always require a roll, at a minimum DC of 15. The GM is the final arbiter of the DC of a particular stunt action. Pulling off Impossible stunts (DC 40) may even result in the character earning more than 1 temporary action point, at the GM's discretion.

Quips, Soliloquies and Gloating:

Characters in pulp stories are a talkative bunch. Heroes and villains always seem to have time to banter back and forth, even in the midst of combat! To reflect this, any character may speak during a round as a free action.

In addition, one of the familiar recurring elements



of pulp stories is the propensity for villains to spill their guts and tell the hero every detail of their plan, once they think they're in the clear.

To reflect this, any villain who has captured the hero (or otherwise is in a situation where they feel that there is no way that their plan can be stopped) must make a Will save at DC 35 to avoid revealing their entire plan. If the save is made, but the roll was still within 5 of the DC, the villain will still reveal some (but not all) of the plan. The temptation to gloat is simply too irresistible.

The Thirties

The pulps are very much a product of their times, and GMs looking for ways to bring that feeling across in a pulp campaign should try whenever possible to include events that place the adventure in a historical context.

Historical detail can make a setting more "real" to players, and can also provide GMs with inspirations for adventures.

1930

The Nazi party places second in German elections, but Adolf Hitler is kept from his seat in the Reichstag because he is an Austrian citizen.

In South Africa, white women can now vote, but blacks are still excluded under the regime that would soon be called apartheid.

Pluto, the ninth planet, is discovered by astronomers.

President Herbert Hoover signs the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act, weakening the already failing global economy.

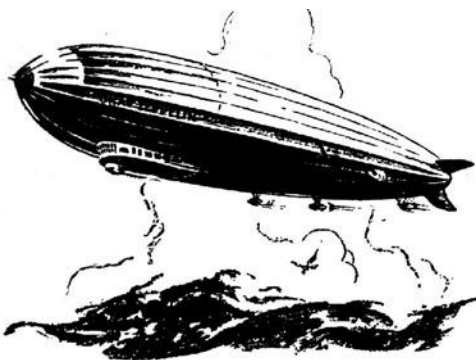
Over 1,300 American banks fail and unemployment exceeds 4 million as the Depression sinks lower.

In Jamaica, Rastafarians proclaim Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie as the new Messiah.

A fire in the Ohio State Penitentiary near Columbus kills 320.

Chicago Tribune journalist Alfred Liddle is shot. Newspapers promise \$55,000 reward for information. Liddle is later found to have had contacts to organized crime.

British Airship R101 crashes in France en-route to India on its maiden voyage.



1931

The Scottsboro affair begins when nine black men are arrested on false rape charges at a train stop in Paint Rock, Alabama.

A 34-year-old Baptist preacher named Elijah Poole joins the Nation of Islam and becomes Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Black Muslims.

Chicago mobster Al Capone is convicted of income tax evasion. Capone is sentenced to 11 years in jail and a \$50,000 fine.

Unemployed Americans march on the White House, demanding a national program of employment at a minimum wage. They are turned away.

Japan occupies Manchuria (which they call Manchukuo), beginning a period of Sino-Japanese conflict which doesn't end until Japan's defeat at the end of the Second World War.

"The Star Spangled Banner," originally written in 1814 by Francis Scott Key, becomes the American national anthem by order of Congress.

In China, the Yangtze River bursts a dam, causing massive flooding, famine, destruction and death.

Construction of the Empire State Building is completed in New York City.

In organized crime, the so-called "Castellemare War" ends with the assassination of Joe "The Boss" Masseria, briefly leaving Salvatore Maranzano as *capo di tutti capi* ("boss of all bosses")--undisputed leader of the American Mafia. Maranzano is himself assassinated less than 6 months later, leading to the establishment of the Five Families, a national commission headed by Charlie "Lucky" Luciano.

1932

Mohandas Gandhi begins fasting to protest British treatment of India's untouchable caste. After just 6 days, he wins concessions.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, pledging a "New Deal," is elected president for the first of his four terms.

Wall Street's Dow Jones Industrial hits its Depression-era low, 41.22.

Physicists Sir John Douglas Cockcroft and Ernest Walton split the atom for the first time.

The Great Depression continues to take a heavy toll: in this year alone, 1,161 banks fail, nearly 20,000 business go bankrupt, and 21,000 people commit suicide.

The son of noted aviator Charles Lindbergh is kidnapped and dies. Richard Bruno Hauptmann is arrested for the crime, beginning the "Trial of the Century."

1933

Prohibition ends in the United States.

Adolf Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany. By the end of the year, Hitler has proclaimed the Third Reich, opened the first concentration camp at Dachau, eliminated all political parties other than National Socialism, and consolidated his dictatorial rule.

President Franklin Roosevelt begins to record his "fireside chats" for weekly radio broadcast.

Giuseppe Zangara attempts to assassinate President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt, but instead kills Chicago, Illinois Mayor Anton J. Cermak.

The federal government passes a flurry of innovative social legislation, as part of Roosevelt's "New

Deal."

Fiorella La Guardia elected mayor of New York.

US airship Akron crashes near New York - 74 dead

Karl Jansky announces the detection of radio waves from the centre of the galaxy.

1934

The "Dust Bowl" hits the US Midwest, blowing 300 million tons of topsoil into the Atlantic, devastating farmland in Kansas, Texas, Colorado, and Oklahoma.

General Lazaro Cardenas, elected president of Mexico, begins a program of agrarian reform, redistributing land and building the power of organized labor.

The FCC is created to oversee U.S. telephone, telegraph, and radio communications.

The National Labor Relations Board is created to regulate collective bargaining between labor and management.

Baseball's Negro National League pitcher Leroy Robert "Satchel" Paige breaks Dizzy Dean's 30-game winning streak.

Bank robbers Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker die in a shower of police bullets near Shreveport, Louisiana.

Alcatraz becomes a prison.

Surgeon R.K. Wilson allegedly takes a photograph of the Loch Ness Monster.

The FBI guns down John Dillinger and Baby-Face Nelson.

Japan renounces the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922 and the London Naval Treaty of 1930.

1935

The Nuremberg laws, enacted by Germany's Nazi party, make anti-Semitism the law of the land.

FBI kills Barker gang, including Ma Barker, in a shootout

Congress passes the National Labor Relations Act (the Wagner Act), reasserting workers' right to collective bargaining. Dissidents within the AFL create the CIO.

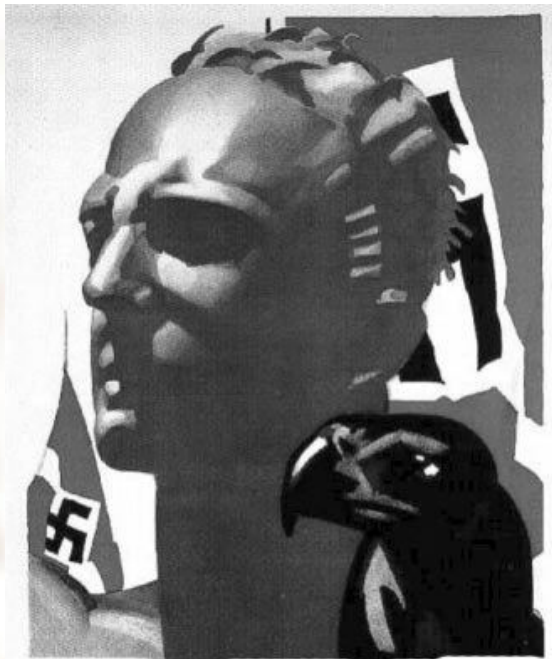
Irish Protestants in Belfast riot against Catholics, provoking retaliation from Catholics in the Irish Free State.

The Social Security Act becomes law in the US.

America's first public housing projects are established on New York's Lower East Side.

Italy invades Ethiopia.

Hitler publicly begins to re-arm Germany, creating the Luftwaffe in violation of the Versailles Treaty.



1936

The Spanish Civil War begins. Hundreds of Americans volunteer for "Lincoln Brigades" to help fight General Francisco Franco's fascists.

In India, statesman Jawaharlal Nehru is elected president of the Indian National Congress.

In violation of the Locarno Pact and the Treaty of Versailles, Germany reoccupies the Rhineland.

Joseph Stalin begins a "great purge" to liquidate his enemies. By 1939, over 8 million are dead and perhaps 10 million imprisoned.

Richard Bruno Hauptmann is executed for the kidnapping and death of the Lindbergh baby.

A major heat wave strikes the Midwestern United States, hundreds of high temperature records are set.

In baseball, Joe DiMaggio joins the New York Yankees, who win the World Series, 4-2, against the New York Giants.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt is re-elected president.

Edward VIII of the United Kingdom abdicates, announcing his intention to marry American divorcee Wallis Simpson. Rumour asserts that he was asked to step down due to his pro-Fascist, pro-Nazi leanings.

1937

Howard Hughes sets a new air record by flying from Los Angeles to New York City in 7 hours, 28 minutes and 25 seconds.

After staging a series of sit-down strikes, the United Auto Workers win official recognition from General Motors.

Pro-Franco German forces attack the Spanish city

of Guernica. Pablo Picasso paints his cubist masterpiece as a reflection upon the destruction.

Amelia Earhart and her aircraft disappear mysteriously over the Pacific.

The Golden Gate Bridge opens in San Francisco.

Sino-Japanese War: Japan invades China. Shanghai is occupied. 250,000 civilians and prisoners are slaughtered in the Nanjing Massacre.

1938

In its most violent display of anti-Semitism yet, German Nazis attack Jewish people and property in Kristallnacht (so named for the sounds of breaking glass).

The Dies Committee (AKA the House UnAmerican Activities Committee), charged with stamping out Nazi activity in the United States, changes its focus to Communist activity instead.

In the Halloween radio broadcast "War of the Worlds," Orson Welles panics Americans who believe that Martians are actually invading Earth.

Under the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas, Mexico nationalizes its petroleum industries.

Anschluss: Hitler annexes Austria. German troops march into Sudetenland.

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs is Walt Disney's first full-length animated film.

Howard Hughes sets a new record by completing a 91 hour airplane flight around the world.

1939

Hitler's Germany invades Poland, which falls in a month. France and Great Britain declare war.

Dictator Francisco Franco conquers Madrid, ending the Spanish Civil War

Ho Chi Minh creates the Viet Minh party to oppose colonialism in the French colony "Indochina."

The SS St. Louis, a ship carrying a cargo of 963 Jewish refugees, is denied permission to land in Florida after already having been turned away from Cuba. Forced to return to Europe, most of its passengers later die in Nazi concentration camps.

President Roosevelt believes that a longer Christmas shopping season will boost the economy and proclaims that Thanksgiving will fall on the fourth Thursday of November. This shift is soon passed into law.

Based on recent research, Albert Einstein writes a letter to President Roosevelt regarding the possibility of using uranium to initiate a nuclear chain reaction, the fundamental process behind the atomic bomb.

In Munich, Adolf Hitler narrowly escapes an assassination attempt while celebrating the 16th anniversary of the Beer Hall Putsch on November 8th.

Gone With the Wind, starring Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh, premieres. *The Wizard of Oz*, another blockbuster of this year, opens before Christmas.



RANDOM ADVENTURE GENERATOR

The pages that follow feature a series of tables which can be used by a GM to randomly generate the outline of an adventure, from plot, to locations, to action scenes, and more. It is based on a Master Plot Formula that was used by Lester Dent, the creator of Doc Savage. The italicized sections are quotations directly from Dent's formula.

Dent advocated the division of a pulp story into four sections, which we'll call Acts. He then broke each Act down into the elements that he felt were necessary to feature within that section. Our random adventure generator will work the same way. For each section, there will be a number of variables which a GM can determine via the tables presented, and when completed, the generator will

create a full outline of the adventure, ready to be fleshed out with started NPCs, and waiting for victims....er...I mean eager players.

Here's how it starts:

- 1. A DIFFERENT MURDER METHOD FOR VILLAIN TO USE*
- 2. A DIFFERENT THING FOR VILLAIN TO BE SEEKING*
- 3. A DIFFERENT LOCALE*
- 4. A MENACE WHICH IS TO HANG LIKE A CLOUD OVER HERO*

One of these DIFFERENT things would be nice, two better, three swell.

We'll combine these suggestions into three elements, which are determined before you start laying out the adventure itself. The three elements are:

- 1) The Villain (who is it?)
- 2) The Fiendish Plot (what is the Villain doing?)
- 3) The main Location. (Where does this occur?)

Each element is arrived at by rolling on the tables that begin on the next page.



Table 1: The Villain

D% Roll	Result
01-04	Gangster
05-09	Occultist
10-13	Murderer
14-17	Supernatural Threat
18-21	Communist
22-25	Cult Leader
26-29	Ruler of Lost Civilization
30-33	Mad Scientist
34-37	Wicked Foreigner
38-41	Thief
42-45	Assassin
46-49	Femme Fatale
50-53	Crooked Cop
54-57	Dictator
58-61	Nazi
62-65	Business Magnate
66-69	Crime Lord
70-73	Pirate
74-77	Anarchist
78-81	Society Swell
82-85	Crooked Politician
86-88	Alien Invader
89-93	Mastermind
94-97	Nemesis
98-00	Roll Twice and Combine

Gangster: One of the many members of organized crime gangs that plagued the period.

Occultist: A villain with an interest or skill in Occult matters (whether magic is real or fake is up to the GM).

Murderer: Someone who has killed another person--this individual may not have been a "Villain" prior to this event, and may not fit the classical villain modes--best used in murder mystery adventures.

Supernatural Threat: A ghost, a mummy, a vampire, etc. (The GM will have to determine whether or not the supernatural exists, or whether this is a "scooby doo" mystery)

Communist: Used almost interchangeably with Nazis in latter pulps. An evil member of the International Communist Conspiracy, looking to subvert and conquer freedom-loving countries.

Cult Leader: The mad leader of a group of fanatics.

Ruler of Lost Civilization: Anything ranging from a descendant of Genghis Khan trying to re-assert the Mongol Horde, to a Witch Doctor who rules a hidden African Tribe.

Mad Scientist: "They called me Mad at the University!" They were right.

Wicked Foreigner: Historically speaking, these were almost always Oriental (q.v. *Fu Manchu*), but any foreign culture will do.

Thief: A villain who specializes in burglary and other forms of theft.

Assassin: An individual whose business is killing. Not a simple murderer, but a professional.

Femme Fatale: You knew she was trouble when you got a look at those gams....

Crooked Cop: A man who has turned his back on his oath to uphold the law.

Dictator: The power-hungry despotic ruler of a nation.

Nazi: Evil Fascist. The classic pulp villain. I hate these guys.

Business Magnate: Capitalist gone wrong.

Crime Lord: The ruler of a vast criminal empire, not necessarily connected to "classical" organized crime.

Pirate: One who steals from (and using) vehicles, whether on sea, land, or in the air.

Anarchist: Madman dedicated to the overthrow of civilization.

Society Swell: A member of the upper class, including the rich and famous.

Crooked Politician: Power-mad and sticking it to the little guy.

Alien Invader: Either the actual invaders themselves, or their earth-bound servant trying to bring about the invasion.

Mastermind: The pinnacle of the criminal class.

Nemesis: If the main hero (or team if there is no main hero) has a nemesis, they re-appear. If none exists, create one--a dark reflection of the the hero, Moriarty to Holmes...The Joker to Batman.

Roll Twice and Combine: GMs can either combine both rolls in a single villain, or feature more than one villain.

Table 2: The Fiendish Plot, Part 1

D% Roll	Result
01-04	Manipulate
05-09	Sell
10-13	Acquire
14-17	Kill
18-21	Control
22-25	Steal
26-29	Create
30-33	Hunt
34-37	Terrorize
38-41	Infiltrate
42-45	Overthrow
46-49	Obliterate
50-53	Ransom
54-57	Blackmail
58-61	Hijack
62-65	Bomb
66-69	Smuggle
70-73	Murder
74-77	Rob
78-81	Attack
82-85	Rule
86-88	Take
89-93	Destroy
94-97	Extort
98-00	Roll Twice and Combine

Table 3: The Fiendish Plot, Part 2

D% Roll	Result
01-04	Monster
05-09	Building
10-13	People
14-17	A Country
18-21	Treasure
22-25	An Enemy
26-29	An Object
30-33	An Invention
34-37	A Woman
38-41	A Man
42-45	The Hero (or team)
46-49	Money
50-53	A City
54-57	The World
58-61	A Vehicle
62-65	A Business
66-69	A Lost World
70-73	Jewels
74-77	A Ruler
78-81	Someone famous
82-85	A rival
86-88	The Law
89-93	Innocent Victims
94-97	Hero's Friends or Family
98-00	Roll Twice and Combine

To determine the Fiendish Plot, roll once on Table 2 and once on Table 3, and combine the results. A result of 98-00 on either table can be interpreted as either a second roll on both tables, or just one, as the GM sees fit.

For example: A roll of 16 and 44 would yield the result: "Kill The Hero." The villain has decided that his plans would work much better without the hero in the way. A roll of 48 and 67 would generate: "Obliterate A Lost World." The villain has decided to destroy a hidden island or secret city. Why?

On occasion, the rolls may not make sense. ("Bomb Jewels," for example) The GM is encouraged to think the result through anyway. The pulps, after all, were known for bizarre stories. Perhaps the villain plans to build a bomb using diamonds, the hardest substance known to man? What for?



Table 4: Main Location

D% Roll	Result
01-04	City: The Docks
05-09	Far-off Jungle
10-13	Asian Country
14-17	European Country
18-21	Third-World Country
22-25	City: slums
26-29	City: Chinatown
30-33	Desert
34-37	At Sea
38-41	Lost City
42-45	Secret Base
46-49	City: Entertainment District
50-53	City: Warehouses
54-57	In the Air
58-61	City: Tenderloin District
62-65	Farmland
66-69	Forest
70-73	Another City
74-77	Cross-country (train, etc)
78-81	City: University
82-85	City: Government
86-88	City: Museums
89-93	City: Skyscrapers
94-97	Arctic/Antarctic
98-00	Roll Twice and Combine

The assumption made on this table is that the GM is playing a generic Hero Pulp campaign, where the PCs are based in a big city (usually New York). Pulp campaigns set elsewhere (Lost Worlds, etc.) should have locations determined by the GM.

EXAMPLE OF ADVENTURE SET-UP:

Rolling for all three elements, I get:

63: Business Magnate
87, 16: Take A Country
38: Lost City.

Thinking about it for a moment, I come up with an idea for a William Randolph Hearst-style tycoon, who is trying to take over a small, oil-rich desert nation, looking for an artifact in a Lost City in the desert sands to do it! He's looking for the fabled Scimitar of Al-Azif, and if he finds it, he will



have a legitimate claim to the throne of Qurania! If he gains control over the country, its people are doomed to a life of slavery...can the heroes stop him?

ANOTHER EXAMPLE:

Rolling for all three elements, I get:

00: Roll Twice and Combine. I get a 85, 22, which gives me Crooked Politician and Cult Leader, which I decide to combine into a single villain.
63, 81: Bomb Someone Famous
47: City: Entertainment District

Wow--this is a juicy one! This one unfolds in my mind, giving me the idea of a District Attorney who is secretly the head of a Cult called the Red Hand. The Red Hand has decided that America's troubles are due to their worship of false idols, and so have decided to plant a bomb at the gala premiere of a movie--which will wipe out most of the screen stars of the time, who will be in attendance.

The First Act:

Now that you've got the set-up, we move to the first act of the adventure. Let's see what Lester Dent has to say about the first act:

First line, or as near thereto as possible, introduce the hero and swat him with a fistful of trouble.

We'll call this the hook--what gets the PCs involved. We'll have a table for that.

Introduce ALL the other characters as soon as possible. Bring them on in action.

For this, we'll move to another table which will give us the supporting characters that will feature in the adventure.

Hero's endeavours land him in an actual physical conflict

Now we get to the good stuff. We'll create the first action sequence, using a table designed specifically for that.

Near the end of first 1500 words, there is a complete surprise twist in the plot development.

And to mark the end of the act, we add a twist in the plot which spins us into the second act. You guessed it, we've got a plot twist table.



Table 5: The Hook

D% Roll	Result
01-11	Solicitation
12-20	Dead Body
21-30	Disaster
31-42	Attack
43-56	Bizarre Occurance
57-65	News
66-77	Friend in Need
78-90	Up To Our Necks
91-96	Roll Twice
97-00	Other

Solicitation: The simplest of plot hooks--an NPC (unknown to the characters) comes to the characters and asks for their help.

Dead Body: The characters encounter a corpse, which has some clue on it regarding the Fiendish Plot.

Disaster: A horrible disaster occurs, somehow related to the Fiendish Plot, and draws the character's attention.

Attack: An attack occurs (on someone other than the characters), somehow related to the Fiendish Plot.

Bizarre Occurance: A strange, inexplicable event happens, somehow related to the Fiendish Plot. In the tradition of the pulps, the more outlandish and bizarre, the better---an early test of the Villain's new ray cannon, for example, turns the sky over the city a brilliant green for 10 minutes at Noon.

News: The characters read a story in the paper, or hear a story on the radio, that is related to the Fiendish Plot.

Friend in Need: Similar to the Solicitation hook, except that the NPC is a friend of the characters. The NPC comes to the characters for help.

Up To Our Necks: In media res: The characters are involved in the plot from the starting gun. They are attacked, or implicated in a crime, or the victim of a theft, or somehow made to suffer in a manner that is directly related to the Fiendish Plot.

Roll Twice: Roll twice on the Hook Table, and combine the results.

Other: A Hook not represented on this table, created by the GM.



Table 6: Supporting Characters

D% Roll	Descriptor	Descriptor	Type
01-04	Big	Neat	Entertainer
05-09	Ugly	Unlucky	Pilot
10-13	Shifty	Menacing	Soldier
14-17	Secretive	Weak-willed	Politician
18-21	Strong	Foreign	Contact
22-25	Small	Rich	Business Owner
26-29	Trustworthy	Small-time	Guide
30-33	Helpless	Ambitious	Servant
34-37	Quirky	Skilled	Socialite
38-41	Troublesome	Helpful	Scientist
42-45	Smart	Feisty	Doctor
46-49	Charming	Wild	Criminal
50-53	Strong-willed	All-American	Investigator
54-57	Famous	Hard-boiled	Spouse
58-61	Sloppy	Distinctive	Expert
62-65	Dense	Professional	Informant
66-69	Cold	Young	Vehicle Operator
70-73	Impulsive	Violent	Thug
74-77	Clumsy	Urban	Fanatic
78-81	Lucky	Amateur	Academician
82-85	Dangerous	Old	Assistant
86-88	Agile	Native	Worker
89-93	Beautiful	Evil	Henchman
94-97	Weak	Odd	Occultist
98-00	Talented	Ordinary	Kid

The above table gives you the featured supporting characters for the adventure. Note that unless otherwise specified, featured characters are always Heroic characters, rather than Ordinary.

First roll 2d4 for the number of featured supporting characters that will appear in the adventure. Then, for each character, roll three times on Table 6. This will give you two descriptors and a type, which will give you a concept for the NPC. Then, using the standard modern D20 rules, generate the NPC's stats.

EXAMPLES:

I need the featured supporting characters for an adventure. I roll for the number of supporting characters and get a 3.

For the first Supporting Character, I roll three

percentile rolls, and get: 58, 94, 61, which gives me a "Sloppy, Odd Expert." I envision an unkempt inventor of strange devices...someone who can help the characters, if they can get past his strangeness.

For the second Supporting Character, I roll a 00, 72, and 06, which gives me a "Talented, Violent Pilot." Even though this does not specify that this character is the villain's henchman, I decide that the idea of a bloodthirsty air ace is just too perfect a henchman to ignore.

For the last Supporting Character, I roll a 18, 52, and 66, which results in a "Strong, All-American Vehicle Operator," who I decide will be a pilot and owner of a small cargo airline, who is being victimized by the villain and his henchman.

Table 7: Action Sequence Type

D20 Roll	Result
1-4	Chase, foot or mount
5-10	Chase, vehicle
11-14	Fight, unarmed
15-20	Fight, Armed

Every action sequence is comprised of four elements: Type, Participants, Setting, and Complications. Using the provided tables, roll a d20, check the result, and assemble your action sequence!

The results are fairly self-explanatory, with the exception of the Complications:

Bystanders: The action sequence will feature non-participants who will get in the way.

Environment: The environment in which the sequence occurs causes difficulties (examples include rain, dangerous surroundings, hazardous conditions). All combatants should be taking penalties on their actions due to this.

Props: The sequence features elements of the setting which can be used by the participants during the sequence (examples would include metal rods at a foundry, or trash cans in a street chase, etc.).

New Sequence: The original action sequence will lead immediately into another sequence--re-roll this new sequence from the beginning. It is possible to have a linked chain of multiple sequences!

**Table 8: Action Sequence Participants**

D20 Roll	Result
1-6	Few (1-2 per PC)
7-15	Some (3-4 per PC)
16-20	Lots (5+ per PC)

Table 9: Action Sequence Setting

D20 Roll	Result
1	Nautical setting (ship, docks, etc.)
2	Natural Setting (park, jungle, etc.)
3	Rooftops
4	City Street
5	Residential Setting
6	Entertainment Setting (theatre, stadium, nightclub, etc.)
7	Church/temple/other religious
8	Business Setting (office, factory, warehouse, street market, etc.)
9	Transportational Setting (airport, train station, or even on trains or planes)
10	Educational (museum, college, etc.)
11	Civic setting (post office, city hall)
12	Slum or Rough neighborhood
13	"Middle of Nowhere"
14	Secret/hidden location
15	Headquarters (PCs or others)
16	Military setting (base, etc.)
17	Restaurant
18	Laboratory
19	Landmark
20	Unusual setting (underwater, in space, underground, etc.)

Table 10: Action Sequence Complications

D20 Roll	Result
1-5	Bystanders
6-10	Environment
11-15	Props
16-20	New Sequence

EXAMPLES:

Rolling on the Action Sequence Tables, I get: 9, 15, 13, 13. This gives me “Chase, vehicle”, “Some Participants”, “Middle of Nowhere” and “Props.” Mulling it over, I decide that the characters are going to be chased by three carloads of the villain’s minions along deserted back-country roads. There are numerous obstacles which will appear during the chase, which can be used to try to force the other drivers into crashing (fallen trees, slow-moving wagons, etc.).

Giving it another try, I roll 17, 6, 18, 10: “Fight, armed,” “Few Participants,” “Laboratory” and “Environment.” I decide that the PCs are going to be attacked by the Henchman and a handful of minions, while in an inventor’s lab. The place is filled with sparking electrical machinery, which will cause electrical damage to anyone falling into it!

For our last example, I roll 15, 17, 15, 20: “Fight, armed,” “Lots of Participants,” “Headquarters” and “New Sequence.” Rolling for the new sequence, I get 3, 7, 3, 6: “Chase, foot or mounted,” “Some participants,” “Rooftops” and “Environment.” This one looks like a corker! How about this: A horde of the villain’s minions attach the PC’s own headquarters, eventually leading to a rain-slicked rooftop chase as either the minions or the PCs are trying to beat a hasty retreat!



Table 4: Plot Twist

D20 Roll	Result
1-2	Betrayal!
3-9	New Location
10	Greater Villain
11-13	Hidden Plot
14-15	Reversal!
16-18	Bizarre Occurance
19	Deus Ex Machina
20	Other

Betrayal!: An NPC changes his or her allegiance in a dramatic fashion.

New Location: Roll again on the Location Table (Table 4). The plot will move to that location at the beginning of the next act.

Greater Villain: The villain of the adventure is actually a henchman of an even greater villain. Re-roll on Table 1 to reveal the new threat.

Hidden Plot: The supposed plot is actually a smokescreen for the villain's true purpose. Re-roll the Fiendish Plot on tables 2 and 3.

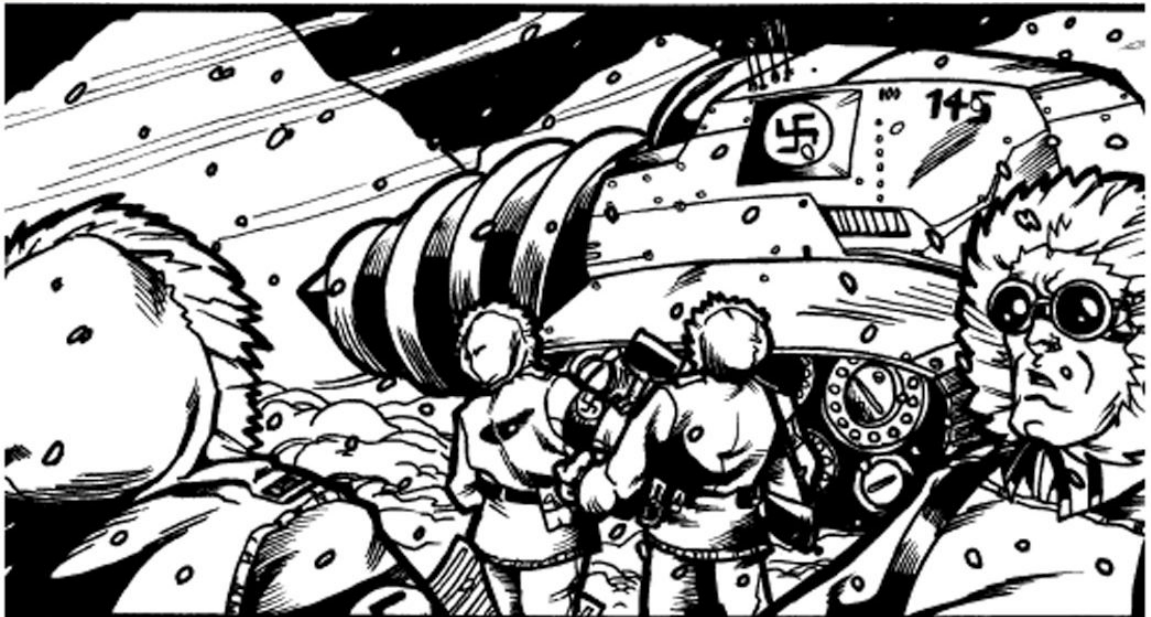
Reversal!: Events shift, leading to a direct reversal of the PC's fortunes. If they are working with

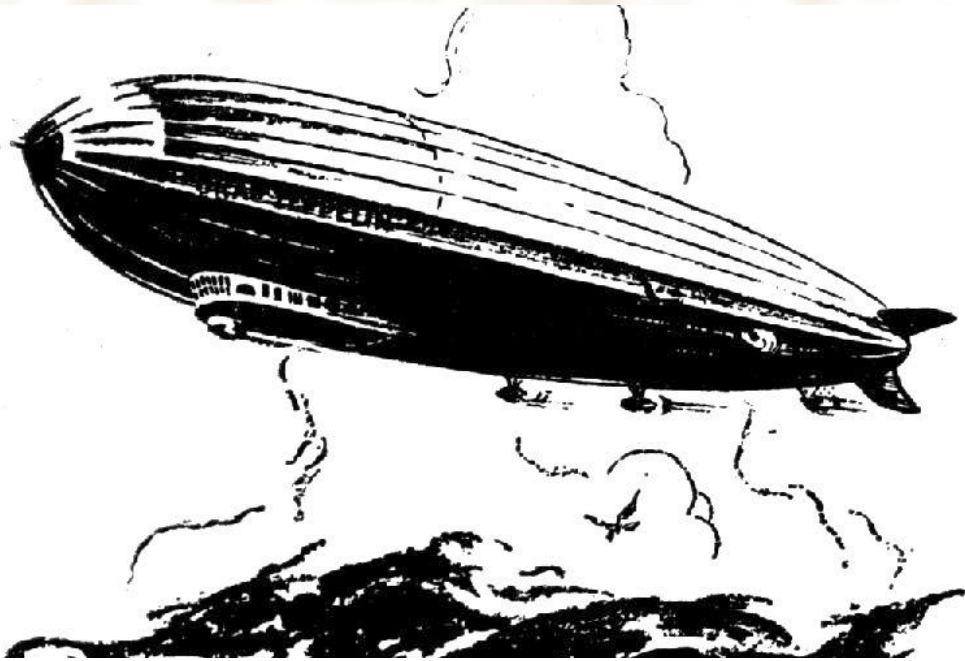
the police, they suddenly become implicated in the crime. If they are following clues, the trail goes cold. This works both ways, however. If they are losing, they suddenly start to win.

Bizarre Occurance: Similar to the Hook of the same name. Something weird happens, without apparent explanation.

Deus Ex Machina: Help comes from some improbable source, not hinted at all previously. This can apply to the villain as well—he just happens to have a underwater breathing invention when he's apparently drowned, etc.

Other: Any twist that the GM's evil little mind can come up with.





The Second Act:

Once you've generated the First Act, it's time to move on to the second. Here's what Lester Dent says about it:

Hero, being heroic, struggles, and his struggles lead up to another physical conflict, and a surprising plot twist.

Using the previously provided tables, generate another action sequence and another plot twist.

The Third Act:

Same as the above. As Lester Dent says:

Hero makes some headway, and corners the villain or somebody in physical conflict.

A surprising plot twist, in which the hero preferably gets it in the neck bad, to end the act.

The difference here is that the action sequence should directly involve the Villain, and the plot

twist generated at the end of the Act should negatively affect the PCs.

The Fourth Act:

Now you're ready for the climax. There's really nothing left to do at this point that can be generated by random rolls. Everything at this point is up to the actions of the PCs.

In Dent's words:

The hero extricates himself using HIS OWN SKILL, training or brawn.

The mysteries remaining--one big one held over to this point will help grip interest--are cleared up in course of final conflict as hero takes the situation in hand.

That's it you should have a rough outline now for a pulp adventure. Just generate the NPCs, and off you go!

Turn the page for an example adventure outline created with this system.

EXAMPLE ADVENTURE OUTLINE

Villain: (59) Nazi

Fiendish Plot: (13, 18) Acquire Treasure

Location:(07) Far-off Jungle

Act 1:

The Hook: (90) Up To Our Necks

Supporting Characters: Three of them: (00,04,33) Talented Neat Servant, (42,38,03) Smart Helpful Entertainer, (23,92, 40) Small Evil Scientist, (62, 85,67) Dense Old Vehicle Operator.

Action Sequence (18,15,6,4) Fight, armed, Some participants, Nightclub, Bystanders

Plot Twist: (7) New Location (given the nightclub fight, I decide to have the adventure start in the PC's home city, and then shift to the previously-rolled jungle location here).

Act 2:

Action Sequence (15,13,1,11)Fight, armed, Some participants, Nautical Setting, Props.

Plot Twist: (7) New Location (European Country)

Act 3:

Action Sequence (19,20, 18,10) Fight, armed, Lots of participants, Laboratory, Environment.

Plot Twist: (2) Betrayal!

Act 4: Climax.



So, looking at the results at left, here's what I come up with: The Nazi's are looking for a legendary artifact. No, not the headpiece to the Staff of Ra. The Jewel of Zinj, which is said to be a phenomenal source of power. However, it is said to be located in the temple at the center of the Lost City of Zinj.

The PCs are at a nightclub, watching the beautiful singer, Elaine Nightengale, perform. Suddenly shots ring out as a group of Nazi secret agents attack, led by a hideous dwarf! The PCs fight them off, with the help of Carstairs, Elaine's fastidious ex-army servant, but not before they snatch a necklace from around Elaine's neck! Elaine says that the necklace was a gift from her dead father, who was an archeologist. The medallion was supposedly a map to the Lost City of Zinj! Elaine is able to recreate the map from memory, and the PCs (with Elaine and Carstairs in tow) head off to the jungle nation of Mubullah.

In Mubullah, the PCs are taken upriver by a senile old river boat captain. Along the way, they come under attack by hostile natives, trying to prevent them from reaching Zinj. They finally reach the lost city, only to discover the jewel missing (I'll probably throw another action sequence in here, too...lots of Indiana Jones-style traps and such). They find a dead Nazi (killed by the natives), who has a telegram on him, revealing that the dwarf is a scientist working for the Nazis, and will be experimenting on the jewel at his lab in Berlin!

The PCs then travel to the heart of the Third Reich, and assault the laboratory of Herr Doktor Liebenohne...a deformed dwarf spared by the Nazis purely because of his brilliance, which is as twisted as his body. The fight takes place in Liebenohne's laboratory, filled with experimental weapons and other inventions. Suddenly, just as things are reaching a climax, Carstairs betrays the PCs! He was a Nazi agent all along!

Can the PC's defeat Carstairs and Liebenohne, get the Jewel of Zinj, and get out of Berlin with Elaine before the Gestapo closes in?

Gosh, I sure hope so....

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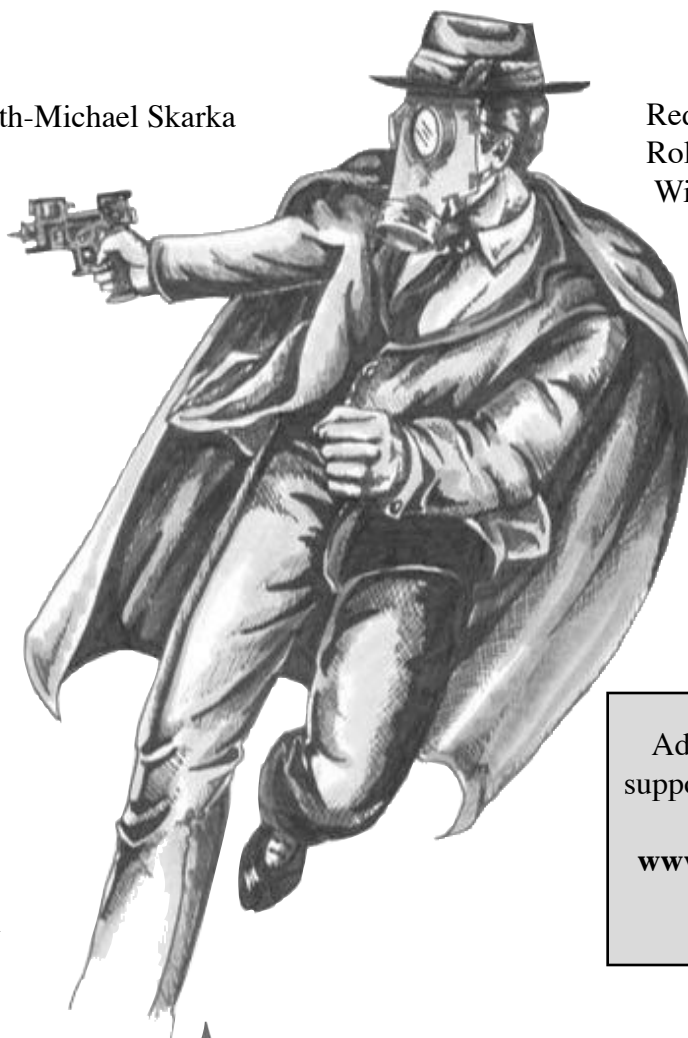
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CHAPTER ONE:

PULP ADVENTURE

The fiendish Manchurian doctor casually kicked over the wicker basket, and three deadly vipers slithered out, winding their way across the marble floor towards the chair where the young woman was bound, helpless to the danger that approached.

"Your time is running out, Ms. Van Meter," Tsung-Chi Sin said, his voice like a silken strangling cord. "I cannot control my pets once they've scented their prey. Tell me: Where is the Green Falcon?"

Suddenly the window shattered as a green-clad figure burst through, twin 45s blazing. The snakes

were obliterated in an instant, blown like rubber toys across the floor. "Right here, Doctor Sin," the Green Falcon laughed. He levelled his guns at the insidious devil of Chinatown.

Suddenly, he felt the sting of a bullet grazing his shoulder, slicing through the green overcoat, and moments later heard the crack of the pistol's report...from behind him! He spun to see Rita Van Meter, his own girlfriend, standing by the chair, ropes pooled at her feet. In her hands she clutched a smoking revolver, and her eyes were glazed in a vacant stare.



A chilling laugh filled the chamber. "You fool...you forget that I am a master of mesmerism. This entire scene was a trap, played purely for your benefit. Now, you will die at the lovely hand of Ms. Van Meter...or you will be forced to kill her!"

The Green Falcon's mind raced, as Rita's finger tightened on the trigger....

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the **THRILLING TALES Omnibus Edition**. In these pages, we present a compilation of the first two years of PDF releases in the d20 pulp line published by Adamant Entertainment, available here in print for the first time.

The contents of this rulebook, along with a copy of the d20 Modern rulebook published by Wizards of the Coast, are all that you need to run a pulse-pounding pulp roleplaying game using the d20 system.

So, hang on tight, because the first thing we're going to tell you is that there is no such thing as the "pulp genre."

WHAT IS PULP?

Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as the "pulp genre." Pulp was a medium, a method of delivery, not a genre in and of itself. Saying "pulp genre" makes about as much sense as saying "television genre" (or, for that matter, "cinematic" as a genre, which is another misnamed term used by gamers, but I digress).

The Pulps were the magazines of popular fiction, delivering stories of adventure, action and romance in several genres from their birth in the first years of the twentieth century to their demise in the mid-1950s. They represented the greatest explosion of mass entertainment by way of the written word that had been seen until the creation of the Internet.

There were pulps for every taste. Detective pulps, science-fiction pulps, western pulps, sports pulps, romance pulps and more. There were pulps devoted to the exploits of everyday heroes, and pulps that were spiced with the macabre and unusual. They all had one thing in common: they delivered escapist entertainment, printed on cheap pulp paper sandwiched between slick, gaudy color covers. There was something for everyone.

The pulp magazine was a twentieth century publishing sensation, the roots of the form can be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century, with the invention of the dime novel: serial fiction printed on newspaper that was aimed at the middle and



lower classes. "Low-brow" entertainment that offered lurid stories full of action, suspense and thrills.

With the birth of the new century, and the growing literacy of the public, the market for serial fiction exploded, leading to the creation of the pulp magazine, with brightly-colored covers designed to lure potential readers in a market that quickly became filled with competitors.

The pulps reached their heyday in the years between World Wars One and Two, especially during the Great Depression of the 1930s. In a world that seemed increasingly hopeless and hard, the pulps offered an escape from the bleakness of everyday life, priced so that anyone could get away for a few brief hours. Gone were the breadlines and the dust bowl of their hard-scrabble lives, replaced by the thrill of soaring through the clouds with air aces, or travelling to far-off worlds, or galloping after a band of desperadoes, guns blazing.

The most popular of the pulps featured crime fighting heroes. The average American saw during Prohibition (1920 to 1933) the rise of a powerful criminal class that could flaunt authority as they wished, becoming rich and powerful in the process. They saw government and business become corrupted by these new criminals and their money....and most importantly, the average American felt helpless to stop it.

The lure of the crime-fighter in pulp stories was obvious: a simple wish-fulfilment of fighting back, of taking control of a situation that seemed out of control. It is the same basic human need that later fueled the popularity of superhero comics and even later still, action movies. Putting oneself in the imaginary role of a hero who takes action against those things which you feel helpless to affect.

The pulps, along with radio (which often produced dramatic presentations based on the stories printed in the pulps) became the prime source of entertainment for the American people before the advent of television. Stories which relied upon the audience's own imaginations to envision. In some ways, a purer form than the passive process of watching television or a film.

The pulps didn't last, however. Paper shortages during the Second World War dealt a crippling blow to the form, which limped along for another decade or so after the war had ended, and finally died out, replaced by the television, the comic book and the mass-market paperback novel.

So, if there is no such thing as the "pulp genre", then what are we talking about?

PULP GENRES

When gamers speak of the "pulp genre," what they're really talking about is an amalgam of several genre elements taken from the various genres of pulp stories, radio shows, cliffhanger film serials and later "post-modern pulps" like the *Indiana Jones* films and *The Rocketeer*.

The following section is a breakdown of the most popular genres from which these elements are lifted. It is not an exhaustive list of every pulp genre--only those that often provide fodder for the RPG interpretations of the pulps. For example, Sports pulps were very popular, but you don't often see gamers clamoring to play a golf pro in a tense tournament!

CRIMEFIGHTING

By far, the most common and popular genre in the pulps was the crimefighting genre, which itself can be broken down into several distinct sub-genres, the most popular of which were the Detective Mystery and the Hero pulp.

The Detective Mystery has survived into the present day as a staple of the mystery section of every bookstore--A hero or heroine whose purpose is to solve mysteries, usually involving murder.

The formula of these tales usually involves a detective (either private or official) brought in to puzzle out a baffling crime. The tale progresses with the detective figuring out the answers to the questions of Who, What, Where, Why and How, most likely facing peril of some kind as they get closer and closer to The Truth, which they inevitably do by the end of the tale.

Detective stories of the pulp era usually ended with the criminal brought to justice. It was later that the focus shifted and the unravelling of the mystery became more important than the result.

Hero pulps are the tales that most gamers think of when they hear the word "pulp," and as such make up the majority of the RPG-created "pulp genre." They are tales of larger-than-life heroes, proto-superheroes, if you will, facing larger-than-life villains and solving bizarre and unusual crimes. *Doc Savage*, *The Shadow*, *The Spider*, *The Avenger*, all of these are famous examples of the Hero pulp.

Since the hero pulps led directly into the creation of the superhero comic book, it is easy to see the genre as, essentially, low-powered (or no-powered) superheroics. There are, however, major differences. Believability, for one. The Hero pulps, however strange or unusual the topic, held at their core a level of "this could happen." Superhero comics, with their demi-godlike powers and huge battles, are by their very nature more farfetched. Think of the difference between early James Bond films and more recent ones--the early films, even with the gadgets, had an air of reality about them, albeit stretched, to be sure. The later films, with orbital heat-rays and spy-car duels have ventured far into the realm of superheroics.

The byword of the Hero pulps was "exotic." Strange crimes, far-off locations, cutting-edge (for the 1930s) technology, etc. The Hero pulps were the pinnacle of escapism, and the more exotic things that they could show the reader, the better. This wasn't limited to pure fiction, either. The writers would be careful to include real elements as well--for example, Walter Gibson, the author of most of *The Shadow* novels was a part-time professional magician, and would often include real magicians tricks in his fictional hero's arsenal. If *Doc Savage* author Lester Dent had recently read some interesting things about the Yukon, you could be sure that Doc and his men would be visiting the

Yukon in an upcoming adventure.

As mentioned previously, the Hero pulp provides the largest amount of inspiration to pulp RPGs, and so will form the basis of the Random Adventure Generator later in this product.

AIR HERO

For readers in the early twentieth century, air travel was a novelty. It was seen during the Depression as a romantic escape from earthbound problems. The pilot was a dashing heroic figure, and the pulps provided many such heroes to thrill readers.

Many of the air heroes of the pulps were World War I flying aces, fighting against the Germans in what at the time was known as “the Great War.” These pulps were adventure tales set during wartime, and provided enough actual aeronautical detail to whet the appetite of would-be pilots.

There were tales set in the present as well. The contemporary air heroes flew aircraft at the cutting edge of aviation (and beyond)--the period equivalent of a Tom Clancy technothriller.

Air hero pulps weren't limited to simple adventure tales of the air war, or tales of daredevils touring air shows, however--the most popular of the air hero pulps, *G-8 and His Battle Aces*, combined the Air hero formula with the Hero pulp and even Horror, featuring the World War One aces fighting off flying armies of zombies, giant bats, supervillains and more.



FOREIGN ADVENTURE

Similar to the exotic elements of the Hero pulps, but without the focus on crime-fighting, this genre tells tales of action and adventure in distant locations. These tales could be stories of globe-trotting fortune hunters, military adventures of the Foreign Legion, or rough-and-tumble tales of life as a merchant seaman in the South Pacific.

The focus of these stories was always on the location, and the strange things and people that could be found there. By today's standards, a great deal of this genre's tales are not exactly enlightened in their viewpoints--the stories are full of ignorant, animalistic savages, shifty, untrustworthy foreigners, seductive half-naked women, and the like. The hero is the embodiment of the “civilized white man in a world of danger”, and to modern eyes, it can be pretty offensive.

That said, though, the *Indiana Jones* films and *Tomb Raider* games draw heavily on the elements of this genre, so it is more than possible to remove the insulting elements and retain the heart--adventure and excitement in far-off lands.

ESPIONAGE

The period between the World Wars was rife with intrigue. Some historians have said that the World Wars can be viewed as a single conflict, with an intermission where nations gathered their strength and maneuvered for the next round.

The Espionage pulps were often reluctant to deal with real-life politics, and so usually shrouded their tales behind fictional nations. Bolsheviks from places like “Bulkavia”, rather than Russians. Fascist leaders of secret world-spanning empires, rather than Nazi Germany. As the thirties drew to a close, however, and war seemed more and more imminent, the gloves came off and real-world issues appeared on the pulp pages.

Whether they were facing real or fictional menaces, the heroes of the Espionage pulps are a familiar archetype to modern readers. James Bond is their direct descendant, and the usual Espionage pulp could, with very little tinkering, be made into a serviceable 007 adventure.

HORROR

The horror pulp genre has gotten quite a bit of attention in the RPG hobby, due to games based upon one of the most famous horror pulp writers, Howard Phillips Lovecraft.

Not all pulp horror was concerned with mind-shattering nameless things from beyond space and time, however. Even that particular variety (which has been termed Lovecraftian, for obvious reasons), was limited largely to the pages of a single magazine: *Weird Tales*. There were other horror pulps, though: *Terror Tales*, *Strange Stories*, *Ghost Stories*, among others.

The stories ran the usual gamut of horror elements: vampires, ghosts, werewolves, mad killers, voodoo, gothic castles, etc. Tales were usually one-shots with no recurring characters--it's easier to kill off protagonists that way, increasing the scare factor. There were, however, the occasional series of tales that would center around an occult investigator of some sort, who would encounter a supernatural threat and defeat it by the end of the tale, ready to move on to the next. This form of story is ironically much more "game-able" than the Lovecraftian variety, and yet Lovecraft still forms the basis of most pulp-horror gaming.

WEIRD MENACE

Everybody loves a good villain. This was also true of pulp readers, and so it was inevitable that magazines devoted to villainy would start to appear.

Inspired by the gothic romances of the 19th century, and the infamous Grand Guignol theatre of Paris (which shocked audiences with realistic scenes of horror and bloodshed), these pulps were dark reflections of the Hero pulps. The magazine would focus on the exploits of the featured villain, who would always be defeated by the often bland, unremarkable hero, yet would always escape justice at the end, to return in the next issue.

The stories delighted in detailed descriptions of torture and fiendish plots, usually performed on a scantily-clad damsel in distress, or on the hero himself. Mild by today's standards, they were shocking stuff at the time, with stories that flirted with sadism and "adult themes." They were often sold "under the counter", rather than displayed openly, and were definitely part of the reason that pulps began to develop a reputation for salacious thrills.

The villains of these stories were the draw: always brilliant and unredeemably evil, and usually given some sort of weird gimmick, whether a costumed secret identity (*Doctor Satan*) or being inscrutable and foreign (*Doctor Fu Manchu*, the most famous alumnus of this particular school).

SPICY

Another "under the counter" genre, Spicy pulps were simply tales from any of the other pulp genres



with “adult themes” added. Usually this involved women in various stages of undress (prominently displayed on the cover, naturally), and often threatened with a sado-sexual “fate worse than death.” Again, almost laughably tame to twenty-first century eyes, but scandalous in the thirties.

The “damsel in distress” element of Spicy pulps certainly finds its way into the other genres, albeit with less of a concentration on whips!

One of the best things about this genre was the magazine titles, which put “Spicy” in the name to let prospective readers know that titillation awaited within. This led to such stalwarts as *Spicy Mystery*, *Spicy Detective*, and *Spicy Western*. Pulp fans have often joked about an imaginary entry into this field, *Spicy Zeppelin Stories*!

JUNGLE STORIES

This genre was made famous by the Tarzan stories of Edgar Rice Burroughs, which first appeared in *All Story Magazine*. There were plenty of imitators, however, and soon the market was flooded with tales of Ki-Gor and Kazar and Sheena, Queen of the Jungle.

Not all Jungle stories were tales of Noble Savages, however. There were tales of intrepid explorers, big game hunters, treasure hunters and more, crossing over with the Foreign Adventure genre. Remember that at the time, there were areas of the globe that were largely unexplored--and many of those were in the tractless interiors of the jungles of Africa, South America, the South Pacific and Asia. These unknown regions were ripe for adventure in the minds of the readers of the Thirties.

The Jungle Story pulps also crossed over quite a bit with the Lost World genre (q.v.) -- Lost cities and secret civilizations were a common staple of this genre.

SCIENCE FICTION

Science fiction was, essentially, an invention of the pulps. Born of the earlier form, the “scientific romance” of the nineteenth century, the science fiction story (a term coined by pulp publisher Hugo Gernsback in his *Science Wonder Stories* magazine in June of 1929) was tailor-made for the pulp format. Of all of the pulp genres, it is the one that has thrived beyond the medium that created it.

The science fiction stories of the pulps leaned heavily toward spectacle. There weren’t a lot of thoughtful examinations of the impact of technology upon human civilization and culture... but there were a lot of rocket ships, alien invasions, two-fisted scientists blazing away at Bug Eyed Monsters with ray-guns, etc. In most cases the science made no sense, but the readers didn’t care. If it sounded like it had the ring of science to it, that was good enough!

That is the biggest difference between pulp science fiction and modern variety. Even in the most far-fetched space operas of today, attempts are made at a certain degree of “realism”--perhaps not scientific accuracy, but at the very least internal consistency of the genre elements. We all know that “Warp drive” is ridiculous, but we also know that there is a consistently stated exposition of how it works within the fictional world. Not so with pulp sci-fi. There was no attempt made to justify anything. The science was often flat-out wrong, but breathlessly described nonetheless. The rocket is



powered by “Atomic Radio Turbines” --- what the heck does that mean? Who cares! On to the next exciting chapter!

As with all pulp genres, there was a great deal of cross over. You could see science-fiction meet horror in tales of alien invasion and body-snatching, or thrilling to the exploits of science fiction heroes like *Captain Future*.

WESTERN

Westerns were a popular pulp genre as well, and not just period tales of gunslingers and Indian raiding parties. In one of the stranger creations of the pulp era, the western magazines would occasionally print contemporary westerns, set in the 1930s.

This strange mix of Cowboys, Indians, Radios and Tommyguns was especially evident in the cliffhanger serial films of the time, and naturally was reflected in print as well. For a jaw-dropping experience, track down a DVD copy of the 1935 Gene Autry serial *The Phantom Empire*, which featured the singing cowboy star fighting the super-science of the underground city of Maurania!

LOST WORLD

The Lost World genre also grew out of the scientific romances of the nineteenth century. These stories usually featured a location that, by virtue of its isolation from the rest of the world, developed separately. Lost Worlds could be found within the hollow earth (reached by caves), in jungles inexplicably found in the middle of the Antarctic (warmed by the presence of active volcanoes), hidden islands in the South Pacific, or deep within primordial African jungles.

Lost Worlds are often populated by remnants of Earth civilizations long past...Ancient Rome, Vikings, Lost African tribes, Sunken Atlantis. Some are populated by creatures whose evolution progressed differently than their more familiar cousins (intelligent, talking species of apes were always a popular choice here). Naturally, Lost Worlds almost always featured dinosaurs, who have survived extinction due to the isolated environment...and, let's be honest: because they're cool.



The stories of Lost Worlds usually involved the adventures of a member of our society upon finding themselves in this strange place, but on occasion (in tales that crossed-over with the Jungle Stories genre), would be tales of Lost World natives.

OTHER GENRES

Other genres from the pulps are also useful for RPG purposes, but usually form the basis of entire games already: Notably the Swords & Sorcery genre, which thrived during the pulp publishing era, and directly led to the creation of the role-playing game hobby in the first place!

CHAPTER TWO:

A TIMELINE OF THE 1930s

The pulps are very much a product of their times, and GMs looking for ways to bring that feeling across in a pulp campaign should try whenever possible to include events that place the adventure in a historical context.

Historical detail can make a setting more “real” to players, and can also provide GMs with inspirations for adventures.

1930

The Nazi party places second in German elections, but Adolf Hitler is kept from his seat in the Reichstag because he is an Austrian citizen.

In South Africa, white women can now vote, but blacks are still excluded under the regime that would soon be called apartheid.

Pluto, the ninth planet, is discovered by astronomers.

President Herbert Hoover signs the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act, weakening the already failing global economy.

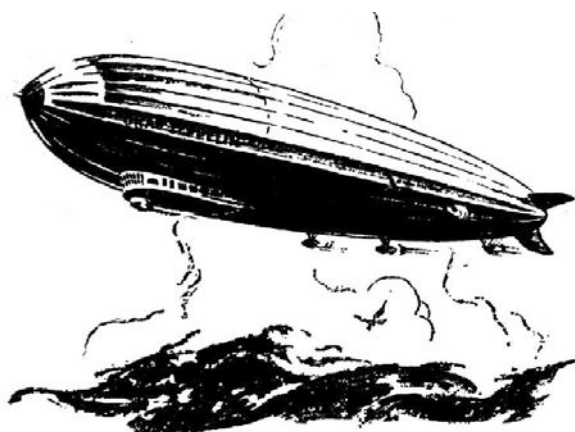
Over 1,300 American banks fail and unemployment exceeds 4 million as the Depression sinks lower.

In Jamaica, Rastafarians proclaim Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie as the new Messiah.

A Fire in the Ohio State Penitentiary near Columbus kills 320.

Chicago Tribune journalist Alfred Liddle is shot. Newspapers promise \$55,000 reward for information. Liddle is later found to have had contacts to organized crime

British Airship R101 crashes in France en-route to India on its maiden voyage.



1931

The Scottsboro affair begins when nine black men are arrested on false rape charges at a train stop in Paint Rock, Alabama.

A 34-year-old Baptist preacher named Elijah Poole joins the Nation of Islam and becomes Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Black Muslims.

Chicago mobster Al Capone is convicted of income tax evasion. Capone is sentenced to 11 years in jail and a \$50,000 fine.

Unemployed Americans march on the White

House, demanding a national program of employment at a minimum wage. They are turned away.

Japan occupies Manchuria (which they call Manchukuo), beginning a period of Sino-Japanese conflict which doesn't end until Japan's defeat at the end of the Second World War.

"The Star Spangled Banner," originally written in 1814 by Francis Scott Key, becomes the American national anthem by order of Congress.

In China, the Yangtze River bursts a dam, causing massive flooding, famine, destruction and death.

Construction of the Empire State Building is completed in New York City

In organized crime, the so-called "Castellemmarese War" ends with the assassination of Joe "The Boss" Masseria, briefly leaving Salvatore Maranzano as *capo di tutti capi* ("boss of all bosses")--undisputed leader of the American Mafia. Maranzano is himself assassinated less than 6 months later, leading to the establishment of the Five Families, a national commission headed by Charlie "Lucky" Luciano.

1932

Mohandas Gandhi begins fasting to protest British treatment of India's untouchable caste. After just 6 days, he wins concessions.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, pledging a "New Deal," is elected president for the first of his four terms.

Wall Street's Dow Jones Industrial hits its Depression-era low, 41.22.

Physicists Sir John Douglas Cockcroft and Ernest Walton split the atom for the first time.

The Great Depression continues to take a heavy toll: in this year alone, 1,161 banks fail, nearly

20,000 business go bankrupt, and 21,000 people commit suicide.

The son of noted aviator Charles Lindbergh is kidnapped and dies. Richard Bruno Hauptmann is arrested for the crime, beginning the "Trial of the Century."

1933

Prohibition ends in the United States.

Adolf Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany. By the end of the year, Hitler has proclaimed the Third Reich, opened the first concentration camp at Dachau, eliminated all political parties other than National Socialism, and consolidated his dictatorial rule.

President Franklin Roosevelt begins to record his "fireside chats" for weekly radio broadcast.

Giuseppe Zangara attempts to assassinate President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt, but instead kills Chicago, Illinois Mayor Anton J. Cermak.

The federal government passes a flurry of innovative social legislation, as part of Roosevelt's "New Deal."

Fiorella La Guardia elected mayor of New York.

US airship Akron crashes near New York - 74 dead

Karl Jansky announces the detection of radio waves from the centre of the galaxy.

1934

The "Dust Bowl" hits the US Midwest, blowing 300 million tons of topsoil into the Atlantic, devastating farmland in Kansas, Texas, Colorado, and Oklahoma.

General Lazaro Cardenas, elected president of

Mexico, begins a program of agrarian reform, redistributing land and building the power of organized labor.

The FCC is created to oversee U.S. telephone, telegraph, and radio communications.

The National Labor Relations Board is created to regulate collective bargaining between labor and management.

Baseball's Negro National League pitcher Leroy Robert "Satchel" Paige breaks Dizzy Dean's 30-game winning streak.

Bank robbers Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker die in a shower of police bullets near Shreveport, Louisiana.

Alcatraz becomes a prison.

Surgeon R.K. Wilson allegedly takes a photograph of the Loch Ness Monster.

The FBI guns down John Dillinger and Baby-Face Nelson.

Japan renounces the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922 and the London Naval Treaty of 1930.

1935

The Nuremberg laws, enacted by Germany's Nazi party, make anti-Semitism the law of the land.

FBI kills Barker gang, including Ma Barker, in a shootout

Congress passes the National Labor Relations Act (the Wagner Act), reasserting workers' right to collective bargaining.

Dissidents within the AFL create the CIO.

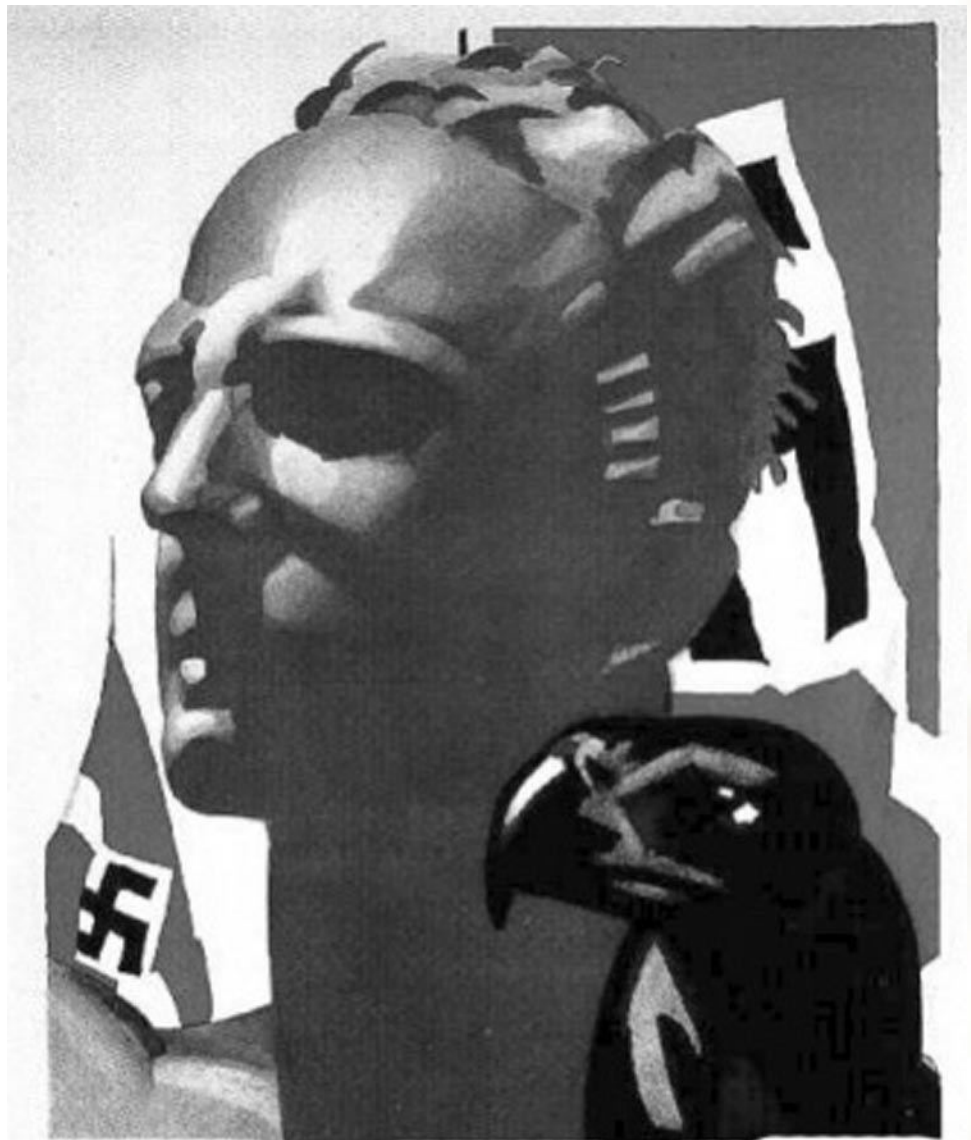
Irish Protestants in Belfast riot against Catholics, provoking retaliation from Catholics in the Irish Free State.

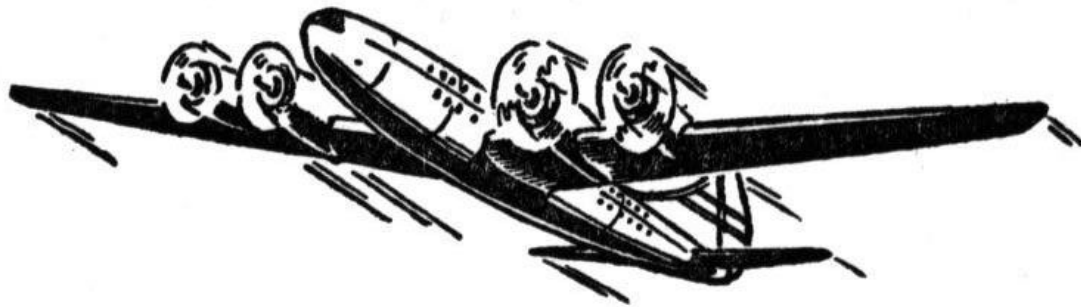
The Social Security Act becomes law in the US.

America's first public housing projects are established on New York's Lower East Side.

Italy invades Ethiopia.

Hitler publicly begins to re-arm Germany, creating the Luftwaffe in violation of the Versailles Treaty.





1936

The Spanish Civil War begins. Hundreds of Americans volunteer for “Lincoln Brigades” to help fight General Francisco Franco’s fascists.

In India, statesman Jawaharlal Nehru is elected president of the Indian National Congress.

In violation of the Locarno Pact and the Treaty of Versailles, Germany reoccupies the Rhineland.

Joseph Stalin begins a “great purge” to liquidate his enemies. By 1939, over 8 million are dead and perhaps 10 million imprisoned.

Richard Bruno Hauptmann is executed for the kidnapping and death of the Lindbergh baby.

A major heat wave strikes the Midwestern United States, hundreds of high temperature records are set.

In baseball, Joe DiMaggio joins the New York Yankees, who win the World Series, 4-2, against the New York Giants.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt is re-elected president.

Edward VIII of the United Kingdom abdicates, announcing his intention to marry American divorcee Wallis Simpson. Rumour asserts that he was asked to step down due to his pro-Fascist, pro-Nazi leanings.

1937

Howard Hughes sets a new air record by flying from Los Angeles to New York City in 7 hours, 28 minutes and 25 seconds.

After staging a series of sit-down strikes, the United Auto Workers win official recognition from General Motors.

Pro-Franco German forces attack the Spanish city of Guernica. Pablo Picasso paints his cubist masterpiece as a reflection upon the destruction.

Amelia Earhart and her aircraft disappear mysteriously over the Pacific.

The Golden Gate Bridge opens in San Francisco.

Sino-Japanese War: Japan invades China. Shanghai is occupied. 250,000 civilians and prisoners are slaughtered in the Nanjing Massacre.

1938

In its most violent display of anti-Semitism yet, German Nazis attack Jewish people and property in Kristallnacht (so named for the sounds of breaking glass).

The Dies Committee (AKA the House UnAmerican Activities Committee), charged with stamping out Nazi activity in the United States, changes its focus to Communist activity instead.

In the Halloween radio broadcast "War of the Worlds," Orson Welles panics Americans who believe that Martians are actually invading Earth.

Under the presidency of Lazaro Cardenas, Mexico nationalizes its petroleum industries.

Anschluss: Hitler annexes Austria. German troops march into Sudetenland.

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs is Walt Disney's first full-length animated film.

Howard Hughes sets a new record by completing a 91 hour airplane flight around the world.



1939

Hitler's Germany invades Poland, which falls in a month. France and Great Britain declare war.

Dictator Francisco Franco conquers Madrid, ending the Spanish Civil War

Ho Chi Minh creates the Viet Minh party to oppose colonialism in the French colony "Indochina."

The SS St. Louis, a ship carrying a cargo of 963 Jewish refugees, is denied permission to land in Florida after already having been turned away from Cuba. Forced to return to Europe, most of its passengers later die in Nazi concentration camps.

President Roosevelt believes that a longer Christmas shopping season will boost the economy and proclaims that Thanksgiving will fall on the fourth Thursday of November. This shift is soon passed into law.

Based on recent research, Albert Einstein writes a letter to President Roosevelt regarding the possibility of using uranium to initiate a nuclear chain reaction, the fundamental process behind the atomic bomb.

In Munich, Adolf Hitler narrowly escapes an assassination attempt while celebrating the 16th anniversary of the Beer Hall Putsch on November 8th.

Gone With the Wind, starring Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh, premieres. *The Wizard of Oz*, another blockbuster of this year, opens before Christmas.

CHAPTER THREE:

CHARACTERS

CHARACTER CREATION

Characters in *THRILLING TALES* are created using the standard *d20 Modern* rules. Refer to the *d20 Modern* rulebook for details.

Characters are the basis for any good pulp story. The most successful pulp magazines were the ones that revolved around the adventures of a single hero, often with a cadre of assistants. This can make things problematic in a role-playing setting. Gamers usually prefer to play heroes, not sidekicks.

There are two ways to address this in your game. One way is to go ahead and put together a group of heroes working together. While it is true that you never saw teams featuring Doc Savage, The Shadow, G-8 and Tarzan teaming up to fight evil together, there were hero groups in the pulps--the Secret Six, for example. The trick to putting together a group is to ensure that each character is a specialist, with as little cross-over with the other characters as possible. Give everyone something that they can do that the others cannot. If you have one investigative specialist, then don't allow someone else to create a character who focuses on investigation. Give everyone their chance to shine. Specialists also make more sense in a group than a haphazard collection of polymath heroes, each of whom is a brilliant Jack-of-all-Trades (One wonders why such heroes would need to team up at all).

Generally speaking, the Advanced Classes presented by Adamant Entertainment in this game line are intended for story-focus heroes. They don't really work for team play, although individual GMs make make exceptions in certain cases. Classes like the Paragon and the Man of Mystery, however, are nearly impossible to work into a team setting.

The second method is a bit closer to the source material: run a hero and his assistants. In the Doc Savage stories, Doc's assistants are all experts in their individual fields--specialists who each are heroes in their own right. The Spider stories often featured his assistants going off on their own--

and on more than one occasion saving The Spider himself!

The only difference between this and the group advice given above is that there is one character who is everything the others are, and more. In this sort of campaign, a hero should be at least 3 levels higher than the assistants, and usually has levels in one of the *THRILLING TALES* Advanced Classes.

The players will have to be comfortable with the fact that one character is going to be placed above the others. However, this really isn't that different than playing a game set in a military hierarchy (whether a World War II game, or a game set on a Starfleet vessel), which gamers do all the time. If the players have no problems with that, just go ahead and do it.

If they bristle slightly at this, another solution is to have every player create an assistant (following the guidelines for groups) and then have the main hero created as a character that is shared--played by all players. The hero is run by a different player in each scene (usually a scene where their regular character is not present).

In a Hero & Sidekicks campaign, the sidekicks should be rewarded, in-game, for behavior that reinforces the common elements of this genre:

If a sidekick gets captured, or otherwise manages to find themselves in a situation where the main hero will need to come to their rescue, the hero will receive a temporary action point (which must be spent during this adventure), and the sidekick will receive a bonus experience award of 425 XP. This system rewards not only the sidekick, but gives the hero a direct bonus as well.

PULP ORDINARIES

While *Thrilling Tales* is designed to seamlessly integrate with the core rules, the basic class titles lack a pulp feel. To remedy this, the six basic classes are listed below with pulp alternative titles.

Not only does this reinforce the feel of the pulp genre, but it also allows the GM to easily maintain the atmosphere when describing NPCs (e.g. “A couple of eggheads look in your direction”). PCs can also use these terms to reflect past careers (“I wasn’t always a gumshoe, you know. I used to be a simple grifter...”).

Core Class	Pulp Name
Strong	Muscle
Fast	Torpedo
Tough	Bruno
Smart	Egghead
Dedicated	Pip
Charismatic	Grifter

ADVANCED CLASS FAST TRACK

While it can be fun to mix and match basic classes before choosing an advanced class, some players may already have an advanced class in mind. These players may wish to know the quickest way to get to an Advanced Class from the start. The following chart matches THRILLING TALES advanced classes with the basic class or classes that offers the quickest way to get to it.

Ace Reporter	Charismatic
Air Ace	Fast
Big Game Hunter	Any
Boxer	Strong
Femme Fatale	Charismatic
Fortune Hunter	Smart
G-Man	Strong
Gumshoe	Strong, Fast, Tough, or Dedicated
Gun Moll	Tough or Charismatic
Mad Scientist	Strong or Smart
Man of Mystery	Any
Mastermind	Tough or Charismatic
Mesmerist	Smart, Dedicated, or Charismatic
Mobster	Tough or Charismatic
Noble Savage	Tough or Dedicated
Paragon	Tough
Rocket Ranger	Fast, Tough, or Smart
Trusted Sidekick	Charismatic

PULP SKILLS

The following is a list of new skills designed for pulp campaigns. In some cases, these are merely pulp extensions of existing skills. In other cases, they are wholly new skills. Some of these new skills are considered class skills for some basic and advanced classes, these are noted beneath each skill description.

Balance (Dex)

New Uses:

Riding the Running Board: Most pulp era automobiles have running boards (a footboard on the side of the vehicle). A common mobster tactic is to use a running board as extra passenger space for a quick getaway. You can even learn to shoot from the running board. Running board passengers often use the car door (with the window rolled down) to brace themselves.

Keeping your footing on a running board while the car is moving requires a Balance check (DC 10). You get a –5 penalty if there is nothing (such as an open window) to hold onto. This check is also modified by the vehicle’s speed (as per the core book) with an additional –2 circumstance penalty due to being on the outside of the vehicle. The penalty for speed (but not the circumstance penalty) is ignored if you have the Drive-By Attack feat. The circumstance penalty also applies when shooting from the running board, even if you have the Drive-By Attack feat.

Riding the Wing: Biplanes with relatively strong wings provide an opportunity to ride the wings by standing on the lower wing and bracing yourself with the stabilizing poles between wings. Once you are on a wing, you need to make a Balance Check (DC 10) to keep from being pulled off by winds. This check is also modified by the vehicle’s speed (as per the core book) with an additional –2 circumstance penalty due to being on the outside of the vehicle.

Should you fail your check, you will slip and fall. You may have an opportunity to grab the wing before falling. This should be treated as a Dexterity check with the same modifiers as above.

Bargain (Cha)

This skill is the art of getting the best deal for goods and services. Everything has two prices, the listed price, and the actual price. A skilled bargainer knows how to find that actual price, even if it is lower than what the seller believes. He can also assess the true worth of a good or service.

Check: You can lower the cost of items. Make an opposed Bargain check. For every 5 points you beat your opponent, you reduce the Wealth DC of the item by 1. If you lose, your opponent's Attitude drops one category and he gets a +2 circumstance bonus in a subsequent Bargain check. This Attitude remains even if the buyer tries to bargain for a different item from the same seller. Once the seller's attitude drops to Hostile, the buyer must pay the offered price or leave. Once the buyer succeeds in a Bargain check, he may not Bargain again to further improve the Wealth DC. The buyer may use a Diplomacy check to raise the Seller's attitude.

Bargain can also be used to assess the value of a good or service. By making a Bargain check at DC 10, the character can make an approximation of the value.

Try Again? Yes, as long as the seller is still willing to negotiate with you.

Special: Since bargaining is an intense, immediate negotiation, you cannot take 10 or 20 when making a Bargain check to lower the cost of a good or service. You can take 10 or 20 when assessing the value of a good or service.

Class Skill: Charismatic Hero, Big Game Hunter, Fortune Hunter, Gumshoe, Investigator, Man of Mystery, Mobster, Negotiator.

Knowledge (Air Travel) (Int) Trained Only

This category encompasses knowledge of airports and distances, good landing sites, aircraft maintenance, safety procedures, weather evaluation and any other type of knowledge related to air travel.

Class Skill: Dedicated Hero, Smart Hero, Air Ace, Daredevil, Fortune Hunter, Rocket Ranger.

Knowledge (Cryptography) (Int)

This category encompasses knowledge of ancient and modern codes and puzzles. It includes being able to understand, decipher, and construct coded messages.

Class Skill: Smart Hero, Fortune Hunter, Paragon

Knowledge (Weird Science) (Int)

This category encompasses knowledge of weird (read: pulp) theories, experiments and technologies, as well as prominent researchers and scientists in these areas.

Class Skill: Dedicated Hero, Smart Hero, Field Scientist, Mad Scientist, Paragon, Techie.



Pilot (Dex)

New Uses:

Parachuting: While Pilot is a Trained Only skill, you may use it untrained in order to successfully deploy a parachute. If a trained pilot has shown you how to use a parachute or if you have Knowledge (Air Travel), the check is at DC 10; otherwise, the check is at DC 15.

Seduction (Cha)

Use this skill to use your charms and wiles to force someone to do something they otherwise would not, especially in a romantic or lustful manner. This skill has elements of Diplomacy and Intimidate, but is a skill all its own.

Check: Seduction only works when the target is Friendly (see the Diplomacy skill description). You may need to use Diplomacy to change the attitude of the target. With a successful Seduction check, you may force another character to perform some behavior that puts him or her in a compromising position. Your Seduction check is opposed by the target's Will Save at a DC equal to your Seduction roll. Success enables you to control the target's actions for the duration of the act.

If a potential target has reason to believe that the Seducer's attentions are questionable (a Mobster's girlfriend suddenly showering attention on the G-Man who's been shadowing him), then the target may make a Sense Motive check against the Seducer's Bluff (if applicable). If the target calls the Bluff, his attitude drops two levels for purposes of the Diplomacy check.

Circumstances dramatically affect the effectiveness of a Seduction check. A character that risks social harm by being seduced (a married man, a priest) should get a +2 circumstance bonus on his check. Similarly, a character that has a reason not to trust the seducer (he's a cop, she's a gun moll), even if he failed the Sense Motive check, should also get a +2 bonus on his or her check.

There are limits to Seduction. If there is travel involved, the target may make a second Will Save once he or she arrives at the scene of the act. For example, if you seduce someone at a bar and convince her to come back to your hotel room, the target gets two Will saves, one at the bar and one in the room. The GM may allow more saves

if the time between the seduction and the scene of the act is especially long (a taxi ride, for example). Each additional Will save after the second gives a cumulative +2 bonus to the target. You need to reroll your Seduction check for each Will Save.

Also, a third party may talk a target out of seduction by using a Diplomacy check. Treat the target as Hostile. The third party need only change the target's attitude to Unfriendly in order to thwart the seduction attempt. If the Seducer wishes to persuade the target to continue with the liaison anyway, then it is no longer a seduction and the usual Intimidate rules apply.

Try Again? Generally, a Seduction attempt won't work a second time in the same scene.

Special: You can take 10 when making a Seduction check, but you can't take 20.

Time: A Seduction check can take anywhere from a few minutes to several hours, at the GM's discretion.

Class Skill: Charismatic Hero, Femme Fatale, Personality.

Author's Note: While Seduction is a pulp staple the use of this skill requires maturity on the part of the players and the GM. This skill is intended to advance plotlines and add a bit of spicy intrigue, not drag the game into schoolyard giggles. The GM should feel free to disallow this skill if he feels it is ruining the integrity of his game.



Sense Motive (Wis)

New Uses:

Reading body language: You can use your Sense Motive skill to deduce the relationships and desires among people in a room. With a successful check (DC 25 – you can take 10, but not 20), you can assess how someone feels about someone else in the room. For example, you can see Hit Man Harry at the bar and determine whom he's been watching. You can also tell which patron Tina Torch Singer has her eye on. You can drop the DC by 5 for every half hour you study the target.

Unfortunately, using Sense Motive in this manner can sometimes draw attention to you. If the target wins an opposed Sense Motive check against your Bluff check, he will notice that you've been watching him. He makes this check during your initial intention and once every half hour of you studying him.

You may use Sense Motive in this manner on more than one target, but the GM may penalize you with a –1 circumstance modifier for everyone you study over the first.

Superscience (Int) Trained Only

This is the pulp version of the Computer Use skill. Use this skill to figure out how to use superscience devices or shut them down.

Check: Most superscience is based on (or at least presented as) sound scientific theory. Because it is presumed to have a rational basis, a character with this skill should be able to examine a device and recognize its key components, such as an on/off switch, the power source, how it is controlled, etc. These uses of the skill do not require a Superscience check (though you might have to make a Search or Spot check if something is well-hidden on the object).

Understand Utility: This application of the Superscience skill allows you to understand what the device is capable of doing beyond the immediately obvious. The GM should set a DC based on how complex or obscure the device is. For example, a rocket pack attached to a body harness and an accompanying helmet would have

an Easy DC (5). A warehouse-sized device that sends particles into the clouds to make rain might be Formidable (DC 25) or Heroic (DC 30). You need to understand the utility of the device before you can attempt to control or thwart it.

Control Device: Once you understand the device, you may attempt to control it. Again, the GM should set a DC based on the actual complexity of controlling the device as well as any other circumstances that must be overcome (such as the original operator of the device already working the controls).

Thwart Device: Once you understand the device, you may attempt to thwart it. The DC for the attempt is normally 15, although the GM may adjust this. Success does not destroy the device; it merely gives you the information you need to thwart it. For example, you may learn that the death ray gun needs the quartz crystal to operate, but you're going to have to figure out how to pry it out of the gun.

A Superscience check to thwart a device is only necessary if the weakness isn't obvious. For example, if a giant robot is approaching, you don't need a Superscience check to figure out that destroying one of its legs is a good way to stop it.

Special: You can take 10 or 20 when using the Superscience skill. You cannot take 20 if you need to make immediate assessments.

Time: Superscience requires at least a full-round action. The GM may determine that some tasks require several rounds, a few minutes, or longer.

Class Skill: Smart Hero, Field Scientist, Mad Scientist, Paragon, Techie.



Tumble (Dex) Trained Only

New Use:

Swinging: You can swing across an opening by using a rope, vine, bullwhip or other flexible cord. The cord must be affixed to a stationary point above you, preferably in the middle of the opening being crossed (since this is pulp, not a physics course, you can assume that, if you are holding a cord taut, you can swing twice the distance between you and the stationary point).

There are two main problems with swinging. First, there is the danger that you are too heavy for the cord (especially natural vines) or the object to which it is affixed (your climbing rope may be able to handle the weight, but the ceiling fan it is wrapped around may not). You must also be certain that the cord will not unravel from the stationary point while you are swinging across the opening. The GM will decide whether the cord will hold, and you can make a Wisdom check (DC 15) to acquire that information.

Assuming that the cord will hold, you must next make the actual jump. Again, we are using pulp rules, so as long as you can hold on, you should be okay. Make a Strength check (DC 10) using to determine whether you hold onto the cord as you cross. Attaching the cord to your person will prevent you from falling (GM's discretion, based on the length of the cord and other circumstances). A Tumble check (DC 15) is necessary to plant your feet on the other side. If you miss, you may try again, but after a second failure you will be stuck hanging in the middle of the opening.

PULP FEATS

The following are a list of feats suitable for pulp gaming. Some of these feats appear in the Advanced Classes with follow this section.

Feats with an asterisk (*) are core book feats that have been modified for THRILLING TALES.

Ambidexterity

You are equally adept with either hand

Prerequisites: Dex 15+

Normal: Without this feat, characters suffer a -4 penalty to attack rolls, ability checks, and skill checks for using their off-hand

Special: This feat includes the abilities of the feat "Two-weapon Fighting."

Assessment

You're quickly able to size up someone's abilities.

Prerequisites: Wis 13+

Benefit: As a half action, you can choose a target within 30 feet of you. Choose three attributes (three ability scores or three skills) and the GM must tell you the target's ability in each relative to the other two. For example, if you choose Bluff, Hide, and Acrobatics, the GM might tell you "the target is best in Acrobatics, then Hide, then Bluff." You don't know the target's ranks or ratings, only a rough estimate of the target relative ability in the assigned attributes.

Could Have Been A Contender

You took a dive and threw a fight, race, or other sporting event in exchange for a payoff.

Benefit: You get +2 Wealth and -1 Reputation.

Special: Others in the same sport may know that the character took the dive if they succeed on a DC 20 Gather Information check.

Exotic Features

Whether it be your unusual accent, physical features, or inability to recall who won the '28 World Series, you are viewed as a foreigner. Men feel overprotective of you and tend to underestimate you.

Prerequisites: Female only, Cha 13+, can only be taken at 1st level.

Benefit: When dealing with a male PC or NPC, you gain a +2 to Bluff, Diplomacy, Seduction, and Sense Motive checks.

Extensive Library

You have personal access to a large library and a number of related contacts.

Benefit: You gain a +2 to all Gather Information and Research checks.

Gearhead*

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus on all Superscience checks and Repair checks.

Special: Remember that the Repair skill can only be used untrained in certain situations.

Gone Native

You've spent so much time in a particular exotic locale that you've started to understand and emulate their ways. This has given you greater expertise in this particular culture, but has a negative impact on those who feel you've turned your back on their ways.

Prerequisite: Speak Language in the culture you're adopting.

Benefit: You gain a +2 to all Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Knowledge checks that involve the culture you've adopted. In addition, you suffer no Attitude penalties that would normally be given to someone from your original culture. Unfortunately, members of your original culture treat you as one Attitude level lower than they normally would.

Improved Critical

You know how to hit where it hurts with an attack.

Prerequisites: Base Attack Bonus 8+

Benefit: Choose an attack. When using that attack, your threat range is doubled; you threaten a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Each time it applies to a different attack.

Infamy

You have a particularly bad reputation. (whether deserved or not)

Benefit: You get a +3 bonus on Charisma-based checks whenever the GM determines that your infamy would be a benefit. However, you suffer a -3 modifier on such checks whenever the GM determines that your infamy would work against you.

Leadership

You're a natural leader, good at coordinating and directing the efforts of others.

Prerequisites: Cha 13+

Benefit: If you direct or lead others in combat (taking a free action each round to do so), everyone on your side gets a +1 bonus on all checks (including initiative). However, if you're incapable of taking a free action on any round, your side loses the bonus until you recover. Characters can only be under the direction of one leader at a time, and may choose to change their leader as a free action. Characters under the influence of a leader must be able to hear and understand that leader's directions.

Looker

You are naturally attractive.

Prerequisites: Can only be taken at 1st level.

Benefit: You get a +3 bonus on Charisma-based checks whenever the GM determines that your attractiveness would be a benefit. However, you suffer a -3 modifier on such checks whenever the GM determines that your beauty would work against you (such as a rival for attention).

Photographic Memory

You have perfect recall of everything you've experienced.

Prerequisites: Int 16+

Benefit: You can recall everything you've seen, read or experienced perfectly. If you forget some detail your character should remember, you can ask the GM to remind you. You get a +2 bonus on any skill rolls for which rote memorization is useful (at the GM's judgment).

Sidekick

You have an assistant, follower or partner of some ability.

Prerequisites: 6th level (total)

Benefit: You have a single NPC follower who helps you out. Your Sidekick's level is determined by a combination of your total level + your Charisma modifier, modified by your abilities as follows:

Renown Feat: +3

Leadership Feat: +1

PC provides room, board, equipment +2

Wealthy (16+ on Wealth): +1

Check your total against the chart on the following page. A sidekick must be at least one level below your own, regardless of the results of

the table. You create your sidekick as a character, subject to your GM's approval. Sidekicks are loyal, perhaps even willing to sacrifice themselves for you. It takes approximately three adventures to replace a lost sidekick (more or less at the GM's discretion).

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Each time, you acquire an additional sidekick.

Level +Cha Mod (+ modifiers)	Sidekick level
1-2	1st
3	2nd
4-5	3rd
6	4th
7-8	5th
9	6th
10-11	7th
12	8th
13	9th
14-15	10th
16	11th
17-18	12th
19	13th
20	14th
21-22	15th
23	16th
24	17th
25	18th
26+	19th

Sidestep

In combat, you have the ability to anticipate your opponent's moves and move in his wake.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, Dodge, Mobility

Benefit: When an opponent in an adjacent square takes a single 5-foot step to a square that you do not threaten, you may spend 1 action point to move into the square the opponent just left.

Silver Tongue

You are a skilled negotiator, able to drive hard bargains.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on Bargain and Bluff checks.

Stowaway

You are adept at secretly hitching a ride to follow the story. This is useful when the villain is departing in anything larger than a motorcycle--say, a car, train, airplane, submarine, or dirigible, for example.

Prerequisites: 1 rank of Hide and 1 rank of Escape Artist

Benefit: If you are not currently being watched,

make a Hide roll against a DC of 10. If you succeed, you have successfully stowed away somewhere on the villain's vehicle undetected. Failure means your attempt to stow away is noticed by the villain or a henchmen while you were awkwardly trying to hide away, and they have the advantage of Surprise on you. Upon arriving at the destination, make an Escape Artist roll against a DC of 20. Success means you are able to leave the vehicle and get a short distance away undetected. Failure means you are discovered by the villain or a henchmen while disembarking, and they have the advantage of Surprise on you. You may take one ally with you when stowing away, but you must add +5 to the DC for both stowing away, and escaping upon arrival in that case.

Stunt Pilot

You are extremely adept at performing aerial maneuvers.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, Pilot 6 ranks

Benefit: You can subtract 4 from any DCs necessary to perform aerial stunts.

Trance

You can enter a deep, death-like trance state

Prerequisites: Wis 13+

Benefit: Through breathing and bodily control, you can slip into a trance state nearly indistinguishable from death, for up to a number of hours equal to your Wisdom bonus. It takes a minute of uninterrupted concentration for you to enter the trance. While in the trance you are still aware, but you are immune to suffocation. Poison effects are suspended for the duration of the trance. It requires a Spot check (DC 15+ Wis bonus) to determine that you're not dead.

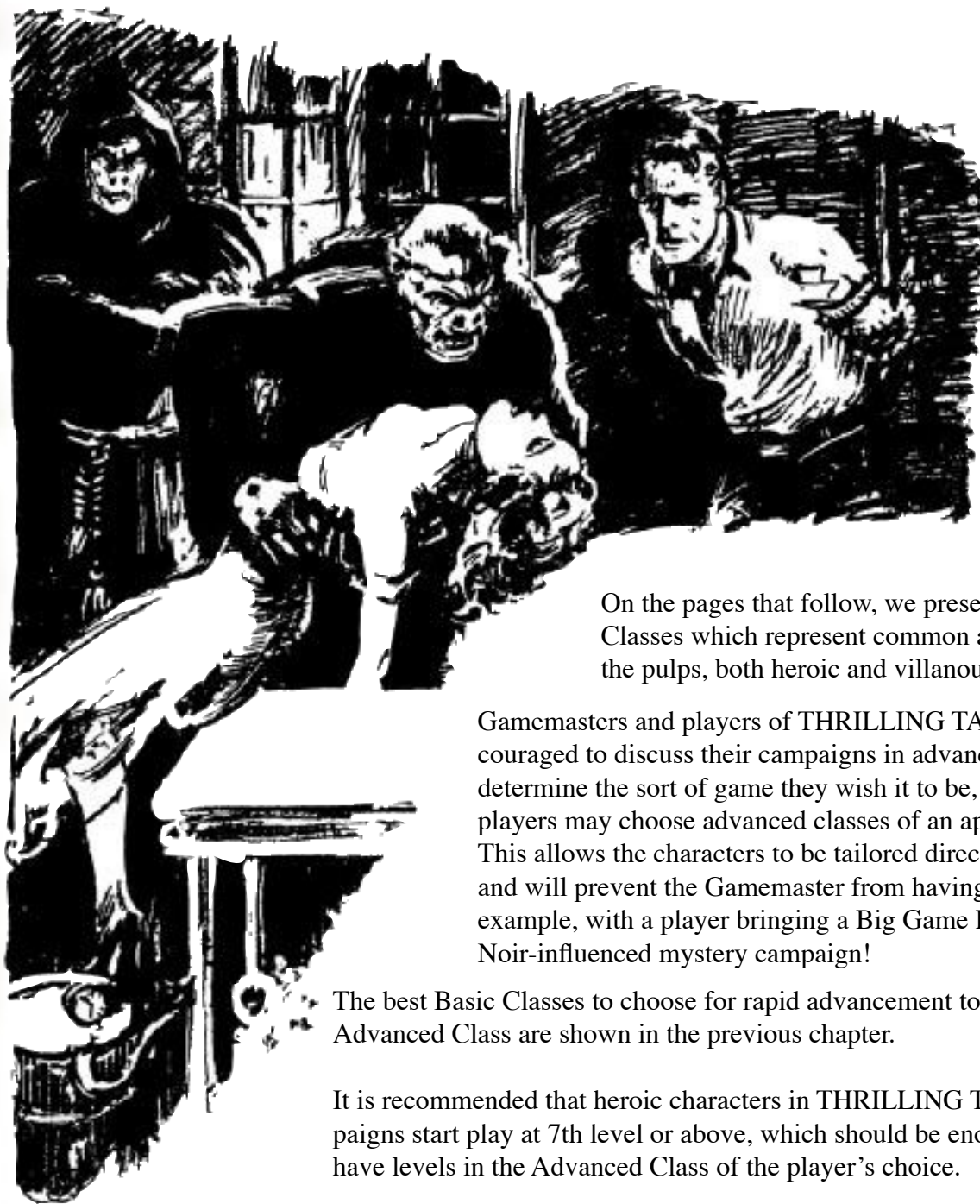
Unassuming

For some reason, people tend to underestimate you. Reasons could include a thick accent, foreign appearance, profession, shyness, or extreme politeness. As a result, people tend not to question your assertions or motives.

Benefit: You get a +2 to Bluff and Diplomacy checks

CHAPTER FOUR:

ADVANCED CLASSES



On the pages that follow, we present 18 Advanced Classes which represent common archetypes from the pulps, both heroic and villainous.

Gamemasters and players of **THRILLING TALES** are encouraged to discuss their campaigns in advance of play, to determine the sort of game they wish it to be, and so that the players may choose advanced classes of an appropriate nature. This allows the characters to be tailored directly to the game, and will prevent the Gamemaster from having to contend, for example, with a player bringing a Big Game Hunter into Film Noir-influenced mystery campaign!

The best Basic Classes to choose for rapid advancement to a particular Advanced Class are shown in the previous chapter.

It is recommended that heroic characters in **THRILLING TALES** campaigns start play at 7th level or above, which should be enough for them to have levels in the Advanced Class of the player's choice.

ADVANCED CLASS:

ACE REPORTER

Penny stared, awed, at the vast fleet of airships hidden within the volcano airbase.

"There's enough firepower here to sink a battleship!" she exclaimed in hushed tones, "Enough to level a small city! I need to take these photos back to the bureau to prove I was right!" She removed the lenscap of her trusty Rolleiflex and lined up the shot. "Pulitzer, here I come!" she whispered for luck.

Unfortunately, the flash of the camera caught the attention of a guard.

"Look, up on the parapet! She's back! Get her!"

The Ace Reporter is an archetype of the pulp genre.

Examples include Lois Lane, Polly Perkins, Buzz Benson, Katie Blayne, Ed Lowery, "Daffy" Dill, Claude Burke, and Daisy Dare.

An Ace Reporter is similar to an Investigator, minus all that tedious lab work and research. Instead, the Ace Reporter follows leads, sneaks into

where she shouldn't, and relentlessly follows the story to its conclusion. In the end, she'll alert the authorities and get that headline.

The Ace Reporter can join in any pulp adventure-- whether the other heroes want her there or not.

Part ally and sometimes adversary, the story comes first. Reporters are smart, charismatic, and-- most of all-- lucky. It's a tough world out there, and someone has to get the facts!

The public has a right to know, and if it takes a little breaking-and entering, stowing away, or sabotage, then that's what you'll do. Plus Reporters have contacts and allies in even the most remote of places, and can get help at the most surprising of times.

While the Ace Reporter is an able hero in her own right, she also works well standing beside other heroes. In fact, Ace Reporters are naturals when forming a team, since they know (or can find out) just about everything



and everyone. And, for younger players, a Junior Reporter is a dandy sidekick with a special trick or two to help pull their own weight.

Ready to solve the world's mysteries, armed only with a pen, a pistol, and the power of the press? Ace Reporter, get that story!

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become an Ace Reporter, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Ability Score: Charisma 13+

Skills: 6 ranks in Gather Information

Feats: Meticulous

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Ace Reporter gets 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Ace Reporter gains a number of action points equal to 5 + one-half his character's level, rounded down, every time she attains a new level in this class.

EVERY GOOD HERO HAS HIS REPORTER

While Ace Reporters like Daisy Dare (London Sentinel), Joseph "Daffy" Dill and partner Dinah Mason (New York Chronicle), and even Brenda Starr (The Flash) broke stories and fought crime directly, many reporters were an essential part of a Man of Mystery's team.

Ed Lowery (of the Sentinel) provided information to the Green Hornet, Claude Burke (of the Classic) gave scoops to The Shadow, and reporter Steve Huston aided the Phantom. And while Lois Lane usually fed leads to Superman, she's often be in the thick of things to get the resulting story.

Class Skills: The Ace Reporter's class skills are as follows:

Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Craft: Writing (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (any) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis)

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int Modifier

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+1	+1	+1	+2	Press Pass Expense Account	+1	+1
2nd	+2	+1	+1	+3	Taking Notes	+1	+2
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+3	Well- Travelled, Bonus Feat	+2	+3
4th	+3	+2	+2	+4	Check the Facts	+2	+4
5th	+3	+3	+3	+4	Talent	+3	+4
6th	+4	+3	+3	+5	Bonus Feat	+3	+5
7th	+4	+3	+3	+6	Double-Edged Luck	+4	+5
8th	+5	+4	+4	+6	Talent	+4	+6
9th	+5	+4	+4	+7	Bonus Feat	+5	+6
10th	+6	+5	+5	+7	Live to Tell	+6	+7

CLASS FEATURES

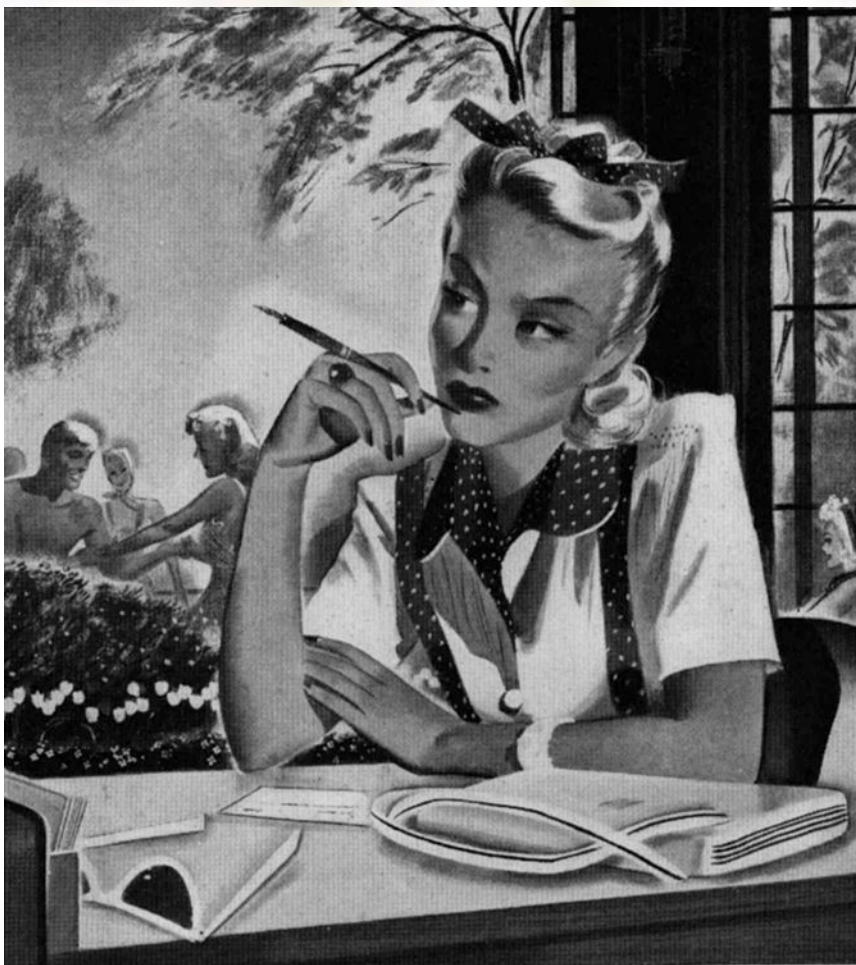
"The freedom of the press is a flaming sword! Use it justly! Hold it high! Guard it well!" Steve Wilson, heroic newsman, 'Big Town' [1937-1951]

Press Pass: Even a starting Reporter is known by the paper they work for. Your Press Pass immediately identifies you as a Reporter, therefore your Press Pass lets you automatically pass the Recognition Check as a 'Reporter' (and thus incur either the +4 bonus or -4 penalty, depending on their bias towards reporters, for Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate and Perform.) Note that, if you want to use your personal reputation and Name, you must do a Reputation Check as usual-- this only identifies you as 'a member of the Press'.

Expense Account: Upon becoming a Reporter, you are given additional support when working on a story. You may temporarily gain a Wealth Bonus equal to your level as an Ace Reporter for any rental or service needed to advance the article you're working on. You have to be able to contact your editor (by phone, telegram, or in person) to use this.

Note this allows rental (not purchase) of items such as formal wear as well as cash to cover a bribe, bail, travel bill, or hotel stay necessary for your story. The GM serves as your 'editor' in deciding if it's truly an article-related expense. You can only use this ability once per day, and can only use it for a number of times equal to your Ace Reporter level, after which you must file the story with your editor before another Expense Account is drawn up for you.

Taking Notes: Ace Reporters of level 2 or higher know how to report on a fight-- even if they're in it. At the start of any fight where you are not



personally under immediate attack, you can declare you are simply staying put and Taking Notes. While you write, the fight will continue-- but anyone who wants to attack you has to make a Will check at a DC of 25 or else find someone else to attack, until all other opponents are eliminated. Mind you, if you're the last of the good side still standing, you'll definitely have to put down that pencil. You, of course, can take no other action than 'take notes' during the fight.

Well-Travelled: Ace Reporters are simply full of worldly experience. By 3rd level and beyond, when choosing a new feat, you can choose to pick up one bonus feat from a different class that you have previously adventured with (so long as you meet the other prerequisites).

Bonus Feat: At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, an Ace Reporter can choose a Bonus Feat. The 'Well-Traveled' ability allows them to choose any feat available to a different class (as described above),

and in addition, the bonus feats available to an Ace Report are (new feats in italics): Alertness, Attentive, Confident, Creative, Deceptive, Dodge, Educated, Low Profile, Meticulous, Reknown, Stealthy, *Stowaway*, Studious, Trustworthy.

Check the Facts: By level 4 and later, Ace Reporters are experts at piecing together the facts of a story-- and are unafraid of interviewing antagonists directly. By Checking the Facts, you can induce opponents into boasting by stating your current theory about what is happening.

The villain must make a Will saving throw at a DC of 10 + Ace Reporter's class level + Ace Reporter's Charisma modifier. If they fail the save, they must either confirm your theory, or state at which point your theory breaks down. They need only state where your theory errs (if at all), and do not have to give you further information, but they must be truthful. And if you're fortunate, the villain may be prone to monologuing at length once they get going. This talent may only be used once per villain in any given adventure.

Talent: Ace Reporters gain a new talent at 5th and 8th level. Reporters have access to the Fast Talk, Charm, and Favor talents, as per the Charismatic hero Talent Tree. They have access to the Empathy and Intuition talents, as per the Dedicated hero Talent Tree. They may also choose their own Talent, Find a Lead:

Find a Lead

Prerequisites: Wis 13+

If you make a successful Search check against a DC of 15, you can figure out where a recently departed person headed to next, based on the trivial evidence you 'just found' at the scene-- a ticket stub, a matchbook cover, or other bit of detritious. This temporary lead only shows their immediate next destination, not necessarily where they ultimately will head or where they are now, so act on it quickly. Note that, unlike an ordinary Search, you aren't specifying the area you are searching, but merely your intent to Find a Lead. You cannot take 10 or take 20 to Find a Lead. If you lose track of the subject, the trail is



cold and you cannot Find a Lead further until you again encounter the person.

Double-edged Luck: At level 7 and afterwards, an Ace Reporter can, once per adventure, reroll one failed check, but you must jeopardize your story in the process. Typical downsides include losing your notes, having your film confiscated, leaving the lenscap on for the crucial evidence, or other story-breaking mishaps. The player can suggest the penalty; the GM ultimately decides.

Live to Tell: By level 10, it's nearly impossible to stop an Ace Reporter from getting their story. If you have all the facts but have just been 'killed' in an encounter, all is not lost. Make a Charisma check against a DC of 25. If you succeed, you are presumed to have narrowly escaped death and were rescued by a kindly local, and nursed back to health. You can file your story from your bedside, but you have to skip the next adventure while you recover your health.

ADVANCED CLASS:

AIR ACE

The engine screamed as “Barnstormer” Burton pushed the plane into a power dive. At these speeds, the wings of a lesser aircraft would have been torn off, sending the pilot to his doom, but Burton was confident that his custom work on the Silver Swan would hold up--at least long enough to ditch the two Air Pirates who were currently roaring after him, weapons blazing.

At the last possible second, Burton pulled back hard on the control stick, and the Silver Swan leapt skyward again, at a nearly impossible angle. As he spiralled the plane into a tight barrel roll, Burton heard the explosions as the vile Air Pirates tried and failed to match the maneuver.

The Air Ace is an archetype of the pulp genre. Examples include G-8 and his Battle Aces, Dusty Ayres, Bill Barnes, and the hero of the recent film *Sky Captain & The World of Tomorrow*.

The 1930s, the heyday of the pulp magazines, was a time of extreme enthusiasm about aviation--travelling by air had not yet become commonplace, and was seen during the Depression as a romantic escape from earthbound problems. The pilot was

seen as a dashing heroic figure, and the pulps provided many such heroes to thrill readers.

Many of the air heroes of the pulps were World War I flying aces, fighting against the Germans in what at the time was known as “the Great War.” The stories weren’t limited to simple adventure tales of the air war, however--the most popular of the air hero pulps, G-8, featured flying armies of zombies, giant bats, supervillains and more.

The contemporary air heroes flew aircraft at the cutting edge of aviation (and beyond)--in tales that were the period equivalent of near-future Science Fiction.

Air Aces are the daredevil defenders of the skies, and their adventures should focus on aviation-based threats and far-flung travel--everything from dogfights with air pirates to infiltrating the flying fortress of a world-conquering madman



REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become an Air Ace, a character must fulfill the following

criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +2

Skills: Craft (mechanical) 6 ranks, Pilot 6 ranks

Feats: Aircraft Operation

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Air Ace gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

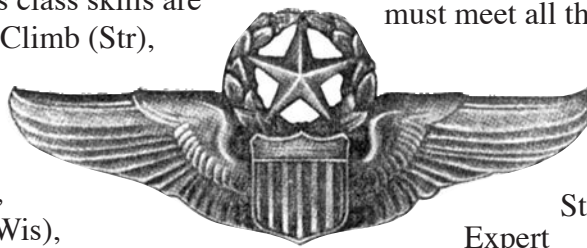
Action Points: The Air Ace gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Air Ace's class skills are as follows: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft(mechanical)(Int), Drive (Dex), Knowledge (Physical Sciences, Tactics, Technology) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Air Ace advanced class.



Favored Aircraft: At 1st, 3rd, 5th and 8th level, the Air Ace can designate a particular model of aircraft as a favored aircraft, gaining a +2 bonus to Craft (Mechanical), Knowledge, Pilot and Repair checks involving that model. At the players discretion, with the GM's approval, additional Favored Aircraft slots can be spent on an existing model, increasing the bonus by a further +2 per slot.

Bonus Feat: At 1st, 4th, 7th and 9th level, the Air Ace gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Air Ace must meet all the prerequisites of the feat .

Builder, Cautious, Dead Aim, Far Shot, Focused, Gearhead, Heroic Surge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Strafe, Vehicle Dodge, Vehicle

Expert

Elbow Grease: Starting at 2nd level, the Air Ace gains a +2 competence bonus to Craft (Mechanical) and Repair checks. This bonus increases to +4 at 4th level, and +6 at 7th level. This bonus is in addition to any bonuses due to Favored Aircraft status.

Soup Her Up: Starting at 5th level, any individual aircraft that the Air Ace has designated as a Favored Aircraft, and that he works on or flies at least once per week, increases all of its traits by 25% (For example, a plane with a top speed of 200 mph would now have a top speed of 250mph). At

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+1	+0	+2	+0	Favored Aircraft, Bonus Feat	+1	+1
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+1	Elbow Grease +2,	+1	+1
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+2	2nd Favored Aircraft	+2	+1
4th	+3	+1	+4	+2	Elbow Grease +4, Bonus Feat	+2	+2
5th	+3	+2	+4	+3	Soup Her Up (25%) 3rd Favored Aircraft	+3	+2
6th	+4	+2	+5	+3	Signature Aircraft	+3	+2
7th	+4	+3	+5	+4	Bonus Feat, Elbow Grease +6	+4	+3
8th	+5	+3	+6	+4	4th Favored Aircraft	+4	+3
9th	+6	+4	+6	+5	Bonus Feat, Soup Her Up (50%)	+5	+3
10th	+7	+4	+7	+5	"That's Impossible!"	+5	+4

9th level, this bonus rises to a 50% increase to all of the aircraft's traits. This bonus applies to all traits, regardless of what particular d20 vehicle rules system you're using.

Signature Aircraft: At 6th level, the Air Ace gains a Signature Aircraft--the one aircraft most associated with the hero. This must be a single aircraft of a type already designated as a Favored Aircraft. The aircraft counts as a Mastercraft item, offering a +3 bonus to use. (In addition to the bonuses due to Favored status).

In addition, the aircraft itself becomes an NPC, with the "Signature Aircraft" NPC class (**Sig**), and is capable of gaining feats (see below)--from that point onward, it draws 10% of the Air Ace's experience as its own.

As the aircraft gains levels, it gains bonuses to Defense and Base Attack Bonus(note that these bonuses are not cumulative).At 1st, 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th and 10th level, a feat may be chosen for the aircraft, which can be used in the same manner as if it were a character.

SIGNATURE AIRCRAFT			
Level	Defense Bonus	Base Attack Bonus	Special
1	+1	-	Bonus Feat
2	+1	+1	Bonus Feat
3	+2	+2	
4	+2	+3	Bonus Feat
5	+3	+4	
6	+3	+5	Bonus Feat
7	+4	+6	
8	+4	+7	Bonus Feat
9	+5	+8	
10	+5	+9	Bonus Feat

The Bonus feats for a Signature Aircraft must be taken from the following list, and are able to be used by the aircraft in the manner described:

Alertness: Gives the bonus to PCs using the aircraft's radar, etc.

Burst Fire: The aircraft's weapons are capable of Burst Fire.

Dead Aim: The aircraft's targeting system give a bonus while aiming.

Dodge: The aircraft is capable of dodging, even if the pilot does not possess the Vehicle Dodge feat.

Elusive Target: In a fight with multiple opponents, the aircraft is hard to hit due to its maneuverability.

Far Shot: The aircraft's weapons have greater range.

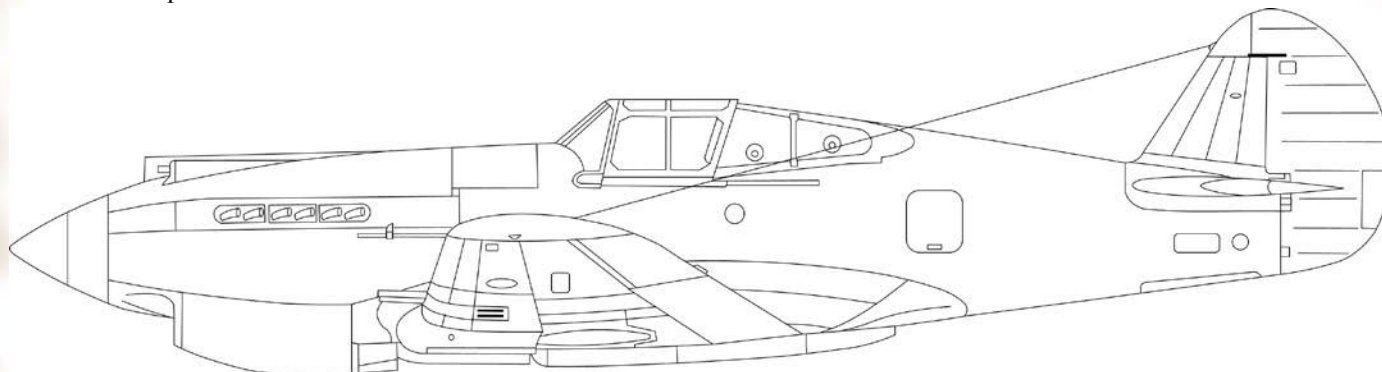
Frightful Presence: The aircraft is infamous, striking fear into the hearts of enemies.

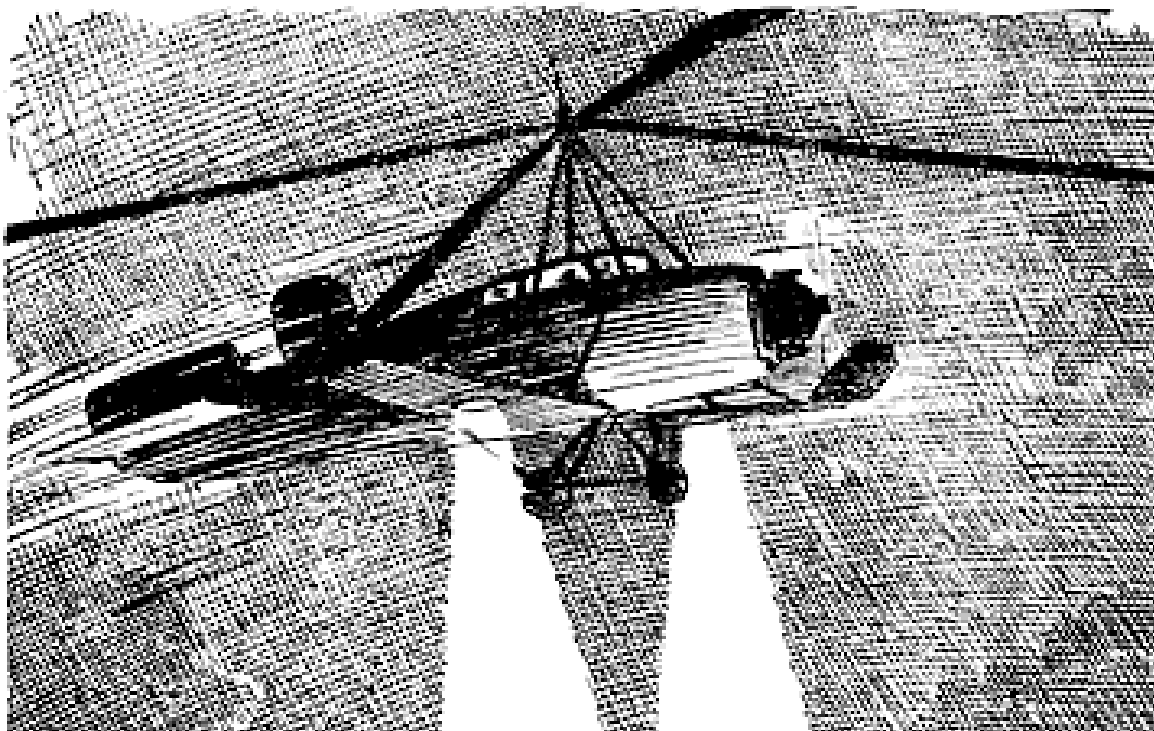
Improved Initiative: The aircraft's speed and maneuverability bestow a bonus to the pilot's initiative roll.

Lightning Reflexes: The aircraft offers a +2 bonus on Reflex saves

Strafe: The aircraft's weapons are capable of strafing fire.

Toughness: The aircraft gains a +3 bonus to hit points (or the equivalent, depending on the d20 vehicle rules used). This can be taken multiple times.





A Signature Aircraft that comes under the control of someone other than the Air Ace will retain the benefits of the NPC class, as long as the new owners maintain the tithe of 10% of their experience awards.

“That’s Impossible!”: At 10th level, the Air Ace gains the final class ability--once per game session while piloting an aircraft, the Air Ace can force it to utterly defy physics for one maneuver. A helicopter can be made to vertically loop, a airplane can come to a complete stop or suddenly fly backwards, etc. The effect of this action upon movement, combat, or chases are determined by the Gamemaster, in accordance with the particular d20 vehicle rules being used.

ADVANCED CLASS:

BIG GAME HUNTER

Jeremiah Cole was a very ambitious man and he wasn't about to let some jungle savage ruin his diamond mining operation. That's why he called me in.

Normally, I don't hunt intelligent prey. Closest I came was a giant albino gorilla a few months back, and I still bear a scar across my cheek from a flint knife it fashioned. Heck, I've hunted quite a few exotic animals in my time, usually accompanied by some egghead or archaeologist searching for lost civilizations or hidden treasure. I enjoy the hunt, but I never considered myself a hit man.

Mr. Cole wouldn't take "no" for an answer. He just kept upping the fee until he found my price. So here I am, in the heart of some African jungle, waiting for the jungle protector who was upset at Mr. Cole's treatment of the natives. I don't do politics.

I sat outside one of the newer mines as Mr. Cole's associates kept the natives

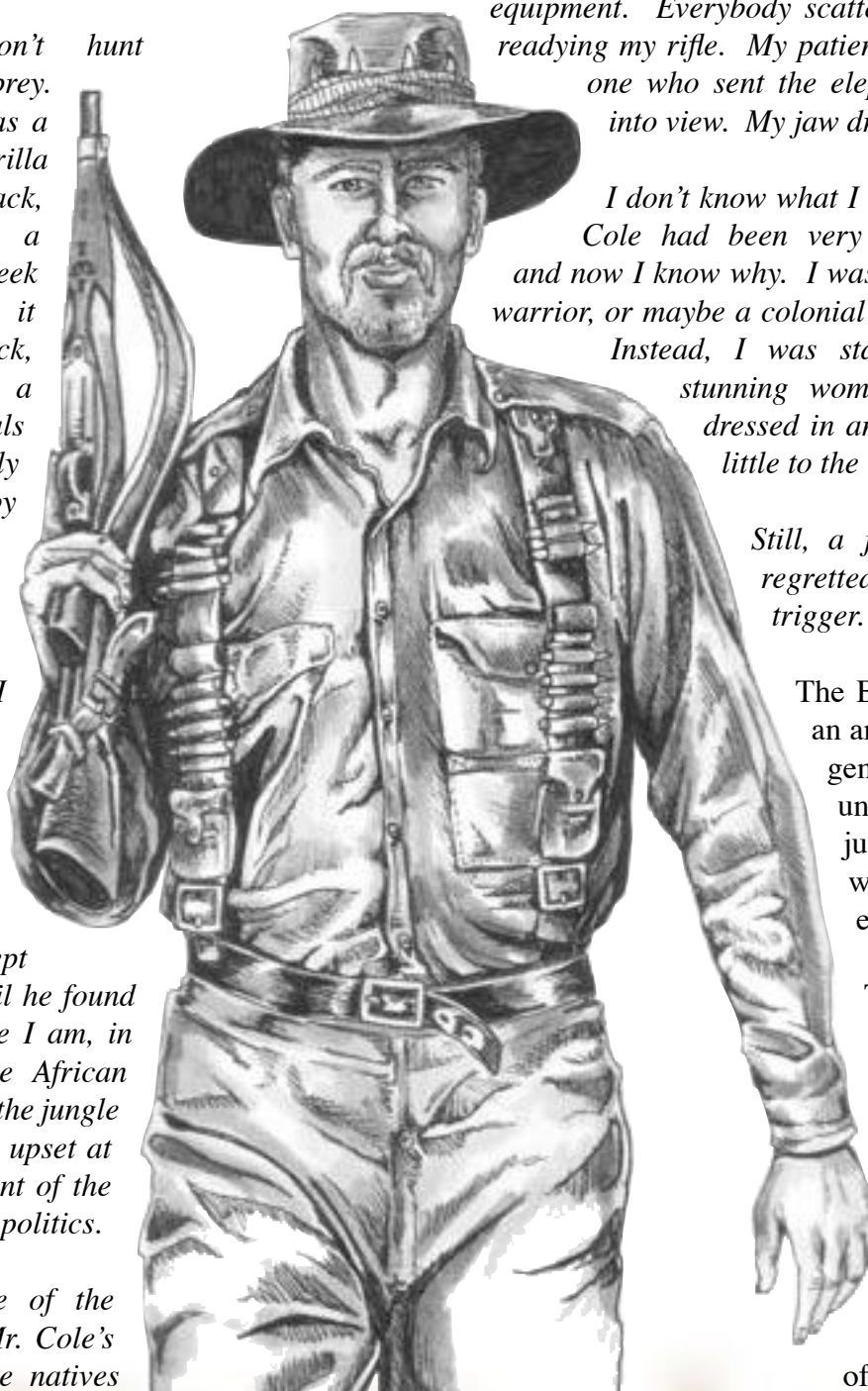
moving. I remained in the bushes, keeping an eye on the mine. I didn't have to wait long. The ground shook as a small herd of elephants stampeded near the mine, overturning the trucks and smashing equipment. Everybody scattered. I stayed put, readying my rifle. My patience paid off, for the one who sent the elephants soon swung into view. My jaw dropped.

I don't know what I was expecting. Mr. Cole had been very vague on details, and now I know why. I was expecting a native warrior, or maybe a colonial who'd gone native. Instead, I was staring at the most stunning woman I'd ever seen, dressed in animal skins that left little to the imagination.

Still, a job's a job, and I regretted having to pull the trigger.

The Big Game Hunter is an archetype of the Pulp genre. He travels to untamed forests and jungles around the world, searching for exotic trophies.

The Big Game Hunter often doubles as a guide, leading Celebrities, Field Scientists, and Fortune Hunters through thick jungles. In the Pulp, he is often the strong man



that accompanies the main hero.

The Big Game Hunter is also often a villain. He is a poacher, disregarding local laws and ignoring local traditions in search of his prey. In this role he represents the unwanted “colonial” interests that pillage the land. This makes him a frequent enemy of the Noble Savage.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Big Game Hunter, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +3

Skills: Navigate (6 ranks), Spot (6 ranks)

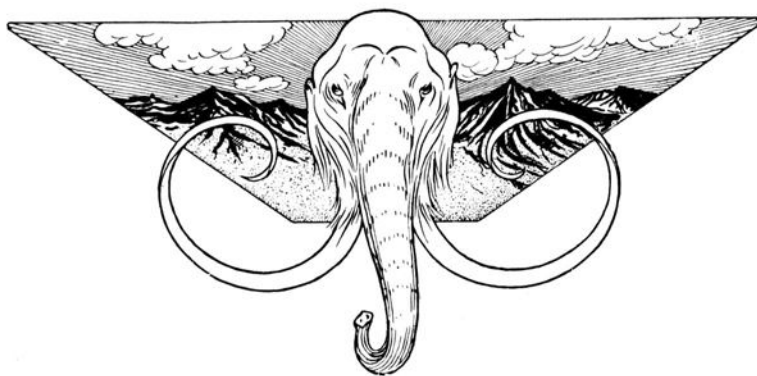
Feats: Archaic Weapons Proficiency or Personal Firearms Proficiency, Track

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Big Game Hunter gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character’s Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Big Game Hunter gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time she achieves a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Big Game Hunter’s class skills are as follows: Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Demolitions (Int), Drive (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (earth and life sciences) (Int), Listen



Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+1	+1	+2	+0	Ranged Weapon Focus, Swift Track	+1	+1
2nd	+2	+2	+2	+0	Henchman, Marksman	+1	+1
3rd	+3	+2	+3	+1	Bonus Feat	+2	+1
4th	+3	+2	+3	+1	Camouflage	+2	+2
5th	+4	+3	+4	+1	Henchman, Ranged Weapon Specialization	+3	+2
6th	+5	+3	+4	+2	Bonus Feat, Spot Prey	+3	+2
7th	+6	+4	+5	+2	Improved Critical	+4	+3
8th	+6	+4	+5	+2	Henchman	+4	+3
9th	+7	+4	+6	+3	Bonus Feat	+5	+3
10th	+8	+5	+6	+3	One Shot, One Kill	+5	+4

(Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language, Ride (Dex), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Treat Injury (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Big Game Hunter advanced class.

Ranged Weapon Focus: At 1st level, a Big Game Hunter gains the Weapon Focus class feature, providing the benefit of the feat with the same name. The Big Game Hunter chooses a specific ranged weapon. While Big Game Hunters usually choose a rifle, there are Big Game Hunters who prefer the elegance of a bow, crossbow, or spear. The Big Game Hunter must be proficient with the chosen weapon. The Big Game Hunter adds +1 to all attack rolls made using the selected weapon.

Swift Track: At 1st level, the Big Game Hunter may move at normal speed while using Track without taking the –5 penalty.

Henchman: At 2nd, 5th, and 8th level, the Big Game Hunter receives a loyal henchman who travels with him on his hunts. This henchman is an Ordinary of at least three levels lower than the Big Game Hunter. The Henchman is a full-fledged NPC, which could be developed jointly with the Player and Gamemaster. Unlike other hired help, the Henchman is unflinchingly loyal to the Big Game Hunter.

Marksman: The Big Game Hunter is an expert shot. At 2nd level he gains the Far Shot feat for free, or the Dead Aim feat if he already possesses the Far Shot feat.

Bonus Feat: At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Big Game Hunter gets a bonus feat, which must be taken from the following list. New feats appear in italics, and are described at the end of this document.

Alertness, Athletic, Brawl, Cautious, Dead Aim, Dodge, Drive-By Attack, Endurance, *Gone Native*, Great Fortitude, Guide, Improved Brawl, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Reload, Run, Shot on the Run, Stealthy, Surface Vehicle Operation, Weapon Focus.

Camouflage: The Big Game Hunter is first and foremost a hunter. At 4th level he knows how to use his natural surroundings to his advantage while laying in wait for a target. When a Big Game Hunter has had a few minutes to conceal himself, characters attempting to target him have a 50% miss chance.

Spot Prey: The Big Game Hunter can spot prey even in hiding. Whenever the Big Game Hunter's target is concealed, the Big Game Hunter subtracts 20% from the miss chance before rolling. By spending an action point, the Big Game Hunter can eliminate the miss chance altogether.

Ranged Weapon Specialization: At 5th level, a Big Game Hunter gains weapon specialization with a specific ranged weapon that he has applied to the Weapon Focus feat or class feature. The Big Game Hunter gets a +2 bonus on damage rolls with the chosen weapon.

Improved Critical: At 7th level, the Big Game Hunter may improve the critical threat range of the weapon he chose for Ranged Weapon Specialization by one.

One Shot, One Kill: At 10th level, the Big Game Hunter has honed the ability to take down his prey in a single shot. All threats made with the weapon chosen for Ranged Weapon Specialization is automatically considered a critical hit.

ADVANCED CLASS: **BOXER**

The four thugs didn't know what they were doing when they stepped in front of Bill McGraw.

They might have been tough guys in Panama City, but Iron Jaw McGraw had been beating punks like them in rings and alleys for years. McGraw had battled for years in boxing matches from New York to New Orleans and up the Pacific coast from Tijuana to Skagway. He had fought in lighted rings, vacant sandlots, and on the decks of ships at sea.

As the thugs closed around him, McGraw cocked his ham-sized fists and said, "Boyos, I don't know what the Jaguar said before sending you out against me, but you're now about to receive a lesson in the fighting arts."

The Boxer is a student of the pugilistic arts, the dominate western style of unarmed combat. A Boxer is dedicated to improving his fighting ability, style, and technique. A Boxer might be working as a dockworker or cab driver or enforcer while working toward his next fight. Police officers,

soldiers, sailors and others might be amateur boxers.

Boxing was a growing and popular sport during the Pulp era, and although most sporting contests were conducted with gloves under the official

Queensberry rules, many organized bareknuckled fights still took place. Many Pulp characters were skilled boxers. Robert E. Howard was a boxer himself and wrote stories about pugilistic heroes such as Dennis Dorgan, Kirby Karnes, and Mike Brennon.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to become an unarmed combatant in the classic western



style.

The fastest path into this advanced class is from the Strong hero basic class, though other paths are possible.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Boxer, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +3

Skill: Bluff 3 ranks

Feats: Combat Martial Arts, Dodge

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Boxer gains 1d12 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Boxer gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Boxer's class skills are as follows.

Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Profession, Read/Write Language, Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, Treat Injury.

Skill Points at Each Level: 3 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Boxer advanced class.

Ring Warrior:

At 1st, 3d, 5th, 7th, and 9th level, a Boxer receives a +1 melee attack modifier when making unarmed strikes. The modifier is cumulative, topping out at a total of +5 at 9th level.

Hammerhand:

At 1st, 4th, and 8th level, a Boxer's blows increase in power, dealing more damage with unarmed strikes.

At 1st level, he deals 1d6 points of damage with an unarmed strike. At 4th level, damage increases to 1d8. At 8th level, it increases to 1d10. This feature stacks with similar features and feats that increase melee damage. Damage increases as follows: 1d6, 1d8, 1d10, 1d12, 2d6, 2d8, 3d6, 2d10.

Bonus Feat:

At 2d, 5th, 7th, and 10th level, the Boxer gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Ring Warrior +1, Hammerhand 1d6	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Bonus feat	+2	+0
3rd	+1	+3	+1	+1	Ring Warrior +2, Born Under the Punches	+2	+1
4th	+2	+4	+1	+1	Fight Club, Hammerhand 1d8	+3	+1
5th	+2	+4	+1	+1	Ring Warrior +3, Bonus feat	+3	+1
6th	+3	+5	+2	+2	Second Wind	+3	+2
7th	+3	+5	+2	+2	Ring Warrior +4, Bonus feat	+4	+2
8th	+4	+6	+2	+2	Flurry of Blows, Hammerhand 1d10	+4	+2
9th	+4	+6	+3	+3	Ring Warrior +5	+5	+3
10th	+5	+7	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+3

the following list, and the Boxer must meet all of the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Advanced Combat Martial Arts, Agile Riposte, Brawl, Combat Reflexes, **Could Have Been A Contender**, Great Fortitude, Improved Brawl, Improved Combat Martial Arts, Improved Damaged Threshold, Improved Feint, Improved Knockout Punch, Knockout Punch, Mobility, Power Attack, Renown, **Sidestep**, Streetfighting, Toughness, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike).

New feats are listed in bold, and are described in the previous Chapter.

Born Under the Punches:

Beginning at 3d level, a Boxer gains a number of hit points equal to his Boxer level. Thereafter, the hero gains +1 hit point with each level of Boxer he gains.

Fight Club:

Beginning at 4th level, a Boxer is able to build upon her connections among boxers and fight promoters and receives a +2 modifier on Gather Information checks when seeking information on other boxers or promoters or when looking for a fight.

Second Wind:

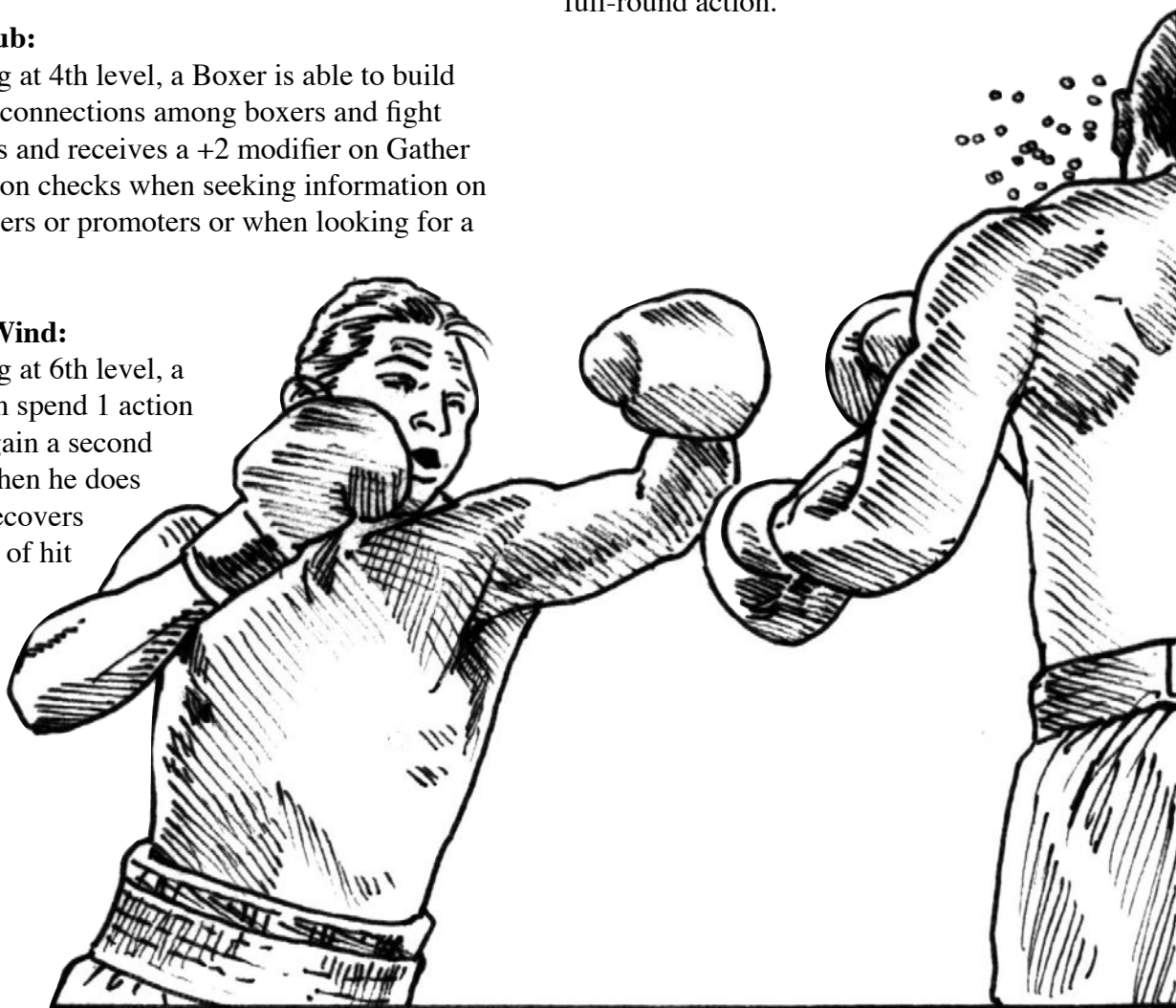
Beginning at 6th level, a Boxer can spend 1 action point to gain a second wind. When he does this, he recovers a number of hit

points equal to his Boxer level plus his Constitution modifier.

This ability does not increase the Boxer's hit points beyond the character's full normal total. For example, a 7th level Boxer with a Constitution bonus of +3 and this ability can recover 10 hit points by spending one action point - but only if his current hit point total is 10 or more lower than his full normal total.

Flurry of Blows:

At 8th level, a Boxer gains the ability to strike with a flurry of blows at the expense of accuracy. The Boxer must be unarmored to use this ability, and she must make unarmed strikes to gain the benefit. With a flurry of blows, the Boxer may make one extra attack in a round at her highest base attack bonus. This attack and each other attack made in the round take a -2 penalty. Using this ability is a full-round action.



ADVANCED CLASS:

FEMME FATALE

So there I was, scouting out the Chinese countryside in my trusty P-40, looking for a Communist airfield. It still feels queer playing a mercenary; it wasn't that long ago I was a stunt pilot in a flying circus. Thanks to the Depression, I was out of job when beer became legal. I spent a long time feeling sorry for myself when an old buddy of mine from the Great War said that the Chinese Nationals were looking for some American pilots to help them root out the Communists. Feels good to be in the air again.

The clouds were low as I flew over a number of abandoned farms. The absence of people was a good sign that there was some military activity nearby. I also noticed that the fields were no longer producing crops and the telltale signs of wheel ruts in the ground told me everything I needed. I bet some of the new-looking barns housed airplanes. Jackpot.

I was about to head back when a plane dropped out of the clouds above me. I didn't recognize the model but I was pretty sure it was Russian. I pulled back on the stick and headed into the clouds myself as bullets sprayed past me. I didn't want to stay in the clouds

long, so once I felt I put some distance between me and the airfield I dropped down. I breathed a sigh of relief as I headed back to base.

That's when the plane dropped down behind me. I didn't have a chance as the bullets ripped through my tail and I heard my engine stall. I was going to have to bail. As I prepared to eject myself, the plane pulled alongside me. The pilot removed hat and goggles and I was staring at the most stunningly gorgeous woman I'd ever seen. I'd bet my life it was Brigid Brophy, the Huntress...another mercenary pilot. She blew me a kiss before rolling away, leaving me to my fate. It's funny. I've heard plenty of stories about her ruthlessness and skill, but as I jumped, I found myself wishing I'd see her again.



The Femme Fatale is an archetype of the Pulp genre. From the Nazi Temptress to the Amazon Queen, these women pursue evil goals while stealing the hearts of heroes. Examples include Catwoman, Sala (from *the Phantom*), and Dr. Elsa Schneider (from *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*).

The Femme Fatale of the pulps is a strong-willed, confident woman who is beautiful and deadly. She

is the antithesis of the docile wife and mother. Femmes Fatales crave excitement and adventure, and have often been wronged at some point in the past. It is this injustice that drives their cravings.

There are many types of Femme Fatale. Some are merely hedonistic mercenaries, more playful than destructive. Some are true master criminals, engaging in insidious plots alongside Mad Scientists and Masterminds. Finally, some Femmes Fatales are rulers of an exotic or alien locale.

Most of the Femme Fatale's abilities have no effect on characters not normally attracted to her (mainly other women). While this is potentially a fatal flaw, it fits in perfectly with the pulp genre. While the Femme Fatale is a master at manipulating men, women generally see right through them. Whether these women can convince their male allies otherwise is another matter!

Throughout this work, Femmes Fatales are considered to be female and the targets of their class abilities are considered to be men. This is intended to reflect the Pulp genre, and the GM should feel free to modify the information for particular circumstances in his or her campaign.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Femme Fatale, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Attribute: Cha 15

Skills: Bluff (6 ranks), Diplomacy (6 ranks)

Feat: Iron Will

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Femme Fatale gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Femme Fatale gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half her character level, rounded down, every time she achieves a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Femme Fatale's class skills are as follows: Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (behavioral sciences, current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Perform (any) (Cha), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language, Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int Modifier

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	0	+0	+1	+2	Lollapalooza, Minions	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+0	+1	+3	Discern Lie, Tough Cookie	+1	+0
3rd	+1	+1	+2	+3	Bonus Feat	+2	+1
4th	+2	+1	+2	+4	Easy Mark	+2	+1
5th	+2	+2	+3	+4	Sob Story, Tough Cookie	+3	+1
6th	+3	+2	+3	+5	Bonus Feat	+3	+2
7th	+3	+3	+3	+5	Green-Eyed Monster	+4	+2
8th	+4	+3	+4	+6	Sow Distrust, Tough Cookie	+4	+2
9th	+4	+4	+4	+6	Bonus Feat	+5	+3
10th	+5	+4	+5	+7	Dying Save	+5	+3

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Femme Fatale advanced class.

Lollapalooza: The Femme Fatale has an exotic, sensual, and powerful aura about her. She exudes cool beauty and self-confidence. Her smile makes men melt and she gets a bonus on all Charisma-based skill checks made to influence members of anyone who would be naturally attracted to her. She also receives this bonus as a defense when someone tries to Sense Motive on her. The bonus is equal to the character's Femme Fatale level. This ability stacks with the Charismatic Hero's Talent Tree.

In addition, the Femme Fatale can use her charms to Intimidate targets into doing something they would not normally do (offer information, romantic favors, etc). This is handled as a normal Intimidate check, but only against characters that would find the Femme Fatale attractive. The Femme Fatale may add her Exotic Features bonus to this check.

It should be noted that this ability affects (usually) male PCs as well as NPCs.

Minions: The Femme Fatale has loyal subordinates who follow her orders. The number of minions available to the Femme Fatale, and the NPC level of those minions, can be found on the table on the following page. Note that these could appear as either traditional subordinates who follow the Femme Fatale's orders, or they might also appear as NPCs that she has placed under her influence. The game effect is the same in either case-- they will do as she says, with utter loyalty.

Minions are gained based on the sum of the Femme Fatale's total character level and her Charisma modifier, modified by the factors listed below:

Renown Feat: +3
 Infamy Feat: +3
 Leadership Feat: +1
 Provides room, board, equipment: +2
 Wealthy (16+ on Wealth): +1
 Rich (21+ on wealth): +2

Femme Fatale's Total Level + Cha mod	Number of Minions, per Minion level					
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
9 or less	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	5	-	-	-	-	-
11	6	-	-	-	-	-
12	8	-	-	-	-	-
13	10	1	-	-	-	-
14	15	1	-	-	-	-
15	20	2	1	-	-	-
16	25	2	1	-	-	-
17	30	3	1	1	-	-
18	35	3	1	1	-	-
19	40	4	2	1	1	-
20	50	5	3	2	1	-
21	60	6	3	2	1	1
22	75	7	4	2	2	1
23	90	9	5	3	2	1
24	110	11	6	3	2	1
25	135	13	7	4	2	2
26	150	15	8	4	3	2
27	165	17	9	5	3	3
28	180	19	10	5	4	3
29	200	20	11	6	4	4
30	220	22	12	6	5	4
+1	+20	+2	+1	+1/2	+1/2	+1/2

Minions that are lost are replaced with new ones by the next adventure.

Discern Lie: At 2nd level, a Femme Fatale develops the ability to read whether another character is telling the truth. When a successful Sense Motive check (opposed by the higher of either the subject's Bluff check result or DC 10) is made, the Femme Fatale can tell whether the subject is deliberately and knowingly speaking a lie. This ability does not reveal the truth, uncover unintentional inaccuracies, or reveal omissions of information.

The Femme Fatale also receives a bonus equal to her Femme Fatale level when making Sense Motive checks.



Tough Cookie: The Femme Fatale can take care of herself. If she does not already possess it, she receives the Combat Martial Arts feat for free at 2nd level. She may attack with any part of her body and never incurs an off-hand attack penalty. In addition, she may add one-half her Femme Fatale level to her damage total.

The Femme Fatale also gains a new Martial Arts feat at 5th and 8th level. She may choose from the following: Improved Martial Arts, Advanced Martial Arts, Defensive Martial Arts, Combat Throw, Improved Combat Throw, Elusive Target, and Unbalance Opponent.

Bonus Feat: At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Femme Fatale gets a bonus feat, which must be taken from the following list. New feats appear in *italics*, and are described at the end of this document.

Acrobatic, Alertness, Confident, Creative, Deceptive, Dodge, Educated, *Exotic Features*, *Infamy*, *Leadership*, Low Profile, Nimble, Renown, Trustworthy, Windfall.

Easy Mark: At 4th level, the Femme Fatale understands how to use her charms to influence the reactions of men. Whenever she spends an action point to improve Charisma-based skill checks against male PCs and NPCs, she adds an additional 1d6 to the result.

Sob Story: The Femme Fatale has made an art form out of lying to people, especially those who hope to crack through her villainous exterior and reach the lover within. At 5th level, a Femme Fatale develops such a force of personal magnetism that he or she can convince a single target to regard him or her as a trusted friend. (If the target is currently being threatened or attacked by the Femme Fatale or his or her allies, the target has a +5 to his Will save).

The target makes a Will saving throw to avoid being persuaded by the Femme Fatale's words and actions. The DC is 10 + Femme Fatale's class level + Femme Fatale's Charisma bonus.

This ability doesn't enable the Femme Fatale to control the target, but the target perceives the Femme Fatale's words and actions in the most favorable way. The Femme Fatale can try to give the target orders, but he or she must win an opposed Charisma check to convince the target to perform any actions the target wouldn't normally undertake. The target never obeys suicidal or obviously harmful orders, and any act by the Femme Fatale or his or her allies that threatens the target breaks the mood and clears the target's head. Otherwise, a target remains won over for 1 minute per Femme Fatale level.

After the duration expires, the GM determines the reaction and attitude of the target based on what the



Femme Fatale compelled the target to do. This is a Mind-Affecting ability.

Green-Eyed Monster: The Femme Fatale doesn't like competition. When squaring off against a potential female rival, the Femme Fatale becomes more aggressive. She adds +2 to Str, Dex, and Con for a number of levels equal to her Femme Fatale class level when engaged in one on one melee combat with another woman. Due to her single-mindedness, the Femme Fatale is at -2 to her Defense during this period. She gains hit points equal to her new Con modifier and these are the first points she'll lose in combat. Any unused hit points disappear when the ability score increase expires.

Sow Distrust: A Femme Fatale of 8th level or higher can turn one character against another (usually a rival female). The Femme Fatale must spend a full-round action and know the name of the character he

or she is attempting to persuade as well as the name of the character toward whom the target's distrust will be directed. The target must be able to hear and understand the Femme Fatale.

The target makes a Will save. The DC is equal to 10 + Femme Fatale's class level + Femme Fatale's Charisma bonus. If the target fails the save, his or her attitude toward the other designated character worsens by one step: helpful turns to friendly, friendly to indifferent, indifferent to unfriendly, unfriendly to hostile (see the Diplomacy skill). The target makes a Will save whenever the Femme Fatale uses this talent against him or her. As long as the target continues to fail the Will save, the Femme Fatale can continue taking full-round actions to worsen the target's attitude toward a designated character. When the target's attitude drops to hostile, he or she attacks the designated character.

A successful Will save doesn't restore previous attitude shifts, but it does render the target immune for 24 hours to further attempts by the Femme Fatale to sow distrust. The Femme Fatale can't use this talent on his or her allies. This is a Mind-Affecting ability.

Dying Save: At 10th level, once per adventure, the Femme Fatale may sacrifice herself to save another life. A Femme Fatale often uses this ability as an act of redemption, but unrepentant Femme Fatales may still sacrifice themselves to further a cause or save a loved one. Whenever another character is successfully attacked, the Femme Fatale may substitute the target's body with her own. (For example, the Mastermind fires his death ray at the Strong-jawed Hero in what should be a killing blow. He's disappointed to see that the Femme Fatale stepped in the way and took the blast).

Game Masters should allow the Femme Fatale to offer any final words before the result of the Dying Save takes effect.

ADVANCED CLASS:

FORTUNE HUNTER

They said I was crazy. They were wrong.

I'd always maintained that Antarctica was the lost continent of Lemuria, the birthplace of African and Asian civilization. I'd spent hundreds of hours researching every major library in the world, looking for every reference I could find. My colleagues scoffed at me and did everything they could to dissuade others from joining me on the expedition of a lifetime.

Yet here we were, standing at the base of an ancient step pyramid frozen within the ice. After a day of meticulous chipping and melting, I had uncovered a stone block with ancient Dravidian characters on it. What a find! I could hardly contain my enthusiasm as we went to work hollowing out the main entrance. Somewhere deep inside laid a king's treasure. I just knew it.

We broke through the ice wall and made our way inside. The walls were covered in Dravidian characters that had a distinctive Egyptian look to them. Robert and I joked about the chicken or the egg argument. I thought I saw a reference to the goddess Kali and decided to have a closer look. Behind my back, Robert noticed an emerald embedded in the wall and started prying it from the wall. I turned around as I heard a thud and a grunt. Robert was dead, his body pinned against the opposite wall by an ancient spear. Apparently, the gods of this temple wanted to be left undisturbed.

After a brief prayer for Robert, I continued inward. I'd be more careful when I found the treasure.

The Fortune Hunter is an archetype of the Pulp genre. He is the explorer of ancient ruins, searching for treasure, whether for the benefit of society or his own gain. Examples include Allan Quatermain, Indiana Jones, and Lara Croft.

The Fortune Hunter is a researcher, archaeologist, and explorer. He is equally at home in the library or an ancient tomb. He is dedicated to seeking out lost treasures and is willing to do most of the heavy work himself. More so than other Pulp archetypes, the Fortune Hunter is a team player, willing to hire experts to help him uncover lost ruins.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Fortune Hunter, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Attribute: Cha 15

Skills: Decipher Script (6 ranks), Research (6 ranks)

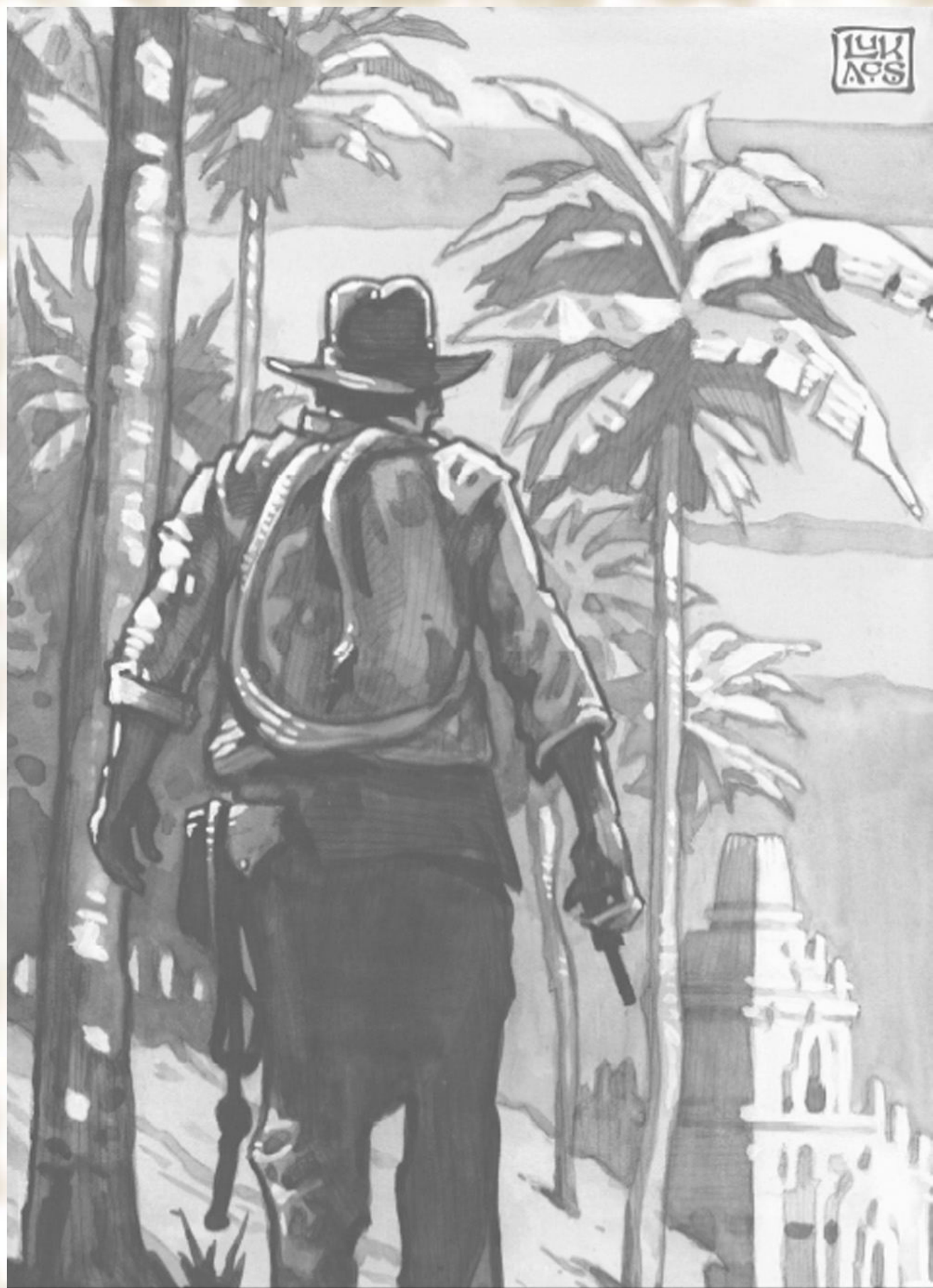
CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Fortune Hunter gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Fortune Hunter gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time she achieves a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Fortune Hunter's class skills are as follows: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int), Demolitions (Int), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (any) (Int), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex),

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Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language, Research (Int), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Fortune Hunter advanced class.

Local Contact: Being a scholar and an adventurer, the Fortune Hunter makes acquaintances and friends in useful and exotic places. Fortune hunting is a dangerous business; almost everyone the Fortune Hunter meets will have his own agenda. Local contacts provide the Fortune Hunter with a sense of security, as these contacts will remain loyal to the Fortune Hunter.

Local contacts are ordinary characters. They are hotel managers, museum curators, guides, drivers, pilots, and black marketeers. The Fortune Hunter gains one local contact at each level of this advanced class.

The Fortune Hunter need not designate these Local Contacts in advance. Whenever the Fortune Hunter enters a civilized locale, he may fill a Local Contact slot as the need arises. This slot remains filled until the Fortune Hunter enters a new civilized locale (GM's discretion).

Studious: Even the most adventurous Fortune Hunters are voracious researchers. At 1st Level, the Fortune Hunter gains the Studious Feat for free.

Anticipate Trap: Fortune Hunters have an uncanny knack for anticipating a trap or ambush, often when they are just about to spring it. The Fortune Hunter may make Search checks as if they were Spot checks (a quick scan allows the Fortune Hunter to make a detailed assumption about a trap).

Bonus Feat: At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Fortune Hunter gets a bonus feat, which must be taken from the following list. New feats appear in italics, and are described at the end of this document.

Acrobatic, Aircraft Operation, Alertness, Athletic, Attentive, Brawl, Cautious, Combat Martial Arts, Defensive Martial Arts, Educated, Endurance, *Extensive Library*, *Leadership*, Meticulous, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Run, Vehicle Expert.

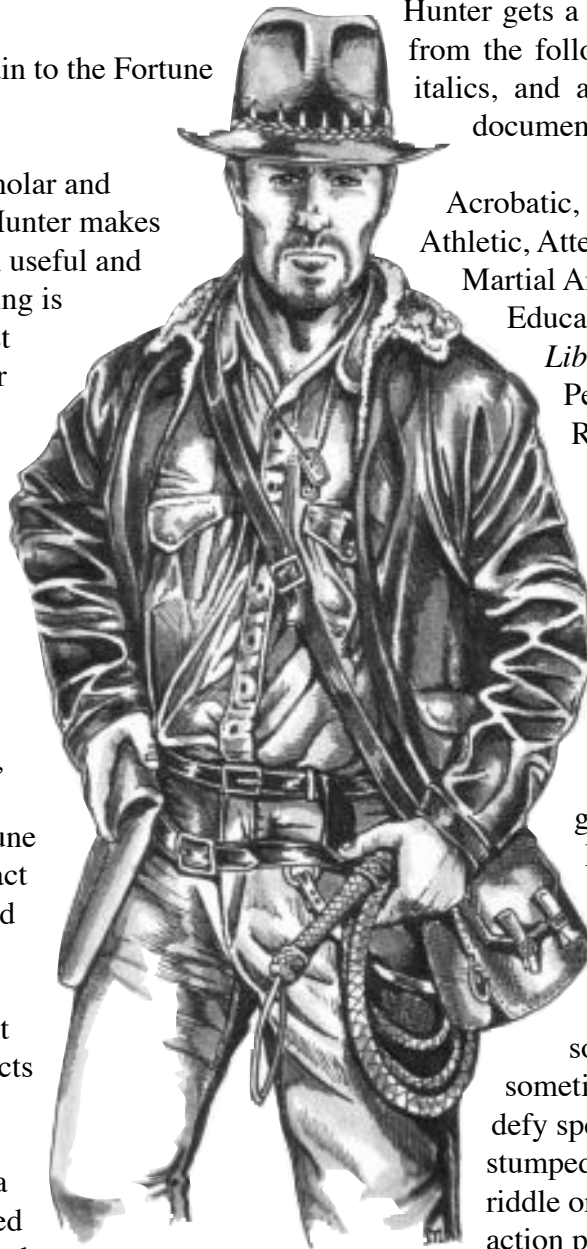
Ancient Weapons Expert:

Having traveled to less civilized and exotic lands, the Fortune Hunter is adept at archaic and exotic fighting styles. This class feature allows the Fortune Hunter to gain either the Archaic Weapons Proficiency or the Exotic Weapons Proficiency.

Puzzle Solving:

At 5th level, Fortune Hunters are able to solve difficult riddles and puzzles, sometimes using leaps of logic that defy spectators. If the character is stumped on how to solve an ancient riddle or puzzle, the player may spend an action point to reveal the answer. GMs should take care that this ability is not abused (a suggested limit is that the Fortune Hunter may only use this ability a number of times equal to half his Fortune Hunter level over the course of an adventure).

Information Font. A Fortune Hunter picks up



many odd bits of information during his travels. Upon reaching 7th level, the character may make a special Information Font check with a bonus equal to his level + his Intelligence modifier to see whether he knows some relevant information about local notable people, legendary items, or noteworthy places.

The Fortune Hunter may not take 10 or take 20 on this check; this sort of knowledge is essentially random. The GM will determine the Difficulty Class of the check by referring to the table below.

DC	Type of Knowledge
10	Common, known by at least a substantial minority of the local population.
20	Uncommon but available; known by only a few people in the area.
25	Obscure, known by few, hard to come by.
30	Extremely obscure, known by very few, possibly forgotten by most who once knew it, possibly known only by those who don't understand the significance of the knowledge.

Double-edged Luck: At level 8, a Fortune Hunter can, once per adventure, reroll one failed check, but he must lose something important in the process. This is usually treasure, but other downsides include maps, journals, transportation, and weapons.

Deus ex Machina: At level 10, the Fortune Hunter can snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. By spending an action point, the Fortune Hunter can escape probable death by creating an escape route once per adventure. This escape route can be coincidental, such as a steam ship that just happens to be passing by, or simply convenient, like a column that collapses across a molten stream to provide an exit from a crumbling temple.

Any PCs that are with the Fortune Hunter can also take advantage of the escape route by spending an action point. The fate of NPCs is left up to the GM.

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	0	+1	+2	+0	Local Contact, Studios	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+0	Anticipate Trap, Local Contact	+1	+1
3rd	+1	+2	+3	+1	Bonus Feat, Local Contact	+2	+1
4th	+2	+2	+3	+1	Ancient Weapons Expert, Local Contact	+2	+2
5th	+2	+3	+4	+1	Puzzle Solving, Local Contact	+3	+2
6th	+3	+3	+4	+2	Bonus Feat, Local Contact	+3	+2
7th	+3	+4	+5	+2	Information Font, Local Contact	+4	+3
8th	+4	+4	+5	+2	Double-edged Luck, Local Contact	+4	+3
9th	+4	+4	+6	+3	Bonus Feat, Local Contact	+5	+3
10th	+5	+5	+6	+3	Deus Ex Machina Local Contact	+5	+4

ADVANCED CLASS:

G-MAN

The Chief of Police frantically grabbed for the bullhorn, squinting to block out the flashing red and blue lights that lit up the crime scene like Macy's at Christmas time. Half his precincts were here in full force, and most of the others at half or better. There was a veritable sea of squad cars and paddy wagons surrounding the 5th street library and the psycho holding the entire P.S. 201 class field trip hostage there. He triggered the bullhorn and opened his mouth to speak, when he was interrupted by a nearby shout. "He's going again!"

Everyone who heard quickly dropped behind open squad car doors or dove for cover behind the wagons as the BHUDAA-BHUDAA-BHUDAA of a heavy machine gun roared from the roof of the library. Chunks of concrete and squad cars kicked up into the air as the madman behind the trigger randomly assaulted New York's finest. As the thunder of heavy caliber munitions stopped it was quickly trailed by shaky laughter on the wind. Chief O'Hara sat up and looked around. Twelve hours had passed since they first got word of children held hostage, and no progress had been made.

O'Hara spotted a commotion- two men in hats

and coats were speaking with a number of his officers; when the cops nodded and took off running, O'Hara nearly had a fit. He watched as the officers spoke to others, and could not believe it when shortly the entire line of cars began to pull back. O'Hara stormed over to the strangers, who were heading in his direction.

"What in the name of the Big Apple is going on here?!" he shouted. The two men met his gaze with a coolness that was unsettling. O'Hara nearly jumped out of his skin when a voice from behind him spoke: "I'm what's going on here." The Police Chief spun on his heel and looked up into a pair of blue eyes that made the strangers seem friendly. A hand holding a badge flashed in front of his eyes, and the newcomer said, "Andrew Franklin, Federal Agent. O'Hara, you've done a miserable job containing the situation- this is my crime scene now."

The G-Man, slang for 'Government Man', is a federal agent typically with the F.B.I. In the world of the pulps the G-Man was known by his trench coat and fedora, traveling in packs and toting Tommy-guns. G-Men were the subject of several entire magazines, and the nation thrilled to their exploits. From breaking up Nazi sympathizers to enforcing Prohibition, the G-Man did whatever his nation called on him to do to keep



her safe on her own shores.

Working for the Government has its perks- the G-Man has an enhanced jurisdiction, granting him powers of law enforcement that typically outstrip those of local cops; he also is generally better equipped with the latest in crime-fighting technology. The G-Man starts off as a part of a unit, learning the ropes. As he proves himself and grows in experience, the G-Man will find himself with more and more responsibility, and given more and more sensitive missions.

It's an unfriendly world out there, and it's only getting worse- your Nation is looking for the best and the brightest to come to her aid- will you heed the call?

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a G-Man a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Ability Score: Int 13 or higher, Cha 11 or higher

Base Attack Bonus: +2

Skills: Speak Language (None) 1 rank, Research (Int) 1 rank

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The G-Man gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The G-Man gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The G-Man class skills are as follows: Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int), Demolitions (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (civics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (None), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Treat Injury (Wis)

Skill Points at each level: 6 + Int Modifier

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+1	+1	+1	+2	Jurisdiction, Only the Best	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+1	+2	+3	Big Brother	+2	+0
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+4	Bonus Feat	+3	+1
4th	+2	+2	+3	+4	Cross-training	+3	+2
5th	+3	+3	+3	+5	Signature Kit, Team Effort	+4	+3
6th	+3	+3	+4	+5	Bonus Feat, Safehouse	+4	+3
7th	+4	+4	+4	+6	Cross-training	+5	+3
8th	+4	+4	+5	+6	Bonus Feat	+5	+3
9th	+5	+5	+5	+7	Cross-training	+6	+4
10th	+5	+5	+6	+8	Promotion	+6	+5

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the G-Man advanced class.

Jurisdiction: As a Federal Agent, the G-Man can override local law enforcement, command rescue personnel (such as firemen) and generally get his way. Starting at 1st level, by showing ID (flashing his badge) and declaring "Federal Agent!", the G-Man gets a +2 bonus to either Intimidate or Bluff. If successful he will get the cooperation of the citizen or law enforcement in question. When in a crisis situation (such as a hostage situation or train wreck) he receives a bonus equal to half his G-Man level, stacked with the normal +2.

Only the best: The Government has access to the latest high-tech equipment, and the G-Man benefits from that. Starting at 1st level he adds his Advance Class level to his Wealth bonus when determining if an item is available for a mission. His Wealth bonus does not lower, even if he would normally reduce his Wealth bonus because of this purchase. If the G-Man does not return the equipment after the mission, his Wealth bonus does lower by 1.

Big Brother: At 2nd level and above, the G-Man has access to virtually unlimited information on any public information, and quiet a lot of private. By 'calling in' a license number, an address, or a name, the G-Man can obtain any information the Game Master determines the Government would know about that individual or establishment. Some examples would include; full name, vital record (Blood Type, Date of Birth, etc), last known address, owner of establishment, etc. The G-Man rolls his Research Skill and gets a bonus equal to his level in this Advance Class. He may Take 10 or 20 with this check, or he may make the check normally if he needs the information quickly. He must have access to radio or telephone to call in his request to his agency.

Bonus Feats: At 3rd, 6th and 8th levels, the G-Man chooses a Bonus Feat from the following list: Aircraft Operation, Combat Martial Arts, Defensive Martial Arts, Drive-By Attack, Exotic Firearms Proficiency, Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency, Force Stop, Vehicle Dodge, Vehicle Expert, Weapon Focus

Crosstraining: At 4th, 7th and 9th levels, the G-Man can cross train with another government agency, gaining additional skills and learning how that agency operates. The G-Man can chose which school he attends, and gains the listed bonuses as well as a +4 Diplomacy bonus whenever dealing with active or retired members of that agency. The G-Man may ignore prerequisites when gaining a feat this way.

Spy School: +2 bonus to Disguise and +1 rank in both Speak Language and Read/Write Language (must chose same language).

Military: gain bonus feats Burst Fire and Exotic Firearms

Secret Service: +2 bonus to Spot and bonus Feat Vehicle Dodge

Signature Kit: At 5th level the G-Man may choose one personal firearm, one melee weapon, one general special equipment, and one vehicle. In addition to any mission-specific equipment, the G-Man is always equipped with his Signature Kit -- he does not have to return the equipment unless he leaves service. In addition, should any item be lost or destroyed, it will be replaced before the start of the next mission.



Team Effort: At 5th level the G-Man may call on his own team of agents. Whenever he needs to work on a case and implements this feature, he may add a bonus equal to half his G-Man level to the following skills. Decipher Script (Int), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (any) (Int), Research (Int) .

This represents the pool of expert resources he has to draw on, and using this Feature takes as much time as if he had Taken 20. Additionally, the Game Master and Player should determine what other skills the team may have and allow the G-Man to make a check using that skill even if it normally cannot be used unskilled. Any use of this Feature requires the G-Man to be able to communicate the situation to his team and receive the answer.

Safe House: At 6th level the G-Man has accumulated enough weapons, equipment and knowledge to have a Safe House. This is a physical location, be it an apartment, a warehouse, a store or even a cave, the location of which is unknown to the G-Man's own agency.

The Game Master should take some time to stock the Safe House with the Player, making Wealth checks with half the bonus available from the 'Only the best' feature. The Game Master is the final arbiter of whether a particular piece of equipment or weapon is available.

Promotion: At 10th level the G-Man has come to the attention of the Power's That Be, and earned a promotion to the equivalent of a Director level. The G-Man gets a +3 bonus to his Wealth and a +4 bonus to Diplomacy checks when dealing with anyone of his own agency. In addition he has the authority to organize joint agency efforts, such as a local police raid or surveillance. The DC to do so is 25, and a success results in 2d6 officers and agents placed under his command for 1 week per level, or until completion of the stated task (whichever comes first).



ADVANCED CLASS:

GUMSHOE

Mack Brolin sloshed gin over two sticky shot glasses and slid half the pair across his desk to the weeping blonde in front of him. He hated this part of his job- hell, he would have to think harder than he wanted too to find a part he did like, lately. Normally he would stay as far away from cheating husband cases as he could and still pay the bills- but Andrea Smith was the leggiest, blondest...healthiest dame who'd come through his door in years, and as close as Mack was to his .38 special, it didn't exactly keep him warm at night.

He'd been in the business long enough to know something was screwy- wives as put together as Mrs. Smith didn't get cheated on very often. He watched her knock back his offered drink and then followed suit. She blew her nose daintily and then refilled their glasses for him, setting down her pocketbook next to the bottle. Her pocketbook with the silver handles. Mack added ten percent to the figure he had in his head.

"Mr. Brolin, Johnny Chin is my dry cleaner- he told me you were very discrete. Can I count on you to be discrete...Mack?"

Mack polished off his second drink and nodded his

head. He folded his hands in his lap and leaned back in his chair. "Mrs. Smith, discrete is my middle name. However, before we go into any more particulars about this case, can I ask you to place that cute revolver on the desk, and keep your hands where I can see them?"

Smith's face clouded over as she complied, her hands moving slowly as Mack raised his own, pointing his .38 in her direction. Mack smiled at her frustrated expression.

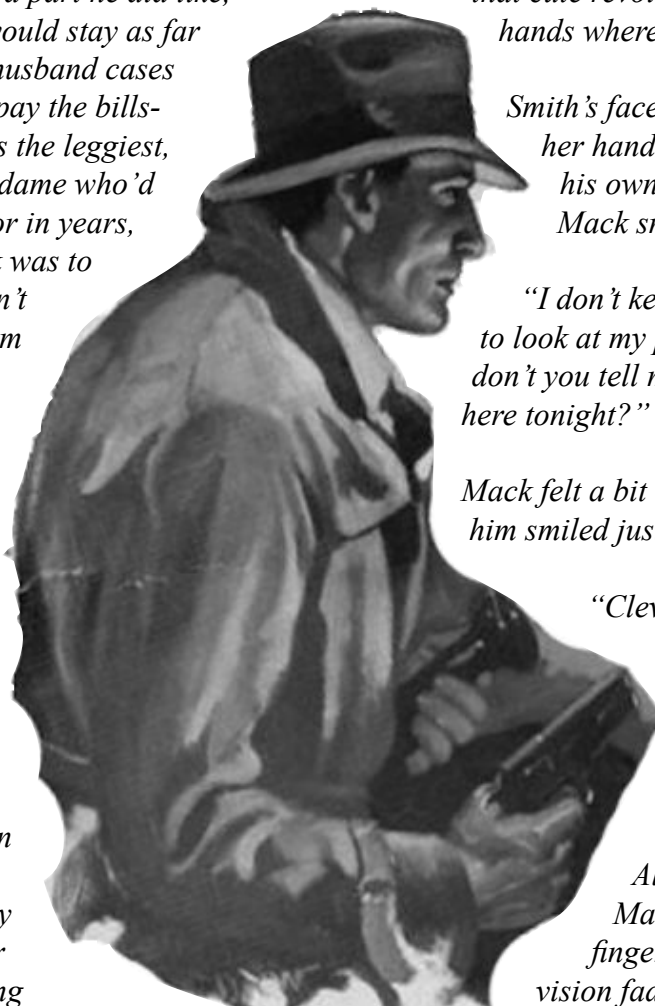
"I don't keep that big mirror in the corner to look at my pretty mug, Mrs. Smith. Now, why don't you tell me your real reason for coming here tonight?"

Mack felt a bit of alarm as the beauty in front of him smiled just as her features began to blur.

"Clever, Mr. Brolin- Chin told me your were clever too. But he also told me you couldn't resist blondes or gin. I hope you don't mind, I added a little something special to yours."

All the alarms were going off as Mack's piece fell from his nerveless fingers and he slumped forward. His vision faded out, as did his last thoughts of the evening. "Damn....second time this month..."

The Gumshoe, P.I., Detective; they all refer to the tough-as-nails, rough around the edges, hard boiled investigator of the pulps. A file cabinet filled with cases, a weather-beaten desk, a name on the door



and a reputation for getting his man- many times this is all a Gumshoe has to call his own- but while his life is often unglamorous, it is hardly ever boring.

The Gumshoe can be a person's last hope- when the police don't seem to care and you haven't a friend in the world, you can call on him- his door is always open. Just don't be surprised to see a chalk outline or two on the way up the stairs.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Gumshoe a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Ability Score: Int 12 or higher, Con 11 or higher

Base Attack Bonus: +2

Skills: Investigate (Int) 3 ranks, Gather Information (Int) 3 ranks

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Gumshoe gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Gumshoe gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Gumshoe class skills are as follows:

Bluff (Cha), Demolitions (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gamble (Wis), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (crime) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Read/Write Language (None), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (None), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Treat Injury (Wis)

Skill Points at each level: 6 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Gumshoe advanced class.

Home Turf Advantage: The Gumshoe knows his turf and, more importantly, knows how make the most of it. Starting at 1st level the Gumshoe gets a +2 bonus to any of the following skills when used in his 'turf', due to his extensive knowledge of the inhabitants, laws, layout and resources in this area: Diplomacy, Drive, Gather Information, Hide, Investigate, Knowledge (crime), Navigate, Search,

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+1	+2	+1	+1	Home turf, Fisticuffs, Office	+1	+1
2nd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Fisticuffs, Citizen's Arrest	+2	+2
3rd	+2	+3	+2	+1	Home turf, Contact	+3	+2
4th	+3	+4	+2	+1	Office, Citizen's Arrest	+4	+3
5th	+4	+4	+2	+2	Home turf, Hard Bitten	+4	+3
6th	+4	+5	+2	+2	Fisticuffs, Citizen's Arrest, Contact	+5	+4
7th	+5	+5	+3	+2	Home turf, Deductive Reasoning	+5	+5
8th	+6	+6	+3	+3	Citizen's Arrest, Hard Bitten	+6	+5
9th	+6	+7	+3	+3	Home turf, Contact	+6	+6
10th	+7	+8	+3	+3	Enough Rope, Satellite Office	+7	+7

Spot, and Survival. At 1st level his turf is the block his office is located on. At 3rd level this area expands into the neighborhood the block is in. At 5th level the turf encompasses into one adjoining neighborhood, and increases by one neighborhood every second level thereafter. Note- this feature duplicates in any city in which the Gumshoe opens a Satellite Office.

Fisticuffs: The Gumshoe makes a living on the edge of the law, and as such does his best to avoid ventilating citizens. In order to bring his quarry down, he often has to resort to a good old-fashioned haymaker over a more permanent solution. At 1st level the Gumshoe gains the Feats Brawl and Knockout Punch. At 2nd level the Feat Improved Brawl is gained, and at 6th level Improved Knockout Punch is gained.

Office: At 1st level the Gumshoe starts with an office with the barest of essentials... sometimes just a desk with one drawer, a filing cabinet, and a chair for clients to sit in. If the Gamemaster agrees, the character can live in an adjoining room, although he may have to hide that fact from the landlord. At 4th level the Gumshoe's career has advanced enough that he can afford to outfit his place of business a bit more respectably- the player and Gamemaster should decide together on equipment, size of the office, etc. When in his office the Gumshoe feels most at home, and gets double his Hometurf Advantage bonus. He also gets a +2 defensive bonus while in his Office- often the only thing between him and an assassin's knife in the back on a rainy October evening... At 10th level a Satellite Office can be opened in another city, and will be fully equipped and staffed as needed.

Contacts: At 3rd, 6th and 9th levels, the Gumshoe gains a Contact. This Contact is a full-fledged NPC, which could be developed jointly with the Player and the Gamemaster. The Contact should be an expert in their field and very well connected. The character can approach a Contact once per adventure or act, and request a favor (usually access to information or a location beyond the



character's ability, or specialized equipment or service.) The Gamemaster will determine the likelihood of the request being granted, based on the possible negative impact to the Contact; the Gumshoe will attempt a Diplomacy skill check at +4, modified by any roleplaying bonuses. The purpose of the Contact is to not only serve as an advantage to the character, but a roleplaying opportunity as well. Some ideas for Contacts are: data processor at the Police Department, numbers runner for a local crime boss, and local newspaper reporter.

Hard-bitten: At 5th level the Gumshoe has escaped enough trash compactors, sinking cars, burning buildings, and beat-down sessions to have developed a thick skin. The character gains two of the following feats: Endurance, Great Fortitude, or Toughness. They gain the remaining feat at 8th level.

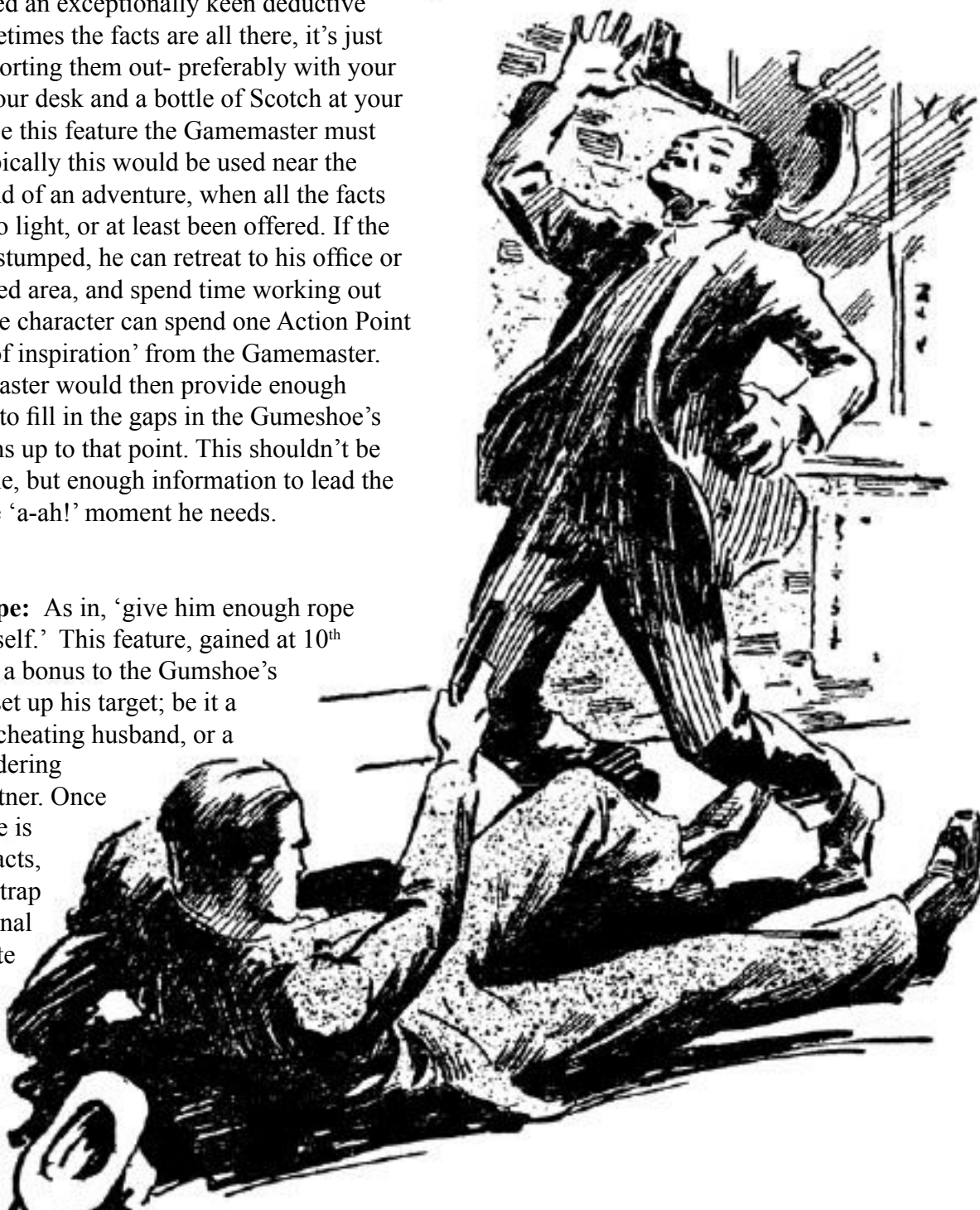
Citizen's Arrest: Starting at 2nd level the Gumshoe is recognized by the local law enforcement authorities as a tolerable fish in their pond. The character gets a +1 Diplomacy bonus when dealing with the cops or any other civic authority. This

bonus becomes +2 at 4th level, +3 at 6th, and finally +4 at 8th. This bonus does stack with the Gumshoe's Hometown Advantage. In addition, the Citizen's Arrest feature makes actions taken by the character legal jurisdiction in a court of law, providing he did not break the law...or at least, cannot be proven to have broken the law.

Deductive Reasoning: At 7th level the Gumshoe has developed an exceptionally keen deductive ability. Sometimes the facts are all there, it's just a matter of sorting them out- preferably with your feet up on your desk and a bottle of Scotch at your elbow. To use this feature the Gamemaster must approve- typically this would be used near the middle or end of an adventure, when all the facts have come to light, or at least been offered. If the character is stumped, he can retreat to his office or other secluded area, and spend time working out the facts. The character can spend one Action Point for a 'flash of inspiration' from the Gamemaster. The Gamemaster would then provide enough information to fill in the gaps in the Gumshoe's investigations up to that point. This shouldn't be a total gimme, but enough information to lead the Player to the 'a-ah!' moment he needs.

Enough Rope: As in, 'give him enough rope to hang himself.' This feature, gained at 10th level, grants a bonus to the Gumshoe's attempts to set up his target; be it a murderer, a cheating husband, or a money-laundering business partner. Once the Gumshoe is sure of his facts, he can lay a trap for the criminal to incriminate himself in a recreation of the crime scene, or an ambush where the target

comes to silence an invented witness, or any other of countless scenarios. Enough Rope gives a +4 bonus to the following skill checks when the Gumshoe is setting up the trap, and working to spring it: Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Forgery, Hide, Perform, and Sleight of Hand. This bonus also applies to convincing the right people to be on hand to witness the springing of the trap, such as the jilted spouse, the cops, etc.



GUN MOLL

Sally sat in the corner of the speakeasy, trying not to draw attention to herself. Mickey, her booze-running partner and sometimes lover, was nowhere to be seen. He told Sally that he couldn't be with her tonight, that he had a card game with some friends. Sally knew better; there was a new singer at the nightclub across town that Mickey fancied, and he didn't mind wasting his evening sipping juice and seltzer water to see her.

Sally sighed as she sipped her gin. She remembered an earlier time, when she first met Mickey. He was everything she never wanted in a man, rough, tough and dangerous. She fell for him immediately, convinced that she just had to prove herself to him. She started by giving him a safe place to sleep and alibis for cops. Later, she helped Mickey and his associates scope out banks and small stores. Eventually, she worked her way up to getaway driver. Mickey was appreciative, especially at first, but over time he started to see her as just one of the guys.

Don walked over and placed a full glass next to her half empty one. She smiled. The boy was

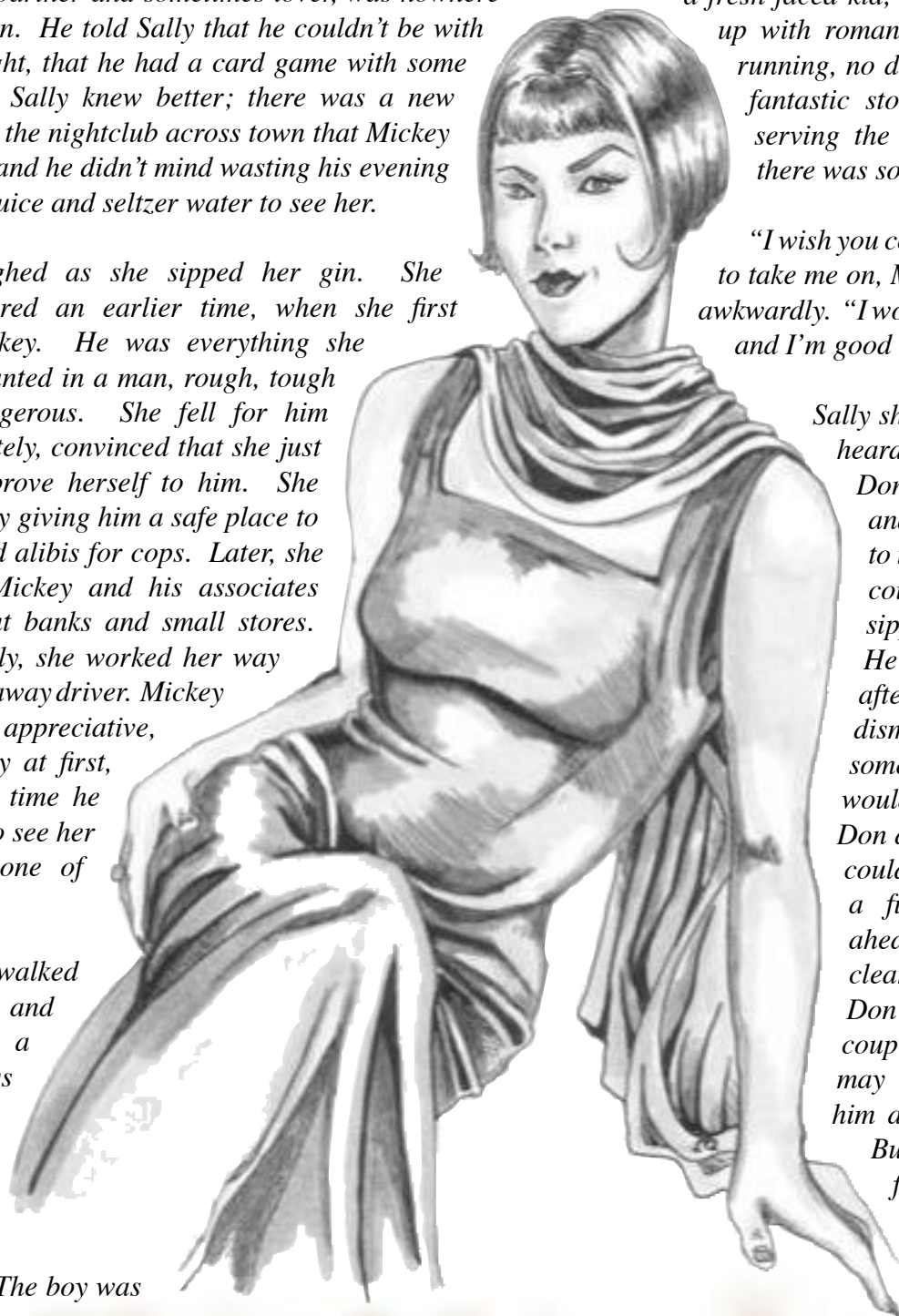
so eager to be in her presence that he wouldn't even wait until she was ready for another gin. Don was a fresh-faced kid, his mind all jumbled up with romantic notions of booze running, no doubt poisoned by the fantastic stories he heard while serving the booze runners. Yet there was something else.

"I wish you could convince Mickey to take me on, Miss Sally," Don said awkwardly. "I wouldn't be any trouble, and I'm good behind the wheel."

Sally shook her head. She'd heard this story before.

Don was smitten with her, and he wanted Mickey to take him on so that he could be with Sally. She sipped her gin again. He was a cute boy, and after the way Mickey dismissed her tonight for some new songbird Sally wouldn't mind teaching Don a few things. But she couldn't do that. Don had a full, respectable life ahead of him if he steered clear of Mickey's type. If Don had come along a couple years earlier, Sally may have run away with him and the criminal life.

But now, it was too late for that. Sally steeled herself and gave Don a cold, hard look.



“You know Mickey’s my man and I’ve got no time for someone else, especially one so wet behind the ears. Now scram before I tell Mickey that you’ve been eyeing his dame.”

Don’s face flushed an embarrassed red as he stammered an apology and scurried away. Sally shrugged and emptied the new glass down her throat. It was all for the best. Really.

In many ways, the Gun Moll is the Mobster’s partner in crime. She is fully aware of and participates in the Mobster’s activities, filling a critical support role. Some women become Gun Molls because they’ve fallen in love with a Mobster. Others become Gun Molls for the sheer thrill of a life of crime. Well-known historical Gun Molls include Bonnie Parker (of Bonnie and Clyde fame) and Ma Barker.

Historically, Gun Molls were a varied lot. Some were simply paramours of Mobsters, while others took more active roles in the criminal life. In the Pulp, Gun Molls had more thrilling and glamorous lifestyles. It is this literary model on which the Advanced Class is based. While the Mobster represents the tough, thuggish soldier of the underworld, the Gun Moll works behind the scenes, acting as a spy and providing logistical support.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Gun Moll, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +2

Skills: Concentration (6 ranks), Gather Information (6 ranks)

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Gun Moll gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character’s Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Gun Moll gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time she achieves a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Gun Moll’s class skills are as follows: Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (business, current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language, Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int Modifier

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+1	+1	Pancake, Low Profile	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+2	+2	Feign Innocence, Sharp Eyes	+1	+1
3rd	+1	+1	+2	+2	Gun Feat	+2	+1
4th	+2	+1	+2	+2	Getaway Driver, Easy Mark	+3	+2
5th	+2	+1	+3	+3	Discern Lie, Pick Pocket	+4	+2
6th	+3	+2	+3	+3	Gun Feat,	+4	+2
7th	+3	+2	+4	+4	Getaway Driver, Smuggle	+5	+3
8th	+4	+2	+4	+4	Poison Ear	+6	+3
9th	+4	+3	+4	+4	Gun Feat, Steel Resolve	+6	+3
10th	+5	+5	+5	+5	Blaze of Glory	+7	+4

CLASS FEATURES:

Pancake: Not only are Gun Molls cool under fire, but they have an uncanny ability to pack all things necessary in the middle of a shoot out. The Mobster relies on her to grab the goods while he holds off the authorities (or Mob rivals) with his weapon. During a firefight, the Gun Moll must make a Concentration check at DC 15. If she succeeds, she is able to grab and pack all relevant items. The Gun Moll gets a +2 bonus if in a Safe House (see the *Mobster* Advanced Class, by *Adamant Entertainment*).

Most Gun Molls live out of their suitcases, so it may only take a Gun Moll one full round action to grab the suitcase and head for the door. The Game Master (GM) should use his discretion in assigning more rounds, but keep in mind that this class feature becomes worthless if the GM is too harsh.

If the Gun Moll does not already have it, this class feature gives the Gun Moll the Focused feat.

Low Profile: A good Gun Moll knows how to stay in the background, at least until her notoriety catches up with her. She gets the Low Profile Feat.

Feign Innocence: At 2nd level, the Gun Moll is aware of what society thinks of her and is able to exploit it. At 1st level, the Gun Moll adds a +4 circumstance bonus to her Bluff check when convincing the authorities that she has no information to give them.

Sharp Eyes: At 2nd level, a Gun Moll learns how to work a room and assess security measures, hidden compartments, and the location of valuables. She can even do this while a party is going on in the room. The Gun Moll may add a +4 circumstance bonus to Search checks when she is casing a room for a future crime.

Gun Feat: At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Gun Moll gets to choose a feat from the following list:

Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Quick Draw, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Strafe.



Getaway Driver: At 4th level, the Gun Moll is given more responsibilities in the commitment of crimes. She gains the Vehicle Expert feat. At 7th level, she receives the Vehicle Dodge feat.

Easy Mark: At 4th level, the Gun Moll understands how to use her charms to influence the reactions of men. Whenever she spends an action point to improve Charisma-based skill checks against male PCs and NPCs, she adds an additional 1d6 to the result.

Discern Lie: At 5th level, a Gun Moll develops the ability to read whether another character is telling the truth. When a successful Sense Motive check (opposed by the higher of either the subject's Bluff check result or DC 10) is made, the Gun Moll can tell whether the subject is deliberately and knowingly speaking a lie. This ability does not reveal the truth, uncover unintentional inaccuracies, or reveal omissions of information.

Pick Pocket: At 5th level, a Gun Moll learns how to take full advantage of her easy marks. If a Gun Moll is in favor with a man (using a Diplomacy check to change his attitude to Friendly, if not already), she gains a +4 to her Sleight of Hand check when attempting to lift an item from him.

Smuggle: At 7th level, the Gun Moll becomes adept at hiding items on her person and conning her way past security guards with them. Whether hiding a derringer for protection or smuggling a knife in a loaf of bread to her jailbird lover, the Gun Moll knows how to make the most of this ability. She gains a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks and a +2 circumstance bonus to Bluff checks when smuggling an item.

Poison Ear: At 8th level, a Gun Moll learns how to manipulate people and set them against each other. She turns husbands against imagined adulterers; she eliminates rivals by poisoning her lover's ear; she protects her Mob by sowing discontent among other mobs.

In order to use this ability, the Gun Moll must first chat (or more) with the target for a while and elicit a friendly attitude from him (usually by making a Diplomacy check). She also needs to know enough about the person with which she is going to poison her target's ear (this can usually be discovered through a Gather Information check at DC 15 with the target). She is now ready to poison his ear.

The target makes a Will save. The DC is equal to 10 + Gun Moll's class level + Gun Moll's Charisma bonus (+ Easy Mark if applicable). If the target fails the save, his or her attitude toward the other designated character worsens by one step: helpful turns to friendly, friendly to indifferent, indifferent to unfriendly, unfriendly to hostile (see the Diplomacy skill). The target makes a Will save whenever the Gun Moll uses this talent against him or her. As long as the target continues to fail the Will save, the Gun Moll can continue taking full-round actions to worsen the target's attitude toward a designated character. When the target's attitude drops to hostile, he or she will attempt to cause some type of harm to the designated character.

A successful Will save doesn't restore previous attitude shifts, but it does render the target immune for 24 hours to further attempts by the Gun Moll to poison his or her ear.

Steel Resolve: By 9th level, the Gun Moll has accepted her lot in life as part of underworld society. She no longer yearns for the respectable life, nor can she be seduced by it. By the same token, the Gun Moll has a soft spot for those who still have a choice, and will do her best to steer them clear before it is too late. The Gun Moll receives a +3 circumstance bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Sense Motive Checks when dealing with one of these two situations.

Example: Gun Moll Sally discovers that Don, a young waiter in a seedy club is always trying to make time with her. She uses a Sense Motive check (with Steel Resolve) to realize that he is smitten with her. While she fancies him, Sally knows that Don has dreams of college and has a chance at a respectable life. She uses a Bluff check (with Steel Resolve) to convince him that she doesn't fancy him and a Diplomacy check (with Steel Resolve) to convince him to stay away from the underworld.

Blaze of Glory: At 10th level, when all is lost and her mob is crumbling around her from lead poisoning, the Gun Moll can make her final stand. In order to use this class feature, the Gun Moll must have a firearm in her hand(s). By spending an Action Point, the Gun Moll gets a +4 to Dexterity and a +4 to Constitution (increasing her hit points by 2 per character level). She can use any appropriate feats, but her actions are limited to shooting at her enemies. The Blaze of Glory lasts for as long as the Gun Moll has ammunition in her weapons (if other weapons are handy, she may switch guns, but she can only reload an empty weapon if she has the Quick Reload feat).

Once her weapons are emptied, the Gun Moll loses all of her bonuses (which may kill her if she took enough damage). She is also considered Fatigued until she can get complete rest.

ADVANCED CLASS: **MAD SCIENTIST**

Doctor Schreck threw the main switch, and the infernal machine sparked to life, lights winking on and off in a mad language that only the demented scientist could understand. Great arcs of electric current roped out between giant brass electrodes, filling the air with the distinct odor of ozone.

The hair on the back of the Green Falcon's neck stood on end, not because of the charge in the air, but rather at the realization of the depth of the danger that Schreck posed to New York City.

"Excellent... Excellent!" exclaimed

Doctor Schreck. "Everything is proceeding according to plan." he whirled to face the Green Falcon, the blue-white light of the sparking machinery matched by the insane gleam in his eyes.

"You were a fool to try and interfere, Falcon." he said. The Green Falcon strained against the bonds that held him in the chair, but to no avail.

"Once my invention reaches it's full charge, I shall activate the wave generator, and every cretinous moron in this city will become my mindless slave!" He began to laugh then...a ragged, tortured sound that seemingly crawled from somewhere deep within his soul, rising in pitch and intensity until, nearly a hysterical scream, it almost drowned out the sound of the buzzing and crackling machinery.

The Green Falcon knew that he needed to act...and SOON.

The Mad Scientist is an archetype of the pulp genre--an insane

genius seeking to dominate the world through technological terror. Examples include Doctor Satan, The Scorpion, and dozens of generic madmen with vaguely Prussian or Eastern-European-sounding names.



In many ways, the Mad Scientist is the flip-side of the Paragon. Where the Paragon represents the possibilities of science, the Mad Scientist is the fear of science run rampant over humanity. The Mad Scientist can range from the sad, deluded individual who has forgotten that science should serve humankind, to the raving lunatic who wants to avenge himself on those who did not appreciate his genius.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Mad Scientist, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Skills: Craft (any) 6 ranks, Knowledge (any) 6 ranks, Repair 6 ranks.

Feats: Builder

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Mad Scientist gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Mad Scientist gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Mad Scientist's class skills are as follows: Concentration (Con), Craft(any)(Int), Decipher Script (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Drive (Dex), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (Any) (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 8 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Mad Scientist advanced class.

Weird Science: At 1st level, the Mad Scientist gets the ability to invent using Weird Science.

Weird Science items are handled as d20 Modern FX abilities. The inventor creates a device that mimics the effects of an Arcane or Divine spell, or a Psionic power. A Weird Science invention is not permanent--it only lasts for a single adventure, unless the inventor chooses to make the device permanent by spending XP (to make a Weird Science device permanent costs a number of XP equal to the level of the device, times the level of the inventor, times 50). Permanent inventions take up one of the available slots...well, permanently, so players taking this option should be aware of that.

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Weird Science	+0	+0
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+0	Scientific Improvisation	+1	+0
3rd	+1	+2	+2	+1	Bonus Feat	+1	+1
4th	+2	+2	+2	+1	Inspiration	+1	+1
5th	+2	+3	+3	+1	Bonus Feat	+2	+1
6th	+3	+3	+3	+2	Build Robot	+2	+2
7th	+3	+4	+4	+2	Bonus Feat	+2	+2
8th	+4	+4	+4	+2	Skill Mastery	+3	+2
9th	+4	+4	+4	+3	Bonus Feat	+3	+3
10th	+5	+5	+5	+3	Brilliant but Insane	+4	+3

A Mad Scientists can have a number of Weird Science inventions available per adventure according to the chart that appears at right:

(Note: 0-level inventions are available at a rate equal to the first column +1)

The inventor picks an FX ability of the appropriate level, and, for the duration of the adventure (unless they choose to make it permanent), they have a device capable of replicating that devices effects. The inventor can, if they choose, combine multiple FX abilities into a single invention.

Example: Doctor Schreck, a 9th level Mad Scientist, wishes to invent a device that will terrifying the cretinous masses into following his will. As a 9th level Mad Scientist, he has the following Invention levels available: 5/5/4/3/2. He decides to combine two FX abilities into a single invention--he chooses the 4th level Mage spell *Fear* and the 5th level Acolyte spell *Greater Command*. He invents the Terror Wave Subjector, which, when activated will subject all living creatures within a 45-foot cone to fear, and will command up to 9 of them for 9 rounds.

Scientific Improvisation: At 2nd level, a Mad Scientist gains the ability to improvise solutions using common objects and his scientific know-how. This ability lets him create ojects in a dramatic situation quickly and cheaply, but that have a limited duration.

By spending 1 action point and combining common objects with a Craft check that corresponds to the function desired, the Mad Scientist can build a tool or a device to deal with any situation. The DC for the Craft check is equal to 5 + the purchase DC of the object that most closely matches the desired function. So, to improvise a weapon that deals the same damage as a shotgun, the DC for the Craft (mechanical) check is 22 (5 +17).

Only objects that can normally be used more than once can be improvised. For example, a Mad Scientist cannot use scientific improvisation to build an explosive, since that's an object that can only be used once.

Electronic devices, special tools, weapons, mechanical devices and more can be built with scientific improvisation. It takes a full-round action to make an object. The object, when put into use, lasts for a number of rounds equal to the Mad Scientist's class level, or until the end of the current encounter, before it breaks down. It cannot be repaired.

Class Level	Weird Science Invention Level				
	1	2	3	4	5
1st	2				
2nd	3	2			
3rd	3	2			
4th	4	3			
5th	4	3	2		
6th	4	4	3		
7th	5	4	3	2	
8th	5	4	4	3	
9th	5	5	4	3	2
10th	5	5	4	4	3

Bonus Feat: At 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th level, the Mad Scientist may take a Bonus Feat. The feat must be taken from the following list.

Alertness, Cautious, Combat Expertise, Educated, Gearhead, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Renown, Studious, Windfall.

Inspiration: At 4th level, the Mad Scientist gains the Inspiration ability. Once per day per total class level, the Mad Scientist may benefit from a flash of inspiration and ingenuity, gaining a +4 bonus to any skill check. This can also be used when taking 10 or taking 20 with a skill.

Build Robot: Mad Scientists and Robots go together like Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. At 6th level, the Mad Scientist gains the ability to build robots. These robots serve as the Mad Scientist's eyes, ears and hands out to a predetermined distance away from the character when the Mad Scientist wants to use one of the following skills: Demolitions, Disable Device, Listen, Repair, or Spot. A robot can also be given a Base Attack Bonus, which would be handled as if it is a skill (programmed into the robot). The Robot can also be fitted to use any of the Weird Science devices invented by the Mad Scientist.

The Mad Scientist must have at least 1 rank in the skill that he wants to program into the robot, and must also possess the open slots neccessary for any Weird Science devices mounted. The Mad Scientist can control a number of robots equal to his Craft (mechanical) skill rank.

Follow these steps to build a robot.

Wealth Check: The purchase DC for the components required to construct a robot is based on the robot's size:

Size	DC
Diminutive	18
Tiny	15
Small	18
Medium-size	22
Large	26
Huge	32
Gargantuan	40
Colossal	50

Make the Wealth check to purchase and gather the necessary components prior to starting construction. The high price of robot construction is often what leads to Mad Scientists committing crimes to pay for their research.

Construct Frame: The robot's body determines its size shape, locomotion and hit points. The DC of the Craft (mechanical) check is set by the robot's size and modified by the form of locomotion selected:

Size	Hit Points	Craft DC
Diminutive	1d8	15
Tiny	1d10	12
Small	2d10	15
Medium-size	3d10	20
Large	4d10	25
Huge	5d10	30
Gargantuan	6d10	35
Colossal	7d10	40

Components	DC Modifier
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Form/locomotion

Bipedal	+4
Quadruped	+3
Tracks	+2
Wheels	+1
Flight	+4

Components	DC Modifier
-------------------	--------------------

Components

Arms*	+3 per set
Audio/visual sensor**	+2
A armor	+ Def bonus

Remote Range

Remote Control link,	
100ft range	+1
200ft range	+3
300ft range	+5
500ft range	+7
1 mile range	+9
Independent Control	+12
(robot follows orders, unlimited range)	



* Necessary for a robot to use any skill except Listen or Spot

** Necessary for a robot to use Listen or Spot

Select a frame size and form, add arms and sensors as necessary, and choose a type of remote range. Add all of the modifiers to determine the check's DC. Make the craft (mechanical) check to construct the robot's frame.

It takes a Mad Scientist 12 hours to construct a basic robot, +3 hours per size class. For every additional hour spent beyond that, reduce the DC by 1, up to a maximum of 1/3 of the unmodified DC.

Construct the Electronics: The next step is to build the internal electronics for the robot and install them into the frame. The DC is based on the number of components that need to be wired together. The base DC to wire a robot is 15, +1 for each component, +2 for a remote control link, +4 for Independent control, and +4 for each Weird Science Device.

It takes a Mad Scientist a base of 6 hours to wire a robot, +2 hours per size class.

Program the Robot: The Mad Scientist programs the robot as the final step. Decide how many ranks of the appropriate skills to program into the robot, up to the number of ranks the Mad Scientist has in



becomes so accomplished in the use of these skills that he can use them reliably even under adverse conditions.

Brilliant But Insane: The Mad Scientist is, to use the vernacular of the time, nutty as a fruitcake. This insanity,

the skill. Make a check for Craft (electronics) at a DC of 10 + the number of ranks the Mad Scientist wants to program into the robot.

It takes a Mad Scientist 1 hour to program a robot.

Example: Doctor Schreck decides to build a robot servant to terrorize the populace. Never one to think small, he decides to create a Gargantuan robot. This gives him a purchase DC of 40. He decides to make it Bipedal, with 2 arms, Audio/visual sensor, Armor with +8 Def bonus, and Independent Control. This will require a Craft (mechanical) check at DC 64! It will take him 33 hours. He decides to take an additional 40 hours to build the Robot, reducing the Craft (mechanical) check DC to 24. He rolls 6 d10 for the robot's hit points, getting 48.

He then wires the robot. The DC for wiring the robot is 15 + 1 (arms) +1 (audio/visual sensor) +1 (armor) +4 (Independent) and +4 for the electro-cannon that he's planning on fitting to this monstrosity. The total wiring DC is 26, and it will take him 20 hours.

Lastly, Doctor Schreck programs the robot. He gives it Demolitions 5, Spot 5 and Listen 5, and a BAB of +6. Programming the robot requires a Craft (electronics) check at DC 21.

With that, Doctor Schreck's newest creation is ready to stomp into action!

Skill Mastery: At 8th level, the Mad Scientist selects a number of skills from his class list equal to 3 + his Intelligence modifier. When making a skill check using one of these skills, the Mad Scientist may take 10 even if stress and distractions would normally prevent him from doing so. He

paradoxically, also allows them to make brilliant intuitive leaps when inventing that are beyond the capabilities of sane men.

When designing Weird Science devices, the Mad Scientist can increase the effective "caster level" of the FX ability by spending an additional slot.

Spending an additional slot of the same level will increase the effective "caster level" of the device by +3. Spending a slot of one level lower will increase the "caster level" by +2. Slots of two levels lower will raise the level by +1. Anything less has no further effect.

Multiple slots can be spent in this fashion, however--there is no maximum.

Example: Doctor Schreck decides to "soup up" his Terror Wave Subjector. If you recall, it used a 4th level Mage spell (*Fear*) and a 5th level Acolyte spell (*Greater Command*). He decides to use his remaining 5th level slot to boost *Greater Command*, as well as 1 of his remaining 4th level slots. He spends his last 4th level slot on *Fear*, and then decides to split all 4 3rd level slots between both effects.

This raises the effective caster level of *Greater Command* to (9 +3 +2 +2)16, and the effective caster level of *Fear* to (9 +3 +2 +2) 16 as well.

The Terror Wave Subjector, when activated, now subjects all living creatures within a 65 foot cone to fear, and will command up to 16 of them for 16 rounds.

ADVANCED CLASS:

MAN OF MYSTERY

Vincenzo DiNapoli, better known as “Vinnie the Hook” stood back and watched as his boys went to work on the poor schlub who had decided to testify against the Boss in his upcoming trial. Rocko and Tony were good boys, eager to please and skilled at their work. Their work was hurting people.

They were standing at the back of a blind alley, hidden from the street, where they could beat the Grocery Store owner without interruption. Vincenzo watched with little interest--he was there to make sure the message was delivered, nothing more. Suddenly, he felt the hairs on the back of his neck stand up.

“Let the Grocer go, Vinnie.” A voice drifted out of the fog that obscured the other end of the darkened alleyway. Vinnie’s heart nearly stopped. He knew that voice.

Rocko and Tony let the Grocer drop to the ground as they drew their guns,

searching for the source of the voice. Vinnie tried to warn them--to tell them to drop their guns, but his voice caught in his throat as a figure emerged from the fog. A dark green trenchcoat whirled around the figure like a vampire’s cape, and cold grey eyes glittered from beneath the brim of a matching fedora and a domino mask.

“Good,” the voice continued, “I was hoping that you’d resist.”

Twin chromed 45’s leapt suddenly into view and began to bark a death-chant in the confines of the alley. The Green Falcon had come to work.

The Man of Mystery is an archetype of the pulp genre. Examples include The Shadow, The Spider, The Phantom, Captain Satan, and a legion of similar ominously-named imitators.

The Man of Mystery is similar in most respects to an Investigator--however the Man of Mystery comes with added doses of strangeness, violence and fear.

Strangeness comes in the subject matter--the mystery men of the pulps didn’t solve run-of-the-mill crimes, or even puzzling murder mysteries.



They were faced with hidden criminal empires run by hooded madmen, zombies created by evil scientists, occult ritual murders, and more. Not the beat of the average Private Eye.

Men of Mystery were often more violent than their gumshoe cousins--operating as masked vigilantes outside of the law allowed for higher criminal body-counts, which the readers of the pulp magazines relished.

Lastly, the Man of Mystery was cloaked in fear. In every case, the character's main form of attack involved striking fear into the hearts of criminals before bringing them to justice. The Man of Mystery was not content to stop or even kill criminals--they would first make sure that the criminals knew the same kind of fear that they had inflicted upon their own victims. It was fear as karmic justice.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Man of Mystery, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +3

Skills: Intimidate 6 ranks, Investigate 6 ranks, Sense Motive 6 ranks

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Man of Mystery gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Man of Mystery gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Man of Mystery's class skills are as follows: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (current events, streetwise) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int Modifier

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+1	+1	Improved Investigation, Contact, Man Without Fear	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+2	+2	Weapons Focus Esoteric Knowledge	+1	+1
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+2	Frightful Presence, Contact	+1	+1
4th	+3	+1	+2	+2	Action Boost, Bonus Feat	+2	+2
5th	+3	+1	+3	+3	Discern Lie, Contact	+2	+2
6th	+4	+2	+3	+3	Uncanny Investigation	+3	+2
7th	+5	+2	+4	+4	Bonus Feat, Contact	+3	+3
8th	+6	+2	+4	+4	Like A Shadow	+4	+3
9th	+6	+3	+4	+4	Terrifying Presence, Contact	+4	+3
10th	+7	+3	+5	+5	Inner Sanctum	+5	+4

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Man of Mystery advanced class.

Improved Investigation: The Man of Mystery is trained to notice things that mundane investigators might miss. A Man of Mystery that comes within 10 feet of a clue to a crime or other mystery is allowed to make an Investigation skill check, even if the character is not actively searching for clues at the time.

Contact: A Man of Mystery gathers many associates and informants throughout his career. Each time the Man of Mystery gains a contact, the GM should develop a supporting character to represent that contact. The player can suggest the type of contact his or her character wants to gain, but the contact must be an ordinary character, not a heroic character.

Contacts include informants, black marketeers, police employees, reporters, street people, taxi drivers and others who can provide limited aid and information pertaining to the Man of Mystery's cases.

A contact will not accompany a Man of Mystery on missions or risk his or her life. A contact can, however, provide information or render a service (make a specific skill check on your behalf).

The contact can be called upon once per adventure, and will automatically agree to assist the Man of Mystery.

The Man of Mystery gains contacts at 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level. If the GM agrees, two contact slots can be traded in for an Ally, who is a heroic character who can be run as a secondary character to the Man of Mystery.

Man Without Fear: A Man of Mystery gains a +4 morale bonus on Will saves to resist fear effects and on level checks to oppose Intimidate checks



Weapons Focus: At 2nd level, the Man of Mystery gains the Weapon Focus class feature, providing the benefit of the feat with the same name. The Man of Mystery must choose a specific personal weapon, and adds +1 to all attack rolls made with that weapon.

Esoteric Knowledge: Since a Man of Mystery's cases often involve the strange and unusual, the

characters often possess a vast amount of esoteric knowledge.

After reaching 2nd level, a Man of Mystery can make a special esoteric knowledge check with a bonus equal to his level + his Intelligence modifier to see if he knows anything relevant about clues, people, places or things. The check will not solve a crime, but might provide leads for the Man of Mystery to follow. The DC of the check is determined by the GM, based on the relative obscurity of the information (usually within a range of 15 to 30).

Frightful Presence: At 3rd level, a Man of Mystery gains the Frightful Presence class feature, providing the benefit of the feat with the same name.

Action Boost: This ability, gained at 4th level, allows a Man of Mystery to spend 2 action points in a round. You can spend 1 action point, see the result of the roll, and then decide to spend a second action point, as long as you do so before the GM reveals the result of your action.

Bonus Feat: At 4th and 7th level, the Man of Mystery gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Man of Mystery must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Advanced Two-Weapon Fighting, Combat Reflexes, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Educated, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Knockout Punch, Streetfighting, Surface Vehicle Operation, Two Weapon Fighting, Vehicle Dodge.

Discern Lie: At 5th level, a Man of Mystery develops the ability to read whether another character is telling the truth. When a successful Sense Motive check (opposed by the higher of either the subject's Bluff check result or DC 10) is made, the Man of Mystery can tell whether the subject is deliberately and knowingly speaking a lie. This ability does not reveal the truth, uncover unintentional inaccuracies, or reveal omissions of information.

Uncanny Investigation: At 6th level, a Man of Mystery adds a +4 bonus to any Investigate skill check. (Including rolls to spot clues made under Improved Investigation)

Like A Shadow: At 8th level, a Man of Mystery leaves almost no trace behind when using the following skills:

Balance, Climb, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Hide, Move Silently, and Sleight of Hand. Characters trying to discover the Man of Mystery through use of Investigate, Listen, Search, or Spot take a -4 penalty.

Terrifying Presence: At 9th level, opponents of the Man of Mystery making Will Save checks against his Frightful Presence suffer an additional +5 to the DC.

Inner Sanctum: At 10th level, a Man of Mystery gains an Inner Sanctum--a secret headquarters that is secure (-8 to opponent's attempts to find it via Investigate or other skills, as well as -8 to attempts to break in via Disable Device, etc.), provides a crime lab facility that offers an additional +4 to Investigate checks, a research facility that offers a +4 bonus on Esoteric Knowledge checks, and allows for secure communication with all Contacts. The Inner Sanctum may also possess other features, at the discretion of the GM.



ADVANCED CLASS:

MASTERMIND

I felt myself roughly led, half-carried, from the dungeon where my unknown captors had placed me. The air within the black cloth hood that they had forced over my head was close, and I could see nothing. The only sound that I could hear, muffled by the layer of cloth, were the echoing footfalls of my guards as they dragged me towards some unknown destination.

Suddenly, I was forced to my knees on what felt like a stone floor.

"I trust you have not been mistreated?" A voice echoed in the chamber. It was a voice of authority--the silken tones of power. "I do not wish for my guests to suffer."

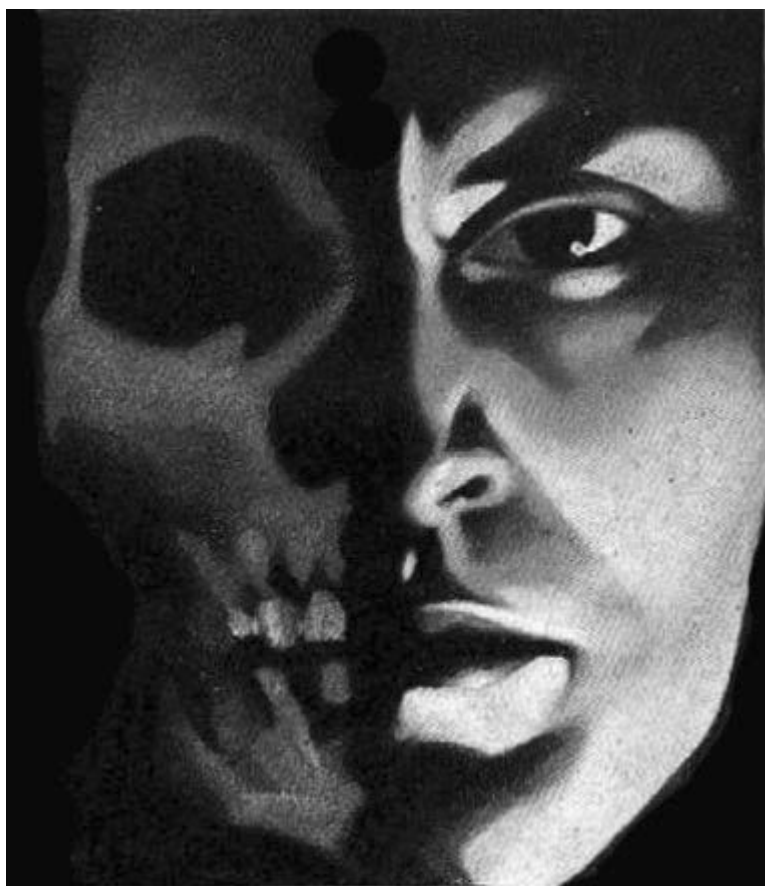
"Guests?" I scoffed, my voice sounding uncomfortably feeble to my own ears. "Do you always throw your 'guests' into cells and deny them food and water?"

"On occasion," came the measured reply.

The hood was jerked from my head, flooding my eyes with sudden light. As I blinked to clear my vision, the figure seated before me came into focus.

Green eyes glittered with a wicked intelligence, and a cruel, sensual mouth curled into a horrible, knowing smile. I felt the cold chill of hopelessness engulf me.

I was in the clutches of none other than the fiend known only as The Emperor of Crime.



The Mastermind is an archetype of the pulp genre. Examples include the insidious Dr. Fu Manchu, John Sunlight, Shiwan Khan and Doctor Death.

Every hero needs a good villain. King Arthur had Mordred... Sherlock Holmes had Doctor Moriarty. This Advanced Class fills that need.

A Mastermind stands head and shoulders above the average villain--they are the pinnacle of the criminal world. Often

possessing abilities equal to or greater than the heroes they oppose, the Mastermind is often only defeated through their own hubris...and often escape to plague the heroes again and again.

In the heyday of the pulps, villains were so popular, that some became the "heroes" of their own magazines!

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Mastermind, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Attribute: Intelligence 15+

Skills: 6 ranks in any Knowledge skill, 6 ranks in Intimidate.

Feats: Iron Will

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Mastermind gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Mastermind gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Mastermind's class skills are as follows: Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (underworld) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Profession (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int Modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Mesmerist advanced class.

Minions: The Mastermind has loyal subordinates who follow his orders. The number of minions available to the Mastermind, and the NPC level of those minions, can be found on the table on the following page.

Minions are gained based on the sum of the Mastermind's total character level and his Charisma modifier, modified by the factors listed below:

Reknown feat: +3

Infamy feat: +3

Leadership Feat: +1

Provides room, board, equipment +2

Wealthy (16+ on Wealth): +1

Rich (21+ on Wealth): +2

Regardless of the Mastermind's total level and Cha mod, they cannot have any minions with a level greater than the Mastermind's level, minus one (so, for example, a 4th level character could not have any 4th level minions, even if their modified score was 17 or better). Minions can be of any class.

Minions that are lost are replaced with new ones by the next adventure.

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	Minions, Ill-gotten gains	+2	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	Crime Network	+3	+2
3rd	+1	+1	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+4	+2
4th	+2	+1	+4	+4	Nefarious Influence	+4	+3
5th	+2	+1	+4	+4	Lair	+5	+3
6th	+3	+2	+5	+5	Bonus feat	+5	+3
7th	+3	+2	+5	+5	Devil's Own Luck	+6	+4
8th	+4	+2	+6	+6	Halls of Power	+6	+4
9th	+4	+3	+6	+6	Bonus Feat	+6	+4
10th	+5	+3	+7	+7	Nine Lives	+7	+5

Mastermind's		Number of Minions, per Minion level					
Total Level + Cha mod		1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
9 or less	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10		5	-	-	-	-	-
11		6	-	-	-	-	-
12		8	-	-	-	-	-
13		10	1	-	-	-	-
14		15	1	-	-	-	-
15		20	2	1	-	-	-
16		25	2	1	-	-	-
17		30	3	1	1	-	-
18		35	3	1	1	-	-
19		40	4	2	1	1	-
20		50	5	3	2	1	-
21		60	6	3	2	1	1
22		75	7	4	2	2	1
23		90	9	5	3	2	1
24		110	11	6	3	2	1
25		135	13	7	4	2	2
26		150	15	8	4	3	2
27		165	17	9	5	3	3
28		180	19	10	5	4	3
29		200	20	11	6	4	4
30		220	22	12	6	5	4
+1		+20	+2	+1	+1/2	+1/2	+1/2

Ill-gotten gains: A Mastermind's criminal enterprises make them very wealthy over time. A Mastermind adds +2 to their Wealth score per level gained in the class.

Crime Network: Starting at 2nd level, the Mastermind has access to a network of criminals that can provide him with information or goods.

The network can provide the Mastermind with nearly any commonly available item--the DC of the Wealth check for the item is halved (for example, the check to get a car with a normal purchase DC of 34 would be made at DC 17).

The GM is the arbiter of whether or not an item could be considered commonly available--for example, a Ford sedan most likely would be, whereas a Zeppelin would not.

In addition, the network provides the Mastermind with information, bestowing a +4 bonus to all Gather Information and Research checks.

Bonus feat: At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Mastermind gets a bonus feat, which must be taken from the following list. New feats appear in italics, and are described at the end of this document.

Brawl, Combat Expertise, Combat Martial Arts, Combat Reflexes, Confident, Deceptive, Dodge, Frightful Presence, Improved Brawl, Improved Combat Martial Arts, *Improved Critical*, Improved Initiative, *Infamy*, *Leadership*, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus.

Nefarious Influence: At 4th level, the Mastermind is capable of extending his power to influence others. He gains a +4 bonus to all Bluff, Diplomacy and Intimidate checks. In addition, opponents with fewer Hit Dice than the Mastermind's total class level suffer a -2 morale penalty to attack rolls against the Mastermind and a -2 morale penalty to all Will saves during the encounter.



Lair: At 5th level, the Mastermind gains the use of a Lair. The Lair is a secure location that acts as the Mastermind's headquarters during that adventure.

The location covers 1500 square feet per Mastermind level (so at 5th level, the lair is 7500 sq. ft.), arranged as the Mastermind desires. The Lair features a number of secret doors or escape passages equal to the Mastermind's level. The DC to find those secret doors and passages is 25.

The Lair also may feature cells to hold prisoners, torture chambers and/or death traps, as the Mastermind wishes (with the GM's approval).

The Mastermind gains a different lair each adventure.

Devil's Own Luck: It always seems as though things tend to go the Mastermind's way. At 7th level, the Mastermind may re-roll any failed roll, adding a +2 bonus, up to 3 times per adventure.

Halls of Power: At 8th level, the Mastermind's influence grows and expands to the highest levels of power. The Mastermind cannot be found guilty of any crime in a court of law. If brought to trial, the case will be thrown out on a technicality, or an escape will be arranged by contacts within the authorities themselves.

In addition, contacts will inform the Mastermind of any actions being taken against the Mastermind by PCs who share that information with the authorities.

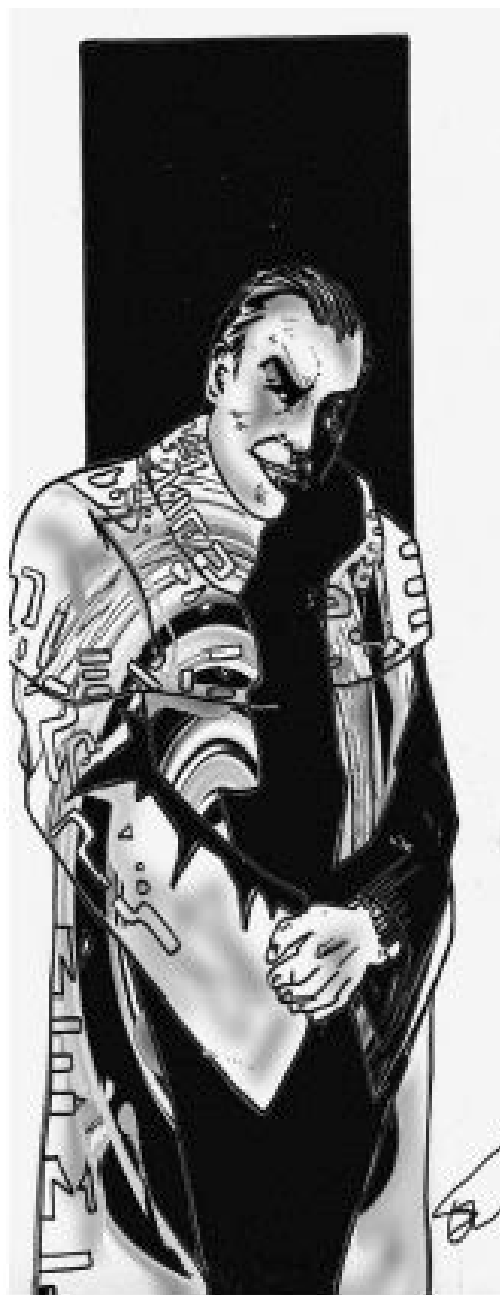
Nine Lives: At 10th level, the Mastermind gains the ability to return from what was thought to be certain death.

If the Mastermind dies, make a Will save at DC 20. If the save is made, the Mastermind survives somehow (thrown clear of the explosion, washing up on a desert island after been thrown overboard, coming to in a hospital when they've already been declared dead, etc.) and one "life" is removed from their total.

The Mastermind literally has 9 of these lives to spend. If the save is failed, the Mastermind loses a life and must continue to roll until the save is made (losing a life for each failure). If the Mastermind has no lives remaining, the death is permanent.

Gamemasters will find that they need to use the "Obscure death" method when using this ability--keeping the final fate of the Mastermind a mystery.

Whenever possible, the situation should be described in such a way that verification is difficult if not impossible (a Mastermind who is shot can fall out a nearby window, for example).



ADVANCED CLASS:

MEXMERIST

"Look deeply into my eyes..." Morgan the Mystic focused his gaze upon the woman seated in the stark metal chair of the third precinct's interrogation room.

Detective Matt Murphy rolled his eyes and fetched a cigarette out of the pack in his jacket pocket. The dame was guilty, and this was an open-and-shut case. She was found standing over the District Attorney's body, smoking pistol in her well-manicured hand. No motive--there wasn't any indication that a wealthy socialite like Francine Farmer had any interaction

with the DA outside of the occasional society fundraiser. Of course, when you're caught literally red-handed, there's not much need for a motive. But still, the Captain thought it necessary to bring in this carnival side-show.

Murphy took a drag on the cigarette as the stage

magician, a long-time friend of his Captain, muttered to the girl, waving his hands theatrically in front of her face. She hadn't said a word since she'd been brought in. First, Murphy thought she was playing dumb...now, though, he was guessing that it was shock--perhaps the realization of what she had done.



Suddenly, the girl's eyes closed, and she slumped in the chair, unconscious. Morgan the Mystic drew himself up to his full height, and turned to face the stocky detective.

"It's just as I suspected, Detective Murphy," the magician said. "Francine Farmer has already been the subject of an extensive amount of hypnosis. She did kill the District Attorney, but she was used as an unwitting pawn. She no more could control her actions than you could stop

your heart from beating. There's only one man I know of who has that kind of hypnotic power..."

Murphy dropped his cigarette. "You don't mean--"

"Yes," replied Morgan. "The insidious Doctor Tsung-chi Sin, the devil of Chinatown."

The Mesmerist is an archetype of the pulp genre. Examples include the Green Lama, Chandu the magician and Don Diavolo, the Scarlet Wizard.

The Mesmerist is a trained hypnotist and an expert in the use of his own animal magnetism to sway the will of others. A Mesmerist may work as a private counselor or as a stage magician or assist in solving crimes. Some use their abilities to help solve the problems of others. Others seek only to enhance their own wealth and reputation.

The Mesmerist may follow the practices developed by Dr. Franz Anton Mesmer in the 18th Century, some may see it as the science of etheric magnetism, and others may base their abilities on practices from India, classical Greece, or another occult source. Many Mesmerists see their abilities as the result of greater mind influencing a smaller mind. Most firmly believe that a person of loose character cannot become a powerful hypnotist.

Select this advance class if you want your character to be a master of mystic arts with the ability to sway other characters.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Mesmerist, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Attribute: Intelligence 14+

Skills: Knowledge (arcane lore) 5 ranks, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) 2 ranks

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Mesmerist gains 1d6 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Air Ace gains a number of action points equal to 5 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Mesmerist's class skills are as follows.

Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (arcane lore, behavioral sciences, current events, history, popular culture, theology & philosophy) (Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (act, stand-up) (Cha), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int Modifier

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Hypnotic ability, hypnotic trance	+0	+1
2nd	+1	+1	+1	+2	Trick	+1	+2
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat	+1	+2
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Command word	+1	+3
5th	+2	+1	+2	+4	Lengthy Trance, winning smile	+2	+3
6th	+3	+1	+2	+5	Bonus feat	+2	+3
7th	+3	+2	+2	+6	Compulsion	+2	+4
8th	+4	+2	+3	+6	Eschew Focus	+2	+4
9th	+4	+3	+3	+7	Bonus Feat	+3	+4
10th	+5	+3	+4	+7	Past life regression	+3	+5

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Mesmerist advanced class.

Hypnotic Ability: A number of times per day equal to the Mesmerist's class level + Intelligence modifier, a Mesmerist can attempt to place a target (a GM character) in a hypnotic state, using any of the abilities listed below.

Hypnotic Trance: A Mesmerist can place a target in a hypnotic trance. A Mesmerist does this by making a hypnosis check with a bonus equal to his Mesmerist class level + his Intelligence modifier against a DC equal to the target's Wisdom. If the target is resisting the attempt at hypnosis, the target's base Will save modifier is added to the target's Wisdom (Note that the target's Wisdom modifier is not added to the DC). An attempt at hypnosis requires a full-round action, and an object, such as a pocket watch or fob, is required to gain the target's attention in order to place them in a hypnotic state. A Mesmerist and the target must be able to speak the same language. If a Mesmerist has 5 or more ranks in Concentration, he gains a +2 bonus on hypnosis checks. If a Mesmerist has 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (behavioral sciences), he gains a +2 bonus on hypnosis checks.

On subsequent rounds, once the target is in a hypnotic state, the Mesmerist may either question the target or give them a suggestion. A hypnotic trance lasts for a number of minutes per Mesmerist class level. If the Mesmerist spends an action point, the duration is increased to 10 minutes per level.

Questioning: The Mesmerist may ask a number of questions equal to $1d3$ + his Mesmerist class level. Each round, the Mesmerist will learn the answer to one question, to the best of the

target's knowledge. The Mesmerist may spend an action point to increase the number of questions. Any action points spent to increase the duration or extent of this, or any other hypnotic ability, would be in addition to any action points spent on the hypnosis check.

Suggestion: The Mesmerist suggests a course of action (limited to a sentence or two) to influence the target's actions. The suggestion must be worded in such a manner as to make the action sound reasonable. Asking the target to stab himself, throw someone dear to them out of a window, or some other harmful act automatically negates the hypnotic state. However, a suggestion that a vat of acid is actually pure water and that a quick dip would be refreshing is another matter. A common suggestion is that the target go to sleep. Stage magicians often implant the suggestion that the target is another person or an animal, such as a chicken. A target will remain under a hypnotic suggestion for a number of minutes equal to the Mesmerist's class level.

Trick: Beginning at 2d level, the Mesmerist has the ability to temporarily confuse a target (a GM character) through the use of ploy and deception. The target must have an Intelligence score of 3 or



higher to be susceptible to a trick, must be within 30 feet of the Mesmerist, and must be able to hear and understand him.

To play a trick on a target, the Mesmerist must use a full-round action and make an Intelligence check (DC 15), adding his Mesmerist level as a bonus. If the Intelligence check succeeds, the target can try to think quickly and ignore the trick.

The target resists the trick by making a Reflex saving throw (DC 10 + Mesmerist's class level + Mesmerist's Int bonus). If the saving throw fails, the target

becomes dazed (unable to act, but can defend normally) for 1 round.

A trick can only be played on a particular target once per encounter. After the first trick in an encounter, whether the attempt succeeds or not, that target becomes wary and immune to such ploys.

Bonus Feats: At 3d, 6th, and 9th level, the Mesmerist gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list (new feats are listed in *Italics*), and the Mesmerist must meet all the prerequisites of the feat in order to select it.

Alertness, *Assessment*, Attentive, Confident, Deceptive, Educated, Focused, Frightful Presence, Iron Will, Low Profile, Renown, *Trance*, Trustworthy.

Command word: Beginning at 4th level, a Mesmerist is able provide a target with a command

word that will make it easier to put the target into a hypnotic state at any time over the next few days (equal to the Mesmerist's class level). The Mesmerist should strive to provide a command word that the target is unlikely to hear during the normal course of her day. A command word allows a Mesmerist to remotely direct a target by speaking over a telephone or radio. While a command word is in effect, the Mesmerist will still need to make a hypnosis check to activate the target's hypnotic state, but the DC will be halved.

Lengthy trance: At 5th level and above, a

Mesmerist's hypnotic trance lasts for 10 minutes per Mesmerist class level. If the Mesmerist spends an action point the duration is increased to hours per level.

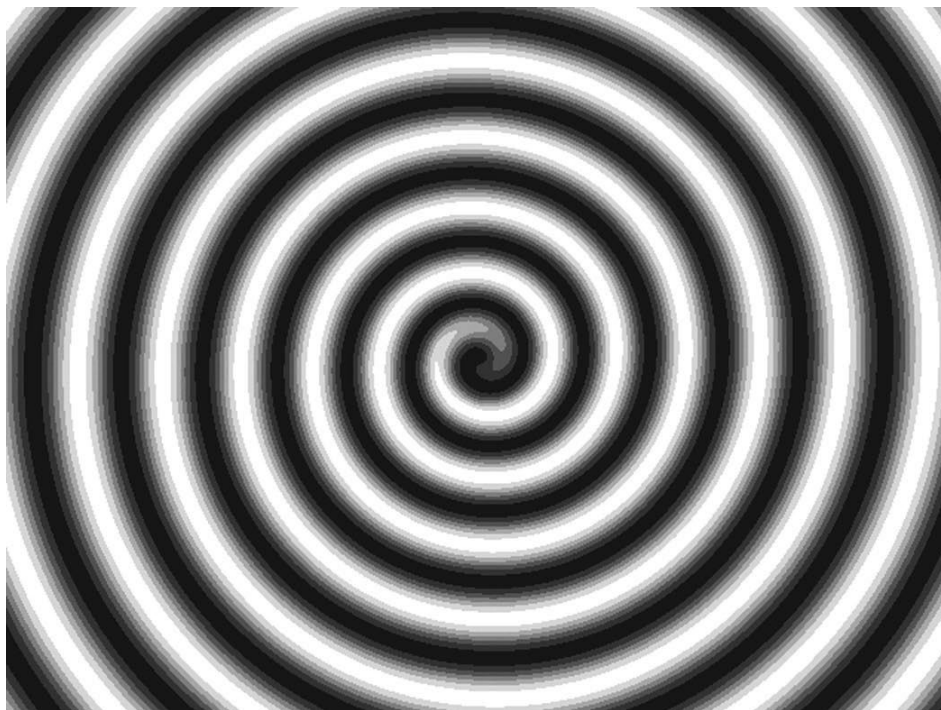
Winning Smile:

Beginning at 5th level, a Mesmerist develops such a force of

personal magnetism that he can convince a single target to regard him as a trusted friend. (If the target is currently being threatened or attacked by the Mesmerist or his allies, this ability will not work.)

The target makes a Will saving throw to avoid being persuaded by the Mesmerist's words and actions. The DC is 10 + Mesmerist's class level + Mesmerist's Charisma modifier.

This ability does not enable the Mesmerist to control the target, but the target perceives the Mesmerist's words and actions in the most favorable way. The Mesmerist can try to give the



target orders and suggestions, but he must win an opposed Charisma check to convince the target to perform any actions he wouldn't normally undertake. The target never obeys suicidal or obviously harmful orders, and any act by the Mesmerist or her allies that threatens the target breaks the mood and clears the target's head. Otherwise, the target will remain won over for one minute per Mesmerist class level.

After the duration ends, the GM determines the reaction and attitude of the target based on what the Mesmerist compelled the target to do.

Compulsion: A Mesmerist of 7th level or higher can direct a target to carry out longer and more elaborate tasks than under a Hypnotic Suggestion. The commands given to a target still need to be simple and unambiguous (such as “go, take the jewels from the safe, and bring them back to me”). The Mesmerist may need to monitor the target and provide further direction to ensure that tasks are carried out as intended. A Hypnotic Compulsion will last for a number of hours equal to the Mesmerist's class level. The duration may be increased to days per level if the Mesmerist spends an action point.

If the target is directed to take an action that goes against his nature, he may attempt a Will saving throw to come out of the hypnotic state (DC equal to $10 + \text{Mesmerist's class level} + \text{Mesmerist's Intelligence modifier}$).

Eschew Focus: A Mesmerist of 8th level or higher no longer requires a focus to place a target in a hypnotic state.

Past Life Regression: A 10th level Mesmerist can impel a target to remember experiences from a past life. While in this hypnotic state, a target can employ $1d3+1$ skills and one feat used in the past life. The Mesmerist must describe the general historic period that he is attempting to reach (e.g. ancient Rome), but the GM has the final say as to what skills and what feat may come into play through use of this ability. This ability lasts for a number of hours equal to $1d3 + \text{the Mesmerist's class level}$.



ADVANCED CLASS:

MOBSTER

It was almost nine o'clock when I entered the club, hoping to hear my Betty sing. I had to hand it to Manny; only a few years ago, this place was an unmarked speakeasy in the basement of a hotel. Now, with Prohibition over and the G-Men off his back, Manny really turned this place into a classy joint.

Betty wasn't on stage yet, so I walked over to the bar. Eric eyed me as I approached as he wiped a glass. Without a word, he turned around and grabbed a bottle of scotch off the shelf. I sat on a stool in the corner just as Eric poured a shot in front of me.

"How's business, Joey?" Eric asked half-interested. Eric used to work for me in the good old days, running booze from across the border. Those days were gone now, and I had to let Eric go. Fortunately, Manny needed some extra help expanding his operation.

"Same old story," I lied not-too-convincingly. With alcohol legal again, all I had to fall back on was my numbers racket. I was never much of a businessman; I used what worked. Now that things didn't work

that way anymore, I was lost. Truth be told, I was surviving more on what I'd socked away in the past than in new business. It was almost enough to make me go legitimate. I sighed and emptied my glass.

"Manny wanted to see me?"

Eric leaned over the bar a bit, not that anyone hear would care. Eric was always careful with his words. I appreciated that. "Manny's shipments are becoming more expensive lately. He'd like to know why and you're the best at extracting that kind of information." He poured me another drink.

I gave Eric a small grin. What he was really saying was that someone was disrupting Manny's supply line and trying to extort higher prices from him. Manny apparently had a possible lead,

tied up in the back, and he wanted me to extract the information from him. After all, I was still one of the best leg breakers in the city. I downed my second drink.

"Manny's in the back?" I asked. Eric nodded and took back the glass, wiping it down for the next



customer. I sighed as I slid off the stool. I once commanded ten men, and now I was going back to my roots. Still, a job is a job and Manny was an old friend. Before I left the club tonight, I would make sure the canary would sing.

It is almost impossible to think about the Pulp Era without thinking about the Mobster. Whether they are used as little more than muscle or gangland intrigue, the Mobster is a critical element in many Pulp. They are the quintessential “bad guys.”

While this Advanced Class assumes a villainous character, it is possible for a player character (PC) to have levels in this Advanced Class, especially if the Game Master (GM) is running a Mobster-themed campaign. The PC may also be a former mobster who’s left his old life behind, providing a colorful background (and old unsettled scores) for his new profession.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Mobster, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +2

Skills: Intimidate (6 ranks), Knowledge (streetwise) (6 ranks)

Feat: Advanced Firearms Proficiency

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Mobster gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character’s Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Mobster gains a number of action points equal to 5 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time she achieves a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Mobster’s class skills are as follows: Bluff (Cha), Demolitions (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Drive (Dex), Forgery (Int), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (business, streetwise) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language, Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language, Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES:

Affiliation: In order to become a Mobster, it is necessary to join a Mob. There are generally two types of Mob: Independent and Family. An Independent Mob is a small group of criminals who work together as long as it is convenient. Mobsters are generally free to come and go in Independent Mobs, as long as they don’t rat out their former

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Affiliation, No Stool Pigeon	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+0	Drive-By, Leg Breaking	+1	+1
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+1	Bonus Feat	+2	+1
4th	+3	+2	+2	+1	Sweep, Seedy Favor	+2	+2
5th	+3	+3	+3	+1	Safe House	+3	+2
6th	+4	+3	+3	+2	Bonus Feat, Arm Twisting	+3	+2
7th	+5	+4	+4	+2	Improved Sweep	+4	+3
8th	+6	+4	+4	+2	Discern Lie	+4	+3
9th	+6	+4	+4	+3	Bonus Feat	+5	+3
10th	+7	+5	+5	+3	Made Man	+5	+4

associates. Family Mobs, such as the Mafia, are larger organizations with strong codes of conduct and obligations. There is less freedom for a Mobster in a Family Mob.

Mobsters gain the benefit of their Affiliation's reputation (usually +5 to +10) when dealing with others who would respect that Affiliation's reputation. If the Mobster leaves a Mob, he will lose this benefit as well as any Contacts gained by this Advanced Class. The Mobster only regains these Class Abilities when he joins a new Mob.

No Stool Pigeon: One of the initial "tests" of a Mobster is his ability to keep quiet when pressured or arrested by the authorities. The Mobster gains a +4 circumstance bonus to Will saves when being interrogated about his Affiliation. This stacks with the Iron Will feat.

Drive-By Shooting: The Mobster learns how to position himself on a vehicle's running board while aiming and shooting a Tommy gun. The Mobster gains the Drive-By Attack feat.

Leg Breaking: The Mobster can acquire information from reluctant sources through actual physical harm. While this method lacks finesse and sophistication, it is brutally effective. The Mobster adds a +2 circumstance bonus to his Intimidation check when using non-lethal force on a subject, or a +4 circumstance bonus if he uses lethal force.

In order to use this "technique," the victim must first be immobilized (e.g. tied to a chair, arms held by accomplices). The Mobster then attacks him (automatically hitting in both cases), dealing normal damage. The Mobster may not pull punches or cause superficial wounds. Once the damage is dealt, the Mobster may apply the Leg Breaking bonus to his Intimidation check.

If the attempt fails, the Mobster may continue trying until the victim relents or is beaten into unconsciousness or death. Once the Mobster has started Leg Breaking, he may not substitute a normal Intimidation roll (he may, however, alternate between using lethal and nonlethal force, so long as

he applies the appropriate bonus). The Leg Breaking bonus is not cumulative; the Mobster only gains the benefit or +2 or +4.

Bonus Feat: At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Mobster gets a bonus feat, which must be taken from the following list: Agile Riposte, Burst Fire, Combat Reflexes, Dead Aim, Elusive Target, Improved Initiative, Low Profile, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Renown, Shot on the Run, Strafe.

Sweep: A Mobster knows how to size up an area and get the lay of the land in a single sweep of his or her eyes. This sweep provides a +4 circumstance bonus on Spot checks and covers an area out to 30 feet away from the Mobster. The Mobster can use this bonus at the start of an encounter.

Anything not concealed can be spotted in a sweep with a successful check (DC 10). The DC for concealed or less obvious threats is equal to their Hide check result.

Seedy Favor: This class feature is similar to the Charismatic Hero's Favor talent. Starting at 4th level, the Mobster has the ability to request minor aid from anyone connected or associated with his mob. By making a Seedy Favor check, the Mobster can gain important information, keep people quiet, hide stolen loot, acquire the loan of equipment, or receive other minor assistance in the course of the adventure.

The Mobster spends 1 action point to activate this feature. To make a Seedy Favor check, roll a d20 and add the character's Seedy Favor bonus, equal to the character's Mobster level (any Charismatic Hero levels will stack with this if the character has the Favor talent). The GM sets the DC based on the scope of the Seedy Favor. The DC ranges from 10 for a simple favor (such as keeping one's mouth shut or pointing out someone in a room) to as high as 30 for formidable or dangerous favors (violently covering the Mobster's escape, hiding drugs). A Mobster can't take 10 or 20 on this check, nor can the hero retry the check for the same (or virtually the same) favor.

Seedy favors should help advance the plot of an adventure. A favor that would enable a character to avoid an adventure altogether should always be unavailable to the character, regardless of the result of a seedy favor check.

The GM should carefully monitor a Mobster's use of seedy favors to ensure that this ability isn't abused. The success or failure of a mission shouldn't hinge on the use of a favor, and getting a favor shouldn't replace good roleplaying or the use of other skills. The GM may disallow any favor deemed to be disruptive to the game.

Safe House: The Mobster has a few secret locations around the city where he can lay low for a while if the heat is turned up on him. These "safe houses" often have money, guns, and ammunition stored in them. Anyone trying to find the Mobster is assessed a +5 penalty to appropriate skill DCs.

Should the Mobster be compromised in his safe house, he gains a +2 circumstance bonus on any skill checks that would directly or indirectly assist in his escape. He also gains a +2 defensive bonus while inside the Safe House.

Arm-Twisting: Thanks to his leg breaking experience and reputation, the Mobster can now acquire a +2 circumstance bonus to his Intimidation checks with the threat of physical force. The victim must still be immobilized, but the Mobster no longer has to actually harm the victim in order to gain the +2 bonus. The Mobster may combine Arm-Twisting with a non-lethal attack to gain a +4 bonus (no further bonus is gained if the Mobster uses lethal force).

Unlike Leg Breaking, the Mobster may not use regular Arm-Twisting consecutively, since his threat must be carried out. If the victim resists the first Intimidate check, then the Mobster must either resort to Leg Breaking or add a nonlethal attack to his Arm Twisting. The Mobster may return to regular Arm-Twisting in the third round.

Improved Sweep: At 8th level, a Mobster's ability to get the lay of the land improves. Now the Mobster not only spots potential perils with a successful check, he or she can determine the relative strength

of these dangers. A successful check relates the danger's strength compared to the Mobster: stronger (higher level or Hit Dice), on par (same level or HD), or weaker (lower level or HD).

Discern Lie: At 7th level, a Mobster develops the ability to gauge whether another character is telling the truth by reading facial expressions and interpreting body language. The Mobster must be able to see and hear (but not necessarily understand) the individual under scrutiny.

With a successful Sense Motive check opposed by the subject's Bluff check result or against DC 10 (whichever is greater), the Mobster can tell whether the subject is deliberately and knowingly speaking a lie. This ability doesn't reveal the truth, uncover unintentional inaccuracies, or necessarily reveal omissions in information.

Made Man: The Mobster has become well respected in the Underworld. He enjoys a certain degree of immunity from assassination by rival mobs. If the Mobster has an Affiliation with a Family mob, this class feature involves a formal ceremony. If the Mobster has an Affiliation with an Independent Mob, he simply garners a greater degree of respect from other Mobs.

A Made Man will only be the target of an assassination if certain conditions are met. If the Mobster belongs to a Family Mob, his own Family Boss must approve of the assassination. If the Mobster is an Independent, he must offend a Family Boss in such a way that offends other Family Bosses.

Absent a sanction, a Made Man may use this class feature to prevent a Hit Man or other Underworld figure from injuring or killing him. This class feature acts as a +10 bonus to Diplomacy checks in such cases.

ADVANCED CLASS:

NOBLE SAVAGE

Kamba crept silently along the upper branches of the tree, watching the column of men hack their way through the jungle beneath him, machetes clearing a wide swath ahead of them.

The night-birds had cried their alarm at this intrusion, and for once, their agitation was justified. Kamba had discovered the bodies of the Tumutu villagers that these men had tortured to death. The intruders had pried from them the secret of the location of the Lost City.

Kamba did not know the tribe of these intruders, but as they marched through the jungle, each marked by the emblem of a crooked cross, his instinct told him that the secrets of the Lost City could not be allowed to fall into the hands of such men.

He grabbed his spear in both hands, and leapt from the branch, bursting through the leafy canopy to land in a fighting crouch directly in front of the column of men. His green eyes flashed dangerously, and a low, animal growl rumbled from deep within him.

The men at the head of the column dropped their machetes, and the hired pack-bearers fled, all shouting "Kamba! Kamba!"

Sturmbannfuhrer Eberhardt, the man in command of the expedition, heard the shouts of the porters, and saw the golden-maned figure advancing on his men, spear in hand.

"Gott im Himmel! It is Kamba--Lion-man of the Congo!"

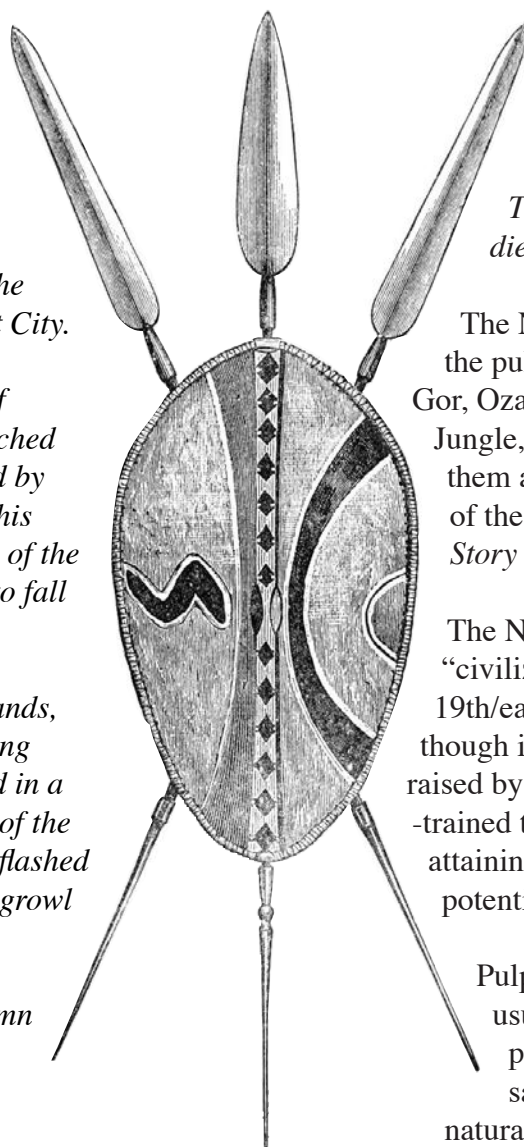
The order to fire never escaped Eberhardt's lips. He found himself staring, dumbfounded, at a 3-foot length of spear protruding from his chest.

Kamba drew his knife and stalked forward with dire purpose. The secret of the Lost City would die with these men.

The Noble Savage is an archetype of the pulp genre. Examples include Ki-Gor, Ozar the Aztec, Sheena: Queen of the Jungle, and, of course, the forefather of them all, Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan of the Apes, who first appeared in *All-Story Magazine* in October 1912.

The Noble Savage is a person from a "civilized culture" (as defined by late-19th/early 20th century standards) who, though incredible circumstances, was raised by creatures of the animal kingdom--trained to survive in the wilderness and attaining the pinnacle of human physical potential.

Pulp tales featuring the Noble Savage usually involved the character presented as the King of their savage domain, protecting the natural world from the machinations of some villain or another, although on occasion, the Noble Savage's adventures would taken them to the civilized world, where they would inevitably demonstrate their innate superiority in any environment.



REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Noble Savage, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Attribute: Dexterity 15+, Strength 15+

Skills: Handle Animal (3 ranks), Survival (6 ranks)

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Noble Savage gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Noble Savage gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Noble Savage's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are as follows: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Noble Savage advanced class.

Totem: The Noble Savage was raised by creatures of the wild, and develops the skills used every day by his animal patrons. Through the awakening of an untapped potential within, the Noble Savage gains special talents and abilities considered foreign to other members of his native species.

At 1st level, the Noble Savage selects a totem animal from the list on the next page. Once the totem animal is chosen, it may not be changed unless otherwise approved by the GM. This totem represents the species who raised the Noble Savage, and whose abilities he or she will emulate. The Noble Savage gains 1 new ability of the player's choice from the list of abilities provided for that totem. Another ability (from the same list) may be chosen at 4th level, 7th level, 9th level and 10th level. The Noble Savage may not select any ability multiple times, unless otherwise specified in the description.

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+2	+2	+0	Totem, Animal Companion, Feral	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+3	+3	+0	Master of the Wild	+2	+1
3rd	+2	+3	+3	+1	Uncanny Dodge, Bonus Feat	+2	+1
4th	+3	+4	+4	+1	Totem	+3	+2
5th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Uncanny Dodge, Bonus Feat Master of the Wild (2/day)	+3	+2
6th	+5	+5	+5	+2	Feral Senses, Bonus Feat	+4	+3
7th	+5	+5	+5	+2	Totem, Uncanny Dodge	+4	+3
8th	+6	+6	+6	+2	Master of the Wild (3/day), Feral Voice	+5	+3
9th	+6	+6	+6	+3	Totem, Uncanny Dodge	+5	+4
10th	+7	+7	+7	+3	Totem, Master of the Wild (4/day)	+6	+4

TOTEM ANIMALS

LION:

Toughness	+3 hit points*
Ambush	+4 competence bonus to all Hide Checks
Stalking	+4 competence bonus to all Move Silently Checks
King of the Jungle	+4 competence bonus to all Intimidate Checks
Pounce	Can make a full attack after a move action if attacking in the 1st round.

* May be selected multiple times

CHEETAH:

Speed	+5 ft. to Speed*
Center of Balance	+2 competence bonus to all trip attacks *
Moving Target	+1 bonus to Defense
Quick Reflexes	+1 bonus to Reflex saves
Trip	can attempt to trip an opponent (+3 check mod) after a successful attack, without making a touch attack, or provoking an attack of opportunity

* May be selected multiple times

APE:

Deceptive Intellect	+2 skill points*
Master Climbers	+4 competence bonus to all Climb Checks
Animal Agility	+4 competence bonus to all Tumble Checks
Quick Movement	+1 bonus to Defense
Jungle Warrior	doubled critical threat range w/ unarmed attacks

* May be selected multiple times



BEAR:

Sturdy Build	+3 hit points*
Natural Swimmer	+4 competence bonus to all Swim Checks
Inner Might	+1 bonus to Fortitude saves
Thick Skinned	+1 bonus to Defense
Great Strength	+1d6 damage to unarmed attacks

* May be selected multiple times

WOLF:

Skilled Hunter	+2 skill points*
Tracker	+4 competence bonus to all Survive Checks
Hard Target	+1 bonus to Defense
Pack Tactics	+4 bonus to melee attacks when flanking
Trip	can attempt to trip an opponent (+3 check mod) after a successful attack, without making a touch attack, or provoking an attack of opportunity

* May be selected multiple times

Other Totem animals can be created, with the approval of the GM. The pulps included examples of Noble Savages raised by such strange choices as Elephants and Vultures!

Animal Companion: As a child of the wilderness, the Noble Savage typically looks to creatures of the wild for friendship. At 1st level, the Noble Savage may start with an animal companion--a lifelong friend with whom the Noble Savage has established complete trust. The Noble Savage's companion may be any animal type (with the GM's approval), and may have up to 3 Hit Dice.

Master of the Wild: At 2nd level and above, the Noble Savage gains the ability to call on the natural talents of his animal heritage once per day, performing amazing feats of skill and athleticism. Each round, the Noble Savage gains a +10 circumstance bonus to any one class skill of his choice. The Noble Savage may choose a new skill each round, but he gains the bonus on only one skill per round. This ability lasts for a number of rounds equal to 3+ the Noble Savage's Constitution modifier.

At 5th level, the Noble Savage can do this twice a day. At 8th level, three times a day, and at 10th level, four times a day.

Uncanny Dodge: At 3rd level and above, the Noble Savage retains his Dexterity bonus to Defense when caught flat-footed or struck by an unseen attacker.

At 5th level, the Noble Savage can no longer be flanked. The exception to this defense is that a character with the uncanny dodge ability at least 4 levels higher than the Noble Savage can still flank.

At 7th level, the Noble Savage gains a +1 bonus to Reflex Saves made to avoid traps, and a +1 dodge bonus to Defense against all attacks made by traps. At 9th level, these bonuses rise to +2.

Feral: As a creature of the wild, the Noble Savage possesses an animalistic nature. At 1st level, the Noble Savage gains a +3 bonus to all Handle Animal and Intimidate checks.



Bonus Feat: At 3rd, 5th, and 6th level, the Noble Savage may take a Bonus Feat. The feat must be taken from the following list.

Alertness, Animal Affinity, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Athletic, Brawl, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Elusive Target, Endurance, Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency, Frightful Presence, Great Fortitude, Heroic Surge, Improved Brawl, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Track, Weapons Finesse.

Feral Senses: At 6th level, the Noble Savage gains the use of Feral Senses, gaining a +2 bonus on all Listen and Spot checks (+4 if the character already has the Alertness feat).

Feral Voice: At 8th level, the Noble Savage gains the ability to mimic the sounds of animals, from mating calls to threatening roars. The Noble Savage makes a opposed Knowledge (nature) check against a Listen check in order to imitate the sounds of any small, medium or large animal. This can be used to trick others, or to attract the attention of other animals in the area, making them react appropriately (a lion's roar, for example, might draw other lions to investigate, or make gazelles run, etc.).



ADVANCED CLASS:

PARAGON

I watched in amazement as Erasmus Quinn finished the last delicate adjustments to the device lying on the laboratory bench in front of him. With hands like a surgeon (which, I was later to learn, is one of the many degrees held by the man), he soldered the last connections into place.

"There." He stood and stretched his back, stiff after the hours of work put into the invention.

"This projector should fire a strong enough electro magnetic blast to disable Satan's Robot. We just need to get close enough."

Quinn scooped up the device and hurried for the door. I nearly ran into him as he stopped suddenly, whirling around to face me. "Wait," he said. "Do you know how to fly an autogyro?" I responded that I did not.

Quinn pondered the issue for a split-second, and then his face lit with a realization. "Never mind, Jack," he said with a broad grin, "I just remembered -- I can."

..and with that, he rushed out the door.

The Paragon is an archetype of the pulp genre--a two-fisted scientific detective jack-of-all-trades. Examples include Doc Savage, Captain Hazzard and Buckaroo Banzai.

The character embodies the popular view of science and scientists in the days before the Atomic Age led to science becoming a source of anxiety and distrust. The Paragon was the brilliant embodiment of the American ideal: strong, square-dealing, forthright, morally pure, educated, clever and resourceful.

Paragons should be the focus character of a

campaign--usually their stories were adventures of a single hero and a team of expert assistants, all of whom were heroes in their own right, albeit shining less brightly than the central star.

The tales were often globe-trotting, usually beginning in the comfortable surroundings of the United States before taking readers to far-off, exotic lands. Their adventures were action-packed



and fast-paced (as was standard for the hero pulps), and science (or at the very least, some sort of invention) always played a part, whether as the focus of the tale, or as part of the tools used by the Paragon to solve whatever problem was to be faced in that issue.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Paragon, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +2

Skills: Concentration 6 ranks, Craft (any) 6 ranks, Any one other skill at 6 ranks.

Feats: Educated

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Paragon gains 1d12 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Paragon gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Paragon's class skills are as follows: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft(any)(Int), Decipher Script (Int), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Investigate (Int), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Any) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 9 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Air Ace advanced class.

Jack of All Trades: The Paragon has picked up a smattering of even the most obscure skills. They may use any skill untrained, even those that normally require training and those that are exclusive to classes in which the Paragon has no levels. The Paragon cannot, however, gain ranks in a skill unless they are allowed to select it.

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Jack of All Trades, Gadgets, Weird Science	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+1		+1	+1
3rd	+1	+2	+2	+1	Bonus Feat	+2	+1
4th	+2	+3	+3	+1		+2	+2
5th	+2	+3	+3	+2	Improved Jack of All Trades Bonus Feat	+3	+2
6th	+3	+4	+4	+2		+3	+2
7th	+3	+4	+4	+3	Bonus Feat	+4	+3
8th	+4	+5	+5	+3		+4	+3
9th	+5	+5	+5	+4	Bonus Feat	+5	+3
10th	+6	+6	+6	+5	Exemplar	+5	+4

Gadgets and Weird Science:

At 1st level, The Paragon gets the ability to invent Gadgets, as well as the ability to create Weird Science.

Gadgets are inventions that use feasible, real-world technology available in the 1930s, although the invention can use the technology in novel ways, or in combination (a cane that has a concealed firearm, for example).

Weird Science, however, is the realm of the impossible or bizarre: thought-reading helmets, water-breathing pills, super-sonic zeppelins, atomic ray guns, etc. These are things that were not possible in the 30s, and most likely remain impossible today.

Gadgets and Weird Science are handled differently:

A gadget is defined by five attributes: **Speed**, **Damage**, **Range**, **Uses**, and **Abilities**. Not every gadget possesses every attribute--a car, for example, would not be likely to have a Damage rating. Each of the five attributes is discussed below:

Speed: Any gadget that moves under its own power possesses the speed attribute. Select the top speed on the table below, and note the corresponding modifier:

<u>Speed</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
20 MPH	1
60 MPH	5
100 MPH	10
150 MPH	15
200 MPH	20
500 MPH	25
Super-sonic	30
Lightspeed	35



Damage: Any gadget that is a weapon or otherwise causes harm must possess the damage attribute. Pick one of the damage levels listed on the table below, and note the corresponding modifier:

<u>Damage</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
d4, per die	2
d6, per die	3
d8, per die	4
d10, per die	5
d12, per die	6

Range: If a gadget is capable of using its abilities over a distance, it must possess the range attribute. This would include ranged weapons, communications devices, sensors, etc. Pick a value from the table below and note the corresponding modifier:

<u>Range (non-weapon)</u>	<u>Range Increment (weapon)</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
Close (100ft or less)	30ft	5
Short (300 ft or less)	40ft	10
Medium (1500 feet or less)	50ft	15
Long (1 mile or less)	70ft	20
Extreme (100 miles or less)	90ft	25
Remote (1000 miles or less)	110ft	30
Worldwide	150ft	35

Uses: All gadgets possess the uses attribute, which determines how long the gadget may be used before it needs to be reloaded, repaired, or otherwise

recharged. Pick a value from the table below and note the corresponding modifier:

Duration (non-weapon)	Uses(weapon)	Modifier
10 minutes	1	2
1 hour	2	4
12 hours	4	8
1 day	6	12
1 week	8	16
1 month	16	20
6 months	32	25
1 year	100	30
Infinite	Infinite	35

A weapon that reaches the limit of its uses must be reloaded. A non-weapon that reaches the end of it's duration must undergo maintenance to be used again--this takes 8 hours, spread out as the player wishes.

Abilities: Any gadget which performs the function of any skill or feat must have this attribute. (Armor falls under this attribute as well, with the Defense Bonus figured as a skill rank) A gadget which gives a rank in a skill (for example, a computing device which gives ranks in Research) has a modifier equal to the desired rank of the skill in question. A gadget which allows the use of a feat has a modifier of 6 per feat. The prerequisites of a feat are ignored for gadgets.

Once you have tallied up the modifiers for the attributes, you are ready to invent the gadget. This requires a skill check (craft (mechanical) or craft (electronic), or whatever applies) at a DC equal to the modifier total. The inventing character can receive a +1 competence bonus for every uninterrupted day spent designing and constructing the gadget--the more time you take, the easier it is.

The invention of a gadget also requires resources: A Wealth check at a DC equal to the modifier total for all of the gadget's attributes. An inventor does not need to make that check himself--a sponsor can fund the project, or multiple PCs can pool resources.

Example: The Green Falcon decides to invent

a gadget--a cane that fires a single shotgun shell (as an emergency weapon). The weapon has no speed attribute, does 2d8 damage (modifier of 8), has a range increment of 30 (modifier of 5), a single use (modifier of 2), and is well-concealed (the gamemaster rules that this will be handled by giving the gadget the Disguise skill at 6 ranks--The Green Falcon will roll an opposed roll when people try to Spot the weapon.) The total modifier for the gadget is 21. The Green Falcon can build the device by making a craft (mechanical) check at DC 21, with a +1 competence bonus given for every uninterrupted day spent on the process. The device will require a Wealth check of 21 as well.

Weird Science items are handled as d20 Modern FX abilities. The inventor creates a device that mimics the effects of an Arcane or Divine spell, or a Psionic power. Unlike a gadget, a Weird Science invention is not permanent--it only lasts for a single adventure, unless the inventor chooses to make the device permanent by spending XP (to make a Weird Science device permanent costs a number of XP equal to the level of the device, times the level of the inventor, times 50). Permanent inventions take up one of the available slots...well, permanently, so players taking this option should be aware of that.

A Paragon can have a number of Weird Science inventions available per adventure according to the following chart:

Class Level	Weird Science Invention Level				
	1	2	3	4	5
1st	1				
2nd	2				
3rd	3	1			
4th	4	2			
5th	4	2	1		
6th	5	3	2		
7th	5	3	2	1	
8th	5	4	3	2	
9th	5	5	3	2	1
10th	5	5	4	3	2

The inventor picks an FX ability of the appropriate level, and, for the duration of the adventure (unless they choose to make it permanent), they have a device capable of replicating that device's effects. The inventor can, if they choose, combine multiple FX abilities into a single invention.

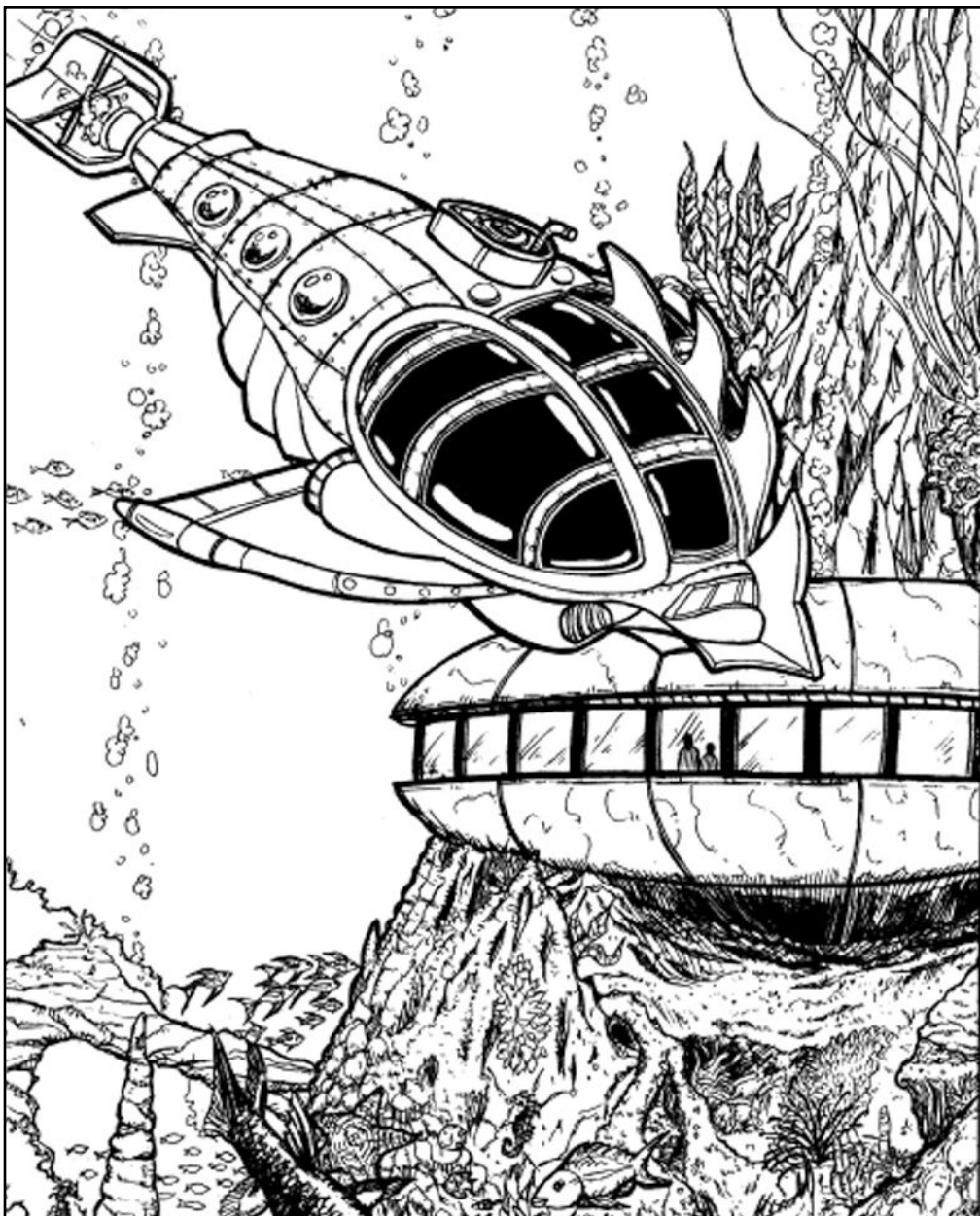
Example: Erasmus Quinn, a 3rd level Smart Hero/2nd level Fast Hero/5th level Paragon, needs an electromagnetic projector to disable Satan's Robot. Quinn has the following Weird Science inventions available: 4/2/1. The player decides to use Quinn's 3rd-level invention to replicate the effects of Lightning Bolt (a 3rd level spell). Quinn invents an electromagnetic projector that will deliver a total of 10d6 electrical damage (10 being the "caster level" in this case). To make this device a permanent part of Quinn's arsenal (thereby always filling that 3rd level slot), the player would have to spend (3 x 10 x 50) 1500 XP.

Bonus Feat: At 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th level, the Paragon may take a Bonus Feat. The feat must be taken from the following list. Feats in italics are new feats, and described elsewhere in this document.

Alertness, *Ambidexterity*, Athletic, Builder, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Endurance, Heroic Surge, *Leadership*, Reknown, *Photographic Memory*, *Sidekick*, Studious, Surgery, Toughness, *Trance*, Vehicle Expert, Windfall.

Improved Jack of All Trades: At 5th level, the Paragon's Jack of All Trades ability improves--the Paragon can now gain ranks in any skill, even if they would normally not be allowed to select it. Such skills are now considered cross-class skills for the purposes of spending skill points.

Exemplar: At 10th level, the Paragon's Jack of All Trades ability reaches its pinnacle--the Paragon now treats all skills as if they are class skills.



ADVANCED CLASS:

ROCKET RANGER

"The Moon Men have kidnapped Polly, Ace! They say that they'll shoot down any aircraft that tries to follow them! Holy Socks! What're we gonna do?" Bucky Brown cried, pointing to the receding shape of the Moon Men's Flying Saucer, currently racing away to the hidden location of their invasion base somewhere in the Deserts of Utah.

Ace Adams leveled a flint-hard glare in the saucer's direction. "Good thing I won't be following them by plane, then... eh, Bucky? Get me my Rocket Pack."

The newsboy grinned and hurried to retrieve the fantastic device from the trunk of the Packard. He marvelled at its design: a gleaming chrome chassis featuring two powerful rocket-jets, attached to two sturdy leather shoulder straps and a control belt. When he returned with the pack, Ace had already strapped on his special aero-helmet, which protected the daredevil from the fantastic speeds generated by the pack, and helped him steer in flight via its unique aerodynamic shape.

Ace buckled the pack in place. "Stand back, Bucky---I'm off to rescue Polly. Have lunch

ready for us when we get back," he said with a wink.

With a quick twist of a control knob on his belt, Ace rocketed into the sky, and was out of sight within seconds.

The life of a Rocket Ranger is one of speed and danger. Harnessing the power of controlled explosions is a difficult science to master, and the risk involved deters all but the most stalwart heroes.

The select few who dare to fly without an airplane are respected for their skill and daring.

The Rocket Ranger archetype can be found in many sources, including the classic *Rocket Man* serials of the 1940s, the *Buck Rogers* and *Flash Gordon* comic strips and radio programs of the 1930s, and latter-day homages such as Dave Stevens' comic book (and later film) *The Rocketeer*.

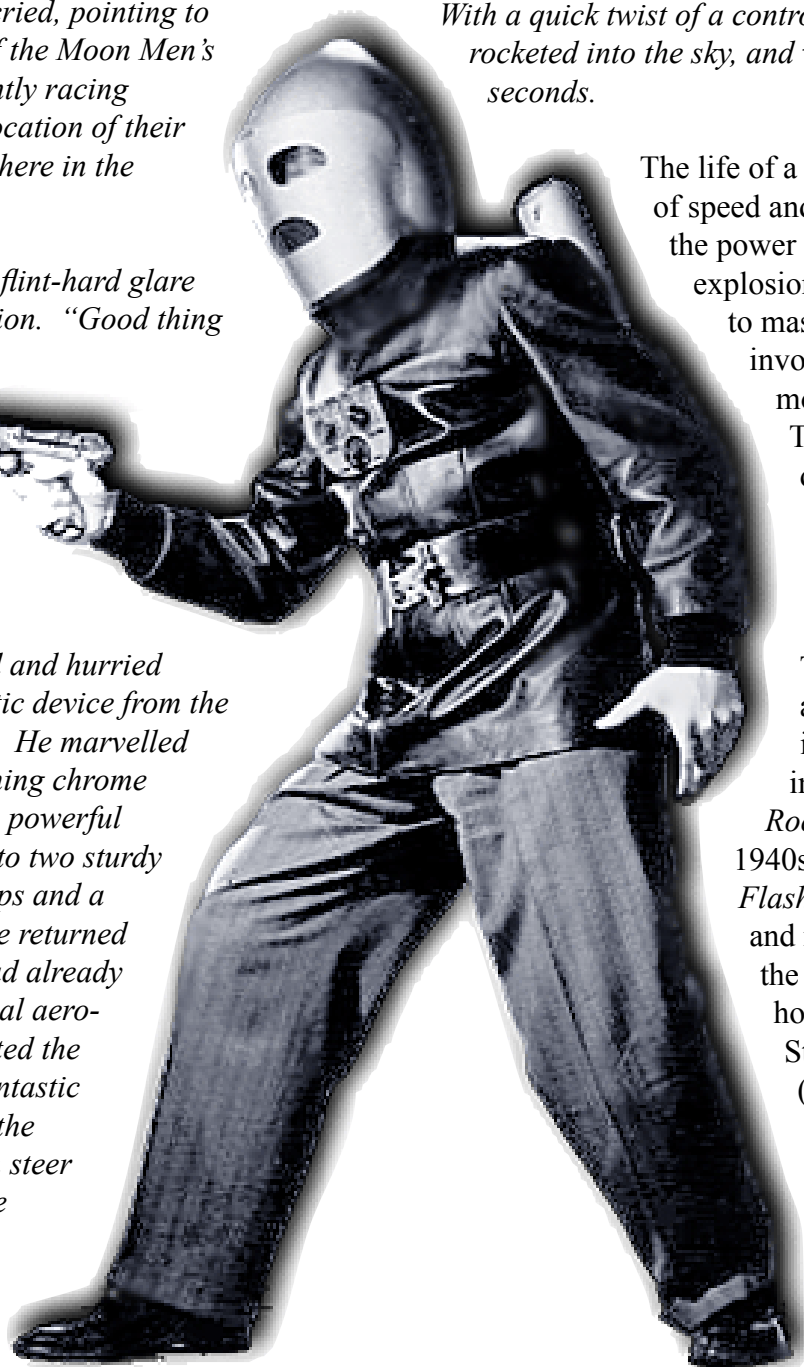


Photo stills taken from Public Domain Film Serial: "Radar Men From The Moon", available in mp4 format from Adamant Entertainment at RPGNow.com.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Rocket Ranger, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Skills: Craft (mechanical) 8 ranks, Jump 4 ranks, and Pilot 4 ranks.

Feats: Acrobatic

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Rocket Ranger gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Rocket Ranger gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Rocket Ranger class skills are as follows:

Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Disable Device (Int), Drive (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Repair (Int), Profession (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex)

Skill Points at each level: 4 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Rocket Ranger advanced class.

Rocket Pack: At first level, the Rocket Ranger gains the use of the signature vehicle of their class, the Rocket Pack. This can be the product of the Ranger's own invention, or bestowed upon the character from another source, depending upon the events that occur within the GM's particular campaign.

A rocket pack is an ingenious design--a small, yet powerful engine designed to grant the wearer high-speed flight for short periods of time. The design of the rocket pack varies from Ranger to Ranger, but generally follows this model: a back-mounted engine accented with various gauges, valves and controls, strapped to the user's back with thick, reinforced leather harness, along with some sort of control mechanism (either on the harness itself, or attached gloves, etc.). In addition to the rocket pack itself, the wearer must also use a special helmet designed to aid in maneuvering and hands-free flight. This helmet is usually aerodynamic (bullet-shaped, or finned, etc.).

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+1	+0	+2	+0	Rocket Pack, Roll	+1	+1
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+0	Rocket Mechanic	+2	+2
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+1	Dive	+3	+2
4th	+4	+1	+4	+1	Booster	+4	+3
5th	+5	+1	+4	+1	Fly-by	+4	+3
6th	+6	+2	+5	+2	Rocket Defense	+5	+4
7th	+7	+2	+5	+2	Cannonball	+5	+5
8th	+8	+2	+6	+2	Attack of Momentum	+6	+5
9th	+9	+3	+6	+3	Afterburner	+6	+6
10th	+10	+3	+7	+3	Rocket Legend	+7	+7

Once activated, the rocket pack unleashes a controlled high-pressure explosion, which propels the wearer upward at high speed. To control himself during flight, a Rocket Ranger must use body positioning and the aerodynamic features of his helmet to modify his trajectory, while using the rocket controls to increase or decrease the thrust of the rocket. There is a 5% non-cumulative chance for the rocket pack to misfire during ignition, stalling the ignition system for 1d4 rounds unless a successful Repair skill check (DC15) is made to clear the flooded ignition valves.

In flight, the wearer has a top speed of 1000ft.per round (200 squares). If the wearer reduces his speed to 50ft or less for two or more rounds, he must land or increase his speed to prevent the loss of momentum necessary to maintain his flight. In routine operation, the wearer of the rocket pack is typically not required to make Pilot checks with every action, however the GM may see fit to institute a brief learning period for the wearer. Maneuvers in combat also require Pilot checks.

The rocket pack has a hardness of 10 and 30 hit points. If the rocket pack suffers enough damage to drop its hit points to 0, it explodes dealing 10d6 points of damage to the wearer.

Roll: With trial, error and a little luck, a Rocket Ranger develops several maneuvers to increase his effectiveness in combat situations. At 1st level, a Rocket Ranger may execute the roll maneuver. Whenever a Rocket Ranger passes through the threatened area of an opponent while in flight, he does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If a Ranger passes through multiple threatened areas in a single movement action, he may avoid a number of attacks of opportunity equal to 1 plus his Dexterity bonus (if any).

Rocket Mechanic: The Rocket Ranger gains a higher level of understanding and craftsmanship when modifying or repairing the complex device. At 2nd level, a Ranger gains a +4 competence bonus to all Craft (mechanical) and Repair checks while working on the rocket pack. The rocket pack

also gains additional hit points equal to 5 plus the Rocket Ranger's Intelligence bonus (if any).

Dive: As with the Roll maneuver, a Rocket Ranger continues to develop new tactics for improving his combat ability. At 3rd level, a Ranger may execute the Dive maneuver. To execute this maneuver, a Ranger must begin his action at an altitude at least 30 ft. above an opponent. The Rocket Ranger dives at the opponent and makes a melee attack with a +4 bonus on the attack roll. If successful, the attack deals 1d6 points of bonus damage and opponent must make a successful Strength check (DC 10 + damage dealt) or fall prone. If the attack misses, the Rocket Ranger must make a successful Pilot check (DC15) to avoid striking the ground. If he fails, he suffers 3d6 points of damage, plus damage as if he had fallen from the same altitude, and is knocked prone.

Booster: With intimate knowledge of his rocket pack, a Rocket Ranger may use methods to push his pack to the limits, gaining more speed in the process. At 4th level, a Rocket Ranger may add his class level x 50 ft. to the speed of his rocket pack for a number of rounds equal to his class level.

Fly-By: By honing his reflexes to a razor's edge, The Rocket Ranger gainst the use of the fly-by maneuver. At 5th level, a Rocket Ranger may move and attack as a standard action and then move again. A Ranger may turn during his move action if he so chooses. The Ranger's total movement may not exceed his rocket pack's top speed, and the maneuver does not provoke an attack of opportunity from the target of the attack.

Rocket Defense: With incredible speed and dexterity, a Rocket Ranger is increasingly difficult to hit in combat. Beginning at 6th level, a Rocket Ranger in flight gains a dodge bonus to Defense equal to his Dexterity Bonus (if positive).

Cannonball: As he gains experience, a Rocket Ranger continues to develop new and increasingly effective maneuvers in combat. At 7th level, the Rocket Ranger gains the cannonball maneuver. To execute a cannonball attack, a Rocket Ranger in

flight must move at least 50ft, and he gains a +4 bonus on his melee attack roll. If successful, the attack deals 1d6 extra points of damage per class level of the Rocket Ranger. The opponent must make a successful Strength check (DC15 +damage dealt) or be pushed back 5 ft. and fall prone. If the attack is unsuccessful, a Rocket Ranger must make a successful Pilot check (DC20) or lose control of the rocket pack and crash into the ground, suffering 4d6 points of damage. This attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity from the defender.

Attack of Momentum:

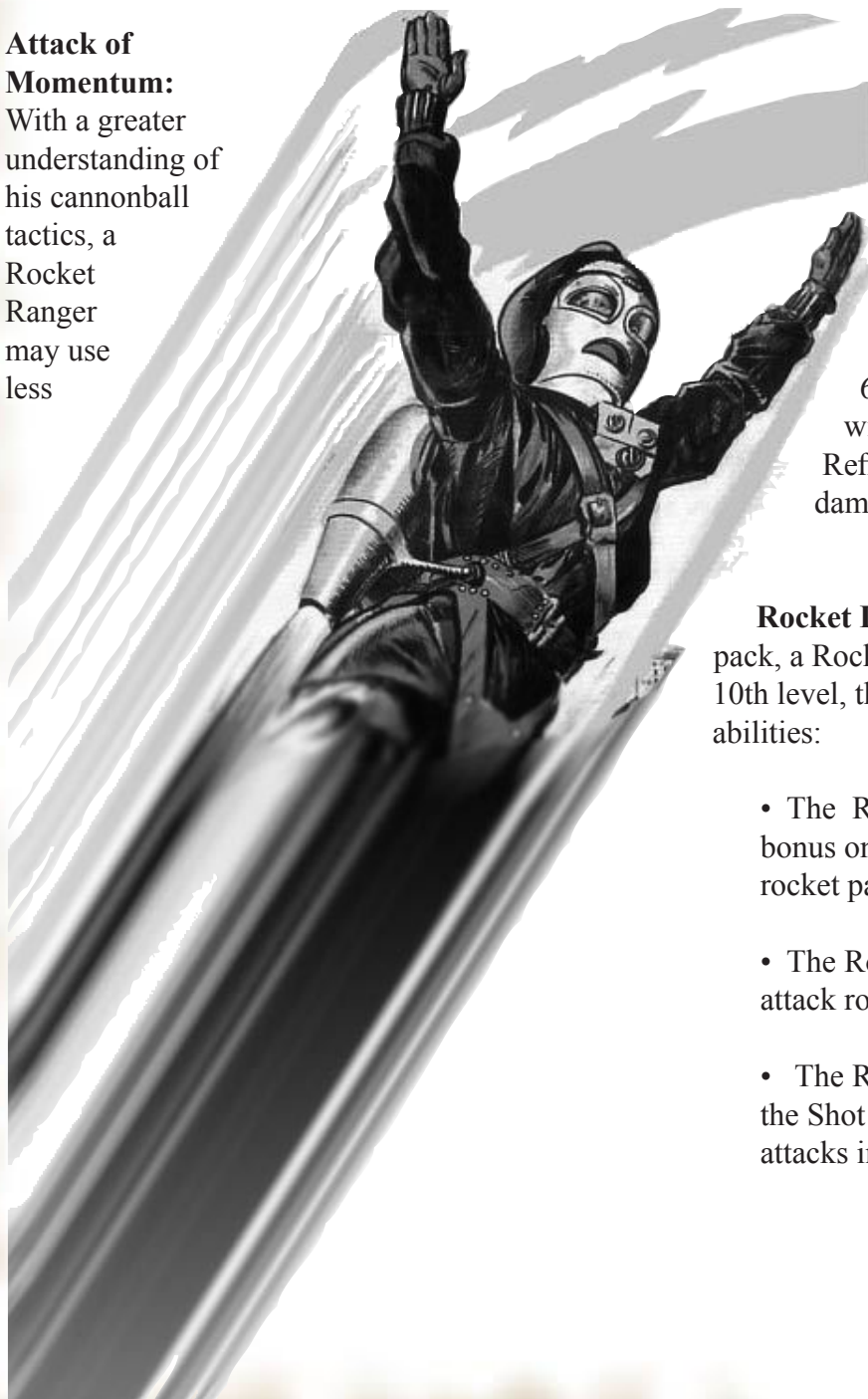
With a greater understanding of his cannonball tactics, a Rocket Ranger may use less

force and risk to increase his damage in combat. Beginning at 8th level, when a Rocket Ranger uses his cannonball attack, he deals an extra 1d6 points of extra damage per 20ft moved (rather than the flat 1d6 of extra damage he normally gets). If he misses his opponent, the Rocket Ranger must make a Pilot check (DC 25) or lose his next action as he regains control of his rocket pack.

Afterburner: By using a controlled build up and explosive burst from his rocket pack, a Rocket Ranger can deal fire damage to several opponents at once. At 9th level, a Rocket Ranger gainst the afterburner maneuver. To execute this maneuver, a Rocket Ranger must land and charge his afterburner for one full round before use. Once the rocket pack is charged, he explodes into the air and must travel no fewer than 50 ft. On take-off, a 15-foot radius explosion erupts from the rocket pack, dealing 6d6 points of fire damage to everyone within the blast radius. A successful Reflex save (DC 15) allows for half damage.

Rocket Legend: As a master of the rocket pack, a Rocket Ranger becomes a legend. At 10th level, the Rocket Ranger gains the following abilities:

- The Rocket Ranger gains a +4 competence bonus on all Pilot checks when operating his rocket pack.
- The Rocket Ranger gains a +1 bonus to all attack rolls (melee or ranged) while in flight.
- The Rocket Ranger gains the benefits of the Shot on the Run feat when making ranged attacks in flight.



ADVANCED CLASS:

TRUSTED SIDEKICK

So there I was, standing outside with the car in my chauffeur uniform while the Scarlet Avenger was inside the warehouse across the street, doubtless teaching the cretins inside a lesson or two about kidnapping the mayor's daughter. I'd asked to join her, but she insisted that I remain with the car running just in case things went badly. I've served the Scarlet Avenger long enough to know that was a distinct possibility.

My ears perked up as another sedan pulled up near the warehouse. Two ruffians emerged and I feared that might complicate things a bit for the Scarlet Avenger. I put out my pipe and crossed the street, doing my best to appear confused.

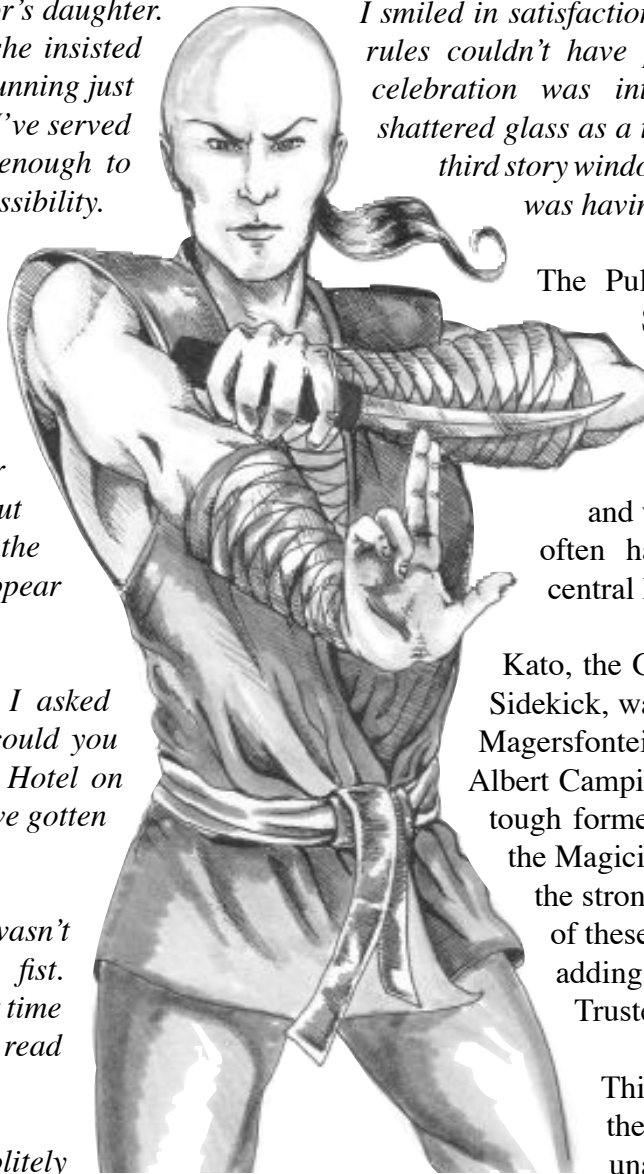
"Excuse me, gentlemen," I asked in the Queen's English, "could you direct me to the Parkview Hotel on Broad Street? I seem to have gotten rather lost!"

The ruffian closest to me wasn't amused. He made a fist. "Scram, limey. We ain't got time for foreigners who can't read directions!"

"My apologies." I bowed politely and then followed it with a right cross to his jaw. As he crumbled, his friend put his hand inside his jacket, reaching

for his pistol. I jumped over his companion and punched him square in the nose. His gun fell out of his limp hand right before he did.

I smiled in satisfaction. Whoever said Queensbury rules couldn't have practical applications? My celebration was interrupted by the sound of shattered glass as a third ruffian violently exited a third story window. I guess the Scarlet Avenger was having a little fun as well.



The Pulp Genre is full of Trusted Sidekicks, men and women who aid the central hero in completing his adventures. Trusted Sidekicks are the butlers, chauffeurs, pilots, and wards of the main hero. They often have abilities helpful to the central hero in his adventures.

Kato, the Green Hornet's driver-Trusted Sidekick, was an incredible martial artist. Magersfontein Lugg, British detective Albert Campion's manservant, was a street tough former burglar. Lothar, Mandrake the Magician's best friend, is considered the strongest man in the world. Many of these sidekicks were foreign-born, adding an exotic element to the Trusted Sidekick.

This Advanced Class treats the Trusted Sidekick as an unassuming employee of another PC (such as the Man of Mystery, Mesmerist, or Paragon) who is also a capable fighter and assistant.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Trusted Sidekick, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +3

Skills: Bluff (6 ranks), Diplomacy (6 ranks)

Feat: Personal Firearms Proficiency

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Trusted Sidekick gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Trusted Sidekick gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time she achieves a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Trusted Sidekick's class skills are as follows: Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (current events, popular culture) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language, Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Dedication: The Trusted Sidekick must select one appropriate character (usually a player character (PC), although at the Game Master's (GM's) discretion, a non-player character (NPC) may be chosen. This becomes the Trusted Sidekick's "Designated Hero." Many of the Trusted Sidekick's abilities are tied to the Designated Hero.

Martial Prowess: The Trusted Sidekick is competent in the martial arts (whether fencing, fisticuffs, or judo). He gains one feat from the list below, and a new feat at 4th, 7th, and 10th level. He selects from the following feats (prerequisites must be met):

Advanced Combat Martial Arts, Agile Riposte, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Brawl, Combat Expertise, Combat Martial Arts, Combat Reflexes, Combat Throw, Improved Brawl, Improved Combat Martial Arts, Improved Combat Throw, Improved Disarm, Improved Feint, Improved Knockout Punch, Improved Trip, Knockout Punch, Mobility, Sidestep*, Streetfighting, Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus.

Unassuming: The Trusted Sidekick allows his friend to take the spotlight. As a result, others tend to underestimate the sidekick. He gets the feat of the same name for free.

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+1	+0	+2	+1	Dedication, Martial Prowess, Unassuming	+1	+0
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+2	Patch Up, Transporter	+2	+0
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+2	Keeping Current, Retrace Steps	+2	+0
4th	+3	+1	+4	+2	Martial Prowess, Clean Sweep	+3	+0
5th	+4	+1	+4	+3	Transporter, Toughness	+4	+1
6th	+5	+2	+5	+3	Fearless, Harm's Way	+4	+1
7th	+6	+2	+5	+4	Martial Prowess, Nick of Time	+5	+1
8th	+6	+2	+6	+4	Transporter, Toughness	+6	+1
9th	+7	+3	+6	+4	Defensive Strike	+6	+2
10th	+8	+3	+7	+5	Martial Prowess, Ultimate Sacrifice	+7	+2

Patch Up: The Trusted Sidekick is used to patching up the Designated Hero without compromising his identity by going to a hospital. At 2nd level, the Trusted Sidekick receives a +4 to Treat Injury checks (which only applies when treating the Designated Hero) and the Surgery feat.

Transporter: The Trusted Sidekick is often relied upon to get the Designated Hero in and out of danger. At 2nd level, the Trusted Sidekick receives a +2 to Drive and Pilot checks (this may stack with the Vehicle Expert feat). He may also choose a feat from the following list, and gains an additional feat at 5th and 8th level:

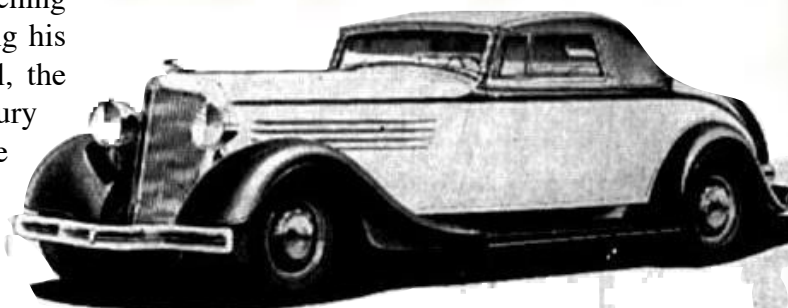
Aircraft Operation, Drive-By Attack, Force Stop, Surface Vehicle Operation, Vehicle Dodge

Keeping Current: While the Designated Hero keeps an eye on criminal masterminds, the Trusted Sidekick remains grounded in the intricacies of the real world. At 3rd level, the Trusted Sidekick receives a +2 to Knowledge (current events) and Knowledge (popular culture) checks.

Retrace Steps: At third level, the Trusted Sidekick has the ability to understand how the Designated Hero thinks and follow in his footsteps. This ability can become very important if the Designated Hero is captured or otherwise detained. By using a Gather Information check at DC 25 (he may take 10 or 20), the Trusted Sidekick can collect all clues uncovered by the Designated Hero and determine the last spot where the Designated Hero went under his own power, as well as any unresolved leads.

This class feature does not give the Trusted Sidekick the ability to follow the Designated Hero's captors and locate where the Designated Hero is being kept. Once the Trusted Sidekick has determined where the Designated Hero stopped his investigations, he must rely on other skills, abilities, and allies to follow his trail. Also, it is up to the GM to determine how long it takes a Trusted Sidekick to retrace steps.

Clean Sweep: Starting at 4th level, the Trusted Sidekick may clear an area of evidence that would implicate him or the Designated Hero. If someone uses Investigate to search for evidence, they receive



a DC modifier equal to the Trusted Sidekick's class level.

Toughness: The Trusted Sidekick receives the Toughness feat at 5th level and again at 8th level.

Fearless: At 6th level, the Trusted Sidekick gains a +4 morale bonus on Will saves to resist fear effects and on level checks to oppose Intimidate checks.

Harm's Way: Starting at 6th level, once per round, the Trusted Sidekick can subject him or herself to the attack in the Designated Hero's stead. If the attack hits the Trusted Sidekick, he or her takes damage normally. If it misses, it also misses the Designated Hero.

The Trusted Sidekick must declare his or her intention to place him or herself in harm's way before the attack roll is made.

Nick of Time: At 7th level, the Trusted Sidekick has the uncanny ability to arrive when the Designated Hero needs him most. By spending an action point, the Trusted Sidekick can arrive while there is still time to rescue the Designated Hero. With each additional action point, the Trusted Sidekick may bring along another Hero or Ordinary to help.

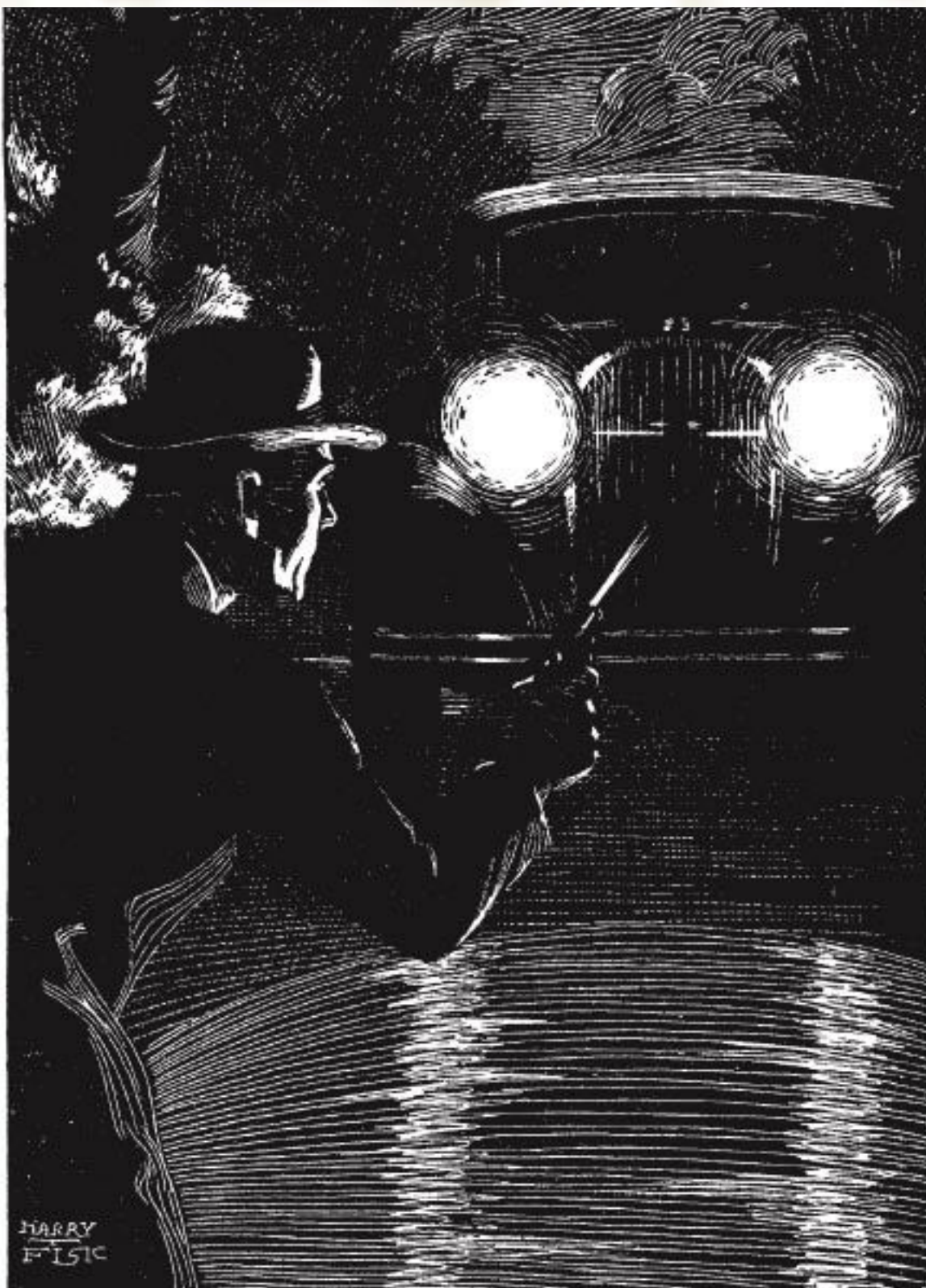
The GM must determine the exact details and placement of the Trusted Sidekick. If it was impossible to reach the location without dealing with security, this class feature assumes the Trusted Sidekick overcame it. The Trusted Sidekick will also make intuitive leaps of logic to learn the location of the Designated Hero.

Defensive Strike: At 9th level, if an opponent makes a melee attack against the Trusted Sidekick or the Designated Hero and misses while the Trusted

Sidekick is using the total defense option, the Trusted Sidekick can attack that opponent on his or her next turn (as an attack action) with a +4 bonus on his or her attack roll. The Trusted Sidekick gains no bonus against an opponent who doesn't attack the Trusted Sidekick or the Designated Hero or against an opponent who makes a successful attack.

Ultimate

Sacrifice: When all hope is lost, the Trusted Sidekick can sacrifice his own life for the Designated Hero. By spending an action point, the Trusted Sidekick may substitute himself into a situation where the Designated Hero's life is in danger. If both are in danger, the Trusted Sidekick can ensure that only he receives the damage (by pushing the Designated Hero out of the way, cutting him free over the acid pit and throwing him to safety, etc.).



It is likely that the Trusted Sidekick will only get to use this power once. At the GM's discretion, he may reward the Trusted Sidekick's player by allowing him to bring in a replacement character at the same level.

CHAPTER FIVE:

EQUIPMENT

This chapter details weapons and vehicles of the pulp era that do not already appear in the *d20 Modern* core rulebook. Mundane equipment is not covered, as guides to America in the 1930s can be found on many internet sites (for example, at the university of Virginia : <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~1930s/front.html> , and the University of Kansas : <http://vlib.iue.it/history/USA/ERAS/20TH/1930s.html>).

PULP WEAPONS

This section offers a few “classic” guns available during the 1930s that better reflect the pulp genre than those in the core book. GMs can emulate almost any other weapon simply by choosing a similar weapon from the list below and modifying one or more elements (such as damage or range). Core book weapons (such as the Colt M1911) are not reproduced here.

While automatic pistols are available in the pulp era, the revolver is the weapon of choice among gumshoes, especially snub-nosed models. No list of pulp weapons would be complete without the Tommy Gun, the weapon of choice among mobsters. Weapons from all over the world are included for world-hopping PCs or Men of Mystery looking for an exotic sidearm.

Weapon	Dmg	Crit	Type	Range Inc.	ROF	Mag	Size	Weight	Pur. DC
Pistols									
Astra 400	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft	S	7 box	Small	1.25 lbs	16
Beretta Model 1934	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft	S	7 box	Small	1.75 lbs	15
Browning High Power Model 1935	2d6	20	Ballistic	40 ft	S	13 box	Small	2 lbs	18
Bulldog Revolver	2d6	20	Ballistic	20 ft	S	6 cyl	Tiny	1 lb	15
Colt Detective Special	2d4	20	Ballistic	20 ft	S	6 cyl	Tiny	1.5 lbs	14
Colt M1917 Revolver	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft	S	6 cyl	Small	2.5 lbs	17
Luger P-08	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft	S	8/32 drum	Small	2 lbs.	15
Mauser C96	2d8	20	Ballistic	30 ft	S	10 box	Small	2 lbs	17
Nambu Type 14	2d4	20	Ballistic	30 ft	S	8 box	Small	2 lbs	14
S&W Model 10 Police Revolver	2d6	20	Ballistic	30ft	S	6 cyl	Small	2 lbs	14
Walther PPK	2d4	20	Ballistic	30 ft	S	7 box	Small	1 lb	15
Webley Revolver	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft	S	6 cyl	Small	2.25 lbs.	15
Longarms									
Arasaka Type 38 Rifle	2d6	20	Ballistic	70ft	S	5 box	Large	9 lbs	16
Mauser M32	2d8	20	Ballistic	40 ft	S, A	20 box	Small	2 lbs	18
MP38	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft	S, A	32 box	Large	9 lbs	18
Springfield US M1903	2d10	20	Ballistic	50 ft	S	5 int	Large	8.5 lbs	15
Star Si35	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft	S, A	30, 40 box	Large	8.5 lbs	17
Thompson M1928 SMG	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft	S, A	20/ 30 box, 50 drum	Large	11 lbs	18
US M1 Garand	2d10	20	Ballistic	60 ft	S	8 box	Large	9.5 lbs	16

Astra 400 Pistol

This Spanish pistol is also used by the French military. It was copied and used in the Spanish Civil War.



Beretta Model 1934 Pistol

This pistol is the standard Italian military sidearm.



Browning High Power Model 1935 Pistol

This Belgian pistol was actually developed by an American. This popular sidearm is destined to be used by both the Axis and the Allies in the coming war.



Bulldog Revolver

This pocket pistol was developed by Webley. It was widely exported and uses a larger round than the similar Colt Detective Special.



Colt .38 Detective Special Revolver

This snub-nosed revolver is a popular favorite with detectives due to its lighter weight and compact size. It is easy to conceal in one's pocket.



Colt .45 M1917 Revolver

This revolver was included as an example of a regular, large caliber revolver. Unlike the later Colt Python, the M1917 is not a mastercraft weapon.



Luger P-08 Pistol

This well-made pistol is the standard sidearm of the German military. Due to the high quality of its manufacture, all Lugers are considered mastercraft weapons and gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls.



Mauser C96 Pistol

The Mauser has a very distinctive look, garnering the nickname "Broomhandle" due to the shape of its handle. Although a German weapon, it was also manufactured in China and Spain.



Nambu Type 14

The Japanese-made Nambu Type 14, introduced in 1925, was a common sidearm for officers of both the Imperial Japanese Army and Navy. It suffered from a weak caliber of ammunition and such poor design that it would often backfire or break in combat. On a critical miss (a natural roll of 1), a Type 14 explodes in the user's hand, causing him or her 1d4 damage.



Webley Revolver

This popular British revolver is the standard sidearm of British officers.



Arasaka Type 38 Rifle

This is the standard rifle of the Japanese army.



Smith & Wesson Model 10 Police Revolver

This popular American revolver is used by police and military officers.



Walther PPK Pistol

This pistol is popular with European police forces, and later made famous by a certain British secret agent.



Mauser M32 Submachine Gun

The first widely used true machine pistol; the 7.62mm M32 is an automatic fire version of the C96. The weapon is nearly impossible to fire without the stock in place -- without the stock, the firer suffers a -8 penalty to hit.



MP38 Submachine Gun

This is a common submachine gun used by German soldiers. It will feature prominently in the 1939 invasion of Poland.



Springfield US M1903 Rifle

This bolt-action rifle was the standard rifle of the American army until 1936, when it was replaced by the M1 Garand.



Star Si35 Submachine Gun

This Spanish submachine gun was developed during the Spanish Civil War. It had an adjustable speed of 300rpm and 700rpm, but switching was considered too unwieldy for combat and would cause both Britain and America to pass on it at the outset of World War II.



Thompson M1928 Submachine Gun AKA "Tommy Gun"

The quintessential mobster weapon, the Tommy Gun is the symbol of the pulp genre. Prior to 1934, this weapon was readily available at local gun shops. The most distinctive features of the Tommy Gun are the drum magazine and the vertical fore-grip (removed from later versions).



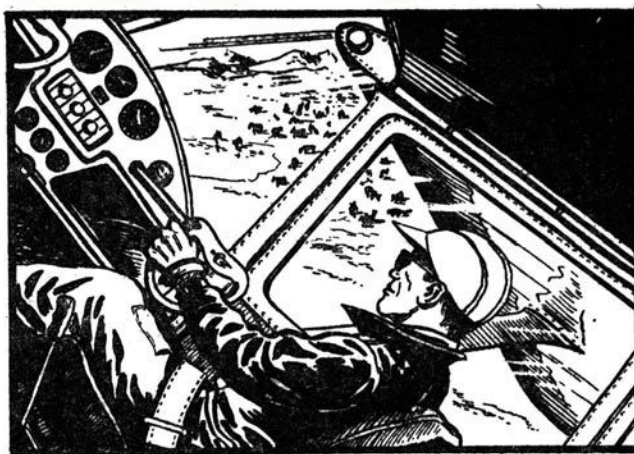
US M1 Garand Rifle

This semi-automatic rifle replaces the Springfield M1903 as the standard American military rifle. Pre-1939 models had an unreliable gas-trap firing mechanism. As a result, the gun will jam on a natural 1.



PULP VEHICLES

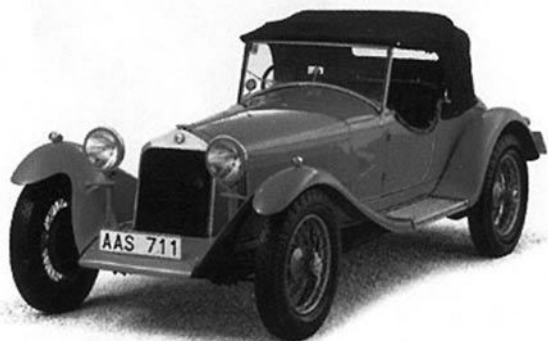
This section provides a short list of vehicles from the 1920s and 1930s. It is important to note that affordable versions of most vehicles, especially those built before the mid-30s, were ragtops/convertibles and therefore provided less protection from those inside. Pulp vehicles are harder to maneuver than their modern counterparts due to their steel construction, and this also accounts for their increased Hardness.



Vehicle	Crew	Pass	Cargo	Init	Man	Spd	Def	Hard	HP	Size	Purch
Automobiles											
1929 Alfa Romeo 6C 17501	2	0	100 lbs	-1	-1	167 (16)	8	6	32	L	32
1935 Auburn Speedster	1	1	100 lbs	-2	-2	190 (19)	8	6	32	H	33
1930 Austin Seven Special	1	1	100 lbs	-1	-2	116 (11)	9	6	28	L	21
1930 Bentley 8-Litre	1	3	300 lbs	-2	-2	177 (17)	8	6	38	H	35
1937 BMW 328	1	1	100 lbs	-2	-2	181 (18)	8	6	32	L	34
1934 Chrysler Airflow	1	5	200 lbs	-2	-1	154 (15)	8	6	34	H	26
1937 Cord 810	1	3	100 lbs	-2	-2	195 (19)	8	6	32	H	28
1929 Duesenberg Model J	1	5	200 lbs	-2	-2	204 (20)	8	6	36	H	34
1928 Ford Model A	1	2	200 lbs	-2	-2	126 (12)	9	6	30	H	24
1908 Ford Model T	1	3	100 lbs	-2	-3	73 (7)	8	6	30	L	20
1936 Hudson Terraplane	1	4	200 lbs	-2	-2	140 (14)	8	6	32	H	25
1936 Lincoln Zephyr	1	4	200 lbs	-2	-2	153 (15)	8	6	35	H	30
1934 Packard Twelve Victoria	1	4	300 lbs	-2	-2	158 (15)	8	6	37	H	33
1931 Pierce-Arrow Model 41	1	4	200 lbs	-2	-2	148 (14)	8	6	38	H	35
1936 Rolls-Royce Phantom III	1	3	300 lbs	-2	-2	163 (16)	8	6	38	H	35
1932 Studebaker Dictator	1	2	200 lbs	-2	-2	149 (14)	8	6	30	H	24
1939 Delahaye T165 Roadster	1	1	100lbs	-1	-1	195 (19)	8	6	32	H	35

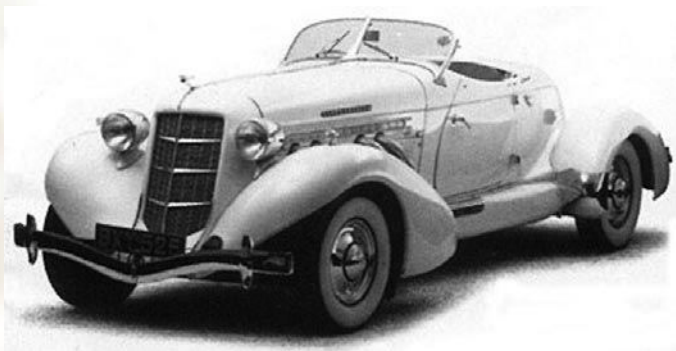
Alfa Romeo 6C

This Italian car won the *Mille Miglia* (Thousand Miles) race two years in a row.



Auburn Speedster

True to its name, the Auburn Speedster's design screams "speed." It was guaranteed a top speed of over 100mph. The version statted here is the convertible design, with a low V windshield.



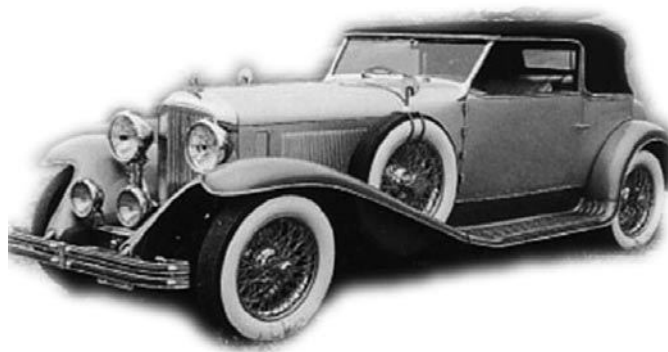
Austin Seven Special

This British automobile was created as an affordable car with a simple design. The Special is a two seater version designed to be so lightweight that it lacks doors (the body slopes downward to enable easy access).



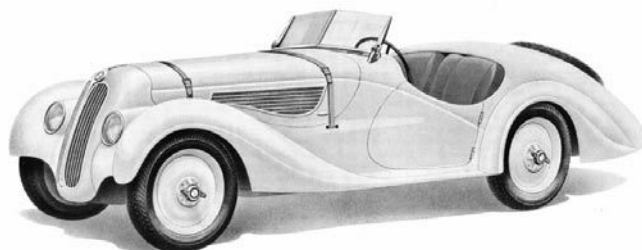
Bentley 8-Litre

Only 100 of these cars were ever made before Bentley was taken over by Rolls-Royce. The Bentley 8-litre is a marvel of its time, ironically designed to compete with Rolls-Royce in the luxury car market.



BMW 328

This sports car would eventually win the *Mille Miglia* in 1940. Its design would be a strong influence on the Jaguar.



Chrysler Airflow

Built to reflect the car of the future, the Chrysler Airflow was so revolutionary that it hurt sales. Its spacious design was tested in a wind tunnel.



Cord 810

Built by Auburn, this “coffin-nosed” vehicle caused a sensation at the 1936 New York Auto Show (although orders weren’t filled until 1937). About 3000 of these cars were built before production ceased.



Duesenberg Model J

The most unusual feature of this American luxury car is the trunk, which is quite literally strapped to the back of the car. Its elegant design made it a popular choice for film stars.



Ford Model A

The successor to the Model T, the Ford Model A was more powerful and boasted four choices of color. The Model A came in many styles. The example presented here is the standard coupe design.



Ford Model T

The “Tin Lizzie” introduced the concept of the automobile assembly line. For a decade (1915-1925) the Model T was only available in black, but Model Ts of different colors were produced before that and in its last two years of production. Perhaps the most annoying feature of the Model T was its lack of windshield wipers.



Hudson Terraplane

The most notable feature of this inexpensive, reliable American car is its ornate wraparound grill design. The Terraplane was one of the first affordable enclosed automobiles on the market.



Lincoln Zephyr

The stylish Zephyr inspired the industry to imitate it. Designed as an entry level Lincoln, the Zephyr was conceived as a fast, aerodynamic vehicle. Unlike the similarly themed Chrysler Airflow, the Zephyr proved to be very popular.



Packard Twelve Victoria

Packard was another top-of-the line luxury car manufacturer. The Twelve series, with its long hood covering a 12 cylinder engine, was considered to be its finest work. The elegant Victoria was the first convertible model.



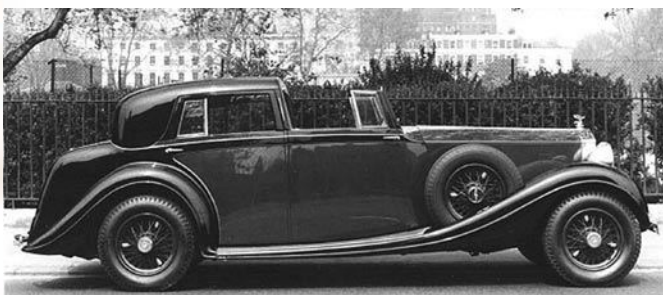
Pierce-Arrow Model 41 LeBaron

Pierce-Arrow automobiles were favored by the elite in Hollywood and around the world. The opulent LeBaron, like the Duesenberg, had a trunk strapped on the rear.



Rolls-Royce Phantom III

The Phantom III was the final Rolls-Royce developed before World War II, and the last car worked on by Henry Royce himself. It boasted an aluminum V-12 engine and an independent suspension in the front.



Studebaker Dictator

The Dictator was designed as a reliable, affordable car. It was the cheapest of the Studebaker line, and popular outside the country (where it was renamed the "Director," as "Dictator" was an obviously unfashionable term in Europe).



Delahaye T165 Roadster

A top-line luxury roadster, designed by Italians for a French manufacturer, only 400 of these were ever made.



Vehicle	Crew	Pass	Cargo	Init	Man	Spd	Def	Hard	HP	Size	Purch
Aircraft											
Autogyro	1	1	100lbs	-2	+2	264(26)	7	5	20	H	35
Bellanca Airbus	2	14	2Klbs	-4	-4	255 (25)	6	5	30	G	40
Boeing 247	3	10	3K lbs	-4	-4	352 (35)	6	5	40	G	44
Curtiss F9C-2 Sparrowhawk	1	0	0	-1	-2	308 (31)	8	8	30	H	40
Curtiss P-36	1	0	0	-1	-1	526 (52)	7	5	28	G	40
Dornier Do-24	3	40	1K lbs	-4	-4	264 (26)	6	5	45	G	40
Douglas DC-3	3	32	2K lbs	-4	-4	417 (41)	6	5	48	G	48
Ford Trimotor	2	8	250 lbs	-4	-4	264 (26)	6	5	42	G	40
Gee Bee R-1	1	0	0	-1	-1	520 (52)	7	5	28	H	40
Grumman G-21 Goose	2	4	100lbs	-2	-4	280 (28)	7	5	38	G	40
Junkers JU-87D Stuka	2	0	0	-2	+1	400 (40)	6	5	30	G	40
Junkers JU-52	2	17	5K lbs	-4	-4	220 (22)	6	5	44	G	45
Messerschmitt Bf109	1	0	0	-1	+1	500 (50)	6	5	28	G	40
Nakajima A1N2	1	0	0	-1	0	261 (26)	8	8	40	H	40
Sikorsky s38	1/2	10	2K lbs	-4	-4	220 (22)	6	5	40	G	40
LZ-129 Hindenberg	61	50	124 ton	-6	-4	148 (14)	2	8	55	C	50

Naval

Type VII A U-Boat (surface)

42	8	5K lbs	-4	-4	80 (8)	6	5	50	G	50
(submerged)			-2	-2	40 (4)	8				

Autogyro

The precursor of the modern-day helicopter, autogyros used a rotor to generate lift, but otherwise flew like an airplane. They were much more maneuverable than standard aircraft, but were not able to hover or land vertically.



Bellanca Airbus

Also known as the "Flying W", the distinctive silhouette of the plane is derived from the aerodynamically shaped triangular lifting struts extending down from the bottom of the fuselage and continuing up to a point outboard the main wing.

Boeing 247

This passenger airplane counted a flight attendant amongst its crew. It also boasted new features such as autopilot and retractable landing gear.



Curtiss F9C-2 Sparrowhawk

This small but fast fighter was made exclusively for the Navy's airship program by Curtiss Aeroplane & Motor Company, Buffalo, NY. First delivered in 1932, the Sparrowhawk featured a hook mounted on top of the plane to catch the trapeze beneath the airship. Once suspended, the plane could be raised into the ship's interior. Armament consists of two .30-caliber machine guns fixed on its nose.

Curtiss P-36

The precursor to the popular World War II P-40, the P-36 was an American military fighter plane that saw extensive use in the British and French armed forces. Armament consists of one .30 caliber machine gun and one .50 caliber machine gun mounted in the front.



Dornier Do-24

The Do-24 is a tri-motor flying boat originally ordered by the Dutch Navy to patrol the islands of the Dutch Indies. The vessel was found in the Dutch and German services, as well as in private stock, among corporations or few extremely wealthy individuals.



Douglas DC-3

The DC-2 was the main competitor to the Boeing 247. Built a year later, it was faster and could accommodate more passengers. The DC-3 was the result of even further improvements, including sleeping berths on some models and an on-board kitchen. The DC-3 made practical transcontinental flights possible, requiring only one refueling stop.

Gee Bee R-1

The distinctive fat racing plane built by the Granville Brothers and made famous to pulp fans by its appearance as Cliff Secord's plane in the comic book and film versions of "The Rocketeer." The Gee Bee is little more than a huge engine with wings, and a cramped cockpit.



Grumman G-21 "Goose"

The Grumman Goose is perhaps the world's most famous flying boat. Originally envisioned as a shuttle for Manhattan millionaires to cruise down to Miami for the weekend, the Goose rapidly became the utility plane of choice for several small air companies, as well

as a primary rescue plane for the Coast Guard and other agencies. Its amphibious nature, generous interior space, and rugged construction made it a popular choice for independent air merchants in the South Pacific and Caribbean. The Goose is probably best remembered by pulp gamers as the aircraft used by Jake in the short-lived TV series "Tales of the Gold Monkey"

Ford Trimotor

This popular civil transport airplane was nicknamed the "Tin Goose." It gets its designation from the fact that it has three engines. Ford is an automobile company, and the aircraft engines were built by other companies. Ford Trimotors were sold all over the world.



Junkers JU-87D Stuka

Stuka is the abbreviation of the German word Sturzkampfflugzeug, which designated all dive bombers. The main fighter/bomber used by the Luftwaffe, the Stuka would play a major role in the Blitzkrieg that swept across Poland, northern Europe and France. In the later years of the war, the Ju 87 had a successful second life as an antitank weapon, striking armor columns from above.

Junkers JU-52

Nicknamed "Tante Ju" (Auntie Ju) by German troops, the Junkers Ju-52 was the most famous transport of the Third Reich. The Ju-52 served as an airliner for many nations, including the German Lufthansa and eventually entered service as a troop transport for the Reich. The Ju-52 was slow and very lightly armed against fighters, but was used from the 30s right through to the end of the war.



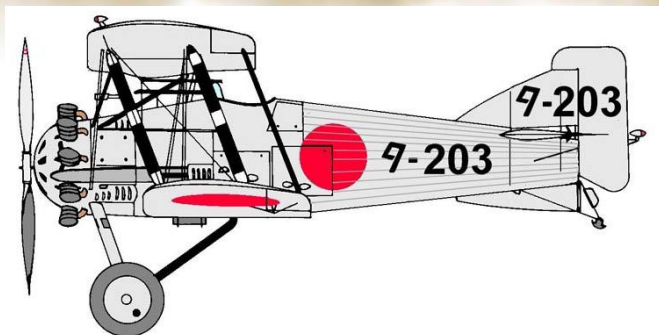
Messerschmitt Bf109

One of the best air superiority fighters ever built, the Messerschmitt was the predator of the skies. The Bf109 was the Luftwaffe's standard single-seat fighter from 1935-1943 and was able to outfight or outrun virtually all opposition. The fighter was used primarily for intercept and bomber escort duties. The Messerschmitt was equipped with two 7.92 mm machine guns and two 20 mm cannons.



Nakajima A1N2

The A1N2 were carrier fighters for the Imperial Japanese Navy. First introduced in 1930, they were biplanes equipped with an arresting-cable hook and two 7.7mm forward-firing machine guns.



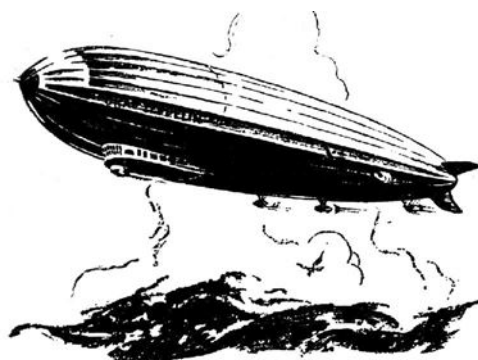
Sikorsky S-38

Also known as “The Explorer’s Air Yacht,” the S-38 was a flying boat fitted with wheels in the pontoons, so that it could land on water or ground. They saw service with Pan American Airways and the U. S. Army. Numerous private individuals bought and flew the S-38 as well, including Howard Hughes (as seen in the recent film “the Aviator”).



LZ-129 Hindenberg

The Hindenberg is provided as an example of a 1930s zeppelin. The number of passengers listed is for transatlantic flights; the full complement would be 72. GMs should be aware that the Hindenberg disaster would never have happened if the zeppelin were fueled by helium, as intended. Pulp versions of this airship (especially those designed by Mad Scientists) would probably use helium.



Type VII A U-Boat

Another iconic Nazi vehicle, the U-boats traveled the Atlantic in predatory “wolfpacks”, harassed shipping, delivered Nazi spies onto unsuspecting enemy beaches, and carried secret archeological discoveries to hidden island fortresses! There were many types of U-boat -- the statistics provided here correspond to the Type VIIA, provided as an example. This model carried an 88mm deck gun and 11 torpedoes.



Vehicle Weapon	Dmg	Crit	Type	Range	ROF	Mag	Size
.30 caliber machine gun	2d10	20	Ballistic	100 ft	A	47 box/97 drum	L
.50 caliber machine gun	2d12	20	Ballistic	110 ft	A	Linked	H
7.7 mm machine gun	2d8	20	Ballistic	660 ft	A	Linked	H
20 mm cannon	3d12	20	Ballistic	150 ft	A	Linked	H
88 mm cannon	12d12	20	Ballistic	150 ft	A	Linked	H
G7A torpedo	4d10x100	20*		3k ft	Single	Single tube	L

CHAPTER SIX:

PULP GAMING RULES

This chapter is devoted to optional d20 rules that can lend a pulp feel to your campaigns. Use of these rules, as is usually the case, is at the discretion of the individual Game Master.

VILLAINS, HENCHMEN, MINIONS & MOOKS

Villains in pulp RPG should be the equal (and preferably more powerful) than the PCs. They are the equivalent of the Evil Wizard or the Dragon in fantasy d20 -- the big threat, the focus of the adventure. As such, they are created as Heroic characters, as described in the Modern d20 rules.

A Villain will typically have one prized Lieutenant (occasionally more, but usually one). In THRILLING TALES, we refer to this character as the Henchman. Henchmen are the “level bosses” of the game--they are also created as Heroic characters. The Henchman will usually be encountered by the PCs long before they ever get to the Villain...occasionally before they even realize that the Villain exists!

Minions are the rank-and-file of the Villain's loyal subordinates who follow his orders. They are created as Ordinary characters, as described on the Modern d20 rules.

The ability to attract Minions is a class ability of the Mastermind Advanced Class, bestowed at 1st level. For that reason, most pulp villains should have a level of Mastermind.

A GM can decide instead

to bestow this ability to all Villains, in which case it differs slightly from the Mastermind class ability. Use the table for Minion determination in the Mastermind class description, but with the following alteration: Non-Mastermind Villains have non-replaceable minions.

Mooks are a new type of character for THRILLING TALES. They are the level below Ordinaries. Mooks are the faceless cannon-fodder who get thrown at the PCs in combat. Use the 1st level Minion entry on the Minion table to determine the number of Mooks that a Villain has available per adventure. Mooks are renewable for every villain, regardless of class.

Mooks have:

- * Entirely Average ability scores (every score is 10 or 11, giving a +0 bonus)
- * No hit points. If they are hit, they're down (either dead or unconscious, depending upon



the attack used).

- * No action points.

- * No class features.

- * No levels in any advanced class

- * 1 level only in one of the Basic Classes.

The primary purpose of the Mook is as cannon fodder. The Villain will throw these at the PCs in an effort to slow their progress, with the off chance that one or more Mooks might get lucky and do some damage.

Mooks do not have to be limited to only the service of a Villain. If a GM wants to, he or she can throw Mooks at the PCs in any situation where a large-scale combat is called for. A Fortune Hunter, for example, might face a horde of cannibals, all of whom are Mooks, led by an Ordinary. A Man of Mystery might find himself ambushed by Mook gangsters completely unrelated to the current Villain, who are simply taking the opportunity to strike at someone who has plagued their operations!

STUNTS & ACTION POINTS

Action points are a useful part of Modern d20 play, giving players the ability to alter rolls in dramatic situations. In a pulp campaign, players should have access to more action points than they would under the normal rules. This is addressed by stunts.

Any character who attempts a stunt action should be rewarded with 1 temporary action point. Temporary action points are spent just like regular action points, but must be spent during that adventure. They do not carry over between adventures.

What is a stunt action? A stunt action is any action which is performed in a flashier manner than one would normally observe. Get on board a train before it pulls out of the station is an action. Leaping from a moving car onto a moving train is a



stunt action, and should be rewarded.

In game terms, a stunt is an action where the player purposefully makes the action more difficult for themselves. In the above example, the player would have had the option to get on board the train, but instead announced that the character had gotten there too late, and instead described the stunt action. In a way, the player is taking on the role of the GM for a moment, changing the situation for his or her character in such a way that a more difficult solution is required.

A stunt action should always require a roll, at a minimum DC of 15. The GM is the final arbiter of the DC of a particular stunt action. Pulling off Impossible stunts (DC 40) may even result in the character earning more than 1 temporary action point, at the GM's discretion.

QUIPS, SOLILOQUIES & GLOATING

Characters in pulp stories are a talkative bunch. Heroes and villains always seem to have time to banter back and forth, even in the midst of combat! To reflect this, any character may speak during a round as a free action.

In addition, one of the familiar recurring elements of pulp stories is the propensity for villains to spill their guts and tell the hero every detail of their plan, once they think they're in the clear.

To reflect this, any villain who has captured the hero (or otherwise is in a situation where they feel that there is no way that their plan can be stopped) must make a Will save at DC 35 to avoid revealing their entire plan. If the save is made, but the roll was still within 5 of the DC, the villain will still reveal some (but not all) of the plan. The temptation to gloat is simply too irresistible.

"CALLING ALL CARS..."

One common element of the pulps (and the cliff-hanger serials which drew upon the pulps for inspiration) is the near-instantaneous police response to any dramatic crime situation.

To reflect this in your pulp-genre d20 campaigns, we've come up with the "Calling All Cars" rule.

In the event of any combat or chase in a metropolitan area (town or city), have the players make a d20 roll for police response.

The DC of the roll is based on the size of the metropolitan area, modified as follows:

Metro Area	DC
Rural, or outskirts	25
Small Town	20
Large Town	18
Small City	15
Large City	12

Modifiers To The Roll

Witnesses	+1
10 or more Witnesses	+2
Armed Combat	+2
Vehicle Chase	+1
Property Damage	+1
Casualties	+2
Police On the Lookout	+3

If the roll fails, but falls within 3 of the DC, Police

are "on the lookout" for the perpetrators, and any future events during the adventure session receive the "Police on the Lookout" +3 bonus.

If the roll meets or exceeds the DC, the Cops are coming.

The police arrive within a period of time set by the size of the metro area:

Metro Area	Police Arrive in...
Rural or Outskirts	3d20 rounds
Small Town	3d12 rounds
Large Town	3d10 rounds
Small City	2d10 rounds
Large City	1d10 rounds

Police arrive in the following numbers:

Metro Area	Number of Cops
Rural or Outskirts	1d4
Small Town	1d6
Large Town	2d6
Small City	2d8
Large City	2d10

It is up to the GM to determine if more cops come in additional waves, etc. -- depending upon the severity of the situation and the needs of the plot.

HEROIC ESCAPE

Another common thread of the cliffhanger serials is the heroic escape -- the hero faces certain death at the end of each Chapter, but at the beginning of the next Chapter, we see how the hero in fact escaped at the last second.

Gamemasters interested in emulating that particular facet of the genre can make use of the following rule:

Heroes can spend Action Points to avoid certain death. This can be used to get out of any situation where the character's death would occur -- traps, vehicle crashes, or even standard combat.

For the character to make a Heroic Escape costs a number of Action Points equal to the half the

character's total level, rounding up.

These points can be spent **AFTER** the character death has occurred. (The "audience" has just seen the character die....but wait! That's not what *really* happened....) The player comes up with a way that the hero escaped certain death, no matter how far-fetched, and play proceeds from that point.

Heroic Escapes may only occur once per game session (assuming that your character has accumulated enough Action Points).

At the discretion of the Gamemaster, this ability can also be made available to Villains, although it should be reserved for major villains only (perhaps those intended to be recurring villains).

PRETTY PLEASE?

Relationships can get complicated in a world of Mobsters, G-men, and Men of Mystery. The Green Falcon may have a grudging respect for mob boss Marco Marciano, but can't stand his activities. The core book has skills for Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive, while this book adds Bargain and Seduction into the mix. How do you know which one to use?

Most social interactions start with Diplomacy. Generally, one uses Diplomacy to either persuade someone to do something for them, or to negotiate terms that both sides can agree to.

Negotiations are resolved using opposed Diplomacy checks. Once a negotiation is agreed upon, a character may try to sweeten his side of the deal with a Bargain check. In the case of an extra favor or perk, the GM can simply determine how many wealth levels it's worth. Typical sales transactions bypass the Diplomacy check entirely, relying on Bargain to set a new price.

The art of persuasion is another matter. Generally, the character is asking someone to go out of their way for them. While Diplomacy is usually the first skill on deck, there are times when other skills are more appropriate.

Example: Gumshoe Rex Derringer wants to get into an exclusive club without an invitation. He has a variety of options to deal with Joey the Bouncer. First, Rex could make a Diplomacy check, perhaps accompanied with a bribe, to hopefully change Joey's attitude to Helpful. Second, Rex can Intimidate Joey, either through threat of force (patting the gun in his shoulder holster) or blackmail ("I can't come in? Gee, I guess I'll have to slip this photo of you and the mayor's daughter into the mail, then"). Third, Rex can use Bluff to momentarily distract Joey long enough for a sucker punch. Finally, Rex can simply attack the Bouncer.

The important thing to consider about Diplomacy is that it only works once. If you can't change the target's attitude with a single roll, then you'll have to use another skill. Intimidate is the usual method of getting someone to help you who otherwise wouldn't. Intimidate cannot be used in place of Diplomacy for Seduction, as Seduction requires that the target believe he has some choice in the matter.

Sense Motive is usually used to call a Bluff, but it can also be used on Seduction attempts (see the Seduction description). Sense Motive can also be used to assess relationships in a room.

YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A BOOK ON ANCIENT HITTITE SORCERY?

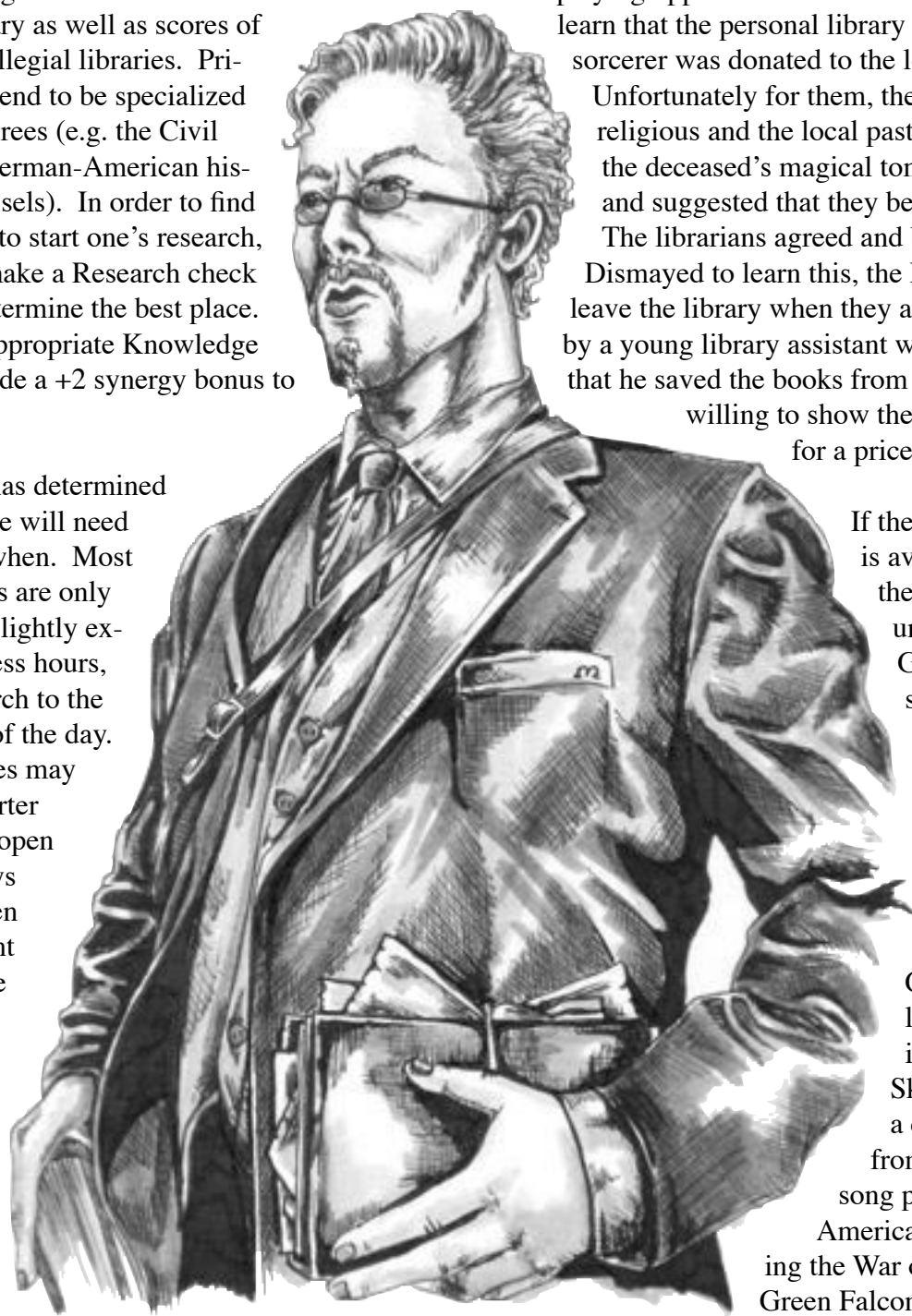
Information flows so easily in the postmodern era that it's easy to forget how difficult research was in the pulp era. Early twentieth century research required hours or days of poring through books, journals, and newspapers in a library, often with the help of assistants and a knowledgeable librarian or two. The social mores of the time also prevented libraries from stocking some books. Finally, libraries were finite resources, and a good fire could wipe out decades worth of old magazines. While pulp adventures rarely get bogged down in libraries, entertaining encounters can be crafted just from hunting down information.

The first thing a PC needs to figure out when doing research is decide where to start. PCs with the

Extensive Library feat may wish to consult their own resources, but a home library might be convenient if the current adventure is taking place in a foreign country thousands of miles away. A typical city might have several branches of its public library as well as scores of private and collegial libraries. Private libraries tend to be specialized to varying degrees (e.g. the Civil War library, German-American history, naval vessels). In order to find the best place to start one's research, a PC should make a Research check (DC 10) to determine the best place. PCs with an appropriate Knowledge skill can provide a +2 synergy bonus to this check.

Once the PC has determined where to go, he will need to determine when. Most public libraries are only open during (slightly extended) business hours, limiting research to the working part of the day. Private libraries may have even shorter hours and are open only a few days a week (or even by appointment only). College libraries tend to have longer hours for the convenience of students. Virtually all libraries are closed on Sunday. PCs can use

Diplomacy or Intimidation to convince a librarian to allow him to stay past closing or to open the doors when the library is closed (provided the PC can confront the librarian).



When the PC accesses a library, the GM will have to determine whether the information sought for exists in the chosen library. This is largely the GM's call, although it can provide interesting roleplaying opportunities. For example, the PCs learn that the personal library of a deceased sorcerer was donated to the local library.

Unfortunately for them, the town is very religious and the local pastor condemned the deceased's magical tomes as Satanic and suggested that they be destroyed.

The librarians agreed and burned them.

Dismayed to learn this, the PCs prepare to leave the library when they are approached by a young library assistant who tells them that he saved the books from burning and is willing to show them to the PCs, for a price.

If the information is available, then the next step is to uncover it. The GM should assign a DC based on the obscurity of the information and the type of library being used to find it. For example, the Green Falcon learns that the insidious Yellow Skull is using a code derived from a marching

song popular among American soldiers during the War of 1812. If the Green Falcon goes to the town public library, finding

the few books available that reference it could be a formidable (DC 25) or heroic (DC 30) task. If the Green Falcon went to a military library, there may be an entire book devoted to marching songs, dropping the DC to 5 or 10.

There are two ways for a PC to find information in a library. The first method is to look for it himself, using his own knowledge and the card catalogue (assuming he can read/write the default language of the library). The PC makes a Research check against the DC of the information. He may add his Knowledge synergy bonus, if applicable. The second (and usually more common) method is to ask a librarian for assistance. Librarians are generally knowledgeable about the information contained in their own library and can point the PC in the right direction. A librarian uses his own Research skill, but will uncover information in far less time (at the GM's discretion, having a PC simply ask for the appropriate section in the library can cut down on the time involved researching). If the librarian is doing the searching, then the DC of the information may be lowered. Finally, even if the library doesn't have the information, a librarian may be able to tell the PC where to go to find it.

Obviously, asking for help saves time, but it also opens up the PC's research to another's eyes, especially if the information sought is unusual. Sometimes, this can work in the PC's favor ("you need to find a book on Cherokee burial customs? That's strange. You're the second person in two days who's asked about that"), but it can just as easily work against them. Librarians can be bribed or coaxed into revealing the book lists of patrons.

Public librarians are generally Friendly or Helpful, based on how busy they are at the time. Private librarians can run the gamut. Some are a bit snobbish about who has access to their collection and may even test a browsing patron to gauge his level of knowledge. Patrons who pass the test could get a Friendly or even Helpful reaction from the librarian, while others could get an Indifferent reaction ("oh very well, here are the books. I'll be in the other room if you really need me") to Unfriendly ("now why is a big palooka like you interested in 1600s fashion?") to Hostile ("yes, I know the sign says 'noon to 3,' but I have a 1:30 appointment and I can't leave the library open. Please leave!"). All librarians, public and private, will drop in attitude if the PC acts inappropriately.

Even if the PC doesn't use a librarian, the mere fact of his presence can draw attention to himself. Any character that spends a lot of time at a table with a stack of books on ancient Greek pottery will attract the attention of a librarian or patron with a similar interest (possibly leading to a tip-off later). This attention can also work in the PC's favor. Perhaps Dr. Egghead doesn't want to talk to the PCs about his regeneration research, but the PCs may find his assistant pouring through science articles on lizard regeneration in the university library. He may be more willing to talk.

Libraries are social places and the PC may find knowledgeable experts, even if the library itself lacks the information. This is more relevant in private or specialized libraries, which tend to attract patrons of similar interests. For example, the Green Falcon walks into the military library looking for War of 1812 sheet music. Unfortunately, while the library has voluminous information on the American Revolution and Civil War, there is little information on the War of 1812. The Green Falcon is about to leave when he notices another patron asking about Civil War sheet music. Striking up a conversation, the Green Falcon learns that the patron is composing a book of American military songs, and he has an extensive collection of them at home. He'd be happy to show them to him.

Libraries are also great places for casual, coincidental contact. Did the PCs miss an opportunity to ask an NPC a critical question? Give them a second chance, as the NPC just happens to be returning books while the PC is there. Want to give the PCs another clue? Have the PCs overhear a conversation between two of the villain's goons as they tail a potential victim who's using the library.

In sum, a PC's research should be a lot more than just "make a Research check." Used properly, a PC's research can help advance the plot of the adventure.

RUNNING BOARDS, RUMBLE SEATS AND CONVERTIBLES.

Pulp era vehicles have two features that are unfamiliar to modern automobile drivers, running boards and rumble seats. A running board is a ledge on the outside of the car that acts as a step for entering and exiting the vehicle (many modern trucks and vans still have this feature). The running board is famous in pulp fiction for being a platform for Tommy-Gun toting mobsters. Using a running board in this manner is covered under the Balance skill as described in Chapter 3.

A rumble seat is a seat that folded down into the back of a vehicle like a reverse trunk. When opened, the rumble seat could accommodate one or two people. Unlike the other car seats, the rumble seat was always exposed to the elements. Characters sitting in the rumble seat should be treated as being in a top-down convertible in combat situations.

Most early pulp era vehicles were convertibles or had ragtops. If the occupants are targeted, they may receive lessened Hardness protection. Ragtops provide 2 Hardness and 1 Hit Point of protection. Open convertibles provide no protection at all, and characters exposed to the elements (usually anyone not in the front seats) receive a -2 circumstance penalty to their actions.

AERIAL COMBAT

Airplanes are as much a symbol of the pulp era as zeppelins. Many pulps were devoted to Air Aces having adventures in custom airplanes engaging in dogfights and flying in and out of dangerous situations. The following rules expand on the vehicle rules in the core book, adapted for aerial maneuvers.

The basic premise behind aerial combat is simple: you need to get behind your opponent to pepper him with bullets while he is unable to attack you (this tactic can get more complicated as tail guns are introduced). As a result, most aerial maneuvers are designed to keep you in an offensive position or get you out of a defensive position.

Simplified Aerial Combat

For GMs who don't wish to map out an entire aerial combat, there is an easy option. If there are only two combatants, have each make opposed Pilot checks. The winner (ties don't count) may attack the loser for that round. The process is repeated every round.

If there are multiple combatants, the checks are slightly more complicated. Each combatant must designate a target (it is possible for multiple com-

Table: Air Vehicle Speeds and Modifiers

Speed Category	Character Scale		Chase Scale		Defense Modifier	Check/Roll Modifier
	Movement ¹	Turn Number ²	Movement ¹	Turn Number ²		
All-out	151-200	8	16-20	2	+4	-4
Super	201-250	16	21-25	3	+5	-5
Ultra	251+	32	26+	3	+6	-6

¹ The number of squares a vehicle can move at this speed.

² The number of squares a vehicle must move at this speed before making a turn.

All-Out: The vehicle is traveling extremely fast, 80-113 miles per hour.

Super: The vehicle is traveling super fast, 114-141 miles per hour.

Ultra: The vehicle is traveling super fast, 142+ miles per hour.



batants to choose the same target). All combatants then make Pilot checks. Any combatant who beats his target's Pilot check may attack the target that round.

Example: Two of the Blue Knight's biplanes are pursuing the Condor. At the beginning of the round, BK-1 and BK-2 designate the Condor as their target. The Condor designates BK-2. All three roll their checks. BK-1 rolls a 19, BK-2 rolls a 17, and the Condor rolls a 21. During the round, The Condor attacks BK-2. Even though the Condor beat BK-1, he may not attack him since he did not declare BK-1 as his target.

Should a combatant attempt to flee then any plane that targets him may continue to follow. The GM should compare vehicle speeds and machine gun ranges to see if the fleeing combatant can get out of range.

If a combatant plan has a separate tail gunner, then

the tail gunner may choose any target and fire on it, regardless of the position of his airplane.

Standard Combat

Three Dimensional Combat: There are two key differences between aerial combat and ground combat. First, fighting takes place in three dimensions without a common plane of reference. Second, gravity plays a much larger role. The following rules are designed to help GMs create exciting aerial dogfights.

While technology can generate 3D models for GMs and players to map out their combats, I'm certain that the majority of gaming groups still use the trusty 2D map board. One way to emulate differing heights on a 2D map is to use a set of poker chips. I generally use two colors. The GM determines what height is "default" (if ground forces are involved this is easy, otherwise, the GM should choose a height that most of the airplanes are on). Use one color of chips to denote how many squares an airplane is above the default plane, and another color for how many squares it is below the default plane. Simply stack the chips below the marker for the airplane.

Due to the nature of 3D combat, it's possible for more than one airplane to be in the same square (just higher or lower in the stack). I've found that the most aesthetically pleasing method to use in this case is to only place the highest elevated marker on the stack, and use a third color poker chip to represent an airplane at a lower level).

For simplicity's sake, most of the vehicle maneuvers in the core book can be translated as aerial maneuvers, except that the airplane can move in three dimensions. A Pilot check should be substituted for a Drive check in all cases. If the pilot ever decreases altitude, add 2 to the airplane's movement (character scale). This reflects working with gravity, rather than against it.

Simple Maneuvers

During an airplane's movement, the pilot can perform any one of the following maneuvers without

the need for a Pilot check.

45-Degree Turn: As per the core book, except that the airplane may also ascend (climb) or descend (dive) 45 degrees. Climbing in this manner is usually called a chandelle.

Ram: In the air, this is effectively a suicide maneuver. However, if the ramming airplane is built of sterner stuff than the target, it may be effective.

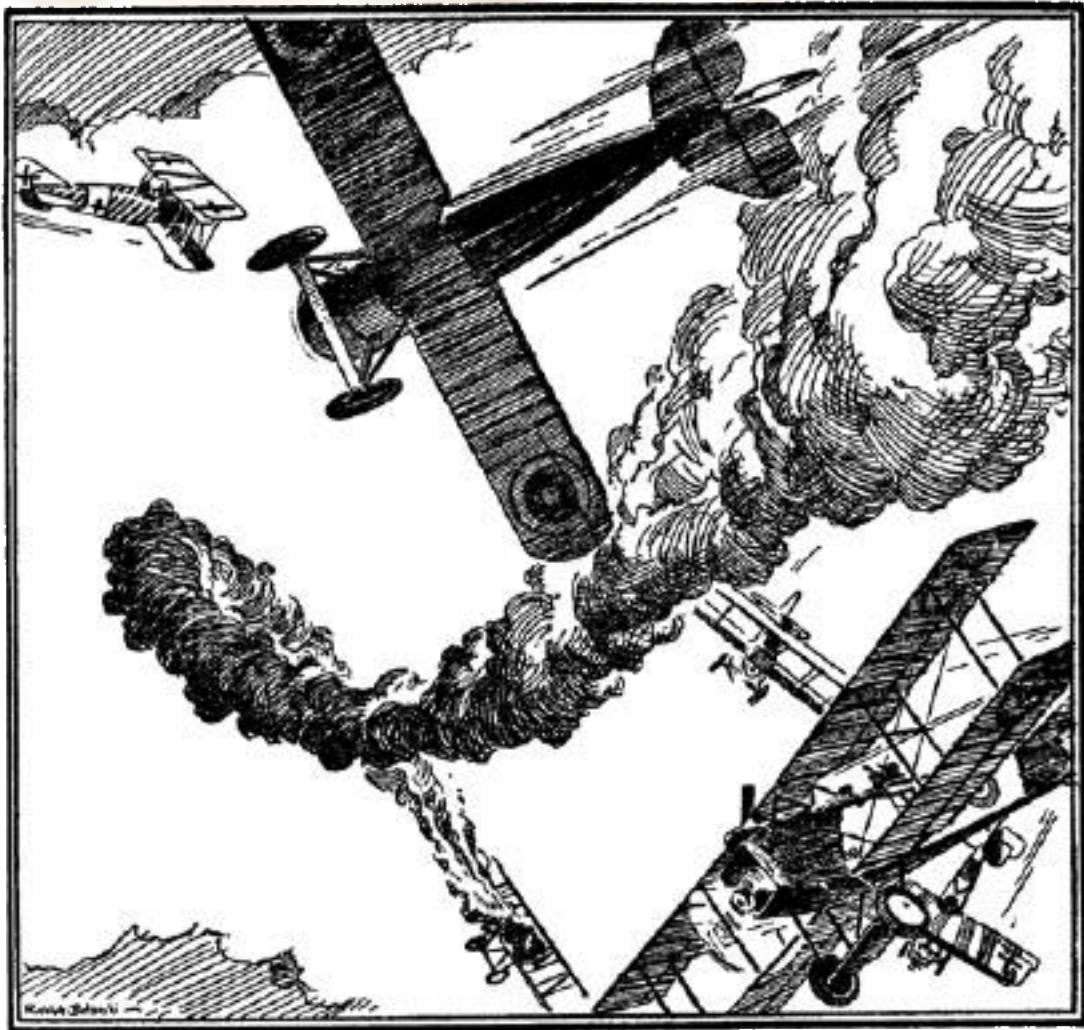
Sideslip: As per the core book.

Stunts

Stunts are maneuvers that require a Pilot check to perform successfully. Unsuccessful stunts often result in the airplane ending up someplace other than where the pilot intended. You can never take 10 or 20 when performing an aerial stunt.

Avoid Hazard: As per the core book. Usually, there aren't many hazards in the air, but airplanes flying through dangerous conditions (ravines or valleys) or at low levels (tops of buildings, silos), may find obstacles to avoid. Barnstorming (or also tunnel-running) can be attempted, but the DC would be 20+. A failed check on barnstorming would result in a collision as per the Sideswipe stunt.

Loop: The pilot can make a number of 45-degree turns in a loop in succession. It takes eight turns to complete a full loop (and remain facing in the same direction), or four turns to complete a half loop (and face the opposite direction). At the completion of a half loop, the pilot must perform a roll



maneuver to invert the airplane (either before or after the loop). An inside loop (nose up) requires a Pilot check (DC 10), while an outside loop (nose down) requires a Pilot check (DC 15).

Roll: The pilot can flip his airplane over and back again on the horizontal axis. A half roll is required to simply invert the airplane. A half roll requires a Pilot check (DC 10) and a full roll requires a Pilot check (DC 15).

Barrel Roll: The Barrel roll combines a loop with a sideslip. It is designed to cut the distance traveled and force the attacker to pass you. A barrel roll takes six moves to complete and requires a Pilot check (DC 15).

Dash: As per core book.

Hard Brake: As per core book.

Hard Turn: As per core book.

Sideswipe: As per core book. Like the ram, this can be a suicidal maneuver in the air.

Collisions and Ramming

Collisions and ramming are conducted as per the core book. If the fastest speed is Super or Ultra, use a d20 for damage die type.

If an airplane is falling, it adds 2 to its Movement (Character Scale) every turn from the acceleration. This may have the effect of increasing its Speed Category (along with all related modifiers) while it hurtles toward the ground). GMs using Chase scale should keep track and add 1 for every 5 times this happens.

Losing Control

A collision or a failed stunt can cause a pilot to lose control of his airplane. In these cases, the pilot must make a Pilot check (DC 15) to retain control of the airplane. If this check is successful, the pilot maintains control of the vehicle. If it fails, the airplane stalls. If it fails by 10 or more, the airplane spins.

An out-of-control vehicle may strike an object, another airplane, and, eventually, the ground. When that happens, a collision occurs (see Collisions and Ramming, above).

Stall: A failed stunt can result in a stall (this is different than an engine stall, which essentially turns the airplane into a glider). The pilot needs to regain control of the airplane or it may crash. The pilot may continue to make

a Pilot check each round until he regains control. If he ever fails by 10 or more (or rolls a natural 1), then the plane falls into a spin.

Spin: When the airplane spins, the nose tips downward and the airplane spirals toward the ground, out of control (and increasing speed). If the pilot succeeds in regaining control, he should roll a 1d8 to determine the airplane's new facing: 1, no change; 2, right 45 degrees; 3, right 90 degrees; 4, right 135 degrees; 5, 180 degrees; 6, left 135 degrees; 7, left 90 degrees; 8, left 45 degrees. Reorient the vehicle accordingly.

Hide and Seek

Airplanes can gain the benefit of the Concealment Miss Chance (see corebook) if they are flying through clouds or at night (night is a risky proposition in the early days of aviation). The GM should apply an appropriate miss chance based on the thickness of the clouds.



TRAPS

Traps are the bane of Fortune Hunters everywhere. Ancient tombs and temples are littered with them, and failure to anticipate them has cut many a Fortune Hunter's career short. This section is designed to provide information on the most common types of traps a Fortune Hunter could expect when plundering...err, exploring, an ancient site.

The traps discussed here are purely mechanical. Superscience and magical traps are best left to the F/X rules of the core book and are beyond the scope covered here. Mechanical traps include pits, arrow traps, falling blocks, water-filled rooms, whirling blades, and anything else that depends on a mechanism to operate.

A trap typically is defined by its location and triggering conditions, how hard it is to spot before it goes off, how much damage it deals, and whether or not the heroes receive a saving throw to mitigate its effects. Traps that attack with arrows, sweeping blades, and other types of weaponry make normal attack rolls, with a specific attack bonus dictated by the trap's design.

Characters who succeed on a DC 20 Search check detect a simple mechanical trap before it is triggered. (A simple trap is a snare, a trap triggered by a tripwire, or a large trap such as a pit.)

A character with the Anticipate Trap class feature (see the **Fortune Hunter** Advanced Class) that succeeds on a DC 21 (or higher) Search check detects a well-hidden or complex mechanical trap before it is triggered. Complex traps are denoted by their triggering mechanisms and involve pressure plates, mechanisms linked to doors, changes in weight, disturbances in the air, vibrations, and other sorts of unusual triggers.

Elements of a Trap

All traps have the following elements: trigger, reset, Search DC, Disable Device DC, attack bonus (or saving throw or onset delay), damage/effect, and Challenge Rating. Some traps may also include optional elements, such as poison or a bypass. These characteristics are described below.

TRIGGER

A trap's trigger determines how it is sprung.

Location: A location trigger springs a trap when someone stands in a particular square.



Proximity: This trigger activates the trap when a creature approaches within a certain distance of it. A proximity trigger differs from a location trigger in that the creature need not be standing in a particular square. A flying Rocket Ranger can spring a trap with a proximity trigger but not one with a location trigger. Mechanical proximity triggers are extremely sensitive to the slightest change in the air. This makes them useful only in places such as crypts, where the air is unusually still.

Touch: A touch trigger, which springs the trap when touched, is one of the simplest kinds of trigger to construct. This trigger may be physically attached to the part of the mechanism that deals the damage or it may not.

RESET

A reset element is the set of conditions under which a trap becomes ready to trigger again.

No Reset: Short of completely rebuilding the trap, there's no way to trigger it more than once.

Repair: To get the trap functioning again, you must repair it.

Manual: Resetting the trap requires someone to move the parts back into place. This is the kind of reset element most mechanical traps have.

BYPASS (*Optional Element*)

If the builder of a trap wants to be able to move past the trap after it is created or placed, it's a good idea to build in a bypass mechanism — something that temporarily disarms the trap. Bypass elements are typically used only with mechanical traps; spell traps usually have built-in allowances for the caster to bypass them.

Lock: A lock bypass requires a DC 30 Disable Device check to open.

Hidden Switch: A hidden switch requires a DC 25 Search check to locate.

Hidden Lock: A hidden lock combines the features

above, requiring a DC 25 Search check to locate and a DC 30 Disable Device check to open.

Puzzle Trap: The trap will be disabled if the proper sequence is followed. Normally, this requires a DC 25 Knowledge (Cryptography) check, although the GM may modify the DC based on the complexity of the puzzle and the hints already given to the character(s) trying to solve it.

SEARCH AND DISABLE DEVICE DCS

The builder sets the Search and Disable Device DCs for a mechanical trap. The base DC for both Search and Disable Device checks is 20. Raising or lowering either of these DCs affects the CR (Table: CR Modifiers for Mechanical Traps).

ATTACK BONUS/SAVING THROW DC

A trap usually either makes an attack roll or forces a saving throw to avoid it. Occasionally a trap uses both of these options, or neither (see Never Miss).

Pits: These are holes (covered or not) that characters can fall into and take damage. A pit needs no attack roll, but a successful Reflex save (DC set by the builder) avoids it. Other save-dependent mechanical traps also fall into this category.

Pits in dungeons come in three basic varieties: uncovered, covered, and chasms. Pits and chasms can be defeated by judicious application of Climb, Jump, or Tumble checks.

Uncovered pits serve mainly to discourage intruders from going a certain way, although they cause much grief to characters that stumble into them in the dark, and they can greatly complicate a fight taking place nearby.

Covered pits are much more dangerous. They can be detected with a DC 20 Search check, but only if the character is taking the time to carefully examine the area before walking across it. A character that fails to detect a covered pit is still entitled to a DC 20 Reflex save to avoid falling into it. However, if she was running or moving recklessly at the time, she gets no saving throw and falls automatically.

Trap coverings can be as simple as piled refuse (straw, leaves, sticks, garbage), a large rug, or an actual trapdoor concealed to appear as a normal part of the floor. Such a trapdoor usually swings open when enough weight (usually about 50 to 80 pounds) is placed upon it. Devious trap builders sometimes design trapdoors so that they spring back shut after they open. The trapdoor might lock once it's back in place, leaving the stranded character well and truly trapped. Opening such a trapdoor is just as difficult as opening a regular door (assuming the trapped character can reach it), and a DC 13 Strength check is needed to keep a spring-loaded door open.



Pit traps often have something nastier than just a hard floor at the bottom. A trap designer may put spikes, creatures (snakes are a favorite), or a pool of acid, lava, or even water at the bottom.

Creatures sometimes live in pits. Any creature that can fit into the pit might have been placed there by the trap's designer, or might simply have fallen in and not been able to climb back out.

A secondary trap at the bottom of a pit can be particularly deadly. Activated by a falling victim, the secondary trap attacks the already injured character when she's least ready for it.

Ranged Attack Traps: These traps fling darts, arrows, spears, or the like at whoever activated the trap. The builder sets the attack bonus. A ranged attack trap can be configured to simulate the effect of a compound bow with a high strength rating which provides the trap with a bonus on damage equal to its strength rating.

Melee Attack Traps: These traps feature such obstacles as sharp blades that emerge from walls and stone blocks that fall from ceilings. Once again, the builder sets the attack bonus.

Entrapment Traps: These traps attempt to cut off access doors or otherwise change the shape of the walls. The GM should set a DC and appropriate skill to overcome these traps once sprung. Example: A sprung trap results in a wall coming up out of the floor, threatening to trap the characters. The GM rules that the characters must make a DC 20 Jump check to leap over the wall before it meets the ceiling.

DAMAGE/EFFECT

The effect of a trap is what happens to those who spring it. Usually this takes the form of either damage or a spell effect, but some traps have special effects.

Pits: Falling into a pit deals 1d6 points of damage per 10 feet of depth.

Ranged Attack Traps: These traps deal whatever damage their ammunition normally would. If a trap

is constructed with a high strength rating, it has a corresponding bonus on damage.

Melee Attack Traps: These traps deal the same damage as the melee weapons they “wield.” In the case of a falling stone block, you can assign any amount of bludgeoning damage you like, but remember that whoever resets the trap has to lift that stone back into place.

A melee attack trap can be constructed with a built-in bonus on damage rolls, just as if the trap itself had a high Strength score.

Special: Some traps have miscellaneous features that produce special effects, such as drowning for a water trap or ability damage for poison. Saving throws and damage depend on the poison or are set by the builder, as appropriate.

MISCELLANEOUS TRAP FEATURES

Some traps include optional features that can make them considerably more deadly. The most common such features are discussed below.

Gas: With a gas trap, the danger is in the inhaled poison it delivers. Traps employing gas usually have the never miss and onset delay features (see below).

Liquid: Any trap that involves a danger of drowning is in this category. Traps employing liquid usually have the never miss and onset delay features (see below).

Multiple Target: Traps with this feature can affect more than one character.

Never Miss: When the entire wall or building moves to crush you, your quick reflexes won’t help, since the wall can’t possibly miss. A trap with this feature has neither an attack bonus nor a saving throw to avoid, but it does have an onset delay (see below). Most traps involving liquid or gas are of the never miss variety.

Onset Delay: An onset delay is the amount of time between when the trap is sprung and when it deals

damage. A never miss trap always has an onset delay. This is a popular pulp feature for ancient sites that have a tendency to start crumbling from within after the climax. Characters need to stay a step ahead of the crumbling (in these cases, the onset delay is longer the further away you get from the center).

Poison: Traps that employ poison are deadlier than their nonpoisonous counterparts, so they have correspondingly higher CRs. To determine the CR modifier for a given poison, consult Table: CR Modifiers for Traps. Only injury, contact, and inhaled poisons are suitable for traps; ingested types are not. Some traps simply deal the poison’s damage. Others deal damage with ranged or melee attacks as well.

Pit Spikes: Treat spikes at the bottom of a pit as knives, each with a +10 attack bonus. The damage bonus for each spike is +1 per 10 feet of pit depth (to a maximum of +5). 1d4 spikes attack each character that falls into the pit. Pit spikes do not add to the average damage of the trap (see Average Damage, below).

Pit Bottom: If something other than spikes waits at the bottom of a pit, it’s best to treat that as a separate trap (see Multiple Traps, below) with a location trigger that activates on any significant impact, such as a falling character.

Puzzle Only: The trap cannot be disabled, only solved.

Touch Attack: This feature applies to any trap that needs only a successful touch attack (melee or ranged) to hit.

Designing a Trap

Simply select the elements you want the trap to have and add up the adjustments to the trap's Challenge Rating that those elements require (see Table: CR Modifiers for Traps) to arrive at the trap's final CR. From the CR you can derive the DC of the Craft (mechanical) checks a character must make to construct the trap.

Challenge Rating of a Trap

To calculate the Challenge Rating of a trap, add all the CR modifiers (see the tables below) to the base CR for the trap type.

Mechanical Trap: The base CR for a mechanical trap is 0. If your final CR is 0 or lower, add features until you get a CR of 1 or higher.

Average Damage: If a trap does hit point damage, calculate the average damage for a successful hit and round that value to the nearest multiple of 7. Use this value to adjust the Challenge Rating of the trap, as indicated on the tables below. Damage from poisons and pit spikes do not count toward this value, but damage from a high strength rating and extra damage from multiple attacks does.

Multiple Traps: If a trap is really two or more connected traps that affect approximately the same area, determine the CR of each one separately.

Multiple Dependent Traps: If one trap depends on the success of the other (that is, you can avoid the second trap altogether by not falling victim to the first), they must be treated as separate traps.

Multiple Independent Traps: If two or more traps act independently (that is, none depends on the success of another to activate), use their CRs to determine their combined Encounter Level as though they were monsters. The resulting Encounter Level is the CR for the combined traps.

Table: CR Modifiers for Traps

Feature	CR Modifier
Search DC	15 or lower -1
	25–29 +1
	30 or higher +2
Disable Device DC	
	15 or lower -1
	25–29 +1
	30 or higher +2
Reflex Save DC (Pit or Other Save-Dependent Trap)	
	15 or lower -1
	16–24 —
	25–29 +1
	30 or higher +2
Attack Bonus (Melee or Ranged Attack Trap)	
	+0 or lower -2
	+1 to +5 -1
	+6 to +14 —
	+15 to +19 +1
	+20 to +24 +2
Damage/Effect	
Average damage	+1/7 points
Miscellaneous Features	
Liquid	+5
Multiple target	+1
	+0 if Never Miss
Onset delay 1 round	+3
Onset delay 2 rounds	+2
Onset delay 3 rounds	+1
Onset delay 4+ rounds	-1
Poison	CR of poison
Pit spikes	+1
Touch attack	+1

CHAPTER SEVEN:

PULP VILLAINS

The pulps were a time of stalwart heroes, larger-than-life characters who would, in time, give birth to the archetype of the modern superhero. It was a time of stark contrasts: Good vs. Evil on a grand scale.

For every hero, there were dozens of villains. The villains were often a never-ending supply of run-of-the-mill gangsters and crooks, ready to be defeated on a monthly basis, sandwiched between lurid, brightly-colored covers, and sold for a dime. On occasion, however, other villains appeared. Villains as fantastic as the heroes they confounded. Villains that were nearly equal to the heroes in power and in their uniqueness.

These are the villains that we remember.

The hordes of cookie-cutter crooks fade into obscurity, but the arch-fiends remain. Sherlock Holmes needs his Moriarty, after all. Doc Savage had his John Sunlight, and the Shadow had Shiwan Khan. Some villains became

so popular that they were given their own magazines, where they were the central character: The Insidious Wu Fang....The Octopus...Doctor Death.

The player-characters in your own pulp-era campaigns should face such threats. Don't give them an enemy to fight....Give them a Nemesis. The villains that appear in these pages will give you a good start, and your players will curse you for it!

In this chapter, we present several sample villains for you to use, as well as a system for designing Cults and Organizations.

A NOTE ON VILLAIN SURVIVAL:

Villains like these are too good to waste on a single story. Taking a page from the pulps,

Game masters should be prepared to bring a villain back, even when it seems impossible. If at all possible, make the villain's end have a bit of "wiggle-room": the body is never recovered, for example.



...and when the heroes ask "how did you survive

that?"

The villain should dismiss the question with a wave of his hand. "You cannot begin to comprehend the power at my disposal...."

DOCTOR SIN

Smart Villain 6, Mastermind 2, Mesmerist 5 CR 13; Medium-size human; HD 6d6+12, 2d10+4, 5d6+10; HP 63; Mas 14; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 18, touch 13, flatfooted 12 (+0 size, +1 Dex, +5 class); BAB +7; Grap +9; Atk +9 melee (1d4+2, martial arts), or +8 ranged (varies by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ Minions, Crime network, Hypnotic ability, Hypnotic Trance, Trick, Command Word, Lengthy Trance, Winning Smile; AL none; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +13; AP 13; Rep +8; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 17.

Occupation: Doctor (Craft [pharmaceutical], Knowledge [Behavioral Sciences])

Skills: Balance +7, Bluff +10, Climb +10, Concentration +4, Craft (chemical) +13, Craft (electronic) +13, Craft (mechanical) +9, Craft (pharmaceutical) +15, Decipher Script +8, Demolitions +9, Diplomacy +12, Disable Device +8, Disguise +12, Escape Artist +13, Forgery +10, Gather Information +8, Hide +9, Intimidate +12, Investigate +7, Jump +3, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) +12, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +18, Knowledge (Tactics) +9, Knowledge (Underworld) +10, Move Silently +5, Read/Write Language +4 (Chinese, English, German, Tibetan) Speak Language +4 (Chinese, English, German, Tibetan)

Feats: Combat Expertise, Combat Martial Arts, Defensive Martial Arts, Educated (Knowledge [Arcane Lore], Knowledge [Behavioral Sciences]), Frightful Presence, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Personal Firearms Proficiency

Talents (Smart Hero): Savant (Knowledge [Behavioral Sciences]), Exploit Weakness, Trick

Wealth: +13



Doctor Tsung-Chi Sin is known as the Devil of Chinatown. He is notorious for his skill as a Mesmerist and as a poisoner and torturer. He runs a criminal empire centered in the Chinatown district of the player-characters home city, where his influence extends into nearly every criminal enterprise. If it's illegal, and happening in the city, it is said that Doctor Sin has his fingers in it.

Doctor Sin is a cold, ruthless killer, with a voice like a silken strangling cord. He can be charming when he has to be, and relies upon lies and subterfuge as a matter of course. If backed into a corner, he will not hesitate to endanger innocents to cover his escape.

As a Mastermind, Doctor Sin has a vast army of minions at his disposal. These range from rank-and-file servants who perform mundane duties such as messengers, to specialists who are

secretly on the Doctor's payroll. Adventurers who are facing Doctor Sin should never be able to completely trust that the NPCs that they encounter are not part of the Devil of Chinatown's vast empire.

Most feared of all of Doctor Sin's minions are the cadre of fanatical assassins called the *Qing Ri* (pronounced "ching ree"). These are orphans from some of the worst slums on Earth, taken in by Sin as children and trained as the most efficient and remorseless killers the world has ever seen. A *Qing Ri* can be identified by heavy scarring where most of his right ear used to be: the final test of the assassin's dedication, which occurs during the "graduation ceremony" when the *Qing Ri* is 18, involves the prospective member having their right ear nailed to a ceremonial post. The *Qing Ri* is then handed a knife, with which to free himself. Any one who cries out is killed instantly by his brothers. Those who pass the test become full members of the brotherhood.

QING RI ASSASSINS

Fast Ordinary 2/Strong Ordinary 2 CR 4;
Medium-size humanoid; HD 2d8+2 plus 2d8+2;
HP 22; Mas 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 18,
touch 18, flatfooted 16 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +6 class);
BAB +3; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (2d6+2/19-20,
Qing Ri Paired Swords), or +5 ranged (2d6+0,
.357 Revolver); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL
Qing Ri Brotherhood; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0;
AP 2; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis
10, Cha 8.

Occupation: Criminal (Disable Device, Move Silently)



Skills: Balance +4, Climb +4, Disable Device +3, Drive +6, Escape Artist +5, Hide +7, Jump +4, Knowledge (Current Events) +2, Knowledge (Streetwise) +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +3, Move Silently +7, Profession +2, Read/Write Language +1 (English, Chinese), Sleight of Hand +4, Speak Language +1 (English, Chinese), Swim +3, Tumble +3

Feats: Combat Martial Arts, Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Two-Weapon Fighting

Possessions: *Qing Ri* Paired Swords, .357 Revolver

Note: The *Qing Ri* use a distinctive weapon: a pair of razor-sharp swords which they wield in both hands. They are similar in form and function to the Japanese katana.

ADVENTURE HOOKS:

- Doctor Sin has decided to expand his operations, allying himself with another force of evil: The Nazis. He has struck an arrangement: He will provide the Nazis with industrial secrets (which his operatives will steal), and in return, the Nazis will allow Sin to smuggle opium from New York to Los Angeles via their zeppelin, *Die Walkuriye*, which is making a promotional world-wide tour. The Nazis believe that helping the Devil of Chinatown spread his drugs throughout the United States will further weaken “a decadent and morally corrupt society”, leaving it ripe for Nazi takeover.

The Player-Characters will first enter the plot by investigating the theft of plans for a new aircraft. This will lead them to the thieves, and from there, to Doctor Sin and his Nazi accomplices.

- The Devil of Chinatown is using his powers of mesmerism to brainwash innocent people into committing crimes upon his behalf. A rash of crimes committed by normal, upstanding citizens alerts the Player-Characters to the problem. In each case, the perpetrator of the crime has had some connection with one of Doctor Sin’s front businesses (a housewife who has her husband’s suits pressed at a Chinatown laundry, a banker who ate lunch at a nearby Chinese restaurant, etc.) The trail will lead back to Doctor Sin.

- This option is best used after the Player-Characters have encountered Doctor Sin on at least one other adventure: The insidious Doctor has decided to remove a thorn from his side...and that thorn is the Player-Characters themselves!



Doctor Sin orders the *Qing Ri* to assassinate the heroes. In finest pulp fashion, the assassins will not simply walk up to the heroes on the street and shoot them, but will, of course, use bizarre methods: releasing a venomous snake, scorpion or spider into the character’s bedroom; setting elaborate traps that shoot poisoned darts; etc.

If these methods fail, the *Qing Ri* will then make a personal appearance, infiltrating the character’s inner sanctum, and striking like shadows in the night!

THE MASTER OF THE WORLD

Strong Villain 5/Smart Villain 4/Charismatic Villain 4 CR 13; Medium-size humanoid; HD 5d8+10 plus 4d6+8 plus 4d6+8; HP 77; Mas 14; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16, touch 16, flatfooted 15 (+0 size, +1 Dex, +5 class); BAB +9; Grap +12; Atk +12 melee (1d6+4/18-20, sword), or +10 ranged (2d4+0, Walther PPK); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL none; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +6; AP 6; Rep +6; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 16.

Occupation: Criminal (Disguise, Move Silently)

Skills: Bluff +8, Climb +6, Craft (electronic) +5, Craft (mechanical) +6, Decipher Script +8, Demolitions +5, Diplomacy +6, Disable Device +5, Disguise +16, Forgery +7, Gather Information +7, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +7, Jump +7, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) +13, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +6, Knowledge (Business) +6, Knowledge (Civics) +4, Knowledge (Current Events) +11, Knowledge (History) +5, Knowledge (Physical Sciences) +5, Knowledge (Streetwise) +12, Knowledge (Tactics) +11, Knowledge (Technology) +7, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +7, Listen +2, Move Silently +11, Navigate +5, Pilot +3, Profession +4, Read/Write Language +3 (English, Tibetan, German), Repair +6, Search +7, Sense Motive +1, Speak Language +3 (English, Tibetan, German), Spot +2, Swim +11, Tumble +3

Feats: Acrobatic, Alertness, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Athletic, Blind-Fight, Combat Expertise, Combat Martial Arts, Deceptive, Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot

Talents: (Strong Hero): Melee Smash, Extreme Effort, Ignore Hardness; (Smart Hero): Savant



(Knowledge [Arcane Lore]), Exploit Weakness; (Charismatic Hero): Charm, Coordinate

Possessions: sword, Walther PPK; Wealth +16

The villain known only as The Master of the World has his origins shrouded in mystery. He appears to be of European descent, but claims to be one of the Hidden Masters spoken of in Tibetan legend. He rules a vast criminal empire, centered in a hidden mountain fortress high in the Himalayas. From this impregnable headquarters, he runs most of the opium and white slavery trade in Asia. His operations stretch into every corner of the globe.

He will ally himself with others, if such an alliance suits his needs, but is quick to betray his allies the moment that he detects an advantage in such betrayal.

Characters who face The Master of the World will find him to be a charming sociopath, who will act the consummate host, wining and dining them as he asks for details about current goings-on in the modern world (given his self-imposed solitude in the Himalayas, he misses hearing about the minutiae of modern life: men's fashion, popular music and film, stocks and bonds, etc. His mood can turn abruptly, however, and he is likely to order someone executed by slow torture, for example, if they displease him in any way.

ADVENTURE HOOKS:

- The local Chinese Tongs who run criminal operations in the Chinatown of the Player-Characters' home city are being attacked, which is sparking a violent gang war. The action is being taken by The Master of the World and his minions, in an effort to expand his influence into the city and use Chinatown as his center of operations. This is an excellent way to introduce the Master of the World into your campaign.
- The daughter of a wealthy socialite is kidnapped while mountain climbing in the Himalayas. Depending upon the whims of the gamemaster, this situation could result in a straightforward rescue operation, with the Player-Characters tracking her to the mountain fortress of the Master of the World, or perhaps something more complex: The daughter inexplicably returns to America, unable to recall what has happened to her. The Master of the World, however, has used a powder created from a rare Himalayan plant as a mind-control drug, and trained the unsuspecting socialite as a hidden assassin, to strike at any target the Master designates!

VINCENZO "VINNIE FIVE-ANGELS" PENTANGELI

Fast Villain 5/Mobster 5: CR 10; Medium-size humanoid; HD 5d8 +5d10-10; HP 38; Mas 8; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; Defense 21, touch 21, flatfooted 18 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +8 class); BAB +6; Grap +5; Atk +2 melee (1d4-1, brass knuckles), or +9 ranged (2d6 Tommy-Gun); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL The Mob; SV Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +2; AP 9; Rep +3; Str 9, Dex 17, Con 8, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 15.

Occupation: Criminal (Hide, Knowledge [Streetwise])

Skills: Balance +6, Demolitions +6, Diplomacy +4, Disable Device +5, Drive +10, Escape Artist +6, Forgery +4, Hide +10, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (Current Events) +8, Knowledge (Streetwise) +9, Move Silently +8, Pilot +7, Profession +4, Read/Write Language +1 (Italian), Search +9, Sleight of Hand +7, Speak Language +1 (Italian), Spot +8, Tumble +6

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Brawl, Combat Driving, Double Tap, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Simple Weapons Proficiency

Talents (Fast Hero): Evasion, Opportunist, Uncanny Dodge 1 (Mobster): Affiliation, No Stool Pigeon, Drive-By, Leg Breaking, Sweep, Seedy Favor, Safe House.

Wealth: +6

Vincenzo Pentangeli, known on the street as "Vinnie Five-Angels", is a highly-placed enforcer for the local Mafia in your campaign's main city. His primary job for the Mob is as a Troubleshooter -- if there's trouble, Vinnie is sent, and he shoots it. He's very good at what he does, and this has made him a valuable member of the organization, and

increased his power within it. He currently is the number two man, behind the Boss -- the old man who is the titular head of the family-- but whispers on the street are starting to say that Five-Angels is the real power behind the throne.

ADVENTURE HOOKS:

- A Mob War rages on the streets of the City, as two (or more) organized crime gangs battle for control of illicit business (smuggling, gambling, prostitution) in the area. Crime is on the rise, and this will naturally draw the attention of the Player Characters. After a few run-ins with mob-related crime, the PCs will be identified as a threat, and the family that Pentangeli works for will send him out to remove the threat.
- Criminal power in the city has been consolidated behind a single family-- the one with Vinnie as a member. Now the time has come to make his move. Pentangeli decides to stage a coup and take control of the Mob, leading to a "civil war" in the city's underworld, with gang bosses declaring their allegiance to one side or the other. Can the Player Characters take down the Mob before the city is torn apart?



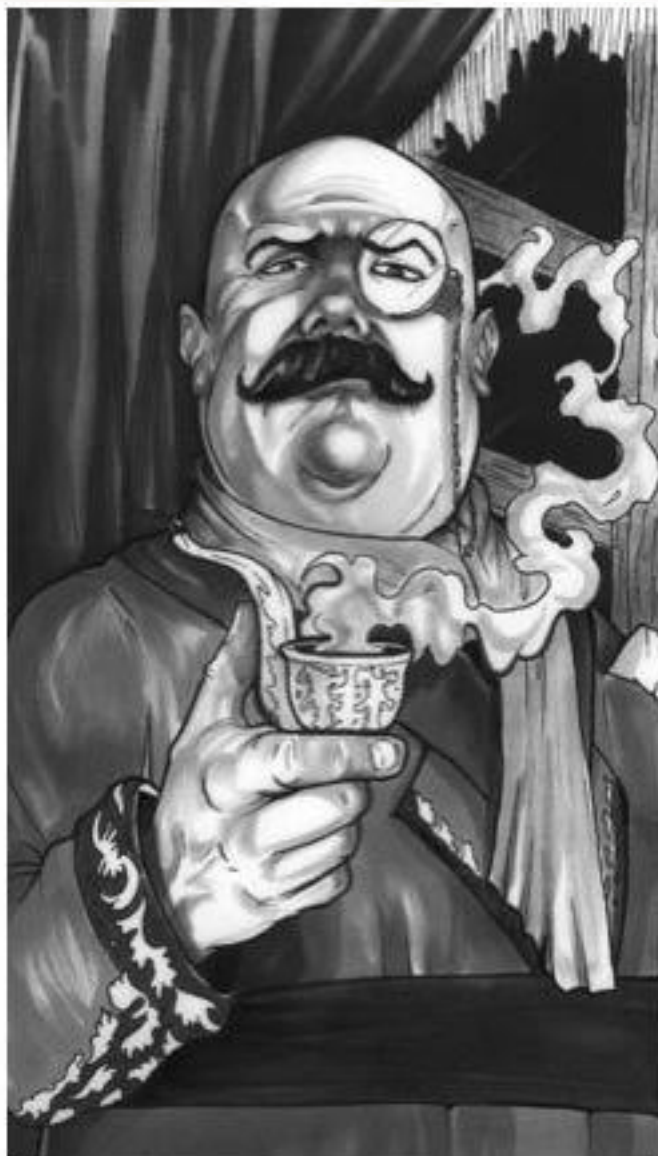
OTTO VON ÜBEL

Vampire Smart Villain 7: CR 9; Medium-size Undead; HD 7d12; HP 46; Mas 3; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; Defense 19, touch 13, flatfooted 18 (+0 size, +1 Dex, +2 class, +6 natural); BAB +3; Grap +7; Atk +8 melee (1d8+4, sword-cane), or +4 ranged; FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ *blood drain*, *create spawn*, *domination* (DC 10 + 1/2 HD + cha mod), *energy drain*, *alternate form*, *children of the night*, *damage reduction* 15/+1, *fast healing* 5, *gaseous form*, *cold and electricity resistance* 20, *spider climb*, +4 *turn resistance*, *darkvision* 60 ft., *weaknesses*; AL none; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +8; AP 8; Rep +4; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 0, Int 21, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Occupation: Dilettante (Intimidate)

Skills: Bluff +10, Decipher Script +9, Demolitions +8, Diplomacy +4, Disable Device +11, Disguise +4, Drive +3, Escape Artist +3, Forgery +7, Gamble +4, Gather Information +4, Hide +10, Intimidate +6, Investigate +8, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) +20, Knowledge (Art) +9, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +8, Knowledge (Business) +13, Knowledge (Civics) +7, Knowledge (Current Events) +10, Knowledge (Earth and Life Sciences) +11, Knowledge (History) +12, Knowledge (Physical Sciences) +10, Knowledge (Popular Culture) +9, Knowledge (Streetwise) +11, Knowledge (Tactics) +9, Knowledge (Technology) +6, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +8, Listen +12, Move Silently +9, Navigate +9, Profession +7, Read/Write Language +5 (English, German, Latin, French, Italian), Repair +8, Research +6, Search +19, Sense Motive +10, Speak Language +5 (English, German, Latin, French, Italian), Spot +12

Feats: Agile Riposte, Alertness, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Educated (Knowledge [Arcane Lore], Knowledge [History]), Improved Damage Threshold, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Weapon Focus



Talents (Smart Hero): Savant (Knowledge [Arcane Lore]), Plan, Trick, Exploit Weakness

Wealth: +11

Otto Von Übel represents a surprise to throw at your characters -- a German villain who not only has no connection to the Nazis, but also turns out to be an honest-to-god vampire!

Von Übel was a Prussian noble who was wounded during the Napoleonic Wars, as he lay dying on the battlefield, he fell victim to the predations of a vampire. The vampire, whose name Von Übel never learned, was a weak creature, more content with scavenging battlefields than in hunting his

own prey -- Von Übel used his dying effort to kill the creature, but not before it had worked its terrible magic. Otto Von Übel rose again as a creature of the night.

Von Übel is interested in only one thing -- power and wealth. He rose in power in Germany as an industrialist, but when the Nazi regime began to nationalize industry, the vampire left Germany to pursue his wealth in the Brave New World of America.

He is a businessman without morals or scruples. He is not above blackmail or strong-arm tactics to get what he wants, and his company, International Holdings, Ltd., is weathering the Depression rather well as a result.

Players will most likely assume that Von Übel is one of the "Fat Cat Businessman" villains (those that don't immediately assume that he's a Nazi spy, of course). Von Übel has managed to avoid detection as a vampire for over 130 years so far

-- his reputation is as an eccentric recluse. The PCs will certainly be surprised when the truth is revealed!

Von Übel is served by a group of lesser vampires that he has created. He recognized their use early on, and sends them on errands to procure him victims for feeding, or to do violence against his business opponents (He knows that the chances of them being traced back to him is negligible, as they turn to dust when destroyed!)



Example statistics for one of his minions:

Vampire Strong Ordinary 2: CR 4; Medium-size Undead; HD 2d12; HP 13; Mas 0; Init +8; Spd 30 ft; Defense 22, touch 16, flatfooted 18 (+0 size, +4 Dex, +2 class, +6 natural); BAB +2; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee, or +6 ranged; FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ *blood drain, create spawn, domination* (DC 10 + 1/2 HD + cha mod), *energy drain, alternate form, children of the night, damage reduction 15/+1, fast healing 5, gaseous form, cold and electricity resistance 20, spider climb, +4 turn resistance, darkvision 60 ft., weaknesses*; AL Von Übel; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1; AP 2; Rep +0; Str 21, Dex 18, Con 0, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Occupation: Blue Collar (Climb, Drive, Intimidate)

Skills: Bluff +9, Climb +8, Drive +6, Hide +12, Intimidate +2, Jump +7, Knowledge (Current Events) +3, Knowledge (Streetwise) +5, Knowledge (Tactics) +3, Listen +12, Move Silently +12, Profession +5, Repair +4, Search +11, Sense Motive +9, Spot +11, Survival +2, Swim +6

Feats: Alertness, Brawl, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency

Wealth: +5

ADVENTURE HOOKS:

- Von Übel, as a prominent businessman of German descent, has come to the attention of the Nazis, who wish to bend him to their will and use his business as a Fifth Column operation within the United States. When he rebuffed their efforts, they decided to use stronger tactics.

The Player Characters are drawn into events when sabotage attacks occur at several International Holdings businesses. The PCs will unveil the Nazi plot, but will also begin to discover that the agents that they are uncovering are soon turning up dead, or disappearing under mysterious circumstances. The PCs will be caught between the Vampire and the Reich as the two sides battle each other!

- As a twist on the above, perhaps Von Übel has instead come to the attention of the United States Government....a wealthy German industrialist, with a reputation as a recluse? Sounds like a job for G-Men to investigate. Players expecting to uncover a dastardly Nazi plot instead have to contend with Evil from Beyond the Grave!

- The Player Characters become involved in a murder mystery -- terror has struck a construction site, as several workers have been killed. Each has apparently fallen to his death from the girders of the skyscraper while staying late...but there are oddities surrounding the events. First, each of the men killed was a vocal proponent of unionizing to negotiate better wages from their employers, International Holdings, Inc. Second, despite the trauma of falling from such great heights, there has been no blood found at the scene.

CREATING CULTS

What follows is a generalized cult creation system so Gamemasters can create cults unique to their own games.

It does this by outlining an adjective based system, in which the creator assigns a number of descriptors to a cult. Each descriptor provides a useable block of narrative information, a bonus to the organization's attributes, questions for further group development, and presentation suggestions.

- 2) Determine whether the cult is of ancient or modern origin,
- 3) Determine the cult's narrative weight and appropriate number of descriptors,
- 4) Assign the descriptors and record their modifiers,
- 5) Record the quick descriptions, and then
- 6) Decide if the quick description provides enough information or go into the detailed creation questions.
- 7) Use the included Organization Rules to create the cult's statistics.

CREATING CULTS: SUMMARY

Pulp fiction presents cults as organizations motivated by a fanaticism. The cult members may pretend to be normal men in public; some even hold high offices. In private, though, their activities shock and horrify even the most jaded of men. Once exposed, the cult gathers its members to protect its inner secrets rather than fade into the background. After all, the heroes must die so they cannot spread their knowledge to others.

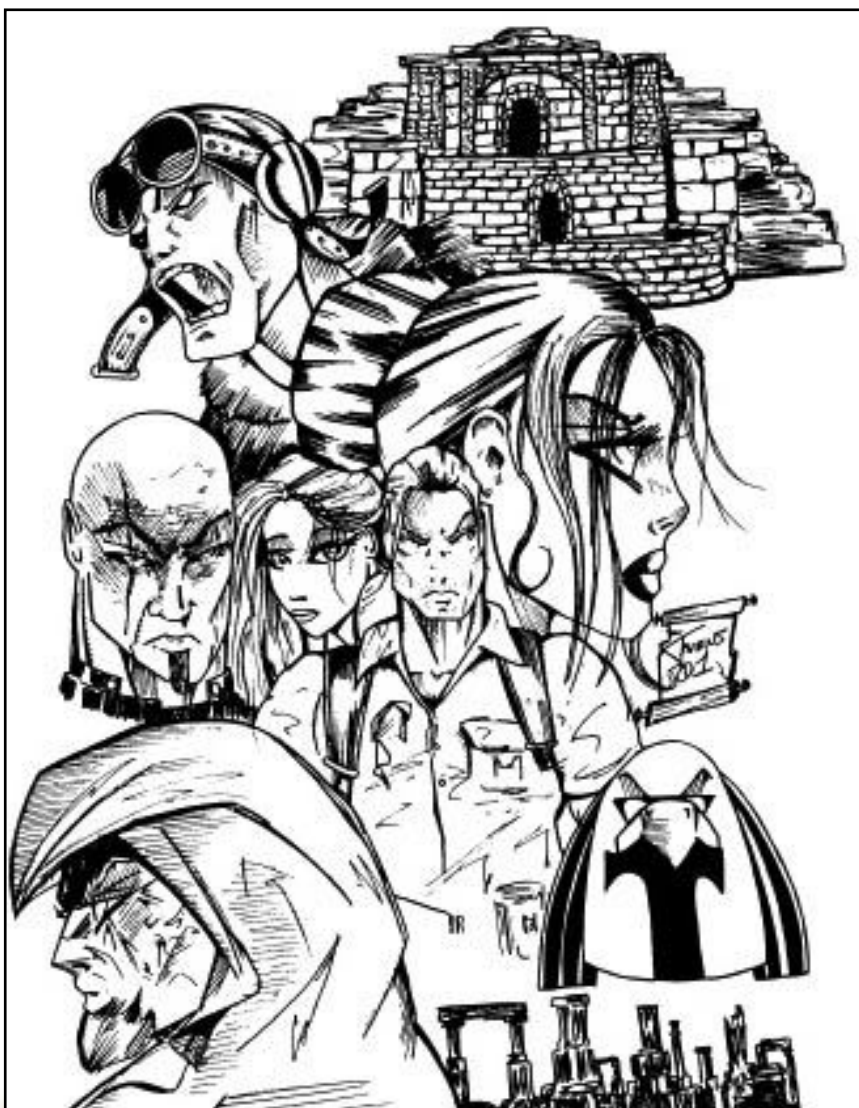
Thrilling Tales expands upon the Open Content organization rules presented in Mongoose Publishing's *OGL Horror* (which we also include in this section) by assigning the cults a set number of descriptors. Each descriptor provides bonuses and/or a penalty to specific organizational abilities, feats, or skills as described in the *OGL Horror* rules. These descriptors also affect how the organization reacts in a narrative sense, giving the Game Master some guidance in the creation of consistent villainy.

The creation process goes through the following steps:

- 1) Decide you wish to create a cult,

CULT, OR NOT TO CULT?

The first decision, whether or not to make an organization a cult, is less obvious than it seems. The pulps certainly contained stories about a



vast number of cults. Pulp heroes also went head-to-head with anarchists, fascists, socialists, communists, slave traders, psychotics, and just about every form of degenerate humanity the authors could imagine. Many of these antagonists did not work together or share the elements required of a cult.

By definition a cult is a group of people who share religious or spiritual beliefs. Political organizations, business collations, and lone madmen do not qualify. Groups organized around a practical purpose (e.g. overthrowing a government or preserving the status quo) do not qualify. Groups designed to protect a specific place, defend a blood line, or destroy the world might or might not qualify, depending on the circumstances.

Additionally, cults in the pulps demonstrate fanatical devotion to their cause. Cult members rarely turn against their beliefs. The cult leaders command instant respect and unwavering obedience. Captured cult members would rather die than reveal their secrets; many come pre-programmed with suicide directives implanted in their minds though the cult's indoctrination procedures.

The religious or spiritual aspect must also come into play. Cults in the pulps almost always worship forgotten gods, people pretending to be forgotten gods, or strange creatures from other worlds. All will claim ancient lineage, though many originate in the world's immediate past.

Answer the questions below if you have any doubts as to whether the organization functions as a cult:

- 1) Does the organization have a religious or spiritual doctrine?
- 2) Does the organization ostensibly exist to promote its doctrine?
- 3) Does the organization demand and receive fanatical loyalty?
- 4) Does the organization claim an ancient tradition?

If you answer yes to one or two questions the

organization is most likely not a cult. If you answered yes to three or more questions the organization displays enough cult-like attributes to continue.

CULT ORIGIN: ANCIENT OR MODERN?

Assuming the organization passes the above test for cult-like attributes, the Game Master needs to decide whether it is of ancient or modern origin. This choice affects what descriptors you will commonly select and the cult's role in the game world.

Ancient Cults

Ancient cults appear most often in games with fantasy or horror elements. They can trace their descent over hundreds, if not thousands, of years. This lineage may break from time to time but the overall sense of continuity remains intact. More importantly, the cult retains access to resources and secrets emanating from the depths of time. Many have knowledge of things man was not meant to know and honestly cannot understand without going insane.

Pulp ancient cults typically embody an emotion or primitive concept. They come creeping out of the shadowy past in an attempt to drag the bright present back into the darkness of superstition and doubt. Ancient cults with a relatively modern face or modern objectives still have this seamy underside. In order to simulate this embodying function, all ancient cults must select at least one emotional descriptor.

In the era of the pulps, authors and readers rarely distrusted progress, corporations, and all the trappings of modern civilization. The horrible excesses of World War I sullied the mix, but people generally placed the blame for it on "old ways of thinking". A cult trying to exert its power in the modern world represents a horror, an aberration all right-thinking men will do anything to stop.

Modern Cults

Modern cults appear most often in games with

mystery or and science-fiction elements. They are, almost universally, scams run by various charismatic figures. The leader cloaks his true intentions behind a façade of occult or religious mumbo-jumbo. Some of this façade comes from ancient texts and forbidden knowledge; most the conmen make up on the spot so they can fool the rubes.

Pulp modern cults typically have some kind of practical purpose hidden under the religious façade. The cult members usually know nothing of this purpose. The leader and his trusted lieutenants will definitely know it, though they do not share it with outsiders.

In order to simulate this practical function all modern cults must select on methods descriptor.

In the era of the pulps, authors and readers fully expected charismatic conmen to overwhelm the “unwashed masses”. Racism and classism ran rampant though the era’s business, politics, and fiction. When incorporating a modern cult into a game, play up these aspects without directly stepping on our modern outrage at these attitudes. Fill the cult’s rank and file with illiterate, uneducated men and women who unquestioningly obey their betters. The upper-crust should contain individuals of wealth and distinction, preferably with good educations, who can banter with the characters while ordering their minions into the breach.

Mixed Cults

The ancient and modern cult descriptions deal with the simplest and most obvious variations on the cult theme. You can mix and nest the two concepts almost infinitely, creating for example:

- 1) A cult of modern lineage that accidentally taps into an ancient cult’s knowledge,
- 2) A cult of ancient lineage that has a religious duty to create the modern age, or
- 3) A cult of modern lineage with a modern leader whose followers secretly adhere to an ancient cult from a forgotten past.

NARRATIVE WEIGHT AND NUMBER OF DESCRIPTORS

All cults, whether ancient or modern, have a number of descriptors. This number can be based off of one of two things: the organizations size or its importance to the game’s narrative (its narrative weight). The size measurement allows the Gamemaster to comfortably build organizations from the small to the massive and fits in with the game mechanics used by the organization rules. The narrative weight measurement requires a trickier balancing act, and assumes the game world unfolds as the characters interact with it.

When using the organization’s size to determine the number of organization descriptors consult the following table:

Table 2-1: Maximum Number of Descriptors by Size	
Size	Number of Descriptors
Local Organization	1
Local Government Section	3
State Level Organization	5
National or Multi-national Organization	7

When using narrative weight, the Gamemaster must decide how important the organization is to the game. An organization the characters rarely interact with and that has very limited impact on their activities has correspondingly little narrative weight even if it boasts a hundred thousand members. Conversely a very small organization playing a dominant role in the story may have five or more descriptors even though barely a dozen men claim membership.

The chart below provides the recommended number of descriptors based on the organizations narrative weight:



Table 2-2: Maximum Number of Descriptors by Narrative Weight

Size	Number of Descriptors
Minor role or one-shot appearance	1
Occasional opponent (appears once every four to six sessions)	3
Important opponent (appears every two or three sessions)	5
Primary antagonist (drives the plot)	7

An organizations narrative weight may change over time as the game evolves. As an organization's weight increases, increase the number of descriptors. As it decreases, suspend any bonuses and penalties from descriptors in excess of the maximum allowed number.

of operation and can be easily combined. Origin descriptors provide bonuses and penalties to the organization based on its lineage and association with specific traditions. Structure descriptors point out an important aspect of the group's hierarchy or organizational methods.

THE DESCRIPTORS

The descriptors mentioned in the previous sections provide the Gamemaster with information about the cult in an easy to reference format. Each descriptor provides a flavorful hook, a brief description, a bonus and/or penalty to the organization, and questions for further development.

Descriptors are organized into the following groups: *emotion*, *method*, *origin*, and *structure*. Emotion descriptors indicate the cult instills specific emotional states in its members. Method descriptors suggest the groups "signature" method

DESCRIPTORS VS DESCRIPTION

The descriptors highlight the things important to the organization; anything not directly under their influence can be however the Gamemaster wishes it to be. For example, the GM may describe a local modern cult with the "Wealth" method (1 total descriptor) as having a "cell structure" without necessarily giving it the descriptor bonus for "Cell".

Table 2-3: Descriptors by Category

Descriptor	Effect
Emotion	
Desperate	+2 to Occult checks
Envious	+2 to Response checks
Greedy	+2 to Resources checks
Lustful	+2 to Influence checks
Prideful	+2 to Occult checks
Wrathful	+2 to Force checks
Method	
Corrupt	Organization operatives' add its Resources modifier bonus to their Diplomacy skill checks (bribery)
Deceptive	Organization operatives' add its Response modifier bonus to their Forgery skill checks
Fearsome	Organization operatives' add its Influence modifier bonus to their Gather Information skill checks
	Organization operatives' add its Information modifier bonus to their Sense Motive skill checks
Murderous	Organization operatives' add its Force modifier bonus to their Intimidate skill checks
Origin	
African	Organization reduces time of Intimidate and Repair by 1/2
Ancient	Organization reduces time of Decipher Script and Research by 1/2
Arabic	Organization reduces time of Knowledge (Theology) and Research by 1/2
Celtic	Organization reduces time of Disguise and Treat Injury by 1/2
Eastern	Organization reduces time of Diplomacy checks by 1/2
Egyptian	Organization reduces time of Knowledge (Art) and Decipher Script by 1/2
European	Organization reduces time of Knowledge (Popular Culture, Tactics) by 1/2
Indian	Organization reduces time of Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) and Search by 1/2
Greco-Roman	Organization reduces time of Knowledge (History, Physical Sciences) by 1/2
Structure	
Cell	Organization never appears to have more than 1/10 th its actual size
Centered	Organization cannot hide its size. It heals damage at twice the normal rate
Circuit	Organization may take 10 on Response checks but suffers a penalty equal to its Response modifier on all Force checks
Monolithic	Organization may take 10 on Force checks but suffers a penalty equal to its Force modifier on all Response checks
Scattered	Organization cannot take 10 or 20 on a skill check. It gains DR equal to its highest attribute modifier against attacks by other organizations

EMOTION DESCRIPTORS

On the surface, the emotion descriptors describe a particular tenor of emotional frenzy the cult incites in its followers. Everyone involved with the cult, from the highest echelons of leadership to the lowliest thugs, displays this emotion in varying degrees of sophistication. Heavy-knuckled bruisers

express their feelings with their fists while the cultured elites engage in lofty discourses about obtuse philosophical principles.

On a philosophical and narrative level a cult's emotion descriptors describe its primary psychological function. The cult both inspires its members to the emotion and embodies that

emotion's power in the fictional world. For example a cult of wrath both inspires great rage in its minions and functions as an external representation of the characters' wrath in the world.

This later point is particular important in pulp games. Pulp heroes have a lot of problems, both personal and professional, but rarely lose control of their masks. An opposed cult with an emotional element can act, in a narrative sense, as the heroes' dark alter ego, doing all of the things he wants to do but is too civilized to admit to.

The emotional descriptors include desperate, envious, greedy, lustful, prideful, and wrathful.

DESPERATE

The cult's founder revealed to them one of the world's great truths. They know nothing matters and the world will continue as it has for ages until it finally drowns in its own accumulated filth. All human creatures dance out their lives on the end of unseen strings, taking whatever pleasure they can before they lay down to rot in the earth.

Quick Description

The cult revels in its lack of hope.

Effect

The cult receives a +2 bonus to its Occult attribute checks.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's despair.

1. Does the cult believe the world will continue in its present state or find freedom from its misery?
2. How do the cult members express their despair?
3. How does the cult inculcate despair into its members?
4. Does the cult look to a single event or source as the "cause" of life's meaninglessness?

ENVIOUS

The cult's founder showed them the world is not fair. This does not come as news to anyone, but he also taught them they deserved all of the things denied them by the world's unfairness. Cosmic forces, random chance, or the will of the gods denied them their rightful place. The cult members must rise up and reclaim whatever was wrongfully taken from them.

Quick Description

The cult knows someone denied them their rightful place.

Effect

The cult receives a +2 bonus to its Response checks.

Questions for Detailed Description:

The following questions help flesh out the cult's envy.

1. Does the cult believe it can ever achieve its goals?
2. What exactly does the cult feel entitlement towards?
3. How do the cult's members manifest this envy in their ordinary lives?
4. How does the cult inculcate envy into its members?
5. What happens when the cult finally gains something it envies?

GREEDY

The cult's founder revealed to them the foolishness of seeking out spiritual pleasures. Only the things of this world, wealth and gold and jewels, can bring pleasure. Only the wealthy can know peace because only they can afford to live well. Wealth, and its trappings, is a sign of divine favor and enlightenment.

Quick Description

The cult desires wealth and power.

Effect

The cult receives a +2 bonus to Resources checks.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's greed.

1. What specifically does the cult desire?
2. What is the cult's favorite form of wealth?
3. Which cult members control access to the cult's wealth?
4. How does the cult inculcate greed into its members?
5. How does the cult's greed manifest in the cult members' lives?

LUSTFUL

The cult's founder taught his followers to revel in the flesh. He showed them that the path to spiritual bliss lies first through then beyond pleasure and pain. Staid society created its moral limits to prevent ordinary people from ascending past their limits.

Quick Description

The cult revels in the body's pleasures.

Effect

The cult receives a +2 bonus to Influence checks.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's lust.

1. What forms of debauchery does the cult encourage?
2. What forms of debauchery does the cult

prohibit?

3. How does the cult inculcate lust in its members?
4. Does the cult allow outsiders to participate in some of its activities? If so, which ones?

PRIDEFUL

The cult's founder told his followers a flattering truth. He claimed they numbered among the chosen, the divine children selected for salvation from among the corrupted masses. Their divine superiority granted them license to do as they will. Everything else, from the plants to the people, exists only to serve the chosen.

Quick Description

The cult rests secure in the knowledge of its own salvation.

Effect

The cult receives a +2 bonus to its Occult checks.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's pride.

1. What central event provides the cult with its sense of superiority?
2. Does the cult believe this superiority will manifest as material or spiritual wealth?
3. How does the cult instill its pride in the members?
4. What happens when the cult encounters a group with equal pride?

WRATHFUL

The cult's founder taught his followers to unleash the fury in their souls. They can answer every slight, every insult, and every denigration with absolute violence and overwhelming anger. By giving into their basest desires they transcend human limitations, becoming like onto gods.

Quick Description

The cult's anger and vengeance spill beyond all civilized bounds.

Effect

The cult receives a +2 bonus to Force checks.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's wrath.

1. What targets dominate the cult's wrath?
2. Why does the cult feel such fury towards those targets?
3. How does the cult inculcate fury into its members?
4. How do the cult members manifest this fury in their daily lives?

METHOD DESCRIPTORS

On the surface the method descriptors describe the cult's preferred technique for eliminating problems. They deploy these techniques to achieve their nefarious ends, running roughshod over whoever dares stand in their way. The slightly more cultured approach taken by the cult's leaders simply acts as a velvet glove over the method's steel fist.

On a narrative level the method descriptor shows what happens when a good thing goes too far. Heroes in the pulps bribe, deceive, bully, lie, and fight but they do so with respect for the norms of their times. Cults display no such respect. They do what they want, go as far as they want, and in so doing become villains.

The method descriptors include corrupt, deceptive, fearsome, manipulative, and murderous.

CORRUPT

The cult knows everyone feels desires they cannot admit to. Everyone wants things they should not have. They exploit this truth, offering up whatever the individual desires if he will give in to their will.

Quick Description

The cult encourages giving in to temptation in order to get its way.

Effect

A cult member may add the cult's Resources modifier (if positive) to their Diplomacy skill checks when attempting to bribe a target. This bonus only applies if the member acts under his cult's orders.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's approach to corruption.

1. Does the cult prefer monetary, moral, or fleshy corruption?
2. What corruptive methods does the cult forbid its members to use?
3. Does the cult permit the cult members to use corruptive techniques in their daily lives?
4. Does the cult use corruption to control its own members?

DECEPTIVE

The cult knows men rarely see past the surface of events. They therefore mastered the use of misdirection and confusion, distracting their potential foes from the reality of their actions.

Quick Description:

The cult's activities are always hidden under multiple layers of misdirection.

Effect

A cult member may add the cult's Response modifier (if positive) to their Forgery skill checks when preparing false clues. This bonus only applies if the member acts under his cult's orders.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's approach to misdirection.

1. How many layers of deception does the cult usually lay between its activities and the outside world?
2. How many layers of deception exist between the cult leaders and the cult members?
3. How does the cult react when a layer of deception is revealed?
4. When does the cult tell the truth?

FEARSOME

The cult studied the fear lurking in every man's heart. They know how to call it forth, how to bend it to their will, and how to use it as a harrying lash on the back of any who dare to oppose them.

Quick Description

The cult knows how to make cowards of the bravest men.

Effect

A cult member adds the cult's Influence modifier (if positive) to his Gather Information skill checks when acting on the cult's orders.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's fearsome methods.

1. What signature method does the cult use to strike fear into men's hearts?
2. Does the cult use fear to control its own members?
3. Why do people fear the cult's influence?
4. Can the cult act openly to cause fear or must it act in secret?

MANIPULATIVE

The cult knows the flattering lies men prefer to cloak their actions in. They know the use a whispered word to make a man turn his back on his brother and the trick to inciting hatred between friends. Let others dance at the end of the world's

puppet-strings; they have seized a few of the threads for their own use.

Quick Description

The cult's mastery of sweet words lets them control other's actions.

Effect

A cult member adds the cult's Information modifier (if positive) to his Sense Motive skill checks when he targets an opponent selected for him by his cult's leadership.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's use of manipulation.

1. How does the cult search for ways to control its targets?
2. What is the cult's favorite lie?
3. How does the cult respond when others discover its actions?
4. What does the cult do when it faces a particularly tough target?

MURDEROUS

The cult exploits the paralyzing terror gripping men's hearts when they face death. They also realize personal death holds no fear for some people. Even the most fearless opponent, though, must store his heart somewhere. When faced with such a foe the cult will mercilessly hunt for something whose loss he does fear. This search leaves behind a trail of bodies wide enough for even the most bumbling detective to follow.

Quick Description

The cult murders those who oppose it.

Effect

A cult member may add the cult's Force modifier (if positive) to his Intimidate skill checks when he openly acts in the cult's name.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's murderous methods.

1. What is the cult's signature killing method?

2. Does the cult allow the members to select their targets?
3. How does the cult deal with law enforcement?
4. Does the cult prefer to directly target its opposition or slaughter the target's loved ones before going in for the kill?

ORIGIN DESCRIPTORS

On the surface the origin descriptors describe the cult's point of origin or at least the origin it claims for itself. The cult's litany, physical trappings, insignia, ranks, and rituals all reflect this claimed genesis. Each origin

carries with it a long and distinguished history, as well as iconography and mythology already present in the characters' minds.

Practically whether a cult really originates from its described culture depends on whether it numbers among the ancient or the modern cults. Ancient cults almost always stem from a secret tradition passed down through some occult transmission to the present day. Modern cults adopt the trappings of an ancient culture to hide their true intentions. In both cases the rank and file believes the cult to be a secret transmission; only the upper echelons really know the truth.

This knowledge
dichotomy creates
an interesting
weakness
in modern
cults



claiming an origin descriptor. If the characters can somehow expose the truth about the cult they can, at the GM's option, inflict direct organization damage to the cult. This damage equals 1d6 HP per point of the party's total Charisma modifiers.

The origin descriptors include African, Ancient, Arabic, Celtic, Eastern, Egyptian, European, or Greco-Roman.

AFRICAN

The cradle of human life and the birthplace of human civilization spawned cults of many types. These cults worship pagan gods of animal aspect. They also hold secrets passed down from the ancient past, secrets of building and making forgotten long before the men of Europe painted the first cave walls.

African cults make extensive use of body-painting, drums, ritual diagrams, and spears. They call upon gods with African names who demand offerings of tobacco, grain, and blood.

Quick Description

The cult's rites clearly show their origin in darkest Africa.

Effect

The cult's approach and worship allows it to reduce the time it takes to reduce the time of organizational Intimidate and Repair skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. What part of Africa did the cult's founders originate from?
2. Does the cult conform to "standard" voodoo practices?
3. Does the cult favor human or animal sacrifices?
4. Does the cult meet in daylight or at night?

ANCIENT

In the ancient days of humankind's ascension above the animals, he believed many things. Some of these ancient beliefs persist into the modern world. Others, fortunately, vanished when the good news came to Europe. The cult's persistence and worship of things man was not meant to know continues, though, and all right thinking people would certainly rise up to destroy it if they could.

Ancient cults make extensive use of flutes, strange eldritch chants, alien looking head-dresses, and exotic robes. They generally worship creatures with outlandish names and perform rituals "unthinkable to common men."

Quick Description

The cult protects ancient secrets man was not meant to know.

Effect

The cult's moldering libraries and ancient pedigree allows them to reduce the time for organizational Decipher Script and Research skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. Describe the secret man was not meant to know in twelve words or less.
2. How does the cult preserve its forbidden knowledge?
3. What ancient culture derived from the cult's founders' inability to keep the secret?
4. How does the cult prevent others from discovering their secret?

ARABIC

The economic, political, and scientific secrets of Arabia did not die when the Ottoman Empire collapsed. Indeed, Arabic cults persist into the modern world, fostering the Muslim cause. These secretive organizations hold vast libraries drawing on the best of eastern and western scholarship.

Arabic cults follow the monotheistic rules of Islam.

They generally exist either to promulgate a specific political agenda or to protect a profound scientific insight.

Quick Description

The poetic beauty of Arabic culture informs the cult's rituals.

Effect

The organization is heir to the accumulated wisdom handed down from Classical culture. This knowledge allows them to reduce the time for organizational Knowledge (Theology) and Research skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. Does the cult allow non-Muslims to join?
2. When does the cult meet?
3. Does the cult maintain Muslim holidays?
4. What rules of Islam does the cult allow its members to break?

CELTIC

The cult inherited the druid's wisdom and power. This unbroken occult tradition stretches from the present day into the dim and misty past, in which mortal men worshiped a Goddess with four faces. It also incorporates the Kabbalah, Roman mythology, and a fair dose of Victorian anthropology.

Celtic cults take their trappings from Irish and Welsh culture. They make offerings of blood and grain to gods and goddesses who represent aspects of an all-encompassing Deity of indeterminate sex. Most also seek a restoration of their priesthood's place in the social hierarchy.

Quick Description

The cult traces its roots back to the ancient druids.

Effect

The cult's history of deception and healing allow it to reduce the time required for organizational Disguise and Treat Injury skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. Do the cult leaders claim druidic titles?
2. Does the cult practice human sacrifice? If so, does it limit its sacrifices to criminals or will it take anyone?
3. Does the cult still use the Ogham script?
4. Does the cult wish to restore the druid's power over civil society?

EASTERN

From a distance the differences between Japanese, Korean, and Chinese beliefs tends to blend together. In the pulps, this blending produces "Eastern" cults which share the same features regardless of their point of origin. All Eastern cults practice a hodgepodge of ancestor worship, alchemy, and mystical practices aimed at some vague goal titled "enlightenment."

Eastern cults take their trappings from Chinese and Japanese culture. Low tables, lush fabrics, and elaborately embroidered robes all help to set the mood.

Quick Description

The cult's origins in the Far East lend it an exotic air.

Effect

The organization has extensive practice in manipulating others. It reduces the time required for organizational Diplomacy skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. What country does the cult original come from?
2. Does the cult believe in the superiority of Eastern culture?
3. Does the cult engage in alchemical or mystical practices?
4. Does the cult use opium or other drugs to control its members?

EGYPTIAN

In ancient Egypt men and women worshiped strange gods by offering up mountains of gold. They built great tombs and monuments which to this day remain some of the world's greatest wonders. The cults descended from these great people maintain their traditions, and their occult secrets, into the modern world.

Egyptian cults generally favor architecture and costumes appropriate to a British view of ancient Egypt. They wear gold masks and headdresses, perform rituals to hundreds of different gods, and try to steal mummies in order to reanimate them.

Quick Description

Rites handed down from the ancient Egyptians bind the cult to its holy purpose.

Effect

The organization possesses extensive archives and secrets of artistic expression. It reduces the time required for organizational Knowledge (Art) and Decipher Script skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. Which of the Egyptian gods does the cult serve?
2. Does the cult use hieroglyphs for written communication?
3. Does the cult intend to restore Egypt's glory or does it have another plan in mind?
4. What secret about Egyptian history does the cult guard?

EUROPEAN

Occult and scientific knowledge flowered during the Renaissance. Eventually science proved the superior of the two. However, some occult revelations survived in the guise of secret societies and cults. These cults protect their secrets with fanatical zeal.

European cults enjoy the trappings of the Renaissance. They dress in fancy costumes and

hold masked balls where cult members mingle with the highest levels of society. Their rituals draw strongly from European scholarly magic and involve magical circles, amulets, and other objects of power.

Quick Description

The cult came into being as a result of the Enlightenment. They hide the true secrets discovered during that hectic time until the common man can finally understand them.

Effect

The organization constantly monitors modern advances. This knowledge allows it to reduce the time required for organizational Knowledge (Popular Culture) and Knowledge (Tactics) skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. What is the cult's country of origin?
2. Does the cult engage in mystical practices or does it fancy itself scientific?
3. What is the cult's ultimate goal for humanity?
4. What one thing would the cult change about the modern world?

INDIAN

Cults originating in the great Indian subcontinent can worship a seemingly infinite pantheon of gods or goddesses. They sometimes even engage in this worship despite seemingly obvious theological clashes. For example, Muslims might worship a goddess without for a moment considering the implications to their Islamic faith.

Indian cults worship before massive statues of multi-faced, multi-armed deities. They engage in decadent behaviors no right-thinking man would condone in public. Most use architecture and details from their home country to create a cult space where members feel like they are back in the old country regardless of their actual geographic location.

Quick Description

The cult springs up from the fertile ground of India's religious cacophony.

Effect

The organization's experience and deep appreciation of the human condition allows it to reduce the time or organizational Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) and Search skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. Which god or goddess does the cult worship?
2. Is the cult considered a respectable form of worship in India?
3. Does the cult allow its members to hold other religious beliefs?
4. Does the cult allow non-Indians to join?

GRECO-ROMAN

The Greeks and the Romans created the basis of European civilization. Their laws and philosophy profoundly influence everything from real estate transactions to codes of professional conduct. Cults claiming descent from this ancient tradition worship the old gods. They also engage in the perversions so beloved by both cultures.

Greco-Roman cults sport the trappings of Greek and Roman culture. They wear togas at their rites, speak in Latin or Greek, and worship gods like Zeus or Saturn. Most favor large marble halls for their meeting places. Many keep slaves despite the practice's dubious legality.

Quick Description

The cult traces its lineage back to the golden ages of Classical thought.

Effect

The cult's long history and profound understanding of Classical science allows it to reduce the time of organizational Knowledge (History) and Knowledge (Physical Sciences) skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. Does the cult follow Greek or Roman fashions?
2. Would the cult describe itself as a mystery religion or a philosophical school?
3. Do the cult members communicate among themselves in Latin or Greek?
4. Does the cult enjoy the excesses of Greek and Roman life more than the intellectual stimulation of its philosophy?

STRUCTURE DESCRIPTORS

The structure descriptors serve the straight-forward purpose of describing the cult's internal hierarchy. This hierarchy protects the upper echelons from distraction and interference while allowing them to pass orders to the seething masses below them. They expect, and receive, absolute obedience. At least, they receive absolute obedience until the heroes somehow foil their dastardly plan.

The structure descriptors include cell, centered, circuit, monolithic, and scattered.

CELL

A cult with a cell structure organizes itself into small autonomous groups. Cell members do not know anyone in the cult beyond their immediate circle. Cell leaders might know one other leader but will usually receive their instructions through a blind drop or other anonymous communication method.

Quick Description

The cult possesses a highly decentralized structure in which each leader only knows one other leader.

Effect

The organization's decentralized structure allows it to hide. No matter how much investigation it suffers it never appears more than one-tenth its actual size.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's internal structure.

1. How does the cult recruit new cell members?
2. What blind methods does the cult use to pass information from cell to cell?
3. Do the cell leaders have any way to contact a central cultic authority?
4. How does the cult insure orthodoxy among cell members?

CENTERED

A centered cult maintains strong internal leadership and relatively strict hierarchies. Power is distributed throughout the organization, with local leaders making decisions for their own groups without seeking permission from above. The organization responds quickly to damage but is easily monitored.

Quick Description

The other cult members obey the leadership without question or hesitation but local leaders remain some control.

Effect

The cult's centralized command structure makes it impossible for it to hide its size, though it can use organization skills to foil investigations. However, its efficient approach to management also allows it to heal organizational damage at twice the normal rate.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's internal structure.

1. Where is the cult's central headquarters located?
2. How much autonomy do the local leaders possess?
3. Why does the cult rely on centralized authority?
4. How does the cult deal with heretics?

CIRCUIT

The cult's leaders make regular trips to the local chapters. The chapters themselves do not have a formal local leader; instead they must wait for the leader to arrive before taking action. Most chapters develop an informal leader of some sort who can take care of small problems without waiting for approval.

Quick Description

The cult's leaders move from chapter to chapter, spreading hope and good news as they go.

Effect

The cult's hands-on approach to leadership makes it highly responsive but somewhat lacking in the direct application of power. The cult may take 10 on Response checks but suffers a penalty equal to its Response modifier on all Force checks

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's internal structure.

1. How do the leaders travel when moving from chapter to chapter?
2. How many times a year does a chapter encounter a leader?
3. How long does the leader stay with the chapter?
4. How many chapters does a leader visit each year?

MONOLITHIC

The cult's leader clutches the reins of power in his tight fists. No one in the organization may take action without direct orders from the leader himself. Some particularly aggressive subordinates may act without instruction under the belief it is easier to ask for forgiveness than permission.

Quick Description

The cult focuses all of its resources and power into a single man.

Effect

The cult's focused leadership approach allows it to concentrate power but slows down its responses.

The cult may take 10 on Force checks but suffers a penalty equal to its Force modifier on all Response checks

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's internal structure.

1. Does the cult believe its grand leader to be of divine origin or appointment?
2. What does the cult do when someone oversteps their bounds?
3. Does the cult leader have the power of life and death over his followers?
4. Does this monolithic structure conflict with the cult's philosophy and avowed beliefs?

SCATTERED

A scattered cult is linked together by chains of tradition rather than organization. Its chapters and members may exist anywhere. Many do not even know about the others or have only the dimmest awareness of their involvement with a larger organization. At the same time, they will help one another when they can, even going so far as to lay down their lives for complete strangers.

Quick Description

The cult has a decentralized structure but the leaders know each other fairly well.

Effect

The cult's highly disorganized approach makes it difficult to coordinate resources. It cannot take 10 or 20 on a skill check. However, it gains DR equal to its highest attribute modifier against attacks by other organizations

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's internal structure.

1. How did the cult become so scattered?
2. Do members of different cult chapters recognize one another as brothers in the same organization?
3. How much control does each chapter leader have over his minions?
4. How do the chapter leaders interact with one another?

QUICK OR DETAILED CULT CREATION

A cult with a full set of descriptors has enough information listed in the "Quick Descriptions" to act as a plot element. By using the pre-built characters in the back of this book the GM can be up and running with a cult in a matter of a half-hour or less.

However, many GMs will want even more detail about their cults. For these GMs the "Questions for Detailed Descriptions" sections provide a starting point for further work. Using these questions he can produce almost endless details to satisfy his players' or his own curiosity.

In order to use the questions first amass the lists from all of the cult's descriptors into a single list. Then sort the questions into related groups, jotting down notes and potential answers while doing so. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to sort the questions. Each Game Master will see different connections between them. Those connections, and how they influence the answers to other questions, add depth and texture to the cult.

The questions provide a guide to laying out the cult's membership requirements, environs, and the kinds of encounters characters will have with it. As with the sorting, there is no right or wrong answers, just varying degrees of detail and imagination applied to the cult's background.

All that remains is to create the cult using the Organization Rules which follow.

ORGANIZATION RULES

Organizations are described much like other Game Master characters, with ability scores, skills, and feats.

ABILITY SCORES

Like a character, an organization is defined by six ability scores and has skills, feats, and hit points. These function in a similar way to those of any character. An organization reduced to 0 hit points is destroyed, while an organization with an ability score of 15 has a +2 bonus.

The six ability scores are:

Force (For): Analogous to Strength, Force measures how powerful an organization is in terms of military might. An organization with a low Force might be able to hire thugs to beat someone up, while an organization with a High Force might have summoned demons, assassins, or even a private army. Force modifies how help and protection the characters get from the organization or how the organization will oppose them.

Response (Resp): Analogous to Dexterity. The higher an organization's Response score, the faster and more agile it is. If the characters are working for a group with a low Response, it might take weeks or months before they get help. A group with a high Response might be constantly monitoring the characters' actions, ready to step in at a moment's notice.

Resources (Reso): Analogous to Constitution, Resources measures the financial strength and backing of the organization. A group with high Resources might be extremely wealthy or have huge stockpiles of equipment or treasure. Resources modifies how big a Wealth bonus characters get from being part of the organization. It also adds to the organization's hit points, as the higher the Resources the more resilient it is.

Information (Info): The equivalent of Intelligence, this measures how much scientific knowledge and research ability the organization

has. A group with low Information lacks laboratories and researchers; a group with high Information has vast archives. Information modifies the amount of research and background data the characters can get from the organization, as well as how many skill points the organization has.

Occult (Occ): Analogous to Wisdom, Occult measures how much magical or mystical power and knowledge the organization has. A low Occult score indicates very little stored information on the occult and only a minor occultist on its payroll. An organization with a high Occult has an extensive magical library and a whole staff of occultists on its payroll.

Influence (Infl): The equivalent of Charisma, Influence measures how much pull the organization has. An organization with high Influence can deal with governments and national groups. An organization with a low Influence might have trouble altering the opinion of its neighbors. Influence modifies a character's Reputation.

Organizations do not roll for ability scores; instead the Game Master assigns the scores. Alternatively, let the players build their own organization by buying ability scores from a points budget.

A minor, local organization might have 20-40 points to spend on ability scores. A fringe cult or section of a large government group like a police precinct might have 50-80 points. A major national organization or worldwide organization might have 100 or more points.

Unlike characters, organizations buy ability scores using points on a one-to-one basis.

APPLYING ABILITY SCORES

Force: Roll Force whenever a question of sheer manpower comes up for an organization. Force also determines how much damage an organization can do.

Response: Response determines how aware the organization is of the characters' actions. It also serves as a form of Initiative—an organization with high Response will respond quicker to a character's requests.

Resources: Each character may add the Resources modifier of the organization to their Wealth bonus (do not subtract if the Resources modifier is negative). If they do so, then the materials or services they acquire from a purchase check are technically the organization's and not their own.

Also, increase or decrease the hit points of the organization by 5% multiplied by the organization's Resources modifier.

Information: Information determines how many skill points the organization has. An Information check can be used to determine if the organization knows something offhand. Occult: Occult measures both how much practical mystical knowledge the organization has, as well as its occult defenses and resources.

Influence: If the character identifies himself as a member of the organization (and the organization is known), the character applies the organization's Influence modifier to his Reputation bonus. This can actually reduce the character's Reputation bonus.

HIT POINTS

The hit points of an organization are calculated as follows:

- +1 for each individual member
- +5 for each member with special skills (such as a character)
- +10 for each influential leader
- +20 for each major stronghold or headquarters

ORGANIZATION SKILLS & ACTIONS

An organization has a number of skill points equal to four times its Information score.

Organizations can select from the table on the following page.

In general, an organization makes skill checks just like a character and with similar effect. For example, a librarian character trying to locate an obscure news article would make a Research check (1d20 + the character's Research skill ranks + Int bonus) against DC 15. An FBI agent character could make a request for his organization to do the same and the GM would make a Research check for the FBI (1d20 + the FBI's Research skill ranks + Info bonus) at the same DC.

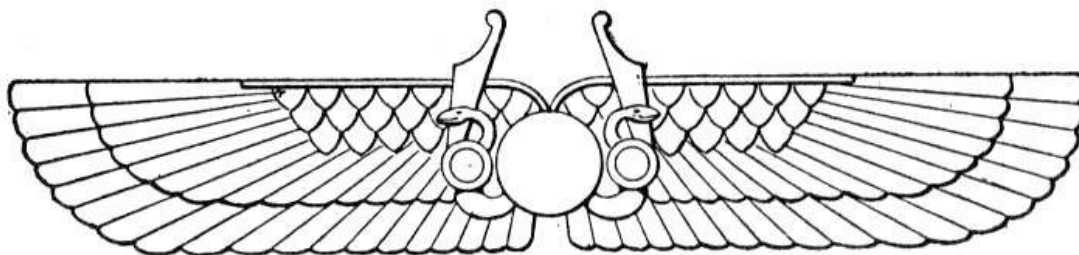
Of course, the FBI has a very high Research skill and huge Info bonus. The disadvantages of going through an organization instead of the character making the check himself are:

- Requests made of an organization can be tracked or intercepted.
- Cigarette-smoking men could nefariously interfere with the result of the Research check.
- Requests take a great deal of time, often much longer than it would take the character to do the task himself.



ORGANIZATION SKILLS

Skill	Ability	Uses	Time Required
Computer Use	Info	Hacking, computer security, programming, searches	8 hours
Craft	Info	Building specialized equipment	48 hours
Decipher Script	Info or Occ	Breaking codes, analyzing ancient tomes	24 hours
Demolitions	Resp	Disarming bombs	-
Disguise	Resp or Infl	Arranging for disguises for the characters	4 hours
Forgery	Info	Forging documents, IDs	8 hours
Gather Information For or Infl		Door to door searches, surveys, rumor control	48 hours
Intimidate	For or Infl	Gunboat diplomacy or subtle political pressure	24 hours
Investigate	Info or Occ	Crime scene investigation	8 hours
Knowledge			
Arcane Lore	Occ	Information on occult, aliens	48 hours
Art	Info	Information on art history, art world rumors	24 hours
Behavioral Sciences	Info	Psychological analysis	24 hours
Business	Info	Information on business world, business rumors	24 hours
Civics	Infl	Information on law and legislation, politics	48 hours
Current Events	Infl	Information on current events, scanning the news	8 hours
Earth and Life Sciences	Info	Information on biology, botany, geology, etc.	48 hours
History	Info or Occ	Information on history	48 hours
Physical Sciences	Info	Information on chemistry and physics	48 hours
Popular Culture	Infl	Entertainment rumors and news	8 hours
Streetwise	Infl	The word on the street	8 hours
Tactics	For	Strategic and tactical advice	8 hours
Technology	Info	Information on cutting-edge technology and devices	12 hours
Theology and Philosophy	Occ	Information on religions and philosophy	48 hours
Repair	Info	Repairing specialized equipment	1 week
Research	Info	Digging through public records, libraries, etc.	48 hours
Search	For	Searching an area for a runaway	24 hours
Treat Injury	Reso	Medical treatment	1 week



REQUEST TIMES

Request Modifier	Time
-5	One month
-4	Three weeks
-3	Two weeks
-2	One week
-1	Three days
	One day
+1	12 hours
+2	8 hours
+3	4 hours
+4	1 hour
+5	30 minutes
+6	10 minutes
+7 or more	Instantly

Some situations give a bonus to the Response modifier:

Situation	Modifier
Emergency!	+3
Characters are geographically distant from the organization	
Outside usual scope of activities	-2
Remote area	-4
Extremely isolated area	-6
Lost	-8

Making Requests

A character can submit a request for assistance just by making a telephone call. However, every organization takes some time to process such a request and provide aid. The organization's Response modifier determines how quickly it responds.

If the character is in bad standing with the organization, a penalty may be applied to Response (usually -2 or -4).

Each skill check has a time requirement: add the response time to the time required for the skill check to work out how long it will take for the characters to get the results of the skill check.

In addition to making skill checks, an organization can also perform the following actions:

- The organization can take 10.
- The organization can keep rerolling, but each attempt takes the normal Response time.
- The organization can take 20, but it takes 10 times longer than normal.

ORGANIZATION ACTIONS

Action	Ability	DC	Time
Minor military support (two police officers/thugs)	Force	10	5 min.
Significant military support (police squad, assassins)	Force	12	10 min.
Major military support (SWAT team, snipers)*	Force	15	30 min.
Overwhelming military support (helicopter gunships)*	Force	20	8 hours
Loan of advanced or heavy weaponry*	Force	15	24 hours
Car rental	Response	5	1 hour
Plane tickets to anywhere	Response	15	1 hour
Helicopter*	Response	20	1 hour
Aid another with Investigate, Knowledge, or Research	Information	5	24 hours
Casting a spell*	Occult	15	48 hours
Spreading rumors	Influence	10	48 hours
Rumor control	Influence	15	24 hours
Cover-up	Influence	20	24 hours

*Requesting any of these too often will really annoy the organization. Also, not every organization can provide these actions. Asking your local police station to cast a spell for you will get an immediate response, but not the one you were asking for.

ORGANIZATION FEATS

Most organizations have one feat per two important characters (basically, one per two player characters or influential GMCs) to a maximum of three for a local organization, six for a national, or twelve or more feats for a massive, world-spanning group.

Arsenal

The organization has a large stockpile of weaponry.

Benefit: The organization has a +5 bonus to Force checks for requisitioning weaponry and has access to military-grade or illegal gear.

Artifact

The organization has access to an ancient mystical artifact or alien device of considerable power. The organization knows a little about the artifact but has not yet fathomed its full power.

Benefit: The characters can gain access to the artifact if the organization makes an Occult check (DC 15).

Special: The organization may take this feat more than once.

Covert

The organization's very existence is concealed.

Benefit: The organization gives no Reputation increase (or decrease), but its members are "off the grid" in terms of fingerprints, police records, and so on, which gives the characters considerably more latitude when it comes to avoiding the attention of the authorities.

Emergency Response

The organization is always on standby to help the characters.

Benefit: The organization has a +5 bonus to Response for the purposes of determining Response time.

Fanatical Loyalty

The organization demands absolute faith from its members.

Benefit: Organization members may add the group's Occult bonus to Will saves for the purposes of resisting mind control effects.

Financial Sway

The organization is adept at using its financial muscle to influence other groups

Benefit: The organization may use Resources instead of Influence for the purposes of pulling political strings.

Forensic Laboratory

The organization has a well-equipped forensics laboratory.

Benefit: The organization has a +2 equipment bonus to Investigate checks. If a character uses the forensics lab, he gets a +4 equipment bonus to Investigate and Treat Injury checks.

Hospital

The organization has a private medical facility.

Benefit: The organization has a +4 equipment bonus to Treat Injury checks.

Library

The organization has an extensive reference library dealing with a particular subject.

Benefit: Choose a subcategory of the Knowledge skill (such as Knowledge (arcane lore) or Knowledge (technology)). The organization has a +2 equipment bonus to that particular type of Knowledge check. If a character uses the library, he gets a +4 equipment bonus to that particular type of Knowledge check.

Special: The organization may take this feat more than once.

Occult Library

The organization has a comprehensive library of occult texts.

Prerequisite: Library of Knowledge (arcane lore)

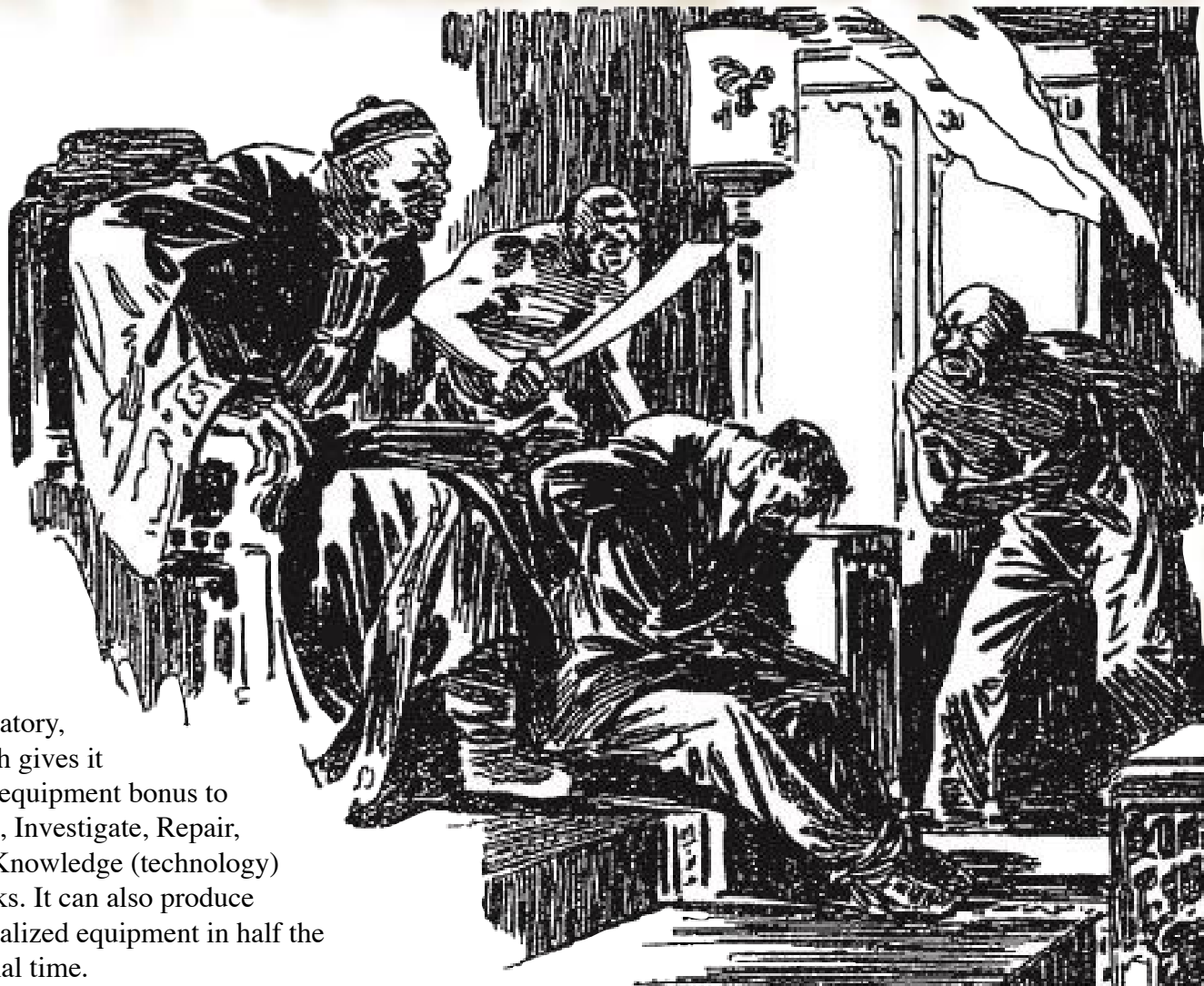
Benefit: Members capable of casting arcane spells are treated as having an additional +1 to their Intelligence modifier for the purposes of learning, casting, and preparing spells.

Research Lab

The organization has a well-equipped research laboratory

Prerequisite: Forensic Laboratory

Benefit: The organization has access to a research



laboratory, which gives it a +2 equipment bonus to Craft, Investigate, Repair, and Knowledge (technology) checks. It can also produce specialized equipment in half the normal time.

Secure Base

The organization's headquarters is protected by state of the art security systems.

Benefit: The organization gains +20 hit points and the headquarters is well defended.

Special: The organization may take this feat more than once.

Widely Known

The organization is famous

Benefit: Members gain an additional +5 bonus to Reputation, but they will also attract attention wherever they go.

DAMAGING AN ORGANIZATION

Every organization has a number of hit points. This is an abstract value that measures how much disruption the organization can take to its structure and plans before collapsing. Losing all its hit points does not mean that every single member of an organization is killed—a group may be forced to disperse long before it loses all its members.

Event	Hit Points Lost
Member lost or killed	1
Leader or officer lost or killed	2d6
Major base destroyed	3d10
Plot foiled	1d10

CHAPTER EIGHT:

NAZIS

The Green Falcon hung precariously by his fingers from the metal gantry. Below him, the distant ground was visible through the open maintenance bay of the zeppelin. Above him, the barrel of a gun, held in the leather-clad hands of SS Major Reinhardt Kritzinger.

The Nazi cocked the Luger, ready to fire at the helpless form that dangled below him. "So this is the end of the famous Grünfalke. Pathetic. You will die

unknown, unmourned...and a failure. The delivery of the poison gas via this airship is already complete. We will release it, and the prevailing winds will carry it into New York City. The death toll will be tremendous...and the shock of it will completely break the spirit of this mongrel nation."

Kritzinger grinned maniacally as he saw one of the Green Falcon's hands lose its grip and slip off the gantry.

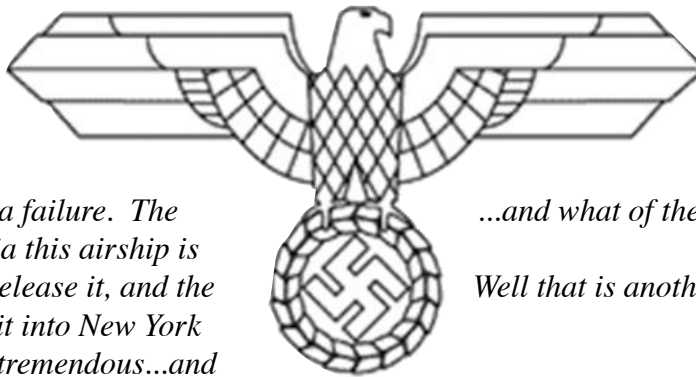
"You're forgetting something." The Green Falcon said calmly. "The poison gas is flammable....and so is hydrogen."

His hand came back into view, gripping a chromed .45.

The weapon spat death in the enclosed space, as the Green Falcon let go of the gantry and fell, still firing. Bullets ripped through the gas bags all around the Nazi, and ricocheted off the metal supports, throwing sparks.

The Hindenberg erupted into a huge ball of flame over Lakehurst, New

Jersey...and the secret cargo of poison was consumed in the conflagration.



...and what of the Green Falcon?

Well that is another tale....

Perhaps no other group makes as perfect a villain for pulp RPG campaigns as the Nazis. They are the embodiment of evil, and suited for any tale, whether it is a straightforward tale of espionage, or a far-fetched story of occult powers and super-science.

Ironically, for much of the run of the pulps themselves, the Nazis weren't featured as villains that often, until late in the thirties when conflict with them began to seem inevitable. The earlier

AN IMPORTANT POINT

This chapter is in no way an effort to downplay the very real evil represented by the Nazi ideology--nor does it intend disrespect to the memory of the millions killed by the Nazi regime. It is simply an examination of two-dimensional villains as portrayed in the pulp genre. Real-life Nazis are a serious subject. Pulp Nazis are scene-chewing Evil Villains. This chapter deals with the latter.

pulps avoided real-world politics, in favor of featuring obviously fascist villains from made-up nations.

THE RISE OF THE NAZIS

In the years following World War I, Germany was ruled by a democratic Republic. The Weimar Republic was an unstable government, and was constantly under attack from both left-wing and right-wing reactionary political parties, fighting to shape the future of the country and wrest control away from the Republic.

Many of these reactionary organizations were occult societies formed during the previous century. Among these were the New Templars, the Runic Order, and the Thule Society, an occult group obsessed with racial purity, anti-Semitism, national pride and militarism.

The Thule Society sponsored a miniscule political party, the German Worker's Party -- in reality little more than the strong arm of the Thules, thugs that they could use against other groups. All of that changed with the arrival of Adolf Hitler.

Hitler was born in 1889 in Austria. An undistinguished student, Hitler had several unsuccessful attempts to become a student of art in the Vienna College of Fine Art, and was forced to take several menial jobs performing manual labor.

Jewish citizens were very prominent in the cultivated society of Vienna, and Hitler saw them as blocking his rightful ascendance as a great artist. This anti-Semitism, coupled with a growing fascination with the Aryan ideal of German culture, would shaped Hitler's

political opinions.

During the First World War, Hitler served as a corporal in the German army. He fought bravely, being awarded the Iron Cross, and was wounded in combat. During his hospitalization, he heard of the German defeat. He believed that Germany had been betrayed from within.

When he was discharged from the hospital, he found himself, like many of his comrades, unemployed. Like many disaffected veterans, he joined one of the paramilitary, political organizations—the German Workers' Party.

By 1920, the German Workers' Party changed its name to the National Socialist German Workingmen's Party (abbreviated as the Nazi Party). By his skill as a fiery orator and efficient organizer, Hitler became the *Führer* (leader) of the Party in 1921.

The Party adopted an emblem, the swastika -- an ancient symbol used by Buddhists and western occultists. Through the party's newspaper, Hitler fiercely denounced the Treaty of Versailles and the socialists who had, he believed, delivered a 'stab in



the back' to Germany in 1918.

Under Hitler, the party which had begun as a strong-arm group to protect the interests of the Thule Society, organized its own strong-arm group -- the *Sturmabteilung* (also known as the S.A., Stormtroopers, or Brownshirts) to protect the Nazi meetings and disrupt the meetings of other parties, such as the Communists.

In November 1923, Hitler and his S.A., joined by other militant reactionaries, tried to overthrow the Weimar Republic. They carried out a coup d'etat in Munich, but the Bavarian government suppressed them. In April 1924, Hitler was put on trial and was sentenced to five years' imprisonment at Landsberg prison, but in a typical display of the leniency the Weimar Republic showed to the right-wing, he was released after serving only 9 months.

While in prison, Hitler laid down the basic ideas behind the Nazi movement in his book, *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle).

Hitler divided mankind into two groups: the Aryans (the master-race) and the non-Aryans (the slave races). The Germans, he asserted, were Aryans, and destined to rule the world. Hitler said that the Jews were the most vicious of the slave races, having caused the German defeat in World War I by encouraging the socialists in the November Revolution in 1918 which overthrew the Kaiser.

Hitler suggested if Germans wanted their nation to be strong again, they had to believe in the *Führer* -- Hitler himself. He would remove the Jews from Germany so that they would not pollute the German blood by intermarriage. Then he would replace the parliamentary government by Nazi rule -- the rule of an elite who accepted orders from Hitler alone. The Nazis would nationalize the big business, provide employment for all workers, implement land reforms for peasants and destroy the chains placed upon the German people by the Jewish capitalists. Hitler claimed that he would

make Germany economically self-sufficient. He would abolish the humiliating Treaty of Versailles, bring about the union of all Germans in a single German state (the *Gross-deutschland*) and, in order to provide for additional living space for the nourishment of the future generations ('*Lebensraum*'), Hitler proposed to conquer eastern Europe.

With a party platform which appealed to many Germans, the Nazis took part in the national elections. However, in times of economic prosperity, the Nazis could make little headway.

In the election of May 1924, only 32 Nazis were elected to the Reichstag. In December 1924, the number dropped to 14. Despite the poor election results, the Nazi Party still showed a sturdy growth in these years. By 1929, the total party membership was 178,000.

The Nazis began to receive financial support from



industrialists who saw the Nazis as an anti-socialist and anti-communist tool which could be used to keep the left-wing in check.

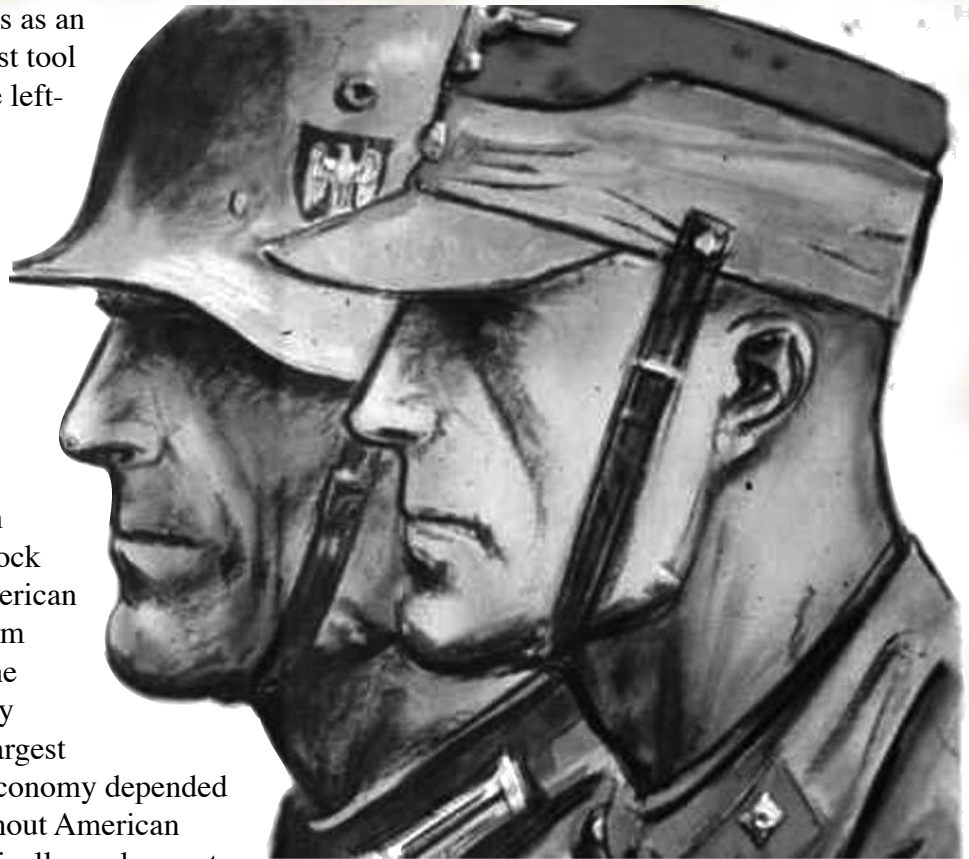
Hitler strengthened his control of the party by forming his personal body-guard, the *Schutzstaffel* ("Defense Unit"), also known as the SS or Blackshirts.

With the Great Depression, the Nazis saw their opportunity. In October 1929, the New York Stock Market suddenly collapsed. American investors recalled their short-term loans from Germany, sending the economy into a tailspin. In early 1931, one of Germany's three largest banks collapsed. The German economy depended largely on American loans. Without American loans, production dropped drastically, and exports dried up. By 1932, a quarter of the working population of Germany was unemployed.

Faced with economic hardship, the Germans lost any faith they might have in the democratic Republic. It was not surprising that they turned to extreme parties for desperate remedies. In the general election of September 1930, the Nazis won 6.5 million votes, took 107 seats in the Reichstag and became the second largest party in the country. The Communists obtained 4.5 million votes and 77 seats. Although the Social Democrats remained the largest party, it had lost much popularity and support.

The unpopularity of the government was shown in the presidential election of April 1932. The Republican coalition put forward Von Hindenburg. He was re-elected with nineteen million votes. But Hitler, who also entered himself for election, won thirteen and a half million votes.

In the next six months, the government tried to get a Reichstag majority by holding two elections. The first took place in July. In that election, the



votes for the Nazis more than doubled. The Nazis won 230 Reichstag seats and became the largest single party in the Reichstag.

Disappointed by the results of the election, the government held another in November. However, in this election, the Communists made tremendous gains and won 100 seats in the Reichstag. Many influential businessmen and landlords became alarmed at the spectre of a Communist Revolution in Germany, and so the conservative Nationalists decided that their cause could be served by supporting Hitler, a staunch anti-communist.

On January 28, 1933, Von Hindenburg invited Hitler to be the Chancellor of Germany.

It took Hitler only eighteen months to concentrate all of the power into his own hands.

The first thing he did was to arrange for an election so as to secure a pro-Nazi majority in the Reichstag. To prepare for Nazi success in the election, Hitler appointed party member Hermann Goering as Minister of Interior of Prussia and

ordered the S.A. and S.S. to launch assaults on the anti-Nazi political parties.

On 27 February, the Reichstag building was burned down and the Communists were falsely accused of using the fire as a signal for Communist insurrection. In the guise of defending the country from an alleged Communist Revolution, Hitler asked for emergency power from President Hindenburg.

In a wave of hysteria over the perceived Communist threat, President Hindenburg signed a decree suspending the civil liberties guaranteed under the Constitution. Henceforth, the German citizens had no personal liberty, no freedom of speech, no freedom of assembly, and no freedom of expression. They were subject to house searches and arrest and could be tried by the special People's Courts. Hitler made use of this presidential emergency power to immediately arrest five thousand Communist officials.

In the Reichstag election that followed, the Nazis banned the Communist and Socialist newspapers. The Nazis also made use of the radio stations to broadcast propaganda. The Stormtroopers marched in the streets in a show of force to influence the election. Still, less than one half of the electorate (43.9%) voted for Hitler, so that only with the aid of the Nationalists (8%) was Hitler able to obtain a bare majority in the Reichstag.

Hitler wanted to transfer all legislative power of the Reichstag to himself, but any change in the Constitution required a two-thirds majority in the Reichstag. Thus Hitler arrested 81 Communist deputies, and bribed the Nationalist Party and the Centre Party. As a result, in March 1933, the Nazis outvoted the Social Democrats by 444 to 94 and passed the Enabling Bill which gave Hitler unlimited power to draft and pass any laws without the Reichstag. The German Constitution was destroyed.

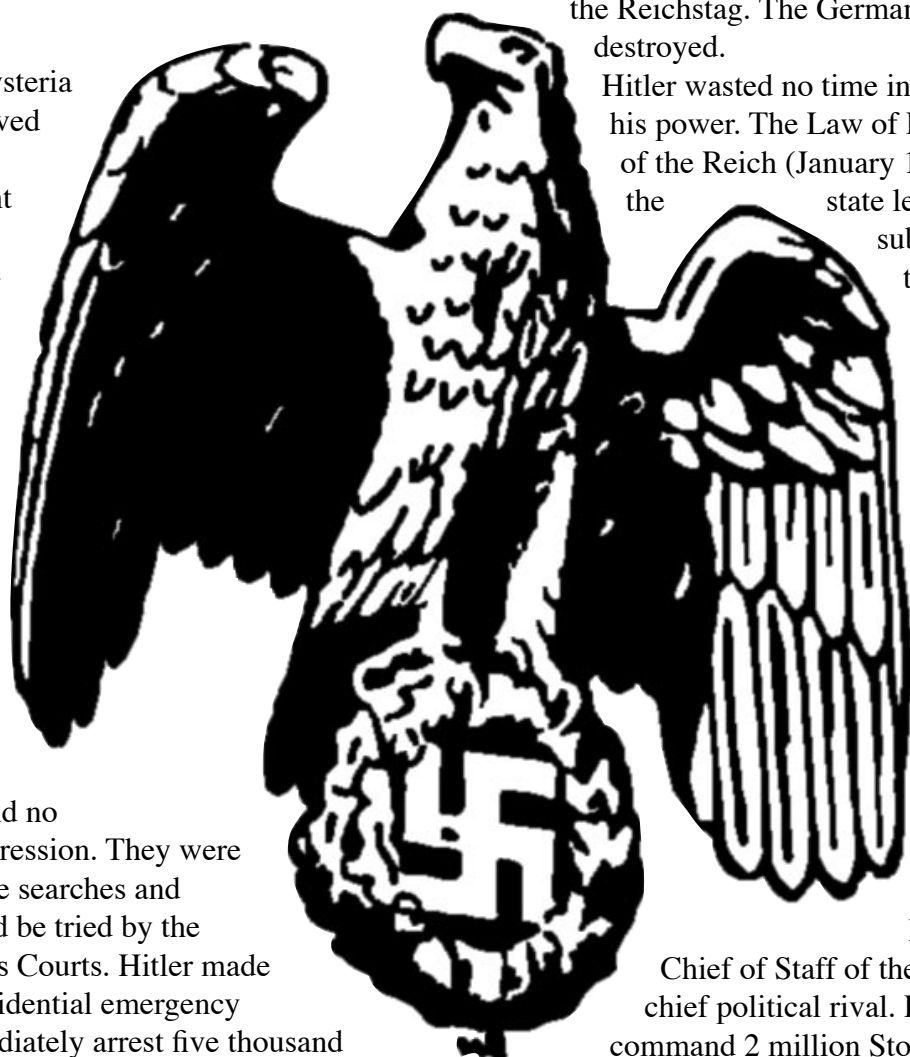
Hitler wasted no time in consolidating his power. The Law of Reconstruction of the Reich (January 1934) abolished the state legislatures and subordinated them to the central government at Berlin. Trade Union offices were raided by the S.A. and S.S. troops. Soon afterward, all political parties except the Nazi Party were declared illegal.

The time then came for Hitler to deal with his political rivals within the party.

Ernst Roehm, the Chief of Staff of the S.A., was Hitler's chief political rival. Roehm had at his command 2 million Storm-troopers (S.A.).

This constituted a great threat to Hitler's political position, since he feared that The S.A. might absorb the smaller German Army, leaving Roehm in command of the nation's entire military force. Therefore, Hitler decided to get rid of Roehm and the S.A.

On 29th June, 1934. Hitler, accompanied by the *Schutzstaffel* (SS), personally arrested Ernst Roehm. During the next 24 hours 200 other senior SA officers were arrested. Many were shot as



soon as they were captured but Hitler decided that Roehm should be allowed to commit suicide but, when Roehm refused, he was killed by two SS men.

The purge of the SA was kept secret until it was announced by Hitler on 13th July. It was during this speech that Hitler gave the purge its name: Night of the Long Knives.

Hitler claimed that 61 had been executed while 13 had been shot resisting arrest and three had committed suicide. Some historians have argued that as many as 400 people were killed during the purge. In his speech Hitler explained why he had not relied on the courts to deal with the conspirators: "In this hour I was responsible for the fate of the German people, and thereby I become the supreme judge of the German people. I gave the order to shoot the ringleaders in this treason."

When President Von Hindenburg died in August 1934, Hitler announced that he would combine in himself the offices of President and Chancellor. He used a combined title, *Führer und Reichskangler* (Leader and Reich Chancellor and Supreme Commander-in-Chief). Army officers took the oath of allegiance to Hitler personally. Hitler's personal dictatorship was now complete. The Third Reich was officially proclaimed.

THE THIRD REICH

The Nazi control of Germany was absolute. The entire nation was indoctrinated to the Nazi ideology. Those who did not adhere to the new directives found themselves the subjects of state-sponsored harassment, arrest, imprisonment or execution.

Education, from kindergarten to university, was geared towards the total immersion of Germany's youth in the tenets of the Nazi ideology. Boys (10-18 years old) were sent to the Hitler Youth, girls (10-18 years old) to the Hitler Maidens. School textbooks were re-written along Nazi lines and University professors were required to wear

swastika and take an oath of allegiance to Hitler.

Dissent within Germany was handled by the secret state police (*Geheime Staatspolizei* - abbreviated to Gestapo), an organization which began as the political department of the Prussian police during the Weimar Republic. With Hitler's rise to power, Hermann Goering became the interior minister of Prussia, taking over the Prussian political police and naming Rudolf Diels as its executive director.

The suspension of civil liberties following the Reichstag fire in 1933 gave the Gestapo complete freedom to impose "protective custody" (*Schutzhaft*) and to prevent undesirable political activities. When Goering was made Prime Minister of Prussia on 11 April 1933, the Gestapo was separated entirely from the overall police structure.

Heinrich Himmler eventually established SS control over the political police and concentration camps in all Germany, including Prussia, where, as Goering's deputy, he took over the Gestapo on 20 April, 1934.

Although throughout Germany the concentration camps came under the control of the SS, the Gestapo had the power to send its victims to them and could determine the prisoners' fate.

By September 1935, the famous Nuremberg Laws were issued. The Laws, in effect, deprived Jews of German citizenship and forbade them to marry 'Aryans'. Jews were excluded from participation in the German political and cultural life. Severe hardships were inflicted on Jews in their daily life (e.g. the need to sit in a separate part of the bus).

As time went on, the treatment of the Jews became worse and worse. They had their property confiscated, personal liberty deprived and eventually were forcibly relocated to ghettos, where they were confined. The persecution grew exponentially worse, and eventually the ghettos were emptied into the concentration camps. It is estimated that 6 million Jews perished under Nazi rule during the rule of the Third Reich.

During the mid-thirties, the Nazis began to re-militarize Germany, in anticipation of their planned conquest of Europe. The plan required the nullification of the Treaty of Versailles and the annexation of all German-speaking countries into the Reich. Hitler then planned to conquer France and Soviet Union before moving on to Britain. Italy would be run as a client state, under the fascist dictator Benito Mussolini.

The first step was to rebuild the German army, which had been kept small by the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. The Nazi industrial machine began to build aircraft and armor, under cover of supposedly civilian projects like the development of new tractors and the nationalized airline.

Hitler announced that he would add 36 new divisions to Germany's Armed Forces. In 1936, German soldiers marched into the demilitarized Rhineland. The Treaty of Versailles was completely destroyed, as neither France nor Britain lifted a finger to stop the German invasion.

As early as 1933, Hitler had been pushing for the annexation of Austria. The Austrian chancellor, Engelbert Dollfuss, responded by outlawing the Austrian Nazi Party. The party continued to operate illegally, with German support, and on July 25, 1934, Austrian Nazis occupied the Parliament building and murdered Dollfuss.

Dollfuss' successor, Kurt von Schuschnigg, was pressured by the Germans into making concessions, which included lifting the ban on the Austrian Nazi Party and the placement of pro-Nazi ministers in key positions. In one final desperate move on March 9, 1938, Schuschnigg called for a popular vote on Austrian independence. Hitler's response to this was to demand that the vote be postponed and that Schuschnigg resign...and three days later, he sent German troops into Austria.

A Nazi puppet is sworn into office as Austria's Chancellor, and the new ministry is composed entirely of Nazis. France invited Italy and England to examine the events, but Italy declines stating that they "regard the events in Austria as the outcome

of a preexistent state of affairs and as the free expression of the feelings and good will of the Austrian people, unequivocally confirmed by the imposing public demonstrations with which the events were greeted."

On March 15th, delirious crowds greeted Hitler as he paraded triumphantly through Vienna, and on April 10th, Hitler held his own election, and 99 percent of Austrians voted in favor of the annexation (*Anschluss*).

France and Britain protested, but weakly. British Prime Minister Chamberlain claimed that Germany was required to consult with England, France and Italy before acting, but this demand is ignored by Hitler. Realizing the threat that Germany's new position placed upon Czechoslovakia (now nearly surrounded by the Third Reich), Chamberlain assured the Czechs that England would support them.

However, by the fall of 1938, England, France and Italy would force the Czechs into handing territory over to the Germans, and by the close of the decade, the Third Reich's invasion of the rest of Czechoslovakia and invasion of Poland began the Second World War (which brought the pulp era to a close).



NAZI WEAPONS

The following table provides statistics for weapons used by the Nazis which appear in the NPC stat blocks presented later in this book. Some of this information is repeated from the Equipment chapter, but is included here for ease of reference.

Handguns

(Require the Personal Firearms Proficiency Feat)

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
Luger P-08	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S	8/32 box	Small	2 lb. 15	Lic (+1)
Mauser C96	2d8	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S	10 box	Small	2 lb. 17	Lic (+1)
Walther PPK	2d4	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S	7 box	Small	1 lb. 15	Lic (+1)
Walther P-38	2d6	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	S	8 box	Small	1 lb. 16	Lic (+1)

Luger P-08

One of the world's most recognizable handguns, the Luger was the standard officer's sidearm for the Third Reich. The 9mm Luger is available with either a standard 8-round clip, or a unique 32-round "snail" drum magazine.

Mauser C96

Also known as the "broomhandle", due to its distinctive grip, the Mauser is unusual in that its magazine of 7.62mm bullets is in front of the trigger guard, and not housed in the grip, as is standard with most autoloaders. The Mauser can also be fitted with a stock, allowing it to be fired while braced against the shoulder (+1 to hit). Gamers probably know this weapon best as the basis for Han Solo's blaster prop.

Walther PPK

The trademark weapon of certain superspies, the .32 PPK is a small, simple and reliable autoloader with a design that dates back to 1930. It was often carried by high-ranking German officers who did not wish to carry the heavier Luger. The PPK was also the favored weapon of the Gestapo.

Walther P-38

This 9mm pistol was designed as a modernized, more easily manufactured replacement for the Luger in 1938. Nazi agents and mad scientists on the "cutting edge" of technology will be armed with the P-38.

Longarms

(Require the Personal Firearms Proficiency Feat)

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
Mauser M32	2d8	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	S,A	20 box	Small	2 lb. 18	Lic (+1)
MP-38/40	2d6	20	Ballistic	50 ft.	S,A	32 box	Med	5 lb. 19	Mil (+3)
MPE (Erma)	2d6	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	S, A	32 box	Med	7 lb. 17	Mil (+3)
Gewehr 98K	2d10	20	Ballistic	90 ft.	S	5 box	Large	8 lb. 17	Res (+2)

Mauser M32

The first widely-used true machine pistol, the 7.62mm M32 is an automatic fire version of the C96. The weapon is nearly impossible to fire without the stock in place -- without the stock, the firer suffers a -8 penalty to hit.

MP (Maschinenpistole)-38/40

The most famous German submachinegun, the 9mm MP-38/40 was commonly referred to as the "Schmeisser," although Hugo Schmeisser was not on the weapon's design team. Originally available in late 1937 (the MP-38), and 1939 (the MP-40), the models are essentially identical.

MP (Maschinenpistole)E (Erma)

The predecessor to the MP-38, the Erma was introduced in the 1920s. The 9mm MPE has a barrel jacket with long slots, a 32 shot detachable box magazine entering from the left, and a unique wooden pistol grip in the stock. The weapon was used by the SS.

Gewehr 98K

The bolt-action Gewehr 98K was the standard service rifle of the German army from 1898 to 1945, and was reputed to be one of the finest military rifles ever produced. The 7.92mm weapon (use 7.62 Rifle ammo in the main rulebook for pricing) was reliable, durable, and accurate. Fitted with a scope, it could be pressed into service as a sniper rifle.

Heavy Weapons and Explosives (Require the Exotic Firearms Proficiency Feat)

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
MG-13	2d8	20	Ballistic	110 ft.	A	25 box	Huge	24 lb.	21	Mil (+3)
MG-26	2d8	20	Ballistic	100 ft.	A	30 box	Huge	21 lb.	21	Mil (+3)
MG-34	2d10	20	Ballistic	110 ft.	A	Linked	Huge	26 lb.	22	Mil (+3)
MG-37T	2d10	20	Ballistic	100 ft.	A	Linked	Huge	40 lb.	22	Mil (+3)
Panzerfaust	10d6 *	—	—	150 ft.	1	—	Large	8 lb.	17	Mil (+3)
Stielhandgranate	4d6*	—	Slashing	10ft.	1	—	Small	2 lb.	15	Mil (+3)

*this weapon does special damage. see description.

MG (Maschinengewehr) -13

The MG13 was a light machinegun constructed by rebuilding the old Dreyse gun left over after WW1. Used 7.92 shells (use 7.62 Rifle for ammo prices).

MG (Maschinengewehr) -26

A Czech weapon, where it was known as the ZB26, the 7.92 MG26 was used by the Nazis as a light infantry support weapon.

MG (Maschinengewehr) -34

The 7.92 MG34, introduced in 1934, was the mainstay of the Wehrmacht until 1942, when it was replaced by the superior MG42.

MG (Maschinengewehr) -37T

Another Czech weapon in 7.92mm, the MG37T was used by the German army as a tank-mounted machinegun.

Panzerfaust

A hand-held, single-shot, shape-charged anti-tank weapon, easily manufactured and designed to be cheap, one-use weapons to be used with little training.

When the Panzerfaust hits its target, it explodes like a grenade or other explosive, dealing it's 10d6 points of damage within a 10-foot radius (Reflex save DC18 for half damage). Because its explosive is a shape-charge designed to penetrate the armor of tanks, the Panzerfaust ignores up to 10 points of hardness if it strikes a vehicle, building or object. This applies only to the object struck, not other objects within the burst radius.

Stielhandgranate

The well-known "potato-masher" hand grenade. When the Stielhandgranate explodes it delivers its 4d6 points of damage within a 20-foot radius (Reflex save DC15 for half damage).

Gamemasters who are fully embracing the pulp feel and giving their Nazi villains access to occult powers or the high-tech inventions of mad scientists should feel free to make use of weapons and equipment from any other supplement for Modern D20 play. Players can face minions of the Third Reich armed with rocket packs, ray guns, spellbooks and more.



NAZI VEHICLES

The chart on the following page features statistics for common vehicles available to the Nazis during the 1930s. Again, remember that many of the more famous vehicles were only developed after the start of the war, and therefore lay outside the scope of this supplement.

GROUND VEHICLES

Name	Crew	Pass	Cargo	Init	Maneuver	Top Speed	Defense	Hardness	HP	Purchase Size	DC	Restriction
Motorcycles												
BMW R12	1	0	0lb.	+0	+2	165(16)	10	5	18	M	23	Lic (+1)
(w/sidecar)	1	1	0lb	-1	+1	140(14)	10	5	22	L	25	Lic (+1)
SdKfz 2	1	1	500 lbs.	-2	-2	105 (10)	10	10	25	L	30	Mil (+3)

Cars

Mercedes 500K Staff Car	1	4	475lb.	-2	-1	220(22)	8	5	34	H	37	Lic (+1)
Mercedes 328WK Wehrmacht Kübelwagen	1	4	675lb.	-2	-2	175 (17)	8	10	34	H	33	Mil (+3)

Truck

SdKfz 7 Zugkraftwagen (Half-Track)	1	10	16,000lb.	-4	-4	165(16)	6	10	40	H	35	Mil (+3)
note: This vehicle is armed with either a single 37mm cannon, or a quad-mount 20mm cannon.												
SdKfz 231 Schwere Panzerspähwagen	1	3	9,000lb.	-2	-2	175(17)	8	10	38	H	34	Mil (+3)
note: This vehicle is armed with a single 20mm cannon and a MG13												

Military Vehicles

Panzerkampfwagen III (tracked tank)	5	0	450lb.	-4	-4	50 (5)	6	15	52	G	45	Mil (+3)
note: This vehicle is armed with a single 37mm cannon and a MG34												
SturmGeschütz III (tracked tank)	4	0	300lb.	-4	-4	70 (7)	6	20	60	G	47	Mil (+3)
note: This vehicle is armed with a single 75mm cannon and a MG37T												

BMW R12

A sturdy well-built motorcycle, available with or without a sidecar, used by the Third Reich as a vehicle for scouts or couriers. Famously appeared in the “jousting” scene in *The Last Crusade*.

SdKfz 2

A treaded motorcycle half-track, the Sd. Kfz. 2 Kettenkraftrad was originally conceived as a light support towing vehicle for mountain troops, but found favor with all Wehrmacht troops, especially those in the Eastern Front where it's excellent cross-country ability allowed it to maneuver in the mud-bogged roads and the mountainous Caucasus region.

Mercedes-Benz 500K Staff Car

The ubiquitous long black convertible with Reich flags mounted on the forward wheel wells, used to ferry Nazi officers in style.

Mercedes-Benz 328WK Wehrmacht Kübelwagen

A lightly-armored all-purpose multi-terrain car for military use. Filled a similar role to the American Jeep.

SdKfz 7 Zugkraftwagen

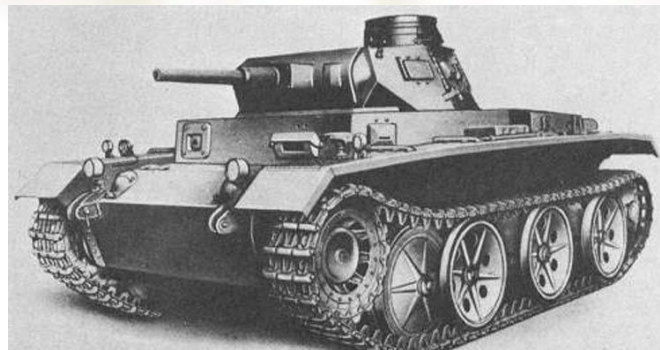
A treaded half-track truck, used primarily as a weapons platform for anti-aircraft and infantry support duties. The most common varieties of the Zugkraftwagen were armed with either a single 37mm cannon, or quad-mounted 20mm cannons.

SdKfz 231 Schwere Panzerspähwagen

A six-wheeled truck, with a rear 4-wheel drive, used for hauling and infantry support. The Schwere Panzerspähwagen was armed with a single 20mm cannon and an MG-13 on a swivel mount.

Panzerkampfwagen III

One of the Reich's famed Panzer tanks, the Panzerkampfwagen III was relatively lightly armed and armored, with 15mm armor and a 37mm cannon.



SturmGeschütz . III

The SturmGeschütz (Assault Gun) was designed using the main hull of the Panzer III. Originally designed as support artillery weapon it was later up gunned with a massive 75mm cannon and used as a tank-killer, where it was a great success.

Vehicle Weapons

(Require the Exotic Firearms Proficiency (cannons) Feat)

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
20mm cannon	3d12	20	Ballistic	150 ft.	A	Linked Huge	*	*	*
37mm cannon	5d12	20	Ballistic	150 ft.	S	1 Huge	*	*	*
75mm cannon	10d12	20	Ballistic	150 ft.	S	1 Huge	*	*	*

* Weight, purchase DC and restriction rating do not apply. These weapons are part of the vehicles on which they are mounted.

OTHER VEHICLES

Name	Crew	Pass	Cargo	Init	Maneuver	Top Speed	Defense	Hardness	HP	Purchase Size	DC	Restriction
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Aircraft

Junkers JU-87D-1 Stuka (divebomber)
2 0 0lb. -2 +1 400 (40) 6 5 30 G 40 Mil (+3)

note: vehicle is armed with 2 machineguns in the wings (use MG-34) and one 250kg bomb (use stats for 100 blocks of C4, Modern page 124)

Messerschmitt Bf109 (fighter)
1 0 0lb. -1 +1 500 (50) 6 5 28 G 40 Mil (+3)

note: vehicle is armed with 2 machineguns in the wings (use MG-34)

Junkers JU-52 (transport plane)
2 17 5,000lb. -4 -4 220 (22) 6 5 44 G 45 Mil (+3)

note: vehicle is armed with 4 MG-34s in passenger-operated emplacements (1 fore, 1 aft, 1 port, 1 starboard)

Zeppelin (Airship)
60 100 30,000lb. -4 -4 275 (27) 6 5 54 G 50 Mil (+3)

note: weapons packages vary. If hit with an incendiary attack and a critical hit results, the hydrogen in the gas bags ignite, destroying the airship and doing 6d6 burn damage to all within.

Naval craft

Type VII A U-boat
(surface) 42 8 5,000lb -4 -4 80(8) 6 5 50 G 50 Mil (+3)
(submerged) -2 -2 40(4) 8

note: vehicle is armed with a 75mm deck gun, 11 torpedoes in 4 forward tubes (use stats for 10 blocks of C4, Modern page 124 , with a range increment for firing of 150)



Junkers JU-87D Stuka

Stuka is the abbreviation of the German word *Sturzkampfflugzeug*, which designated all dive bombers. The main fighter/bomber used by the Luftwaffe, the Stuka would play a major role in the Blitzkrieg that swept across Poland, northern Europe and France.

In the later years of the war, the Ju 87 had a successful second life as an anti-tank weapon, striking armor columns from above.

Messerschmitt Bf109

One of the best air superiority fighters ever built, the Messerschmitt was the predator of the skies. The Bf109 was the Luftwaffe's standard single-seat fighter from 1935-1943 and was able to outfight or outrun virtually all opposition. The fighter was used primarily for intercept and bomber escort duties.

Junkers JU-52

Nicknamed "*Tante Ju*" (Auntie Ju) by German troops, the Junkers Ju-52 was the most famous transport of the Third Reich. The Ju-52 served as an airliner for many nations, including the German Lufthansa and eventually entered service as a troop transport for the Reich. The Ju-52 was slow and very lightly armed against fighters, but was used from the 30s right through to the end of the war.

Zeppelin

Nothing says "pulp Nazis" like an airship. These massive air vehicles have become iconic images. During the 1930s, the German company Zeppelin Luftschifftechnik constructed and operated several airships as a commercial airline, travelling across Europe, and eventually across the world. Vessels like the Graf Zeppelin and the Hindenberg, despite being civilian vessels, were emblazoned with the swastika by Hitler's order, so that the graceful giants could be seen as symbols of German might. Even though their use during this period of history was mostly civilian, GMs should feel free to throw players up against military airships as well...they're just too cool not to use!

Type VIIA U-boat

Another iconic Nazi vehicle, the U-boats travelled the Atlantic in predatory "wolfpacks", harassed shipping, delivered Nazi spies onto unsuspecting enemy beaches, and carried secret archeological discoveries to hidden island fortresses! There were many types of U-boat -- the statistics provided here correspond to the Type VIIA, provided as an example.



NAZI ARCHETYPES

The pages that follow contain NPCs that represent the most common archetypal uses of Nazis as represented in pulp stories, cliffhanger films and modern homages.

Nazi Soldier (Wehrmacht)

The average Nazi rank-and-file goon, ready to goose-step, seig heil and get socked in the jaw by our stalwart heroes.

For the purposes of pulp gaming, the Wehrmacht soldier is essentially the equivalent of an orc in a standard fantasy game. He's there to follow orders, and will fight fiercely against any opposition, only surrendering in the face of overwhelming power.

Strong Ordinary 1 CR 1; Medium-size humanoid; HD 1d8+1; HP 6; Mas 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 13, touch 13, flatfooted 11 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +1 class); BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4+2/19-20, knife), or +3 ranged (2d6+0, MP-38/40); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Occupation: Military (Drive, Knowledge [Tactics])

Skills: Climb +4, Drive +3, Handle Animal +0, Knowledge (Current Events) +3, Knowledge (Streetwise) +2, Knowledge (Tactics) +3, Repair +2, Spot +1, Survival +1, Swim +4

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Brawl, Personal Firearms Proficiency

Possessions: knife, MP-38/40; Wealth +6

Nazi Soldier (SS)

The *Schutzstaffel* represent a tougher and more fanatical variety of the Nazi goon. Use these guys when you want to provide more of a challenge to your player-characters.

Tough Ordinary 1/Strong Ordinary 1 CR 2; Medium-size humanoid; HD 1d10+2 plus 1d8+2; HP 15; Mas 15; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 13, touch 13, flatfooted 12 (+0 size, +1 Dex, +2 class); BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4+2/19-20, knife), or +2 ranged (2d6+0, MP-38/40); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1; AP 1; Rep +0; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Occupation: Military (Drive, Knowledge [Tactics])

Skills: Climb +4, Concentration +4, Craft (mechanical) +2, Demolitions +2, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +6, Search +2, Spot +3, Survival +2

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Brawl, Personal Firearms Proficiency

Possessions: knife, MP-38/40; Wealth +6



Nazi Officer

Now we're getting to the true pulp villains. Use officers as the main villains for adventures featuring the Third Reich. When your player-characters are more powerful, use a Nazi officer as the henchman of an even more powerful and insidious villain!

Dedicated Villain 3/Strong Villain

2/Soldier 4 CR 9; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d6+3 plus 2d8+2 plus 4d10+4; HP 51; Mas 13; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16, touch 16, flatfooted 16 (+0 size, +0 Dex, +6 class); BAB +7; Grap +9; Atk +9 melee (1d4+2/19-20, knife), or +8 ranged (2d6, Luger P-08); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +6; AP 4; Rep +1; Str 15, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 14.

Occupation: Military (Drive, Knowledge [Tactics])

Skills: Climb +3, Demolitions +6, Disable Device +4, Drive +8, Gather Information +4, Handle Animal +3, Intimidate +8, Investigate +4, Jump +7, Knowledge (Current Events) +7, Knowledge (History) +8, Knowledge (Tactics) +17, Knowledge (Technology) +6, Listen +9, Navigate +5, Pilot +3, Profession +4, Read/Write Language +2 (German, English, French), Sense Motive +6, Speak Language +2 (German, English, French), Spot +8, Survival +6, Swim +4, Treat Injury +4

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Combat Expertise, Combat Martial Arts, Exotic Firearms Proficiency (heavy machine guns), Far Shot, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Weapon Focus (Luger), Weapon Focus(MP-38/40)

Talents (Dedicated Villain): Skill Emphasis (Knowledge [Tactics]), Aware



Talents (Strong Villain): Ignore Hardness

Talents (Soldier): Weapon Focus, Weapon Specialization, Tactical Aid

Possessions: knife, Luger P-08; Wealth +15

Gestapo Goon

This instrument of the secret state police should be an omnipresent threat any time that your player-characters travel into areas that lie under the control of the Reich. The heroes should be watched at every step, wondering when the Gestapo will strike suddenly, and whisk them away to a windowless interrogation room...or worse.

Dedicated Villain 2/Tough Villain 1 CR 3; Medium-size humanoid; HD 2d6+4 plus 1d10+2 plus 1; HP 20; Mas 15; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 15, touch 15, flatfooted 13 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +3 class); BAB +1; Grap +0; Atk +0 melee (1d4+1, Pistol whip), or +3 ranged (2d4+0, Walther PPK); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +7; AP 1; Rep +2; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 11.

Occupation: Law Enforcement (Gather Information, Intimidate)

Skills: Bluff +1, Drive +4, Gather Information +3, Intimidate +7, Investigate +3, Knowledge (Current Events) +1, Knowledge (History) +1, Knowledge (Streetwise) +1, Knowledge (Tactics) +3, Listen +8, Sense Motive +6, Spot +7

Feats: Alertness, Brawl, Iron Will, Low Profile, Personal Firearms Proficiency

Talents (Dedicated Hero): Skill Emphasis (Intimidate)

Talents (Tough Hero): Robust

Possessions: Walther PPK; Wealth +6



Nazi Spy

Another iconic Nazi villain, the Spy operates as a Fifth Column within a target nation, engaging in espionage or sabotage on the orders of his or her superiors. Spies are tasked with stealing military secrets, assassinating political targets and many other dastardly deeds, unless your player-characters can track them down and uncover the hidden menace!

Dedicated Villain 3/Fast Villain 2/Infiltrator 2 CR 7; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d6+3 plus 2d8+2 plus 2d10+2; HP 24; Mas 9; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 18, touch 18, flatfooted 17 (+0 size, +1 Dex, +7 class); BAB +4; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, Sap), or +5 ranged (2d6+0, Walther P-38 (w/silencer)); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +6; AP 3; Rep +1; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 8.

Occupation: Military (Hide, Move Silently)

Skills: Balance +3, Bluff +1, Climb +0, Disable Device +2, Disguise +2, Drive +3, Escape Artist +4, Gather Information +2, Hide +10, Investigate +11, Jump +0, Knowledge (Streetwise) +8, Knowledge (Tactics) +4, Listen +11, Move Silently +11, Pilot +2, Read/Write Language +2 (German, English, French), Search +3, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +4, Speak Language +2 (German, English, French), Spot +8, Tumble +4

Feats: Alertness, Attentive, Combat Martial Arts, Deceptive, Low Profile, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Stealthy

Talents (Dedicated Hero): Skill Emphasis (Gather Information), Empathy

Talents (Fast Hero): Evasion

Talents (Infiltrator): Sweep, Improvised Implements

Possessions: Sap, Walther P-38 (w/silencer); Wealth +9

Nazi Temptress

One of the stranger archetypes to develop during the pulp era, and which continues to the present day (for example, in *The Last Crusade* and *Hellboy*), is that of the Nazi Temptress: an evil agent of the Third Reich who uses her feminine wiles in an attempt to seduce our stalwart hero. The archetype in the pulps was often simply an excuse to engage in some blatant dominatrix-themed titillation.

Occasionally, the Temptress is irredeemably evil, serving as an example of Beauty actually being the Beast. In these cases, the allure of the character is set in stark contrast to her horrible acts. In other cases, however, she can be swayed (naturally, having never met the “right guy”) and convinced to betray the Nazi cause at a suitably dramatic moment in the adventure.

Charismatic Villain 6 CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; HD 6d6+0 plus 3; HP 24; Mas 11; Init -1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 11, touch 11, flatfooted 12 (+0 size, -1 Dex, +2 class); BAB +3; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4+0, knife), or +2 ranged (2d6+0, Luger P-08); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +5; AP 3; Rep +4; Str 11, Dex 9, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 18.

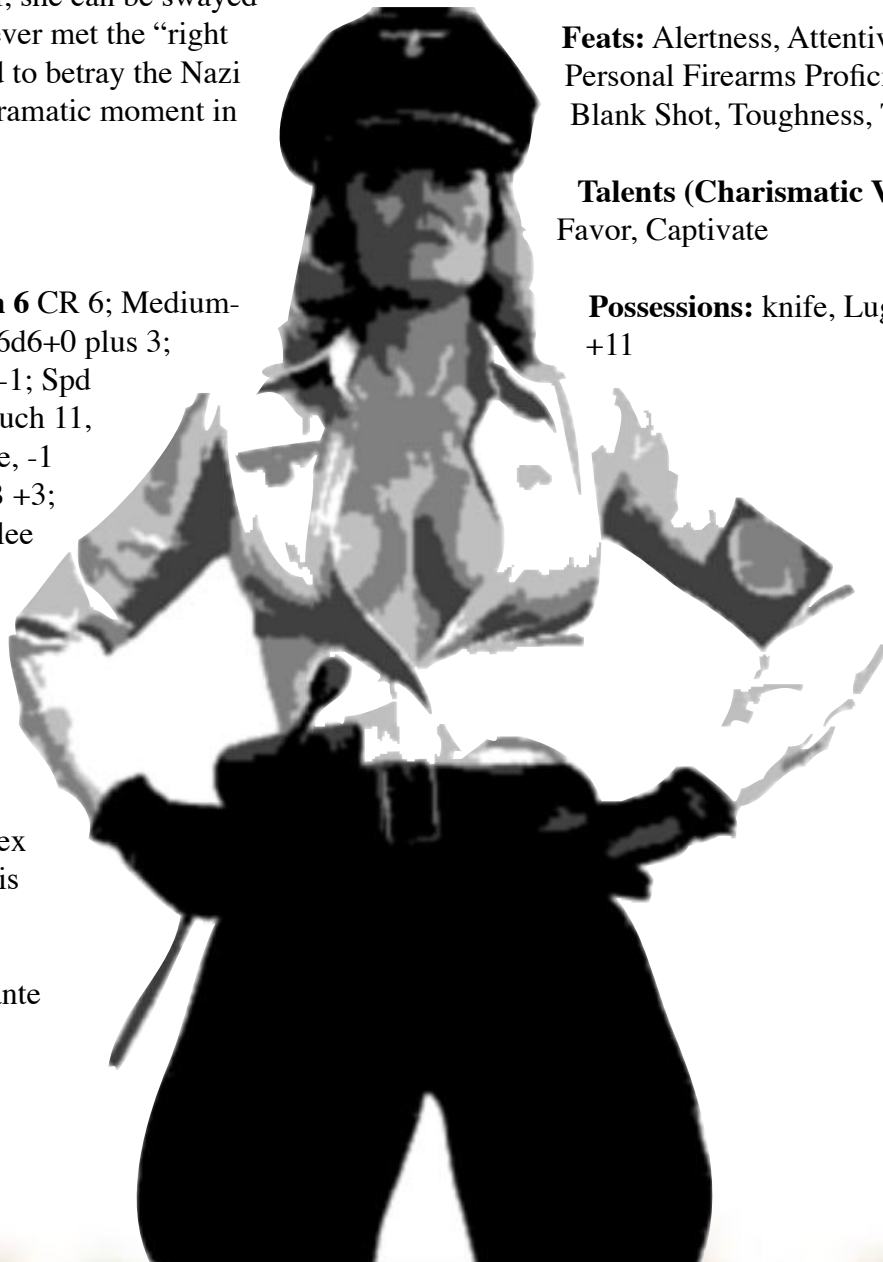
Occupation: Dilettante (Intimidate)

Skills: Bluff +12, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +2, Gamble +5, Gather Information +13, Intimidate +7, Investigate +7, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) +4, Knowledge (Art) +5, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +8, Knowledge (Business) +4, Knowledge (Civics) +4, Knowledge (Current Events) +6, Knowledge (Popular Culture) +6, Knowledge (Streetwise) +4, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +5, Listen +6, Perform +13, Profession +7, Read/Write Language +4 (German, English, French, Russian, Italian), Sense Motive +6, Speak Language +4 (German, English, French, Russian, Italian), Spot +5

Feats: Alertness, Attentive, Deceptive, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Toughness, Trustworthy

Talents (Charismatic Villain): Charm, Favor, Captivate

Possessions: knife, Luger P-08; Wealth +11



Nazi Scientist

*"Nuzzink in ze vurld can schtopp me NOW!
Bwah-ha-ha-ha-haaaa!!!"*

You know the type. The Nazi scientist is bent on world domination via technological superiority...and, in pulp adventures, that means Giant Killer Robots, Flying Saucers, Secret Mind Control Devices and the ever-present Death Ray.

They can be used as either the main villain of an adventure, or as the research specialist working for a more powerful individual.

This archetype is built using the Mad Scientist advanced class, found in the Advanced Class chapter earlier in this book.

Smart Villain 4/Mad Scientist 5 CR 9;
Medium-size humanoid; HD 4d6+4 + 5d8-5; HP 33; Mas 8; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 15, touch 15, flatfooted 15 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +3 class); BAB +5; Grap +2; Atk +5 melee (1d4+0, Pistol whip), or +7 ranged (2d6+0, Walther P-38); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +4; AP 8; Rep +3; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 8, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Occupation: Academic (Knowledge [Earth and Life Sciences], Knowledge [Physical Sciences], Knowledge [Technology])

Skills: Bluff +8, Computer Use +6, Craft (chemical) +7, Craft (electronic) +15, Craft (mechanical) +16, Craft (pharmaceutical) +7, Craft (structural) +5, Decipher Script +8, Demolitions +11, Disable Device +8, Drive +6, Gather Information +4, Investigate +6, Jump +2, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) +5, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +6, Knowledge (Current Events) +6, Knowledge (Earth and Life Sciences) +13, Knowledge (Physical Sciences) +15, Knowledge (Tactics) +7, Knowledge (Technology) +15, Pilot +6, Read/Write Language +2 (German, English, French), Repair +12, Research +13, Sense



Motive +2, Speak Language +2 (German, English, French), Spot +4, Tumble +4

Feats: Builder (Craft [electronic], Craft [mechanical]), Cautious, Combat Expertise, Gearhead, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Studious.

Talents (Smart Villain): Savant (Craft [mechanical]), Plan

Talents (Mad Scientist): Weird Science (4/3/2), Scientific Improvisation, Inspiration

Possessions: Walther P-38 ; Wealth +12

Nazi Sorcerer

Hitler's obsession with the occult is a matter of historical record--even the Nazi party itself began as the political arm of an occult society, the Thule Gesellschaft. In 1935, Heinrich Himmler founded the *Studiengesellschaft für Geistesurgeschichte Deutsches Ahnenerbe* (Society for Research into the Spiritual Roots of Germany's Ancestral Heritage), known simply as the Ahnenerbe. The official purpose of the organization was to travel the world searching for evidence of the ancient Aryans. Records exist that indicate that the Ahnenerbe also studied the occult sciences.

The Nazi Sorcerer is an operative of the Ahnenerbe, well-versed in magical practices (most likely based on the Nordic runes or other Germanic sources).

Smart Villain 6/Mage 3 CR 9; Medium-size humanoid; HD 6d6+12 plus 3d6+6; HP 50; Mas 15; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16, touch 16, flatfooted 14 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +4 class); BAB +4; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4+1, knife), or +6 ranged (2d6+0, Luger P-08); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +9; AP 4; Rep +3; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Occupation: Shadow Scholar (Decipher Script, Knowledge [Arcane Lore], Read/Write Language)

Skills: Bluff +2, Concentration +5, Craft (chemical) +13, Craft (electronic) +8, Craft (mechanical) +7, Craft (pharmaceutical) +11, Decipher Script +16, Demolitions +6, Disable Device +6, Disguise +2, Forgery +10, Gather Information +7, Investigate +17, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) +23, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +8, Knowledge (Current Events) +7, Knowledge (Earth and Life Sciences) +7, Knowledge (History) +10, Knowledge (Physical Sciences) +8, Knowledge (Tactics) +8, Knowledge (Technology) +13, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +8, Navigate +6, Profession +6, Read/Write Language +6 (German, English, French, Latin, Hebrew, Arabic, Sanskrit), Research +17, Search +9, Sense Motive +3, Speak Language +6



(German, English, French, Latin, Hebrew, Arabic, Sanskrit), Spellcraft +5, Use Magic Device +1

Feats: , Attentive, Combat Martial Arts, Deceptive, Educated (Knowledge [Arcane Lore], Knowledge [Technology]), Heighten Power, Iron Will, Meticulous, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Studious

Talents (Smart Villain): Savant (Knowledge [Arcane Lore]), Plan, Exploit Weakness

Talents (Mage): Arcane Skills, Arcane Spells (*Daze, Detect Magical Aura, Light, Read Magic, Magic Missile, Sleep, True Strike, Invisibility, Protection from Bullets*), Summon Familiar, Scribe Scroll

Possessions: knife, Luger P-08; Wealth +10

TAKE THAT, FRITZ! (NAZI PLOT IDEAS)

The Nazis make excellent villains for use in your pulp campaign adventures, largely because of the expectations of the players. You say “pulp” to the average gamer, and you can be sure that he or she is anticipating landing a solid right hook on the jaw of a vile Nazi, while saving New York City from certain destruction.

You should be careful not to over-use the Third Reich, however. They lose their effectiveness as villains if the players start to suffer from “Nazi Fatigue.”

Remember that during the 1930s, the Reich was involved in a build-up to war readiness. Nazi operations should be largely covert...Gamemasters shouldn't have Nazi troops travelling via rocket-pack to invade the United States, unless you're intending for your campaign to veer in alternate history...which is not to say that there isn't fun to be had with that sort of campaign. Just be sure that your players are aware that's what you're going for. After all, the baseline pulp campaign is assumed to take place in at least a close approximation of the real world. Don't stretch your player's suspension of disbelief unless you've been up front about your intentions from the beginning.

Espionage Adventures

The style of adventure that keeps its feet most firmly in the real-world soil, espionage adventures either pit your player characters against the secret machinations of Nazi agents within another nation, or conversely send the player-characters in to infiltrate the Reich itself.

The most time-honored of these plot ideas is where the heroes must stop Nazi spies. The plot line usually goes along these lines: Nazi agents have stolen the plans for some super-secret military technology (it always seems to be either plans for a prototype aircraft or a bomb-sight for some reason), and the player-characters must catch the spies before they can successfully smuggle the technology out of the country.

A variation on this is the discovery that a Nazi agent is operating in a position of power. The player-characters are armed with the knowledge that the agent exists, but are unaware of the agent's identity. The adventure focuses on uncovering the spy. This sort of adventure is more suited to campaigns that are less fantastic and more realistic in feel.

Espionage adventures can be set within the Reich as well, with player-characters sent in to steal secret plans themselves (turning the standard plot described above on its ear). Adventures within the Reich should be fraught with the danger of discovery -- player-characters should be hunted by agents of the Gestapo every step of the way.

Another iteration of the infiltration plot has the player-characters travelling into the Reich to rescue someone from the grip of the Nazis. Perhaps a Jewish scientist held against his will and forced to work on a doomsday weapon, or an American spy who has been captured by the Gestapo...either way the player-characters must find their way into Germany, avoid capture themselves, and participate in a break-out.

Enjoyably, these sorts of missions almost always seem to feature the prisoner being held in some Bavarian castle, which provides the Gamemaster with the perfect opportunity to run the pulp RPG equivalent of a standard “dungeon-crawl” adventure!

Military Adventures

Generally speaking, open conflict with the Nazis doesn't really occur until the start of the Second World War, which marks the end of the pulp era. Given that, there isn't much opportunity for adventures featuring military action against the Reich.

Pulp magazines of the time got around this by cooking up wars with thinly-veiled fictional fascists, or by setting military action during the First World War (for example, *G-8 and His Flying Aces*).

However, there is nothing preventing Gamemasters from engaging in secret military escapades: after all, the Flying Tigers engaged in war with Japan long before the United States officially followed suit. A campaign featuring the player-characters as a private mercenary unit fighting on the side of freedom and right (something along the line of *Sky Captain's Flying Legion*) could easily engage the Nazis. Combat could occur on secret island bases, military expeditions deep in the jungle...anywhere were a "little war" could be fought without attracting the attention of the rest of the world.

Fantastic Adventures

Most pulp campaigns, however, are going to contain elements of the fantastic. It's fun, after all, and one of the things that attracts gamers to the style of play. Primarily, there are two directions that a GM can take when adding elements of the fantastic: Science Fiction and the Supernatural (although enterprising GMs can combine the two for some truly mind-boggling concepts!)

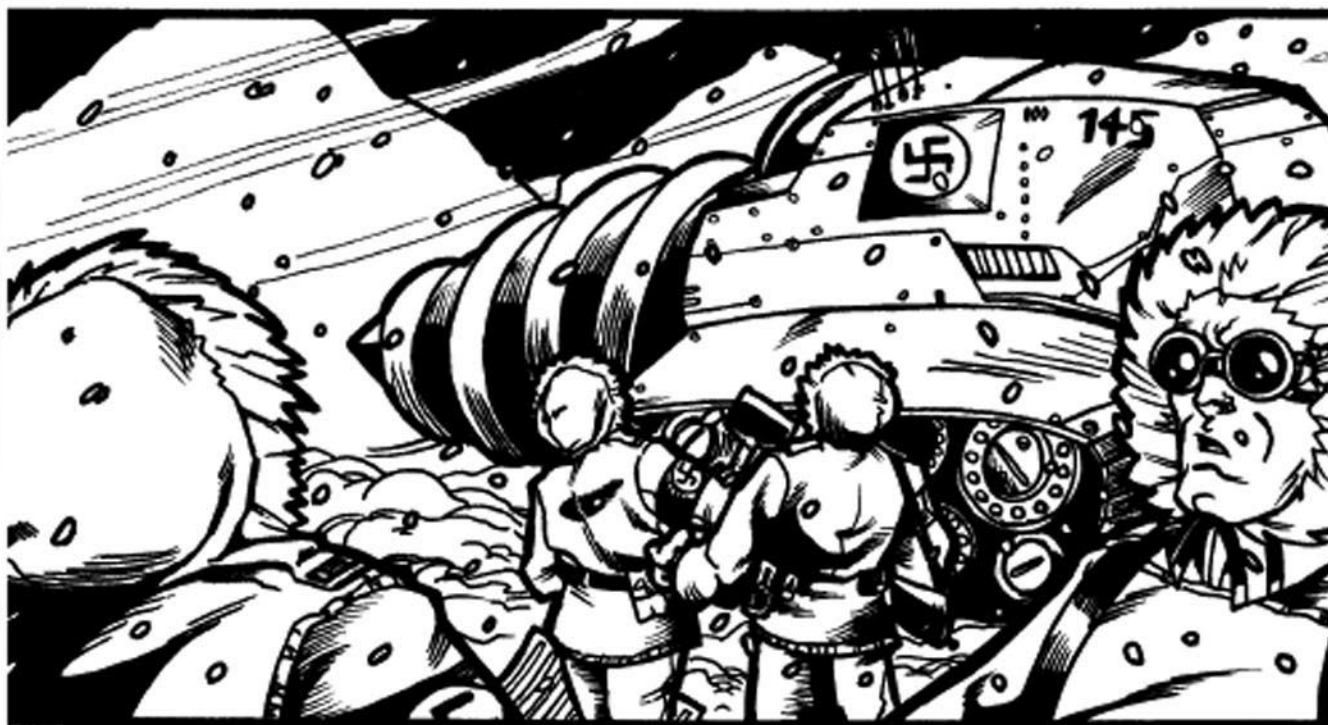
Science Fictional elements usually take the form of technological advances (either already in the possession of the Nazis, under development by Nazi mad scientists, or the subject of Nazi theft).

Historically, the Nazis spent a great deal of time and money investigating and developing new technologies (the V-1 and V-2 Rockets, for example), so the introduction of fantastic technology is not as far a stretch as it would be otherwise. It is a relatively small leap from the V-2 to Nazi spacecraft, after all.

German atomic research is another great idea to spring upon player-characters, since they have the benefit of historical hindsight to know how close the Reich was to developing nuclear weapons, and what would have happened had they done so before the U.S.

Even more fantastic, yet still based in historical fact, is the idea of a German heat ray. After the end of World War II, American investigators found papers discussing the possibility of deploying a solar mirror in orbit, which could focus the sun's rays upon ground targets like a child cooking ants with a magnifying glass. Discovering secret Nazi plans to build such a device, and destroying it, would make a suitably exciting adventure for any hero.

The Nazi fascination with Antarctica also can provide Gamemasters with fodder for adventures. Claimed by Germany in the 1930s, and christened



Neuschwabenland (New Swabia), the South Pole has long been the subject of conspiracy theories about the Reich's activities there. Perhaps your player-characters can discover Nazi efforts to find the long-rumored entrance into the Hollow Earth, where representatives of the Third Reich hope to form an alliance with the subterranean empire that rules the World Below. Can your heroes stop the alliance before dinosaur-mounted troops come spilling out of the New York City subways?

The Reich was equally interested in Tibet, believing it to be one of the homes of the original Aryans. Ernst Schäffer, a German hunter and biologist, participated in two expeditions to Tibet, in 1934 and 1936. The Ahnenerbe sponsored him to lead a third expedition in 1938.

Their mission was to make contact with the Aryan forefathers in Shambhala and Agharti (two hidden subterranean cities said to exist beneath the Himalayas). The cities were said to be the guardians of secret occult powers and super-science, and the missions sought their aid in harnessing those powers for the Nazi cause.

According to the stories, groups of Tibetans purportedly came back to Germany and started lodges known as "the Society of Green Men." It doesn't take much effort on the part of the Gamemaster to work these rumors into plots involving super-science, the occult, or both.

The plot ideas even get juicier when you take into account that of the two hidden cities, Shambhalla (also known as Shangri-la) was associated with higher cosmic powers, while Agharti was associated with more primal energies. It's easy to place them in the roles of a "good" hidden city and an "evil" one. Perhaps the Society of Green Men are Agharti Adepts aiding the Reich, and the player-characters have to discover the hidden city of Shambhalla and ask for their assistance in



combating their ancient rivals.

Of course, today's gamers are more than familiar with the concept of the Nazis looking for supernatural assistance, thanks to the Indiana Jones films.

Whereas the search for the Ark of the Covenant never was an actual Nazi archaeological project, the Reich did actively search for the Holy Grail and acquired the Spear of Destiny.

The Holy Grail, the cup supposedly used at the Last

Supper, and which is said to have caught Christ's blood as it fell from the cross, was the subject of a search by Nazi archaeologist Otto Rahn. Rahn believed that the Grail had been carried to the South of France by the Cathars in the 13th century. Rahn received a commission in the SS from Himmler himself, and searched for the Grail, before inexplicably resigning his commission in 1939 and disappearing. What had he discovered, and what happened to him?

The Spear of Destiny is the spear of the Roman centurian Cassius Longinus, who is said to have used it to pierce the side of Christ. Legend has it that the Spear made whomever possessed it invincible. Stories are told of it passing down through history, in the possession of such men as Louis IX of France, Charlemagne and Napoleon. A spear, either the actual Spear of Destiny or a false relic (depending upon who you listen to), was on display at the Vienna Hofmuseum, and was confiscated by the Nazis after their annexation of Austria.

It was shipped via an armored SS train to Nuremberg on October 13th, 1938, where it remained for six years in St. Catherine's Church before being moved to an underground vault for protection. Some stories say that the Spear was taken to the SS Castle at Wewelsberg.

During the final days of the war in Europe, the United States 7th Army took possession of the Spear in the name of the United States government. Within 90 minutes of the United States capturing the Spear, Adolf Hitler committed suicide. The Spear was returned to the Royal House of Hapsburg shortly thereafter, where it now rests, once again, in the Vienna Hofmuseum. (Although rumors persist that the Spear is a copy, with the true Spear either being kept by the United States, or perhaps by agents of the Reich).

Gamemasters looking to play on this particular theme can have Ahnenerbe-sponsored archaeological expeditions to the far corners of the globe: Egypt, Africa, South America; searching for anything from occult artifacts to Lost Cities.

This allows adventures which cross the lines into standard pulp genres like jungle stories, fortune hunting, or Lost Worlds.

Which leaves us with another standard Nazi adventure plot, wherein the forces of the Third Reich dabble in Things That Man Was Not Meant to Know.

Obviously, the Nazi Sorcerer is the best archetype to use for such adventures, but an occult angle can be added to almost any other variety of plot. Perhaps Nazi agents are looking to steal the copy of the *Necronomicon* held in the library collection of a small New England university. Or perhaps a Nazi scientific experiment causes some kind of dimensional rift, and Things Even Worse Than Nazis come through.

Plots involving the Nazis meddling with this sort of power should be marked by an unbelieving arrogance. At no point should a Nazi villain ever assume that he is in over his head. The firm belief in their status as the Master Race should be the villain's achilles heel in these situations (and, in some cases, the very cause of the danger in the first place!).

Gamemasters can also mix the Nazis with traditional supernatural pulp elements, such as mummies, werewolves, ghosts and vampires. See the *Hellboy* graphic novel series (and film) for suggestions on methods for doing this. The sudden realization that the SS officer whom they've been facing is actually a sorcerous vampire should be enough to put pause to even the most headstrong hero!



CHAPTER NINE:

THUGEE

INTRODUCTION

They strangle unsuspecting travelers on dark country roads. They glide through New York's glittering streets clinging to shadows, carrying fear and death in their yellow scarves. They dance and debauch, brutal thugs masking their villainy behind a façade of ancient mysticism.

They are the Thuggee, a cult of murders whose history and myth stretch back to the time of Herodotus. They terrorized India's roadways for at least six hundred years. Each year they killed travelers by the tens of thousands. Eventually a single man stood up to them, ferreted them out of the dark places, and hung them high for all to see.

The British Empire hung thousands of Thuggee in the period between 1830 and 1850. Thousands more fled rather than pay for their crimes. By the end of the 19th century the terrible cult vanished from India. In the fictional world of the pulps, though, the cult persisted into the modern world. Charismatic conmen use its rituals to disguise their sinister schemes. Remnants of the original Thuggee continue their murderous rites. Rebels and terrorists hide their very modern ambitions under the strangling cord and the pick-axe.

Do you dare oppose them? Or will you too fall to a cunning smile and a swiftly applied yellow strangling cord?

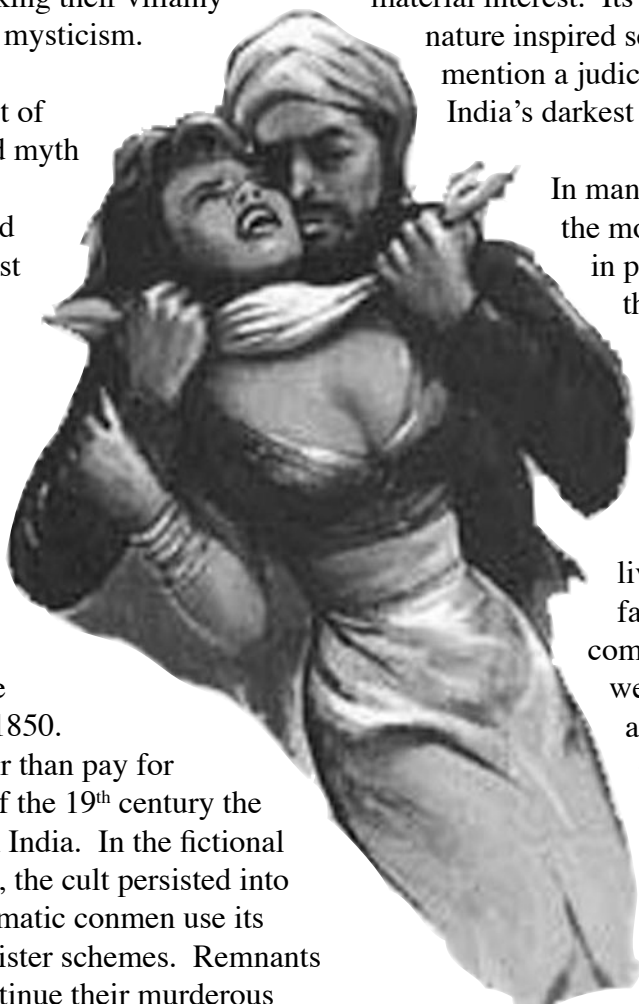
THE THUGEE

The historic Thuggee's saga reads like something out of an adventure novel. It has shining heroes, villains so vile they barely qualify as human, and a nasty intersection between religious fervor and material interest. Its sensational and scandalous nature inspired several best sellers, not to mention a judicial campaign reaching into India's darkest shadows.

In many ways, the Thuggee provided the model writers used to create cults in pulp fiction. They organized themselves into hereditary gangs. These gangs operated in secret and communicated among themselves using an indecipherable cant. When not engaged in their murderous deeds Thuggee lived ordinary lives, had families, and contributed to their communities. In other words, they were everything we imagine a secret society to be: lethal, organized, and completely invisible to the outside world.

In the real world it took a man of remarkable dedication to bring them down. In the world of the pulps it will take more than that: it will take courage, determination, and a fistful of bullets.

The English word "thug" comes from the Hindu word *thag*, meaning a cheater or a thief. In general use a thug is a ruffian, a tough who does what his



bettors tell him. Gangsters employ thugs to beat people to a pulp. Smarmy business men with connections to gangsters hire these slope-browed simians to intimidate weak-willed customers.

Originally, though, the word described something far more dangerous than a class of criminal bottom feeders. Thugs terrorized India for centuries, murdering travelers and stealing the property. Thuggee, their system of beliefs and practices, organized a network of assassins, informers, merchants, and politicians unrivaled in human history. This network turned religious murder into a profitable enterprise, capable of literally mustering an army and ignoring authorities until one man finally brought them to justice.

This section starts by describing the historical Thuggee cult and its grizzly end. It then goes on to describe three different fictional versions of the Thuggee. The first outlines a loosely organized group of psychotic killers under the command of a criminal mastermind. The second suggests a possible continuation of the original Thuggee cult, assuming their goddess actually interceded to protect a her followers. The third outlines a hybrid between these two approaches, describing a rebel fascist organization structured using the ideas of the original Thuggee cult.

All four of the Thuggee cults described below use the Organisation Rules from Mongoose Publishing's *OGL Horror* (which are presented again in Chapter Seven). The attributes for the historical Thuggee cult represents the author's best guess as to the Thuggee's actual capabilities; the other three derive from the cult creation method outlined in Chapter Seven.

THE HISTORICAL THUGGEE

The Indian "thugs" came to the attention of the East India Company during the 1820s through Captain William Sleeman's Herculean efforts. This young British captain boldly assaulted a centuries old institution of murder and robbery without consent from the local authorities. Ignoring centuries of Company policy he interfered in local affairs, hunted down bandits, and eventually changed life for Indians throughout the sub-continent.

The organization Captain Sleeman destroyed operated throughout India. Princes and kings gave it tacit assistance in return for vast wealth. Its members, both Hindu and Muslim, engaged in wholesale murder during the summer months then returned to their ordinary lives. They passed the cult's wealth and its terrible secrets to their children, indoctrinating their sons in murder before their eighteenth birthday.

Descriptors:

Ancient Occasional Opponent (3 Descriptors):

Greedy*, Murderous, Scattered

*required by Ancient designation

Attributes:

The historical cult might possess the following attributes:

Hit Points: 14,000

Force: 30 (+10)

Response: 10 (+0)

Resources: 24 (+7)

Information: 20 (+5)

Occult: 10 (+0)

Influence: 20 (+5)

Skills: Disguise (Inf) +15, Forgery (Info) +15, Gather Information (For) +20, Intimidate (For) +20, Knowledge (Current Events) (Infl) +15, Knowledge (Streetwise) (Info) +15, Research (Info) +15, Search (For) +20

Feats: Arsenal, Covert, Secure Base x4

Descriptor Modifiers: +2 bonus to Resource checks, operatives add +10 to Intimidate checks, DR 7/- against organizational attacks.

Quick Description:

The Thuggee cult uses murder to further its greed

and desire for goods. They have a decentralized structure but the leaders know each other fairly well.

Extended Description:

Herodotus mentioned a people known for strangling their victims in his *Histories*, written in the fifth century BCE. Nineteen hundred years later, in the 14th century CE, a “Thug” financed a mercenary army to repel an Afghani invasion in northern India. Four hundred years after that, the British suddenly took an interest in the unexplained disappearance of 40,000 people every year from India’s roads. They found, to their horror, a loosely organized group capable of murdering everyone in a caravan or plucking one traveler out of a crowd and killing him.

The thugs participated in a cult called “Thuggee”. In theory the cult worshiped Kali in her aspect as goddess of destruction. Hindus and Muslim’s participated in the cult, despite the obvious religious conflict between monotheistic beliefs and Kali worship.

Practically speaking, though, Thuggee and the thugs were a family business. Fathers and uncles inducted young men into the practice early then passed on their positions as they retired. They disposed of their ill-gotten gains through centuries old channels, funding kingdoms and armies throughout the sub-continent.

Thugs lived ordinary lives during most of the year; many became respected members of their communities. They practiced trades, ran businesses, raised families: all of the things expected of normal citizens. However, they also took long “trips” into India every year. For three or more months they stalked the countryside in search of the proper targets.



Selecting a target required careful consultation of omens and proper ritual practice. It also involved an element of practical assessment. The thugs rarely moved unless they outnumbered their target by at least three to one. Reliable accounts describe them murdering caravans of 100 or more, so they obviously traveled in groups of at least 300 at times.

Thugs did not attack their foes in screaming waves, waving knives and shooting guns. Instead they joined their victims as fellow travelers. They could journey with a potential victim for months, usually posing as guards or entertainers, before finding the perfect moment to strike. When that moment came they attacked on a pre-arranged signal. Two thugs held the target, kicking him repeatedly in the genitals as a distraction, while a senior thug strangled him with a yellow scarf.

After completing their rituals and burying the bodies in unmarked graves, the thugs disposed of the victims’ possessions by selling them to established governments. This influx of wealth supported several of the larger central Indian states, giving the thugs somewhere to hide while they prepared to resume their ordinary lives.

Among themselves the thugs spoke a secret language. Although clearly of Hindi origin, this language differed from its root language enough

to prevent casual interception. Even so, they did not speak it in public, reserving it instead for their planning sessions and communications within the cult while not out seeking victims.

The Thuggee cult continued almost unopposed until 1820. In that year a captain in the British Army, one William Sleeman, discovered their existence. For the next twenty years he hunted down thugs wherever he could find them. He might not have succeeded, but early in his operation he captured several cult leaders. The kind of person willing to casually murder hundreds of innocents also, to the good captain's benefit, will also usually turn on his compatriots in return for considerations. These leaders helped Captain Sleeman round up and hang thousands of their fellow thugs despite sometimes stiff local opposition.

For all practical purposes the cult ceased to exist by 1840, though the East India Company continued to issue regulations about them into the middle of the 19th century. Captain Sleeman's exploits and the confessions of several Thuggee leaders became best-selling novels after suffering various degrees of fictionalization. The real events were, after all, almost too much for an educated readership to believe.

Characters

Any campaign involving the historical Thuggee cult should touch upon at least the following characters:

Ameer Ali (Male Human Charismatic Hero 5/Fast Hero 4): Ameer Ali, a Thuggee member and leader, confessed to over six hundred killings during his years as a cult member. His recorded, then fictionalized, confessions became the basis for "The Confessions of a Thug", an instant best-seller in 19th century Britain. Charming, sophisticated, and intelligent, his complete lack of moral compunctions about murder or betrayal fascinated readers for almost one hundred years. Characters might encounter him in any one of a number of disguises or

meet him after his capture in their quest to destroy the Thuggee.

Captain William Sleeman (Male Human, Dedicated 7): Mr. Sleeman came to India as a police officer and left a Major-General after a twenty year campaign against the Thuggee. At the start of his career he is a well-built, intelligent young man fired by high ideals and a sense of righteousness. By the end he suffers from the debilitating effects of living in a tropical environment for two decades, though he still carries himself with great dignity. Characters who encounter him early in his career will find him accessible and charming as he tries to recruit them to his cause. Later in his career Mr. Sleeman's wife smoothes over his hard edges and occasional bouts of temper as he nears the end of his long quest.

Feringeea (Male Human, Charismatic 9): This magnetic young man styled himself as the "Prince of the Thuggee". Charming and educated, he almost escaped Captain Sleeman but turned himself in after Sleeman took his mother, wife, and children into custody. His assistance proved invaluable as he turned over thug leaders all over the Indian sub-continent.



Adventure Seeds and Plot Hooks

The historical Thuggee might appear in any number of stories:

- 1) Characters in a historical campaign could become involved with Captain Sleeman during his early days as a policeman. His fanatical devotion to changing India will put him at odds with the Company executives, the local authorities, and the Thuggee themselves.
- 2) In the later part of his campaign Sleeman becomes a very public and important figure. The characters may find themselves assigned to protect him as the Thuggee, practiced deceivers and assassins, make a final effort to remove their opponent.
- 3) Indian characters may take on the role of Thuggee defending their ancient and honorable calling from interference by the colonial powers. In between bouts of murder they will have to defend their leaders, mislead the authorities, and perhaps even assassinate the meddling Englishman who brought all of this about.

THE THUGGEE CULT OF PERSONALITY

After the destruction of the historical thugs English and Indian conmen began to use its rituals and traditions as a cover. They took popular accounts of the Thuggee, mixed it with their own agendas, and produced an amalgam of East and West even more terrifying than the original.

The cult below follows one such hybridization to its logical conclusion. It describes the efforts of an English conman (Duncan Turnbull) to cover his crimes under the aegis of a long dead cult. His ability to manipulate the weak-minded lower-classes, along with his absolute belief in his personal superiority, lend this cult a hard pulp edge.

Descriptors:

Modern Important Opponent (5 Descriptors):

Cell, European, Fearsome, Greedy, Murderous*

*Required by Modern designation

Attributes:

Hit Points: 3,100

Force: 17 (+3)

Response: 12 (+1)

Resources: 21 (+5)

Information: 10 (+0)

Occult: 8 (-1)

Influence: 14 (+2)

Skills: Craft (Info) +10, Disguise (Inf) +12,

Forgery (Info) +10, Search (For) +13

Feats: Covert, Financial Sway, Secure Base x2

Descriptor Modifiers: Organization never appears to have more than 1/10th its actual size, Organization reduces time of Knowledge (Popular Culture, Tactics) by 1/2, +2 to Resources checks, Organization operatives' add its Influence modifier bonus to their Gather Information skill checks, Organization operatives' add its Force modifier bonus to their Intimidate skill checks

Quick Description:

The "Thuggee" use popular fear of their name and outright murder to bully people into handing over their material wealth. They have a highly decentralized structure in which each leader only knows one other leader. The "Grand Priest" knows all of the cells but none of their leaders know him by his real name or face.

Extended Description:

In 1892 Duncan Turnbull went to the bar in London for the third time. The charges of criminal misconduct, fraud, and murder were enough to insure his speedy removal from society. Then, in a daring move assisted by three accomplices, he escaped from prison on the date of his sentencing. On the run and beyond the law he cooked up a grand scheme.

After leaving his accomplices where the authorities could find them Duncan vanished. A year later, rumors circulated though the underworld of coves showing up in shadowed alleyways. Though dead bodies, especially those of young men, appeared

daily, something about these new murders caught people's attention. Each young man had a yellow scarf wrapped around his neck. Each one also had his head smashed in by something big, heavy, and sharp.

At first the authorities ignored the threat. After all, dozens of madmen and anarchists used the yellow scarves every year in a vain hope to confuse investigations. Two years into the crime spree, though, a group of constables turned up dead. Their strangled and mutilated bodies, posed in mockery of some ancient Indian sexual text, incited public outrage and belated official action.

Scotland Yard took four weeks to track down and apprehend the criminals. The investigation lead them through sordid opium dens, the Thames warehouses, and into London's darkest heart. In a stunning raid they captured twelve men and a vast assortment of Indian paraphernalia. Under interrogation the men claimed descent from the original Thuggee cult, long though exterminated. They even produced papers proving the claim, though these papers later proved to be forgeries.

The investigators closed the case after the raid and confessions. They filed it away as a bit of left over business from the British Empire's early years. A month later, rumors again surfaced of more men and women murdered by strangulation. Close investigation, though, revealed no foundation to the accusations.

A decade later, in New York, the cult surfaced again. This time the aggressive New York Police Department had its hands full with gang wars, turf battles between political factions, and the constant pressure of new immigrants from Europe and Asia. Since it looked like one group of odd-colored men murder other odd-colored men, their captains decided to ignore it.

The streets of New York proved a fertile place for the burgeoning cult. It recruited men from the lowest rungs of society, gave them wealth, and taught them to kill. Eventually cells began to grow in other cities, some as far west as Chicago.



Duncan Turnbull becomes William Sleeman
The new Thuggee came into being when Duncan Turnbull vanished. He decided, at the spur of the moment, to re-invent himself. Using his skills as a confidence man and actor, along with things he learned reading trashy novels in jail, he created a new persona "Mr. William Sleeman, Importer." In order to finance this change he contracted a number of down and out Indian criminals. To make his story more believable he provided the men with false documents "proving" their descent from the ancient Thuggee families.

Upon this flimsy foundation "William Sleeman" built an international criminal empire. Independently organized cells of thugs murdered travelers, tourists, and immigrants in vast numbers. They would travel to a new city or burrough each season, murder and rob, then return home to their cover-lives as upright citizens. All of the stolen goods moved through Sleeman's import business, effectively laundering them while simultaneously tying the enterprise into the local business community.

When Sleeman lost the first cell he relocated from

the familiar environs of London to New York City. There he found a seething immigrant population, an inattentive police force, and lax import/export laws. In short, nearly perfect ground for his efforts. Disaffected men, cut off from their traditional moral and ethical authorities, happily signed on with his “thugs” in an attempt to make something of themselves.

Cult Members

The cult recruits members exclusively from the lowest of the low. Cell leaders seek out the unenfranchised, the newly arrived, and those who have potential but cannot quite make it on their own. They set these men up with legitimate, if low earning, businesses. They give them language training. They help them to put their children into schools and schedule medical care for those who need it.

In return the cell inducts them into the business. The new members learn a secret language made of up “Indian sounding” words that has no real rhyme or reason. One week every three months they go on a trip to an out of town location where they watch older cult members stalk, strangle, and rob anyone who looks like a good target. Once they have participated in enough murders the cult leader inducts them into the society.

No cult member knows much about the other cells. The cell leader, an appointed position, only sees their leader once per year and then on a day chosen by the “Grand Leader”. Loot is left in large blind drops, from which it mysteriously vanishes within a few days.

When not actively engaged in their murderous trade the cult members live ordinary lives. Most own small shops specializing in the garment trade or groceries. None acknowledge other cult members on the street, though they meet once a month to perform stylized rituals to the Dark Goddess Kali.

Unlike the real Thuggee this cult does not select its targets though an elaborate system of omen-reading. Instead they use purely pragmatic criteria for selecting victims. Their newfound faith and

techniques cannot cover over their lowly origins.

Cult Environs

The cult does not maintain a central base of operations. When in their “normal” lives the cult members dwell and work in small shops. When on the road they stay in cheap hotels and boarding houses.

Cult Encounters

Though it would be convenient cult members do not wander around in Indian turbans with necklaces of human skulls around their necks. They dress conservatively, either in the well-tended clothes of a factory worker or the middle of the road shirt and jacket of successful businessmen. They present a friendly, even cooperative, face until they lull the target.

When the target feels perfectly safe they strike. One member attempts a choking attack from the rear while at least one other distracts the target by pummeling him. If the target breaks free the thugs flee by the fastest possible route.

Characters

Any campaign involving the Thuggee cult of personality might encounter the following characters:

Duncan Turnbull aka William Sleeman (Male Human Charismatic 10): Mr. Sleeman openly immigrated to the United States in 1896, bringing with him an active import business specializing in fine artifacts from around the world. His constant supply and cheap prices made him an instant favorite with the cash conscious but status climbing upper-middle class and criminal elements. The more established old money families continued to use their own dealers. Within a year he built up four cells, and has since established another dozen scattered throughout the states. He then hires pawn-brokers and locals to pick up the stolen goods and sells the loot in cities far away from where they were first nicked.

In person Duncan’s almost hypnotic voice and aura of confidence lure people into a hazy daze

from which they emerge after several hours. His flashing dark eyes and sardonic wit put even the most hardened investigators at ease, even when he directs his mockery towards them. Connections in the upper reaches of government and society prevent any serious investigation of his activities, even if he were revealed as a Thuggee strangler.

Jericho Ameer (Male Human Charismatic 4):

Jericho came to this country poor, tired, and sick. His “uncle” Mr. Sleeman took him in, gave him a job, and eventually elevated him to a position of respect. Now Jericho runs a cell in Cleveland Ohio. His mostly Polish and Eastern European cell hunts in Chicago, Toledo, and occasionally Philadelphia.

Miriam (Female Human Dedicated 2): Miriam came to the United States with her husband. Now he runs a small business in New York, refitting rich-men’s shoes. Though she does not like the way they look at her, she does appreciate how much money her clients lay down when they come into the back room for fittings. However she has become very concerned about her husband. His constant black moods get even worse after he comes back from his visits to Chicago or New York in search of good shoe leather. She has started to ask the other local wives for help and may eventually go to the local parish priest even though she is Muslim.

Adventure Seeds and Plot Hooks

The cult of personality could easily become a main campaign villain. Cleaning out a cell could take an entire adventure; defeating Duncan himself would tax even the most psychopathic adventurers.

1. The characters encounter a Thuggee group while traveling between two other adventure sites. The Thuggee attack them in the middle of the night, leaving one or more of the character’s in critical condition. This brutal introduction to the Thuggee could spark a long (or short) set of adventures in which our heroes search out their foes, only to discover they have

vanished back into the darkness.

2. One of the character’s long-standing friends dies while on a business trip. Some time later, in another part of the US, the character’s see a signature item (e.g. a unique engraved pen or brooch) for sale in a pawn shop window. The shop owner is not a cult member but he bought the item in a lot from Sleeman Imports.
3. The characters begin to do business with Mr. Sleeman or one of his representatives, selling items of dubious providence to the importer in return for good cash. Eventually a crusading police officer comes to speak with them, inquiring about their activities. The officer’s investigation, though brushing up against the characters’ activities, really focuses on Sleeman’s import/export business and its connection to a small ring of murderers the policeman uncovered.



THE THUGEE: ANCIENT SURVIVORS

The body of knowledge called Thuggee supposedly came as a revelation from the goddess Kali. She gave her chosen people the right and obligation to murder, knowledge of how to do so safely, and the ability to read omens which would guide them to suitable targets. Such knowledge should have protected them from a mundane extermination campaign, even one launched by the much lauded British Rajah.

Divine knowledge did indeed protect this version of the Thuggee survivors. In fact, Mr. Sleeman's campaign successfully destroyed the heretics and unbelievers who infested their cult over the centuries. With the detritus gone the chosen ones can now renew their vows in secrecy.

Descriptors:

Ancient Occasional Opponent (3 Descriptors):

Centered, Murderous, Pridelful*

*Required by Ancient designation

Attributes:

Hit Points: 4,000

Force: 18 (+4)

Response: 12 (+1)

Resources: 18 (+4)

Information: 14 (+2)

Occult: 20 (+5)

Influence: 10 (+0)

Skills: Decipher Script (Occ) +12, Disguise (Inf) +10, Forgery (Info) +16, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) (Occ) +19, Search (For) +18

Feats: Artifact, Covert, Fanatical Loyalty, Library (Arcane Lore), Secure Base

Descriptor Modifiers: Organization cannot hide its size. It heals damage at twice the normal rate, Organization operatives' add its Force modifier bonus to their Intimidate skill checks, +2 to Occult checks

Quick Description

Kali saved the families of the current Thuggee from the maelstrom ignited by Mr. Sleeman in his one-man quest to make India more European. In awe

and celebration they worship her in the way she commanded: each man murdering one stranger each year and each woman maintaining the façade of an ordinary life. The Thuggee High Priest comes from the family who received Kali's vision in 1820. The other cult members obey without question or hesitation.

Extended Description

In the beginning Black Kali chose from among the people those who could worship her as she desired. To these men she taught the art of reading omens, the skills of the strangling cord, and the words which none other could hear. Her chosen children did as their goddess commanded and all was good.

Over thousands of years, though, her children lost their way. Many fell into decadent practices, murdering without recourse to the proper rituals. They lost the knowledge of true omens, instead taking every turn of a leaf or sudden shower as a sign from the goddess herself. Some became no better than common thieves, killing for their own glory rather than the goddesses.

Eventually Black Kali stretched forth her hands. With one taloned fist she grasped an Englishman's heart. With another she smote the pretender's minds, making them blind to their oaths of loyalty. With a third she opened the eyes of the last remaining man of faith. To this last man she gave a list of names; the names of Thuggee who might be brought to see the light.

As the Englishman slaughtered his way through the false Thuggee, the faithful man (named Dhuliji Lahiri) raced ahead to save those who the goddess named. He drew the faithful into the deep jungle where they lived in a small village while the fires burned out.

The Thuggee emerged from seclusion once the British turned their attention to other matters. Mr. Lahiri caused them to scatter throughout the country under an injunction to commit no crimes for the next decade. They established new identities, business, and families. Some emigrated to Europe; others stayed in their homeland or went

east to the Americas.

In 1860 the Thugee resumed their murderous ways. Quietly, in groups of no more than thirty, they gathered to hear Lahiri's instructions. Once properly motivated they stalked the roadways, selecting targets using the ancient omens and murdering them in the old ways.

Three generations of strangers have come into the business since those fateful first days. The group maintains its emotional fervor and discipline, though some of the fourth generation may fall to greed's temptation. After all, each strangler group possesses the accumulated wealth of thousands of victims; a fat target for an ambitious man.

In order to avoid the failure of the first cults, the High Priest maintains iron control over group activities. He declares the hunts, disposes of the loot, and determines who will advance or fall from grace. The later sentence carries with it deadly repercussions. After all, those who turn against the goddess cannot be allowed to live.

The Thugee communicate among themselves using a variation on the language spoken by the fallen cult. They also send messages, even telegrams, in this elaborate code.

Cult Members

All members of the ancient survivors come from the families who survived Sleeman's purge. Each proudly traces their lineage back to a single man chosen by the goddess herself for deliverance.

In the intervening decades the cult's spread from its mountain fastness has necessitated some thinning of the chosen bloodlines. Once a thug moves out into the world the High Priest expects him to marry local and raise his family as a part of the growing cult. Females must petition the High Priest for permission to marry; males may marry whomever their father selects for them.

The High Priest also chooses and sends a local group's leader from among the members of his family. This allows him to retain central control

and maintains orthodoxy. It also angers many of the younger thugs, especially those who live in the United States or Europe.

Cult Environs

Cult members do not jeopardize their cover by storing cult materials in their homes. A home invasion or legitimate search of such a place will turn up nothing of importance.

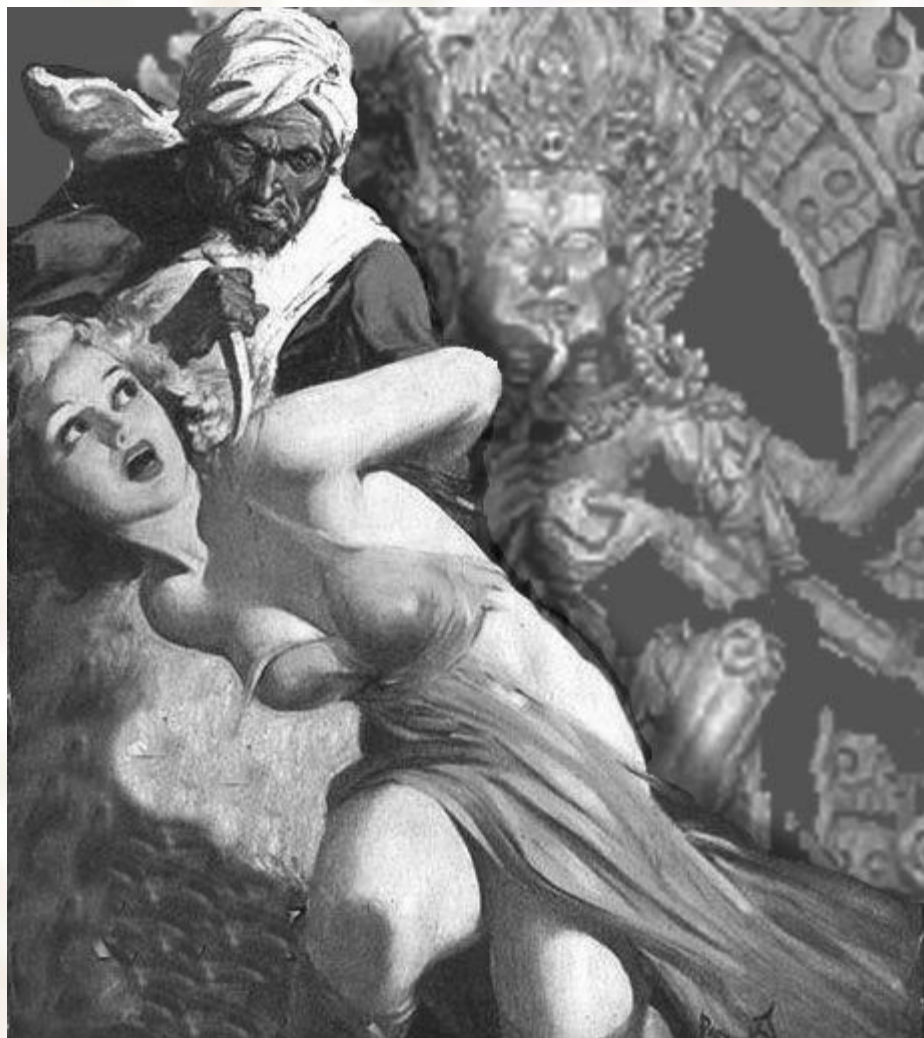
However, the local cult members all pay to support a small, secluded shrine to Kali. The shrine will always be at least thirty miles from any cult member's home. Here they gather once a season to receive messages from the grand temple and the High Priest, to perform their secret rituals, and to bask in Kali's glory. Failure to attend a meeting results in the local leader disciplining the member either by verbal reprimand or by killing one of his family members.

The local shrines communicate with the main shrine in India via special couriers. These couriers carry messages to the shrines, leaving them at times when no cult member is in attendance. Each courier receives extensive training in subterfuge and conditioning to resist questioning. Should he be captured he will try to destroy his messages before ending his own life.

The Thugee built their primary temple on the site of the village Kali revealed to them. Isolated by jungle and mountains, it functions as an impenetrable fortress for them to retreat into in times of need. The lavish temple itself houses almost one hundred thugs; the village supports another three hundred. The couriers and local leaders come from the families living in the temple, so as to insure their loyalty to the higher cause.

Cult Encounters

The ancient survivors engage in ritual murder rather than whole-sale banditry. They use the same tactics as the historical Thugee (strangulation and mass attacks from surprise) and make liberal use of their ability to bluff and confuse targets.



Characters

Any campaign involving the ancient survivors should include some or all of the following characters:

Dhuliji Lahiri (Male Human Fast 4/Dedicated 4/Charismatic 6): The now ancient Dhuliji Lahiri still presides over the reformed Thugee cult from the jungle-bound temple in India. He communes with his goddess daily, though he does not always share the results of his visions. His withered frame and lank white hair speak to the decades of his service to his goddess. The immense strength with which he can turn a strangling cord manifestly demonstrates her favor. The other thugs worship him almost as much as they do their goddess.

James Sinha (Male Human Strong 2): James grew up in New York City. He played with men who now make their livings as gangsters, confidence men, shop keepers, and factory workers

as a boy. As a man, the contract between their growing wealth and his cult mandated simple lifestyle galls him. Why should a strapping young man like himself, blessed with good looks and the wits God gave a man, live in poverty while sending riches to some old man back in the old country? His questions resonate with the new generation of Thugee even as their elders try to teach them the ways of the cord and pick-axe.

Ajita Lahiri (Female Human Charismatic 6): Even though mocha-skinned Ajita comes from the direct line of the High Priest she cannot inherit a position of power in the cult. By tradition she should have married, settled down, and built a cover identity for some local cult leader. Instead the smoky-eyed beauty talked her father into making her a courier. So she travels the world, amusing her self with the businessmen

she meets, and delivers messages to out of the way towns where she cannot show her face. Fortunately her skills as disguise and deception match her arresting looks and charm.

Adventure Seeds and Plot Hooks

The ancient survivors might become a major campaign villain but they work best as a shadowy threat. Characters encountering them might not even realize they are anything more than a slightly exotic street gang. Only later, when the cult plays its hand, should they begin to realize it might be even more sinister than they initially imagined.

Some examples of this kind of story include:

1. Low level characters operating in New York (or another large city) might encounter James Sinha as he breaks away from the main Thugee cult. His group of young,

dissatisfied thugs apply their murderous methods to local crime. Just as the characters close in on them, the elder thugs remove the younger entirely, leaving behind their strangled bodies and a vast sum of money as reparation.

2. One of the male characters might encounter Ajita during her travels. Their interlude together at first seems like a throw-away scene. A little later, the character finds himself under attack by assassins of Indian descent. It turns out the High Priest is well aware of his daughters activities and prefers to “silence” men she spends time with.
3. In a game with some occult overtones the characters may become involved with one of the ritual murders. After all, the Thugee murder as a form of worship, an act which could call forth dark powers. Occult investigators might be dragged from murder site to murder site until they eventually uncover the cult’s methods of operations.
4. The cult kidnaps one of the characters’ close friends or family members (usually a beautiful woman or girl) as a special sacrifice. In order to get her back the characters can race the kidnappers, fail to catch them at a port, and then travel to India in order to save her before the time of sacrifice. Eventually they wind up trekking through the jungle and storming the main temple.

THE THUGEE: INSURGENT FIGHTERS

Historically the Thugee avoid direct interference in politics. However, the British intrusion of their morality into Indian affairs inevitably lead to a backlash against them. In this case, even though the Thugee themselves vanished a number of patriotic men recreated the cult with the expressed purpose of driving the British from the sub-continent.

These thugs use the old methods of deception and strangulation to rid their homeland of the oppressive outsiders. Their carefully target murders serve to destabilize and terrify the foreign population. The British respond by increasing their security and applying even more pressure, leading to an ever escalating cycle of violence from which neither side will back down.

Descriptors:

Modern Occasional Opponent (3 Descriptors):

Indian, Intimidation, Murder*

*Required by Modern designation

Attributes:

Hit Points: 5,000

Force: 20 (+5)

Response: 14 (+2)

Resources: 10 (+0)

Information: 16 (+3)

Occult: 10 (+0)

Influence: 12 (+1)

Skills: Decipher Script (Info) +11, Demolitions (Resp) +10, Disguise (Resp) +10, Forgery (Info) +11, Gather Information (For) +13, Knowledge (Civics) (Infl) +9, Knowledge (Tactics) (For) +13, Search (For) +13

Feats: Arsenal, Emergency Response, Fanatical Loyalty, Widely Known

Descriptor Modifiers: Organization reduces time of Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) and Search by 1/2, Organization operatives’ add its Influence modifier bonus to their Gather Information skill checks, Organization operatives’ add its Force modifier bonus to their Intimidate skill checks

Quick Description

A nationalist Indian cult that masks political ambitions under the cover of a famous belief system. They use the fear of the Thuggee and carefully executed assassinations to achieve their goals.

Extended Description

Mr. Sleeman unleashed a tide of change when he destroyed the Thuggee. His obsession catalyzed a shift in British policy from accommodation and trade to outright political and military domination. The Indian Rajah responded in a typically incoherent fashion. Some capitulated, others accommodated, a rare few resisted but quickly fell to the superior coordination and firepower brought to bear on them.



The duty of resistance therefore fell to the common men. Indians of many castes decried their domination by outsiders with no respect for their ancient ways. Most simply complained. A few took up arms, leading doomed rebellions. The smartest reached back into recent history for inspiration.

This inspiration came in the form of several popular novels released in Britain during and after Mr. Sleeman's efforts. They detailed a complicated, dangerous secret cult with brutally effective methods. These murderers slaughtered Indians by the thousands for centuries without being discovered. Their methods, properly updated, would undoubtedly work just as well in the modern world.

From this initial idea sprang one of the most effective resistance and terrorist organizations ever imagined. Operatives working in coordinated teams began a wholesale slaughter of British officials and foreign civilians. The murders used the strangling cords and spoke in gibberish, but only as a smoke screen to cover the modern methods of mayhem they espoused. Many openly admitted their membership, using the terror inspired by the popular history to force otherwise

unwilling collaborators into the fold.

By the turn of the century this highly organized society of killers works on a steady agenda. They assault government officials, civilian contractors, and travelers in large numbers. Captured operatives are murdered in their prison cells, left dangling from the ceiling on yellow silk scarves. Local community members who talk to the authorities usually vanish, or suffer in anguish as some beloved family member vanishes in their place.

The thuggee network fuels its efforts with robbery and murder for hire. The surprisingly public contacts flaunt their affiliations, selling stolen good almost openly though away from the British Rajah's military force. Most of these public contacts truly know little of the organization; they receive their funds and pass messages though dead drops of various sorts.

Cult Members

The modern insurgency gets its members from those who wish to overthrow the British rule of India. Anarchists, communist, patriots, and psychotics all find a place among them. They come from many castes and places, bound together in common cause.

The insurgency members never engage in their crimes near their own homes. Taking a page from the thugs old techniques, they always travel a considerable distance before executing a mission. This distance helps to shield them from detection, as well as making it more difficult to trace them if they somehow get caught.

When home they maintain a façade of normal activity. Almost all of the “cultists” work as seasonal laborers, giving them an excuse to travel frequently and maintain a low-profile lifestyle suitable to their needs. Most do not have families, as the risks they take exacts a heavy toll on their time and livelihoods.

The insurgency leadership works at a fever pitch. Most have abandoned their ordinary lives, instead choosing to live in secluded jungle villages. From these locations they send out tactical leaders who “activate” a local group then lead it to its target.

Cult Environs

The cult can strike anywhere. Unlike the real Thuggee, they engage in mass assaults and direct attacks, though they also use the tried and true ruses that made the Thuggee so famous.

The individual members live simply, usually in single room huts in the slums surrounding large cities. The command lives just as meanly but stays in isolated jungle villages where the authorities rarely venture. These villages hold no more than forty men and a handful of women kept on for their services.

Cult Encounters

Characters can encounter this group in one of three ways: as a screaming horde of insurgents, as traditional thuggee, and as assassins in the night.

The insurgent thuggee operations involve large groups of semi-literate Indians whipped into a pseudo-religious frenzy. A single thuggee leader uses religious iconography and hokey rituals to convince a large group of angry men that they are Kali’s chosen. After a suitable period the leader unleashes this mob in an orgy of violence directed

at any foreigners in the area. He then vanishes back into the jungles until he reappears somewhere else to start the cycle all over again.

Traditional thuggee thievery supports this cycle with both funds and materials. Bands of operatives wander India’s lonely back-country roads looking for travelers to waylay. They prefer to target Europeans but will happily murder natives as well. These operatives use the traditional methods but supplement them with firearms, chemical weapons, and explosives.

The assassins also adopt modern methods but with a far more lethal intent. These thuggee come out of the jungle and usually strike under the cover of a screaming horde. As the authorities try to deal with the chaos caused by a sudden uprising the assassins sneak in and strike with surgical skill. They murder leaders, plant false documents, destroy hardened targets, and generally wreak havoc in the government infrastructure. These thuggee also take responsibility for murdering any captured operatives and will commit suicide rather than accept capture.

Characters

Encounters with the modern insurgents could involve any one of the following characters:

Devendara Pattanayak (Human Male Tough 3):

By day ebon-skinned Devendara works in a stone quarry, cutting out stone blocks that will eventually become tables and sculptures for the British authorities. At night he engages in wrestling matches and other sports in an attempt to work out his frustrations. He also attends meetings of an ancient society, the cult of the Thuggee, where a masked priest leads the congregation in chanting and prayers to the goddess Kali. When the time comes he will take up the strangler’s noose and help set things right. Fortunately the time will come soon.

Boli Verma (Human Male Charismatic 6): Soft spoken and intense, Boli easily passes himself off as a deal in rare goods and occasional middleman for individuals in search of an elegant beauty for

the evening. His soft voice becomes strident, even commanding, when it issues from behind the elaborate mask he wears at the secret meetings. There he allows his oratory skills free reign, cajoling and inflaming the simple men who come to hear him speak. When the time is right he will unleash his hounds then disappear back into the jungle from whence he came.

Hidhan Nagchaudhuri (Human Male Fast 8/Infiltrator 4): Working as a house servant, especially one skilled in the fine art of being unobtrusive, allows Hidhan to scout out his targets long before the covering riots begin. His precise English and gentle manners put the targets at their ease while his keen mind plans out the details of their demise. His only weakness is his addiction to challenge; he cannot resist a little extra fun while on the way out from an assignment.

Adventure Seeds and Plot Hooks

Although masquerading as a religious organization the modern insurgents are nothing more than anarchists and provocateurs. Characters might encounter them in any of the following ways:

1. They could simply stumble across one of the meetings or a hidden village. The thugs immediately respond with lethal force, even before the characters discover anything. Characters being what they are they will probably escape, leading to an escalating series of dramatic encounters culminating in the destruction of one or both groups.
2. The characters take a contract to protect a British magistrate as he travels from one Indian province to another. Naturally the thugs attack, leading to a long chase sequence through jungles and mountains and a dramatic last minute rescue.

3. Characters engaged in other business wake up to find the city burning down with them in it. Mobs screaming “Kali, Kali, Kali” race around, dragging foreigners out of their beds and strangling them in public. The characters can choose to cower like beaten dogs or attempt to stop the madness. Meanwhile a group of assassins cuts through the government quarter like a bad wind, leaving bodies and fires in their wake.



THUGEE FEATS AND F/X

The Thuggee, in all of their incarnations, rely on stealth and subterfuge to carry out their nefarious purposes. Their success, or failure, depends on split second timing and the ability to communicate with one another secretly using plain language.

Some of the cult's incarnations possess additional, dangerous powers conferred upon them by their goddess. These powers, represented as F/X in d20 Modern, enhance their ability to detect prey and elude capture.

NEW FEATS

All versions of the Thuggee and similar cults might grant their followers access to several special feats described below.

Cant

You can speak and read a secret or forbidden language.

Prerequisite: None

Benefit: When you select this feat you select one cult or occult society. You can communicate with other members of the cult who also have this feat using a secret language that others do not know. Those overhearing your conversation cannot decipher it, though they may record it for later decoding. Decoding a conversation requires a Decipher Script skill check (DC 25).

Special: You must be a member of the cult whose cant you wish to select.

Coordinated Strike

You can coordinate your sneak attacks with others who have the same gift.

Prerequisite: Evasion

Benefit: When two or more characters with this feat attack the same target they are always considered to be flanking even if they are not directly opposite one another.

Normal: The ability to perform a sneak attack is

evaluated on an attacker by attacker basis.

Special: A Fast Hero may select Coordinated Strike as one of his bonus feats.

From Behind

When your target is completely unaware of your presence you can strike deadly blows.

Prerequisite: Stealthy

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to attack and a bonus equal to your Intelligence modifier to damage when making a melee attack against a target during the surprise round.

Special: A Fast Hero may select Coordinated Strike as one of his bonus feats.

Knee and Cord

You have mastered the art of strangling.

Prerequisite: +3 base attack bonus

Benefit: When you succeed in a grappling attack and use a strangling cord you automatically inflict an additional +1d6 damage.

Reading

You know the tells separating marks from hawks.

Prerequisite: Wis 13+

Benefit: As a standard action select one target within visual range. You and the target make a contested Diplomacy vs. Bluff check. If you succeed you may ascertain one of the following pieces of information: the target's CR, his skills, one skill rank of your choice, or one of his attributes. This ability does not allow you to determine the target's special attacks or special qualities.

Special: A Charismatic Hero may select Reading as one of his bonus feats.

THUGEE F/X

Faithful Thugee can, at the Games Master's option, become Acolytes. The goddess Kali grants her Acolytes the following additional spells: Hand of the Goddess and Ritual Dedication.

Hand of the Goddess

Conjuration

Level: Acolyte 3; **Components:** V, S, M; **Casting Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 round/level; **Saving Throw:** Will negates; **Spell Resistance:** Yes

When an acolyte invokes the *hand of the goddess* he calls upon Kali's own might to assist him in his attack. Any one medium size or smaller target he touches (with a touch attack) within a number of rounds equal to his acolyte level enters into a grappling contest with an invisible foe. The foe possesses unlimited hit points, a base attack bonus equal to the acolytes, and Strength equal to the acolytes level + his Wisdom. The two continue to grapple until the spell's duration elapses.

Ritual Dedication

Illusion

Level: Acolyte 2; **Components:** V, S, M; **Casting Time:** 1 hour; **Range:** Touch; **Area:** 30 ft. emanation from touched point; **Duration:** Permanent; **Saving Throw:** None; **Spell Resistance:** No

Kali gives her servants the ability to conceal their crimes. The ritual dedication creates a subtle illusion, serving to turn aside those who would discover the murders committed by her devotees. After slaughtering his targets the acolyte must pray for Kali's blessing for one hour.

Once complete, the spell creates an illusion which masks the crime's traces. Increase the DC of any Investigation, Research, or Search skill check to investigate the crime by the acolyte's Wisdom modifier. Spells and psionic abilities attempting to probe the action fail if the caster fails to beat a DC equal to the acolyte's level +10 on a caster level check.

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

The following characters appear in the Thug cults.

Thug (Human Charismatic Hero 1/Fast Hero 1): CR 2; Medium human; HD 1d6+2 plus 1d8+2; hp: 11; Mas 14; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 13, touch 13, flat-footed 13; BAB: +0; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee garrote grapple (1d4+1); Full Atk +1 melee garrote grapple (1d4+1); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; AP 1; Rep 2; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 13

Skills: Bluff +8, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +7, Gather Information +5, Move Silently +4, Perform (any one) +5, Profession +4

Feats: Cant, Deceptive

Talents (Charismatic): Fast Talk

Talents (Fast): Evasion

Possessions: Garrote, normal clothes

A lowly beginning thug does not yet understand the subtle art of strangulation or the skills used by his betters to select their marks. His role is to work under the direction of more experienced murderers, slowly building his skills until he can one day wield the noose himself. To that end he cultivates the art of deception and studies the methods employed by his betters.

Thugs are the lowest rank in all four of the Thugee cults described in Chapter 1. They will run away rather than fight an armed and aware opponent.

**Thug Strangler (Human Charismatic Hero 3/
Fast Hero 2):** CR 5; Medium human; HD 3d6+6
plus 2d8+4; hp: 27; Mas 14; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.;
Defense 15, touch 15, flat-footed 15; BAB: +3;
Grap +4; Atk +4 melee garrote grapple (1d4); Full
Atk +4 melee garrote grapple (1d4); FS 5 ft. by 5
ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will
+2; AP 1; Rep 2; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 9, Wis
12, Cha 14

Skills: Bluff +13, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +10,
Gather Information +10, Hide +6, Move Silently
+6, Perform (any one) +8, Profession +7

Feats: Cant, Coordinated Attack, Deceptive,
Stealthy, Trustworthy

Talents (Charismatic): Fast Talk, Dazzle

Talents (Fast): Evasion

Possessions: garrote, normal clothes

When a Thug finally participates in enough murders he becomes a strangler. The stranglers act under the direction of the group leader, separating targets from the masses in order to murder them in a quick and effective fashion. Each strangler specializes in lulling his victim into a sense of security, then striking from surprise with the assistance of others.

The historical and ancient survival thug will not attack unless there is one strangler and at least two thugs for each target. The other two thugs, being less cautious in their evil, may attack with lesser odds.

Although a strangler is a respected member of the thug community he still has a long way to go in honing and developing his skills.

**Thug Leader (Human Charismatic Hero 5/Fast
Hero 4):** CR 8; Medium human;
HD 5d6+10 plus 4d8+8; hp: 42; Mas 14; Init +0;
Spd 40 ft.; Defense 17, touch 17, flat-footed 17;
BAB: +5; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee garrote grapple
(1d4+1); Full Atk +6 melee garrote grapple
(1d4+1); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL LE; SV
Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +5; AP 1; Rep 4; Str 12, Dex
10, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 14

Skills: Bluff +17, Diplomacy +17, Disguise +12,
Gather Information +12, Hide +10, Move Silently
+10, Perform (any one) +12, Profession +9

Feats: Cant, Coordinated Attack, Deceptive,
From Behind, Knee and Cord, Iron Will, Reading,
Stealthy, Trustworthy

Talents (Charismatic): Charm, Dazzle, Fast Talk

Talents (Fast): Evasion, Increase Speed

Possessions: garrote, normal clothes

The Thug leader mix deception and psychosis into a deadly brew. These charming killers can hold a polite conversation on nearly any topic, engage in intimacies, and then strangle their companion without hesitation. They watch over the stranglers and young thugs, guiding their charges in the ancient ways of the Thug.

When not out murdering people the thug leader plays a vital role in his local community. His charisma and organizational skills make him a logical choice for official roles like local sheriff, judge, or even mayor. The leader will not break his cover while in normal life, though he will use whatever power he wields to thwart investigations into the Thug.

Historically the average Thug leader did not prove to be very loyal. When confronted with their crimes he agreed to corporate in return for a pardon or reduced sentence. It seems that the kind of man who can murder without compunction might not possess the highest moral or ethical qualities.

**Acolyte of Kali (Human Charismatic Hero 2/
Dedicated Hero 3/Acolyte 5):** CR 10; Medium
human; HD 2d6+2 plus 3d6+3 plus 5d8+5; hp: 45;
Mas 13; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.;
Defense 16, touch 16, flat-footed 16; BAB: +6;
Grap +7; Atk +7 melee garrote grapple (1d4+1);
Full Atk +7/+1 melee garrote grapple (1d4+1); FS
5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.;
SQ Divine skills, divine spells, rebuke undead,
combat casting; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will
+8; AP 1; Rep 6; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 10,
Wis 14, Cha 14

Acolyte Spells Prepared (5/5/4/2, save DC 12+
spell level): 0 – *detect magical aura* x2, *read magic*
x2, *virtue*; 1st – *command* x2, *cure light wounds*,
shield of faith x2; 2nd – *augury*, *hand of the*
goddess x2, *ritual dedication*; 3rd – *animate dead*,
bestow curse

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +9, Diplomacy
+9, Disguise +4, Gather Information +9, Handle
Animal +7, Knowledge (arcane lore) +8,
Knowledge
(theology and
philosophy)
+8, Listen
+8, Perform
+7, Read/
Write (Hindi,
Sanskrit),
Sense Motive
+6, Speak
Language
(Hindi,
Sanskrit),
Spellcraft +7

Feats:
Alertness,
Archaic
Weapon
Proficiency,
Cant,
Deceptive,
Educated,
Knee and
Cord,

Reading, Trustworthy, Educated

Talents (Charismatic): Fast Talk

Talents (Dedicated): Empathy, Improved Aid
Another

Possessions: ceremonial robes, garrote, holy
symbol

Historically, the leaders of the Thuggee
demonstrated many skills including the ability to
hide up to ten thousand murders a year. However,
in the pulps the greatest of the Thuggee wield an
even more sinister power: magic itself. They use
the secrets taught them by Black Kali to hide their
crimes and dominate anyone in their way.

An acolyte of kali does not go on the long murder
pilgrimages. Instead he squats in a hidden temple,
issuing orders to the thugs under his command.



CHAPTER TEN:

RANDOM ADVENTURE GENERATOR

The pages that follow feature a series of tables which can be used by a GM to randomly generate the outline of an adventure, from plot, to locations, to action scenes, and more. It is based on a Master Plot Formula that was used by Lester Dent, the creator of Doc Savage. The italicized sections are quotations directly from Dent's formula.

Dent advocated the division of a pulp story into four sections, which we'll call Acts. He then broke each Act down into the elements that he felt were necessary to feature within that section.

Our random adventure generator will work the same way. For each section, there will be a number of variables which a GM can determine via the tables presented, and when completed, the generator will create a full outline of the adventure, ready to be fleshed out with statted NPCs, and waiting for victims....er...I mean eager players.

Here's how it starts:

1. A DIFFERENT MURDER METHOD FOR VILLAIN TO USE

2. A DIFFERENT THING FOR VILLAIN TO BE SEEKING

3. A DIFFERENT LOCALE

4. A MENACE WHICH IS TO HANG LIKE A CLOUD OVER HERO

One of these DIFFERENT things would be nice, two better, three swell.



We'll combine these suggestions into three elements, which are determined before you start laying out the adventure itself. The three elements are:

1) The Villain

(who is it?)

2) The Fiendish Plot (what is the Villain doing?)

3) The main Location. (Where does this occur?)

Each element is arrived at by rolling on the tables that begin on the next page.

Table 1: The Villain

D% Roll	Result
01-04	Gangster
05-09	Occultist
10-13	Murderer
14-17	Supernatural Threat
18-21	Communist
22-25	Cult Leader
26-29	Ruler of Lost Civilization
30-33	Mad Scientist
34-37	Wicked Foreigner
38-41	Thief
42-45	Assassin
46-49	Femme Fatale
50-53	Crooked Cop
54-57	Dictator
58-61	Nazi
62-65	Business Magnate
66-69	Crime Lord
70-73	Pirate
74-77	Anarchist
78-81	Society Swell
82-85	Crooked Politician
86-88	Alien Invader
89-93	Mastermind
94-97	Nemesis
98-00	Roll Twice and Combine

Gangster: One of the many members of organized crime gangs that plagued the period.

Occultist: A villain with an interest or skill in Occult matters (whether magic is real or fake is up to the GM).

Murderer: Someone who has killed another person--this individual may not have been a "Villain" prior to this event, and may not fit the classical villain modes--best used in murder mystery adventures.

Supernatural Threat: A ghost, a mummy, a vampire, etc. (The GM will have to determine whether or not the supernatural exists, or whether this is a "scooby doo" mystery)

Communist: Used almost interchangeably with

Nazis in latter pulps. An evil member of the International Communist Conspiracy, looking to subvert and conquer freedom-loving countries.

Cult Leader: The mad leader of a group of fanatics.

Ruler of Lost Civilization: Anything ranging from a descendant of Genghis Khan trying to re-assert the Mongol Horde, to a Witch Doctor who rules a hidden African Tribe.

Mad Scientist: "They called me Mad at the University!" They were right.

Wicked Foreigner: Historically speaking, these were almost always Oriental (q.v. *Fu Manchu*), but any foreign culture will do.

Thief: A villain who specializes in burglary and other forms of theft.

Assassin: An individual whose business is killing. Not a simple murderer, but a professional.

Femme Fatale: You knew she was trouble when you got a look at those gams....



Crooked Cop: A man who has turned his back on his oath to uphold the law.

Dictator: The power-hungry despotic ruler of a nation.

Nazi: Evil Fascist. The classic pulp villain. I hate these guys.

Business Magnate: Capitalist gone wrong.

Crime Lord: The ruler of a vast criminal empire, not necessarily connected to “classical” organized crime.

Pirate: One who steals from (and using) vehicles, whether on sea, land, or in the air.

Anarchist: Madman dedicated to the overthrow of civilization.

Society Swell: A member of the upper class, including the rich and famous.

Crooked Politician: Power-mad and sticking it to the little guy.

Alien Invader: Either the actual invaders themselves, or their earth-bound servant trying to bring about the invasion.

Mastermind: The pinnacle of the criminal class.

Nemesis: If the main hero (or team if there is no main hero) has a nemesis, they re-appear. If none exists, create one--a dark reflection of the the hero, Moriarty to Holmes...The Joker to Batman.

Roll Twice and Combine: GMs can either combine both rolls in a single villain, or feature more than one villain.



Table 2: The Fiendish Plot, Part 1

D% Roll	Result
01-04	Manipulate
05-09	Sell
10-13	Acquire
14-17	Kill
18-21	Control
22-25	Steal
26-29	Create
30-33	Hunt
34-37	Terrorize
38-41	Infiltrate
42-45	Overthrow
46-49	Obliterate
50-53	Ransom
54-57	Blackmail
58-61	Hijack
62-65	Bomb
66-69	Smuggle
70-73	Murder
74-77	Rob
78-81	Attack
82-85	Rule
86-88	Take
89-93	Destroy
94-97	Extort
98-00	Roll Twice and Combine

To determine the Fiendish Plot, roll once on Table 2 and once on Table 3, and combine the results. A result of 98-00 on either table can be interpreted as either a second roll on both tables, or just one, as the GM sees fit.

For example: A roll of 16 and 44 would yield the result: “Kill The Hero.” The villain has decided that his plans would work much better without the hero in the way. A roll of 48 and 67 would generate: “Obliterate A Lost World.” The villain has decided to destroy a hidden island or secret city. Why?

On occasion, the rolls may not make sense. (“Bomb Jewels,” for example) The GM is encouraged to think the result through anyway. The pulps, after

Table 3: The Fiendish Plot, Part 2

D% Roll	Result
01-04	Monster
05-09	Building
10-13	People
14-17	A Country
18-21	Treasure
22-25	An Enemy
26-29	An Object
30-33	An Invention
34-37	A Woman
38-41	A Man
42-45	The Hero (or team)
46-49	Money
50-53	A City
54-57	The World
58-61	A Vehicle
62-65	A Business
66-69	A Lost World
70-73	Jewels
74-77	A Ruler
78-81	Someone famous
82-85	A rival
86-88	The Law
89-93	Innocent Victims
94-97	Hero’s Friends or Family
98-00	Roll Twice and Combine

all, were known for bizarre stories. Perhaps the villain plans to build a bomb using diamonds, the hardest substance known to man? What for?



Table 4: Main Location

D% Roll	Result
01-04	City: The Docks
05-09	Far-off Jungle
10-13	Asian Country
14-17	European Country
18-21	Third-World Country
22-25	City: slums
26-29	City: Chinatown
30-33	Desert
34-37	At Sea
38-41	Lost City
42-45	Secret Base
46-49	City: Entertainment District
50-53	City: Warehouses
54-57	In the Air
58-61	City: Tenderloin District
62-65	Farmland
66-69	Forest
70-73	Another City
74-77	Cross-country (train, etc)
78-81	City: University
82-85	City: Government
86-88	City: Museums
89-93	City: Skyscrapers
94-97	Arctic/Antarctic
98-00	Roll Twice and Combine

The assumption made on this table is that the GM is playing a generic Hero Pulp campaign, where the PCs are based in a big city (usually New York). Pulp campaigns set elsewhere (Lost Worlds, etc.) should have locations determined by the GM.

EXAMPLE OF ADVENTURE SET-UP:

Rolling for all three elements, I get:

63: Business Magnate

87, 16: Take A Country

38: Lost City.

Thinking about it for a moment, I come up with an idea for a William Randolph Hearst-style tycoon, who is trying to take over a small, oil-rich desert



nation, looking for an artifact in a Lost City in the desert sands to do it! He's looking for the fabled Scimitar of Al-Azif, and if he finds it, he will have a legitimate claim to the throne of Qurania! If he gains control over the country, its people are doomed to a life of slavery...can the heroes stop him?

ANOTHER EXAMPLE:

Rolling for all three elements, I get:

00: Roll Twice and Combine. I get a 85, 22, which gives me Crooked Politician and Cult Leader, which I decide to combine into a single villain.

63, 81: Bomb Someone Famous

47: City: Entertainment District

Wow--this is a juicy one! This one unfolds in my mind, giving me the idea of a District Attorney who is secretly the head of a Cult called the Red Hand. The Red Hand has decided that America's troubles are due to their worship of false idols, and so have decided to plant a bomb at the gala premiere of a movie--which will wipe out most of the screen stars of the time, who will be in attendance.

THE FIRST ACT

Now that you've got the set-up, we move to the first act of the adventure. Let's see what Lester Dent has to say about the first act:

First line, or as near thereto as possible, introduce the hero and swat him with a fistful of trouble.

We'll call this the hook--what gets the PCs involved. We'll have a table for that.

Introduce ALL the other characters as soon as possible. Bring them on in action.

For this, we'll move to another table which will give us the supporting characters that will feature in the adventure.

Hero's endeavours land him in an actual physical conflict

Now we get to the good stuff. We'll create the first action sequence, using a table designed specifically for that.

Near the end of first 1500 words, there is a complete surprise twist in the plot development.

And to mark the end of the act, we add a twist in the plot which spins us into the second act. You guessed it, we've got a plot twist table.

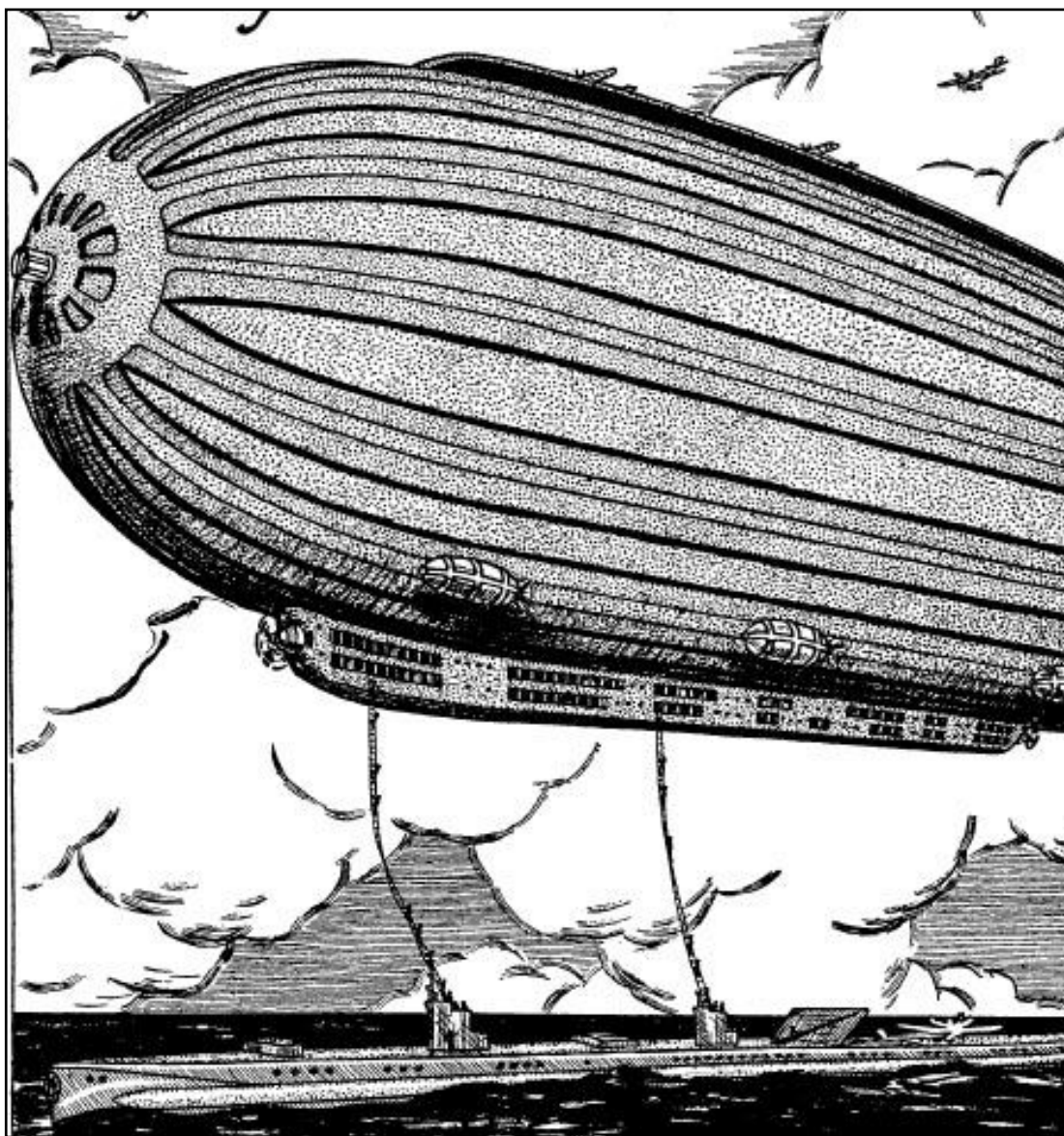


Table 5: The Hook

D% Roll	Result
01-11	Solicitation
12-20	Dead Body
21-30	Disaster
31-42	Attack
43-56	Bizarre Occurance
57-65	News
66-77	Friend in Need
78-90	Up To Our Necks
91-96	Roll Twice
97-00	Other

Solicitation: The simplest of plot hooks--an NPC (unknown to the characters) comes to the characters and asks for their help.

Dead Body: The characters encounter a corpse, which has some clue on it regarding the Fiendish Plot.

Disaster: A horrible disaster occurs, somehow related to the Fiendish Plot, and draws the character's attention.

Attack: An attack occurs (on someone other than the characters), somehow related to the Fiendish Plot.

Bizarre Occurance: A strange, inexplicable event happens, somehow related to the Fiendish Plot. In the tradition of the pulps, the more outlandish and bizarre, the better---an early test of the Villain's new ray cannon, for example, turns the sky over the city a brilliant green for 10 minutes at Noon.

News: The characters read a story in the paper, or hear a story on the radio, that is related to the Fiendish Plot.

Friend in Need: Similar to the Solicitation hook, except that the NPC is a friend of the characters. The NPC comes to the characters for help.

Up To Our Necks: In media res: The characters are involved in the plot from the starting gun. They are attacked, or implicated in a crime, or the victim of a theft, or somehow made to suffer in a manner that is directly related to the Fiendish Plot.

Roll Twice: Roll twice on the Hook Table, and combine the results.

Other: A Hook not represented on this table, created by the GM.



Table 6: Supporting Characters

D% Roll	Descriptor	Descriptor	Type
01-04	Big	Neat	Entertainer
05-09	Ugly	Unlucky	Pilot
10-13	Shifty	Menacing	Soldier
14-17	Secretive	Weak-willed	Politician
18-21	Strong	Foreign	Contact
22-25	Small	Rich	Business Owner
26-29	Trustworthy	Small-time	Guide
30-33	Helpless	Ambitious	Servant
34-37	Quirky	Skilled	Socialite
38-41	Troublesome	Helpful	Scientist
42-45	Smart	Feisty	Doctor
46-49	Charming	Wild	Criminal
50-53	Strong-willed	All-American	Investigator
54-57	Famous	Hard-boiled	Spouse
58-61	Sloppy	Distinctive	Expert
62-65	Dense	Professional	Informant
66-69	Cold	Young	Vehicle Operator
70-73	Impulsive	Violent	Thug
74-77	Clumsy	Urban	Fanatic
78-81	Lucky	Amateur	Academician
82-85	Dangerous	Old	Assistant
86-88	Agile	Native	Worker
89-93	Beautiful	Evil	Henchman
94-97	Weak	Odd	Occultist
98-00	Talented	Ordinary	Kid

The above table gives you the featured supporting characters for the adventure. Note that unless otherwise specified, featured characters are always Heroic characters, rather than Ordinary.

First roll 2d4 for the number of featured supporting characters that will appear in the adventure. Then, for each character, roll three times on Table 6. This will give you two descriptors and a type, which will give you a concept for the NPC. Then, using the standard modern D20 rules, generate the NPC's stats.

EXAMPLES:

I need the featured supporting characters for an adventure. I roll for the number of supporting characters and get a 3.

For the first Supporting Character, I roll three percentile rolls, and get: 58, 94, 61, which gives me a "Sloppy, Odd Expert." I envision an unkempt inventor of strange devices...someone who can help the characters, if they can get past his strangeness.

For the second Supporting Character, I roll a 00, 72, and 06, which gives me a "Talented, Violent Pilot." Even though this does not specify that this character is the villain's henchman, I decide that the idea of a bloodthirsty air ace is just too perfect a henchman to ignore.

For the last Supporting Character, I roll a 18, 52, and 66, which results in a "Strong, All-American Vehicle Operator," who I decide will be a pilot and owner of a small cargo airline, who is being victimized by the villain and his henchman.

Table 7: Action Sequence Type

D20 Roll	Result
1-4	Chase, foot or mount
5-10	Chase, vehicle
11-14	Fight, unarmed
15-20	Fight, Armed

Every action sequence is comprised of four elements: Type, Participants, Setting, and Complications. Using the provided tables, roll a d20, check the result, and assemble your action sequence!

The results are fairly self-explanatory, with the exception of the Complications:

Bystanders: The action sequence will feature non-participants who will get in the way.

Environment: The environment in which the sequence occurs causes difficulties (examples include rain, dangerous surroundings, hazardous conditions). All combatants should be taking penalties on their actions due to this.

Props: The sequence features elements of the setting which can be used by the participants during the sequence (examples would include metal rods at a foundry, or trash cans in a street chase, etc.).

New Sequence: The original action sequence will lead immediately into another sequence--re-roll this new sequence from the beginning. It is possible to have a linked chain of multiple sequences!

**Table 8: Action Sequence Participants**

D20 Roll	Result
1-6	Few (1-2 per PC)
7-15	Some (3-4 per PC)
16-20	Lots (5+ per PC)

Table 9: Action Sequence Setting

D20 Roll	Result
1	Nautical setting (ship, docks, etc.)
2	Natural Setting (park, jungle, etc.)
3	Rooftops
4	City Street
5	Residential Setting
6	Entertainment Setting (theatre, stadium, nightclub, etc.)
7	Church/temple/other religious
8	Business Setting (office, factory, warehouse, street market, etc.)
9	Transportational Setting (airport, train station, or even on trains or planes)
10	Educational (museum, college, etc.)
11	Civic setting (post office, city hall)
12	Slum or Rough neighborhood
13	"Middle of Nowhere"
14	Secret/hidden location
15	Headquarters (PCs or others)
16	Military setting (base, etc.)
17	Restaurant
18	Laboratory
19	Landmark
20	Unusual setting (underwater, in space, underground, etc.)

Table 10: Complications

D20 Roll	Result
1-5	Bystanders
6-10	Environment
11-15	Props
16-20	New Sequence

EXAMPLES:

Rolling on the Action Sequence Tables, I get: 9, 15, 13, 13. This gives me “Chase, vehicle”, “Some Participants,” “Middle of Nowhere” and “Props.” Mulling it over, I decide that the characters are going to be chased by three carloads of the villain’s minions along deserted back-country roads. There are numerous obstacles which will appear during the chase, which can be used to try to force the other drivers into crashing (fallen trees, slow-moving wagons, etc.).

Giving it another try, I roll 17, 6, 18, 10: “Fight, armed,” “Few Participants,” “Laboratory” and “Environment.” I decide that the PCs are going to be attacked by the Henchman and a handful of minions, while in an inventor’s lab. The place is filled with sparking electrical machinery, which will cause electrical damage to anyone falling into it!

For our last example, I roll 15, 17, 15, 20: “Fight, armed,” “Lots of Participants,” “Headquarters” and “New Sequence.” Rolling for the new sequence, I get 3, 7, 3, 6: “Chase, foot or mounted,” “Some participants,” “Rooftops” and “Environment.” This one looks like a corker! How about this: A horde of the villain’s minions attach the PC’s own headquarters, eventually leading to a rain-slicked rooftop chase as either the minions or the PCs are trying to beat a hasty retreat!



Table 4: Plot Twist

D20 Roll	Result
1-2	Betrayal!
3-9	New Location
10	Greater Villain
11-13	Hidden Plot
14-15	Reversal!
16-18	Bizarre Occurance
19	Deus Ex Machina
20	Other

Betrayal!: An NPC changes his or her allegiance in a dramatic fashion.

New Location: Roll again on the Location Table (Table 4). The plot will move to that location at the beginning of the next act.

Greater Villain: The villain of the adventure is actually a henchman of an even greater villain. Re-roll on Table 1 to reveal the new threat.

Hidden Plot: The supposed plot is actually a smokescreen for the villain's true purpose. Re-roll the Fiendish Plot on tables 2 and 3.

Reversal!: Events shift, leading to a direct reversal of the PC's fortunes. If they are working with the police, they suddenly become implicated in the crime. If they are following clues, the trail goes cold. This works both ways, however. If they are losing, they suddenly start to win.

Bizarre Occurance: Similar to the Hook of the same name. Something weird happens, without apparent explanation.

Deus Ex Machina: Help comes from some improbable source, not hinted at all previously. This can apply to the villain as well--he just happens to have a underwater breathing invention when he's apparently drowned, etc.

Other: Any twist that the GM's evil little mind can come up with.



THE SECOND ACT:

Once you've generated the First Act, it's time to move on to the second. Here's what Lester Dent says about it:

Hero, being heroic, struggles, and his struggles lead up to another physical conflict, and a surprising plot twist.

Using the previously provided tables, generate another action sequence and another plot twist.

THE THIRD ACT:

Same as the above. As Lester Dent says:

Hero makes some headway, and corners the villain or somebody in physical conflict.

A surprising plot twist, in which the hero preferably gets it in the neck bad, to end the act.

The difference here is that the action sequence should directly involve the Villain, and the plot twist generated at the end of the Act should negatively affect the PCs.

THE FOURTH ACT:

Now you're ready for the climax. There's really nothing left to do at this point that can be generated by random rolls. Everything at this point is up to the actions of the PCs.

In Dent's words:

The hero extricates himself using HIS OWN SKILL, training or brawn.

The mysteries remaining--one big one held over to this point will help grip interest--are cleared up in course of final conflict as hero takes the situation in hand.

That's it you should have a rough outline now for a pulp adventure. Just generate the NPCs, and off you go!

EXAMPLE ADVENTURE OUTLINES:

EXAMPLE ONE:

Villain: (59) Nazi

Fiendish Plot: (13, 18) Acquire Treasure

Location: (07) Far-off Jungle

Act 1:

The Hook: (90) Up To Our Necks

Supporting Characters: Three of them:

(00,04,33) Talented Neat Servant, (42,38,03) Smart Helpful Entertainer, (23,92, 40) Small Evil Scientist, (62, 85,67) Dense Old Vehicle Operator.

Action Sequence (18,15,6,4) Fight, armed, Some participants, Nightclub, Bystanders

Plot Twist: (7) New Location (given the nightclub fight, I decide to have the adventure start in the PC's home city, and then shift to the previously-rolled jungle location here).

Act 2:

Action Sequence (15,13,1,11) Fight, armed, Some participants, Nautical Setting, Props.

Plot Twist: (7) New Location (European Country)

Act 3:

Action Sequence (19,20, 18,10) Fight, armed, Lots of participants, Laboratory, Environment.

Plot Twist: (2) Betrayal!

Act 4: Climax.

So, looking at the results at left, here's what I come up with: The Nazi's are looking for a legendary artifact. No, not the headpiece to the Staff of Ra. The Jewel of Zinj, which is said to be a phenomenal source of power. However, it is said to be located in the temple at the center of the Lost City of Zinj.

The PCs are at a nightclub, watching the beautiful singer, Elaine Nightengale, perform. Suddenly shots ring out as a group of Nazi secret agents attack, led by a hideous dwarf! The PCs fight them off, with the help of Carstairs, Elaine's fastidious ex-army servant, but not before they snatch a necklace from around Elaine's neck! Elaine says that the necklace was a gift from her dead father, who was an archeologist. The medallion was supposed-

ly a map to the Lost City of Zinj! Elaine is able to recreate the map from memory, and the PCs (with Elaine and Carstairs in tow) head off to the jungle nation of Mubullah.

In Mubullah, the PCs are taken upriver by a senile old river boat captain. Along the way, they come under attack by hostile natives, trying to prevent them from reaching Zinj. They finally reach the lost city, only to discover the jewel missing (I'll probably throw another action sequence in here, too...lots of Indiana Jones-style traps and such). They find a dead Nazi (killed by the natives), who has a telegram on him, revealing that the dwarf is a scientist working for the Nazis, and will be experimenting on the jewel at his lab in Berlin!

The PCs then travel to the heart of the Third Reich, and assault the laboratory of Herr Doktor Liebenohne...a deformed dwarf spared by the Nazis purely because of his brilliance, which is as twisted as his body. The fight takes place in Liebenohne's laboratory, filled with experimental weapons and other inventions. Suddenly, just as things are reaching a climax, Carstairs betrays the PCs! He was a Nazi agent all along!

Can the PC's defeat Carstairs and Liebenohne, get the Jewel of Zinj, and get out of Berlin with Elaine before the Gestapo closes in?

Gosh, I sure hope so....

EXAMPLE TWO:

Villain: (30) Mad Scientist

Fiendish Plot: (16, 50) Kill A City

Location:(89) City: Skyscrapers

Act 1:

The Hook: (44) Bizarre Occurrence

Supporting Characters: Four of them: (71, 56, 50) Impulsive, Hard-boiled Investigator; (32, 69, 41) Helpless, Young Scientist; (99, 43, 100) Talented, Feisty Kid and (05, 59, 90) Ugly, Distinctive Henchman.

Action Sequence (20, 3 4, 2) Armed Fight, Few Participants, City Street, Bystanders.

Plot Twist: (12) Hidden Plot. The reroll results in (02, 15) Manipulate a Country.

Act 2:

Action Sequence (7, 5, 19, 6) Vehicle Chase, Few participants, Landmark setting, Environmental complications.

Plot Twist: (7) New Location (In the Air)

Act 3:

Action Sequence (14, 16, 15, 9) Fight unarmed, Lots of participants, Headquarters setting, Environmental complications.

Plot Twist: (1) Betrayal!

Act 4: Climax.

Taking a look at the results of the rolls this time around, I develop the following ideas:

A Mad Scientist is using a disintegrator ray to destroy buildings in the city. His goal, although apparently one of simple destruction, is instead to manipulate the US Government into giving a valuable contract for defense developments.

The story begins with the disappearance of an entire office building in the middle of the night. The PCs investigate, and during their investigation, encounter Jenny Jenkins, a brassy reporter looking into the story. Together, the heroes and the reporter discover evidence that the building was vaporized, by some sort of disintegrator. During the investigation, a sniper starts shooting at the PCs (a hired thug employed by the villain to raise the stakes of the gambit)! The villain's main henchman, Albrecht (a giant of a man, like Lothar in *The Rocketeer*) will be seen, but escape.

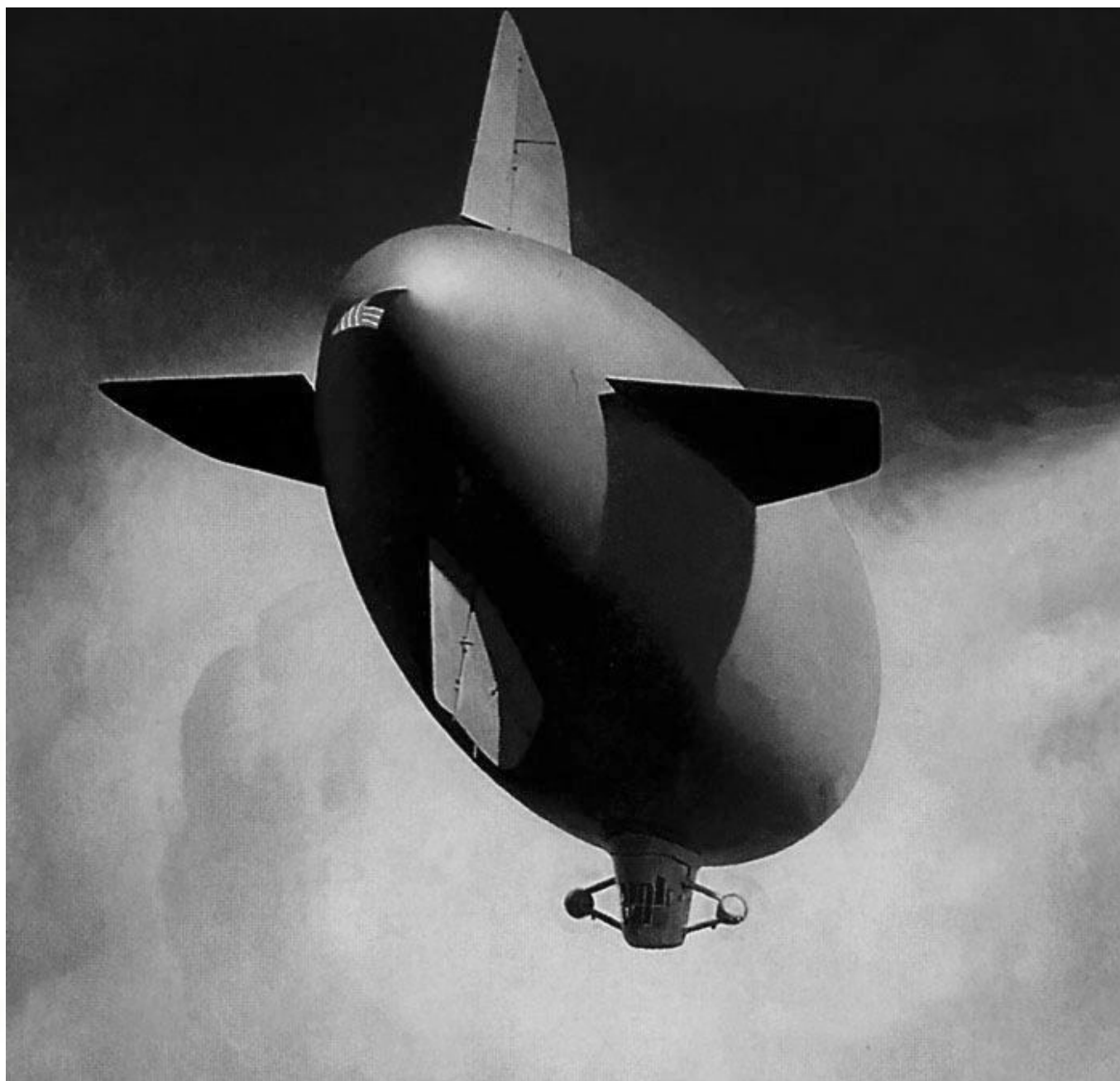
The PCs and Jenny go to the uptown laboratory of a scientist -- the young and beautiful Raven Sinclair -- to get an expert opinion on the sort of weapon being used. They arrive in time to see Ms. Sinclair in the presence of Albrecht! When the PCs are spotted, Albrecht will pick up Raven, throw her into a nearby horse-drawn carriage, and speed into the lanes of Central Park! The PCs give

chase -- the only other carriage nearby is driven by Mickey, a feisty 12-year-old with the horsemanship skills of a jockey!. The chase is on, through the winding paths of Central Park, trying to avoid trees, bystanders, etc.

At the last moment, Albrecht grabs Raven, and leaps from his carriage onto a rope ladder which dangles from the open hatch of an airship, silently hovering over the park!

The PCs will have to follow -- and, on board the zeppelin, they discover the true villain is, in fact, Raven Sinclair herself! She used her invention in an effort to influence the War Department to give her a contract to create inventions to defend against her own attack!

The PCs will have to fight their way off the airship -- being careful not to ignite the hydrogen with weapons fire -- and bring the beautiful but deadly Ms. Sinclair to justice!



AFTERWORD

There you have it. The core rules for playing pulp campaigns using the d20 Modern rules system.

THRILLING TALES was created with a simple goal in mind -- to launch a regularly-supported pulp RPG: Something that hadn't been done before. Previous pulp games had come and gone, victim to the niche interest that drove them: popular with pulp fans and game designers, not so much with the gaming audience at large. So, pulp gamers' shelves were filled with valiant attempts -- some which only ever managed to release a rulebook, some which managed one or two support releases, before fading into obscurity.

Two years after its launch, **THRILLING TALES** has succeeded beyond my hopes. Every month, new material for the game has been released in PDF format via online stores like RPGNow.com, and now we've collected that output into two Omnibus Editions for print -- the one that you now hold, and the Adventure Omnibus.

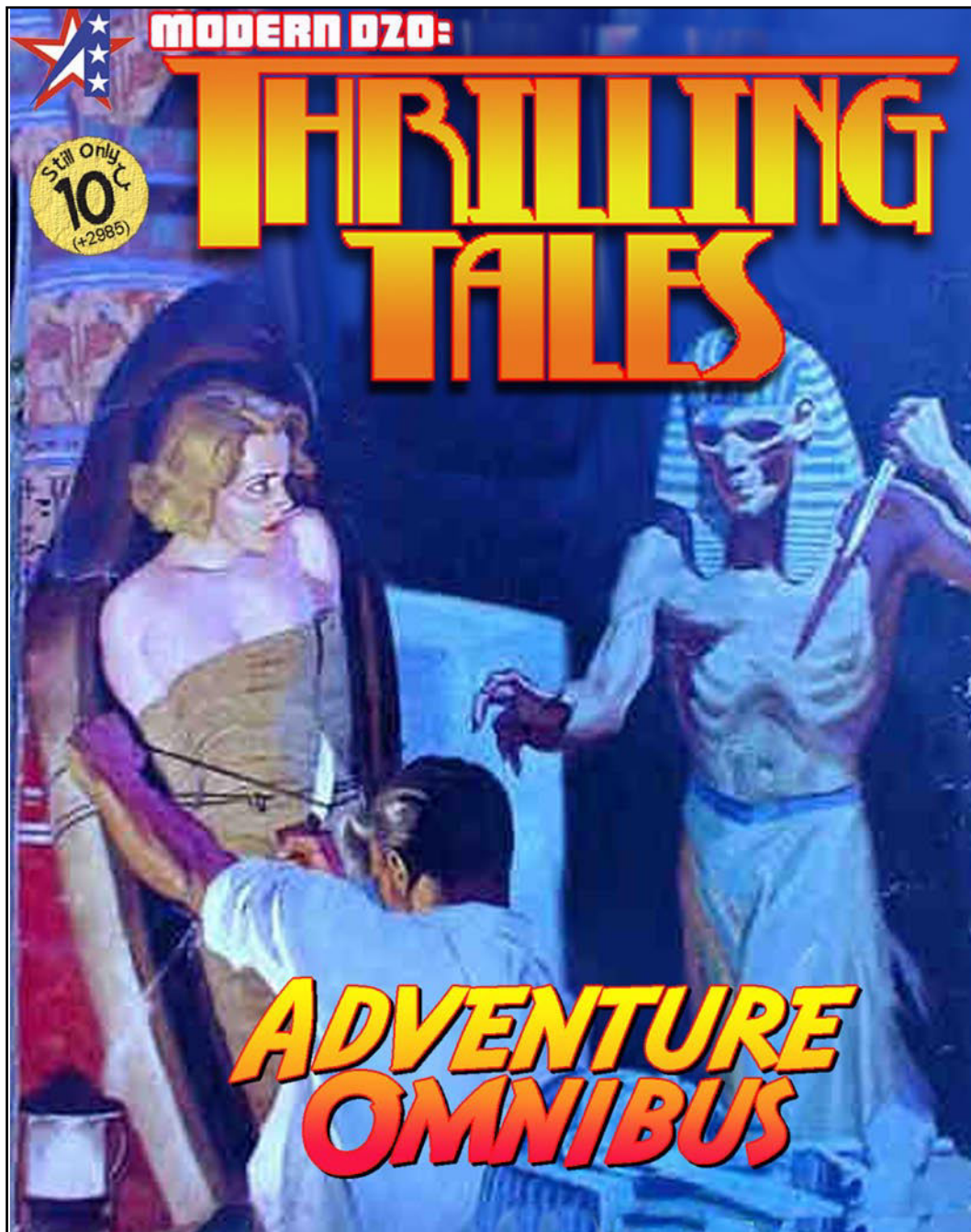
We're not stopping here. Every month, we'll continue to release new **THRILLING TALES** material -- new adventures (including licensed d20 adaptations of Hero Games' **PULP HERO** adventures), new Advanced Classes, and new supplements. Our "Secret Squadron" subscription membership allows pulp gamers to receive these releases automatically, sent to their in-boxes every month. More print versions are planned as well.

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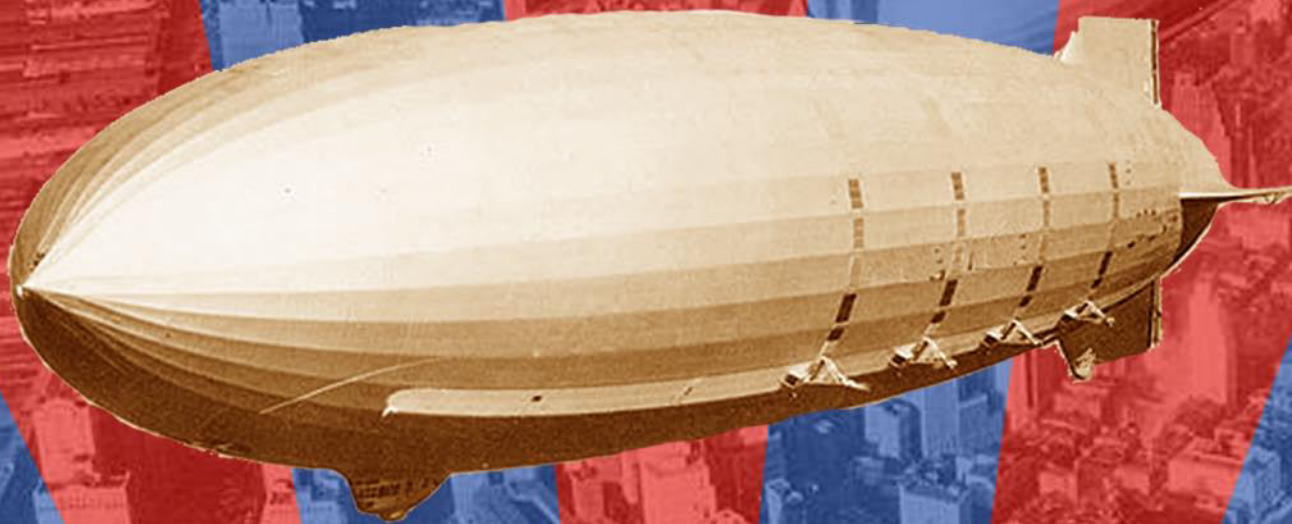
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ZEPPELIN ADVENTURES

by
Jackson Kuhl

INTRODUCTION

Nothing epitomizes the pulp era like the zeppelin.

They were aspirational: in a world of economic depression, totalitarianism, war, and a creeping sense of wider conflict to come, the hulls of the rigid airships reflected everything good and noble in mankind. Simply seeing one pass overhead was an awesome and memorable moment, a flagged experience in a person's lifetime.

They were glamorous: for a \$400 one-way ticket, Hindenburg passengers could enjoy two-and-a-half days of cards, liquor, and five-course dinners 2,000 feet above a storm-tossed Atlantic.

They were exciting -- and not just because

they often came to spectacular and fiery ends. The first regular transatlantic pas-

senger flight was not aboard an airplane but rather a zeppelin.



Both nonfiction and fiction of the period sensationalized zeppelins, an expression that echoes down to us today: who can forget the daring escape of Drs. Jones from the zeppelin in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, *The Rocketeer*'s climactic battle, or the opening sequence of *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow*, in which a Hindenburg III moors to a

mast high atop the Empire State Building?

The romance of zeppelins includes not only what was, but what could have been. Britain planned -- and partially built -- a global network of zeppelin bases across

their empire, from Egypt to South Africa to India to Australia and beyond, each site complete with mooring masts, sheds, and hydrogen plants. The Soviets produced zeppelin propaganda posters and postage stamps but never got around to actually developing the real thing. And some historians conjecture that had the US Navy's rigid-airship program not ended in 1935 with the crash of Macon, the 1941 build-up of Japanese forces in the Pacific would have been impossible, thereby preventing the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Zeppelin Adventures includes three scenarios:

- “Operation Zephyr,” a straight-forward action adventure mixed with light intrigue;
- “Ghouls of the Gasbags,” a brief horror/suspense adventure meant to be played in a single gaming session; and
- “Where Zeppelins Dare,” an espionage adventure in the spirit of spy-novelist Alistair MacLean.

In addition, we present game information on airships, including full D20 system stats, and deckplans.

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OPERATION ZEPHYR

“Operation Zephyr” is an adventure for heroes of 3rd to 5th level. A party consisting of at least four heroes is recommended. Combat ability as well as skills such as Gather Information, Hide, Move Silently, Search, and Spot may be useful.

The scenario begins at Naval Air Station Sunnyvale, California, located 35 miles south of San Francisco. For those running an East Coast campaign, this location can easily be switched to NAS Lakehurst, New Jersey, 75 miles south of New York City, or NAS Anacostia in Washington, D.C. NAS Pensacola or NAS Miami, both in Florida, may be used by those with a campaign along the Gulf coast or in the Caribbean.

Use the plans and statistics for ZRS-4 *Akron* (found in the Appendix) for the fictional *Hoboken*.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The player-characters (PCs) are approached by US Naval Intelligence to accompany a Naval zeppelin to investigate an outpost on a remote island in the north Pacific, dubbed “Outpost Z-1.”

The Navy recently lost contact with Outpost Z-1, which for the past week had complained of mysterious animal attacks and an increase in local volcanism. Naval Intelligence does not wholly trust Navy personnel with the mission as they have

intercepted undecipherable radio transmissions directed to the island originating from the Naval base where the airship is housed. Believing there is a spy within the Navy’s ranks, the PCs are asked to accompany the mission, discover why contact has been lost with the island outpost, and determine the source of the radio signals.

For most of the trip, the PCs are left to interact with the crew in an effort to determine who among them is the spy. As they arrive over the island, the airship is attacked by a swarm of prehistoric birds called teratorns, which eat their way into the interior and attack. In the confusion, the spy, Kessler, attempts to smash the zep’s controls before parachuting into the forest below. The investigators must fend off the teratorns and save the zep from colliding into the slopes of the island’s simmering volcano.

On the ground, the Naval outpost is found deserted and destroyed. Clues direct the PCs to the volcano. Inside, past a hidden entrance, the PCs discover a secret Japanese base where Japanese geologists are experimenting with methods of causing volcanoes to erupt on cue. Their target: the Hawaiian islands, where they plan to destroy the American naval base at Pearl Harbor with a catastrophic eruption! The PCs must foil the Japanese plot and bring Kessler to justice.

CHAPTER ONE: UNCLE SAM WANTS YOU

The PCs are approached by a man who identifies himself as Lieutenant Commander Thomas McCormick with the United States Navy. Exactly how he introduces himself is left to the GM; McCormick can contact the heroes either individually or collectively, in person or by phone call. One dramatic way: a 1934 Ford V8 pulls up beside the PCs while they are on the street, the back door opens, and McCormick asks them if they'd like to hear what he has to say.

Regardless of how the introduction takes place, McCormick asks to meet with the PCs together to make an offer he believes will interest them.

Lt. Commander McCormick

Stern and humorless, McCormick isn't above intimidation if it gets him what he wants. He is a clean-cut, fit-looking man with the bearing of someone accustomed to telling people what to do.

Strong Hero 2/Smart Hero 2/Investigator 2: CR 6; Medium-size human; HD 2d8+1 plus 2d6+1 plus 2d6+1; hp 39; Mas 12; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 15, touch 15, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex, +4 class); BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d4+2, pistol whip) or +5 ranged (2d8, S&W); Full Atk +6 melee (1d4+2, pistol whip) or +5 ranged (2d8, S&W); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL Naval Intelligence; SV Fort +3, Ref +3,

Will +5; AP 3; Rep +2; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Occupation: Investigative (class skills: Search, Sense Motive).

Skills: Decipher Script +3, Drive +1, Gather Information +2, Intimidate +7, Investigate +7, Jump +2, Knowledge (current events) +3, Knowledge (tactics) +5, Listen +6, Read/Write English, Search +5, Sense Motive +6, Speak English, Spot +4, Swim +4.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Double Tap, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

Possessions: Smith & Wesson Model 29, 30 rounds of .44 ammunition, average business clothes.

Lieutenants Byrne and Callahan

McCormick is accompanied by two lieutenants, also in plainclothes, who don't say much but follow McCormick's orders implicitly.

Fast Ordinary 3/Dedicated Ordinary 2: CR 4; Medium-size human; HD 3d8-1 plus 2d6-1; hp 25; Mas 8; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 16, touch 16, flat-footed 10 (+2 Dex, +4 class); BAB +3; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +5 ranged (2d6, Colt); Full Atk +4 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +5 ranged (2d6, Colt); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL Naval Intelligence, McCormick; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; AP 0; Rep +2; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 8, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Occupation: Military (class skills: Navigate, Swim).

Skills: Craft (mechanical) +4, Drive +8, Knowledge (earth and life sciences) +3, Knowledge (physical sciences) +5, Knowledge (technology) +4, Listen +3, Navigate +7, Pilot +10, Read/Write English, Speak English, Spot +3, Swim +3, Treat Injury +2.

Feats: Aircraft Operation (airships), Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Vehicle Expert.

Possessions: Colt M1911A1, 28 rounds of .45 ammunition, average business clothes.

If the PCs agree to listen to Lcdr. McCormick, read the following aloud:

“What I am about to tell you is crucial to the security of the United States. Three days ago, we lost radio contact with a Naval outpost on a remote island in the Pacific Ocean. We are sending our ship USS Hoboken to investigate.

“Ordinarily we would blame a blackout on equipment failure. However, prior to losing contact, we intercepted coded messages directed toward the island. We don’t know what’s in the messages -- our cryptologists are working on them now -- but we must assume they are hostile to the interests of the United States. We don’t even know who the intended recipient was. What we do know is this: the messages originated at



the very base where Hoboken is stationed. We believe the sender is among the crew of Hoboken.

"We don't have another ship we can send, nor do we have a replacement crew for the Hoboken. I'm too short-staffed to go myself. I need someone from the outside, civilian investigators to accompany the mission. People who I know are not involved. That's where you come in. Your nominal role would be as observers, taking orders from the captain. However, I would like you to investigate the crewmembers and report back your findings. I want you to find the spy.

"Your recent--" here he gives you a meaningful look "--actions have drawn the interest of my department. For your trouble, the United States government would be willing to compensate you well."

A successful Sense Motive check (DC 20) suggests that McCormick is not being entirely forthcoming, though it's left to the PCs to determine what he's hiding: McCormick actually works for Naval Intelligence.

The outpost McCormick mentions, Outpost Z-1, was only established six weeks ago and is the first in an intended series of bases from the Aleutians to the South Pacific to support airship surveillance of the Pacific region. This top-secret plan is called "Operation Zephyr."

McCormick believes the rigid airship

Hoboken may be sabotaged during the course of the mission, which is why he will not accompany it. McCormick has voiced his suspicions to Hoboken's skipper, Commander Gregory, but Gregory thinks McCormick is paranoid.

Since Gregory outranks McCormick and their commanding officers have sided with the skipper, McCormick has instead secretly planted one of his agents, Lt. Dwyer, among the crew. The PCs are to draw attention away from Dwyer while Dwyer locates the spy and finds incriminating information about Gregory for McCormick to use in his personal vendetta.

If Byrne or Callahan is isolated from McCormick, or if McCormick is otherwise distracted, a Bluff check (DC 15) can trip either lieutenant into revealing one of the above facts, depending on the line of questioning. Once spilled, however, the lieutenant realizes his mistake and becomes flustered and angry, refusing to speak to the PCs again.

If the PCs agree, McCormick tells them to meet him at Naval Air Station Sunnyvale at 0600 hours the following morning. He tells them to pack for a week but their bags must weigh less than 20 lbs. McCormick offers no further details about the mission or *Hoboken*. Each PC will be compensated with a +2 Wealth bonus upon his or her return but McCormick refuses to advance any money beforehand.

CHAPTER TWO: INTO THE GREAT WIDE OPEN

The next morning, the PCs should have no problem entering the Naval base. McCormick is not on the base, however; Lt. Byrne greets the PCs and escorts them to *Hoboken*. If asked, Byrne tells them McCormick was called away at the last minute. The truth is that McCormick and the skipper of *Hoboken*, Cdr. Gregory, do not like each other and McCormick wanted to avoid a confrontation over the PCs' presence on the mission.

Lt. Byrne drives the heroes to a wide airfield where an enormous Naval rigid airship is moored by its nose to a framework mooring mast. The morning sunlight glints off the airship's silver envelope, on which is clearly printed, "Hoboken." Ground crew swarm beneath the zep preparing for its flight while men ride an open-air elevator up the mast, then board *Hoboken* across a gangway.

Hoboken's crew of 80 men includes 14 officers and 66 enlisted men.



Commander Gregory

A graduate of the US Naval Academy and a career officer with an impeccable record, Gregory is the skipper of *Hoboken*. He is tolerant but brusque with the PCs, suspecting them of being agents of McCormick who mean to undermine his authority. He allows them free run of the ship as long as they don't cross him.

Dedicated Hero 4/Soldier 3: CR 7; Medium-sized human; HD 4d6+1 plus 3d10+1; hp 28; Mas 12; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 17, touch 17, flat-footed 10 (+2 Dex, +5 class); BAB +5; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +7 ranged (2d6, Colt); Full Atk +5 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +7 ranged (2d6, Colt); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL US Navy; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +8; AP 3; Rep +3; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 18, Cha 12.

Occupation: Military (class skills: Navigate, Pilot).

Skills: Jump +2, Knowledge (current events) +3, Knowledge (earth and life sciences) +2, Knowledge (physical sciences) +9, Knowledge (tactics) +9, Knowledge (technology) +5, Listen +9, Navigate +10, Pilot +12, Spot +12, Survival +2, Swim +5.

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Aircraft Operation (airships), Alertness, Educated, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Vehicle Expert, Weapon Focus (Colt M1911A1), Weapon Specialization (Colt M1911A1).

Talents: Skill Emphasis, Aware.

Possessions: Colt M1911A1, 28 rounds of .45 ammunition, Naval khakis.

Lieutenant Kessler

A veteran pilot of the Great War now in his late 30s, Kessler has a cocky attitude and a habit of mouthing off to his superiors which have repeatedly kept him from promotion beyond lieutenant. Navy brass has transferred him to the airship program as a way of keeping him out of trouble. Insulted and frustrated, Kessler began spying for the Japanese Navy, telling them everything he could learn about Operation Zephyr.

Kessler has destroyed his radio transmitter and plans to sabotage *Hoboken* once it arrives at the island, then defect to the Japanese base. There he intends to collect the payment promised to him for his treachery and retire to Tokyo.

Kessler is jealous of Cdr. Gregory and thinks Lt. Dwyer is a dumb rookie. He's very chummy with the enlisted men, encouraging an underdog camaraderie with them. He acts friendly and gregarious with the PCs but is secretly suspicious of their presence on the mission. He subtly attempts to discover why they are along.

Fast Hero 4/Charismatic Hero 2/Air Ace 3: CR 9; Medium-sized human; HD 4d8+1 plus 2d6+1 plus 3d10+1; hp 56; Mas 13; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 22, touch 21, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +8 class, +1 leather jacket); BAB +6; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee (1d4+1, pistol whip) or +9 ranged (2d6, Colt); Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+1, pistol whip) or +9 ranged (2d6, Colt); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL himself; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +2; AP 4; Rep +4; Str 12,

Dex 16, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 15.

Occupation: Military (class skills: Navigate, Pilot).

Skills: Balance +1, Bluff +7, Craft (mechanical) +8, Drive +8, Gather Info +8, Hide +7, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (current events) +3, Listen +3, Move Silently +5, Navigate +7, Pilot +12, Read/Write English, Repair +8, Search +3, Speak English, Spot +4.

Feats: Aircraft Operation (airplanes), Deceptive, Defensive Martial Arts, Heroic Surge, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Stealthy, Vehicle Expert.

Talents: Evasion, Opportunist; Charm (women) +2.

Possessions: Colt M1911A1, 28 rounds of .45 ammunition, leather jacket, Naval khakis.



Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Dwyer

Dwyer actually works for McCormick and Naval Intelligence. McCormick has assigned Dwyer to Hoboken not only to root out the spy but also to uncover any kind of compromising information on Cdr. Gregory. McCormick plans to use any such material in his personal feud with Gregory.

Lt. Dwyer knows why the PCs are on the mission and resents their presence, believing he can identify the spy alone, but he is too inexperienced to know how to proceed. He tries to keep close to the PCs so that he learns what they know about the spy. He also makes ham-handed attempts to dig for dirt on Gregory. Dwyer carries a tiny spy camera to photograph any documents that might incriminate Gregory.

Fast Ordinary 3/Dedicated Ordinary 2:

CR 4; Medium-size human; HD 3d8-1 plus 2d6-1; hp 25; Mas 8; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 19, touch 18, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +6 class, +1 leather jacket); BAB +3; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +5 ranged (2d6, Colt); Full Atk +4 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +5 ranged (2d6, Colt); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL Naval Intelligence, McCormick; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; AP 0; Rep +2; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 8, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Occupation: Military (class skills: Navigate, Swim).

Skills: Craft (mechanical) +4, Drive +8, Knowledge (earth and life sciences) +3, Knowledge (physical sciences) +5, Knowledge (technology) +4, Listen +3, Navigate

+7, Pilot +10, Read/Write English, Speak English, Spot +3, Swim +3, Treat Injury +2.

Feats: Aircraft Operation (airships), Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Vehicle Expert.

Possessions: Colt M1911A1, 28 rounds of .45 ammunition, leather jacket, Naval khakis, spy camera.

Officers (11)

The remaining 11 officers of *Hoboken* are all lieutenants, four of whom (along with Kessler) double as heavier-than-air pilots for the F9-C2 Sparrowhawk fighters carried in the airship's hangar bay (see Appendix). Some of their regular responsibilities include construction and repair, navigation, and meteorology.

The officers include Haggerty, Mitchell, Simmons, and Yates.

Fast Ordinary 3/Dedicated Ordinary 2: Same as Lt. Dwyer except AL US Navy.

Possessions: Colt M1911A1, 28 rounds of .45 ammunition, leather jacket, Naval khakis.

Enlisted Men (66)

Some of the enlisted men are named Jensen, Linder, Nolan, Richards, Stefanowski, and Walsh.

Tough Ordinary 1/Smart Ordinary 1: CR 1; Medium-size human; HD 1d10+2 plus 1d6+2; hp 14; Mas 15; Init +1; Spd 30

ft.; Defense 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex, +1 class); BAB +0; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d6+1, Brawl) or +1 ranged (2d6, Colt); Full Atk +1 melee (1d6+1, Brawl) or +1 ranged (2d6, Colt); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL US Navy; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +1; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Occupation: Military (class skills: Navigate, Swim).

Skills: Climb +5, Concentration +3, Craft (mechanical) +5, Knowledge (streetwise) +2, Knowledge (technology) +3, Navigate +3, Read/Write English, Repair +7, Speak English, Spot +2, Swim +3.

Feats: Brawl, Gearhead, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

Possessions: Colt M1911A1, 28 rounds of .45 ammunition, mechanical tools, Naval khakis.

Crewmembers do not normally carry their sidearms during flight, instead stowing them in the lockers by their bunks. Kessler and Dwyer both keep their Colts hidden on them.

Lt. Byrne introduces the heroes to Lt. Dwyer as "civilian observers" before departing. Dwyer then escorts the PCs aboard *Hoboken* and shows them to their bunks. Each hero is issued a flashlight and told to keep it in his or her possession at all times. At night, a flashlight is needed to navigate the dimly lit catwalks of the airship.

The airship departs NAS Sunnyvale at 0800 hours (8 a.m.).

CHAPTER THREE: TO CATCH A SPY

The journey to the island, which takes about 40 hours, is uneventful. Hoboken travels at about 56 knots (65 mph) at an altitude of 1,500 ft. The weather is clear.

The heroes should use this time to acquaint themselves with the crew to discover the whereabouts and identity of the spy. This part of the adventure is a free-form role-playing opportunity.

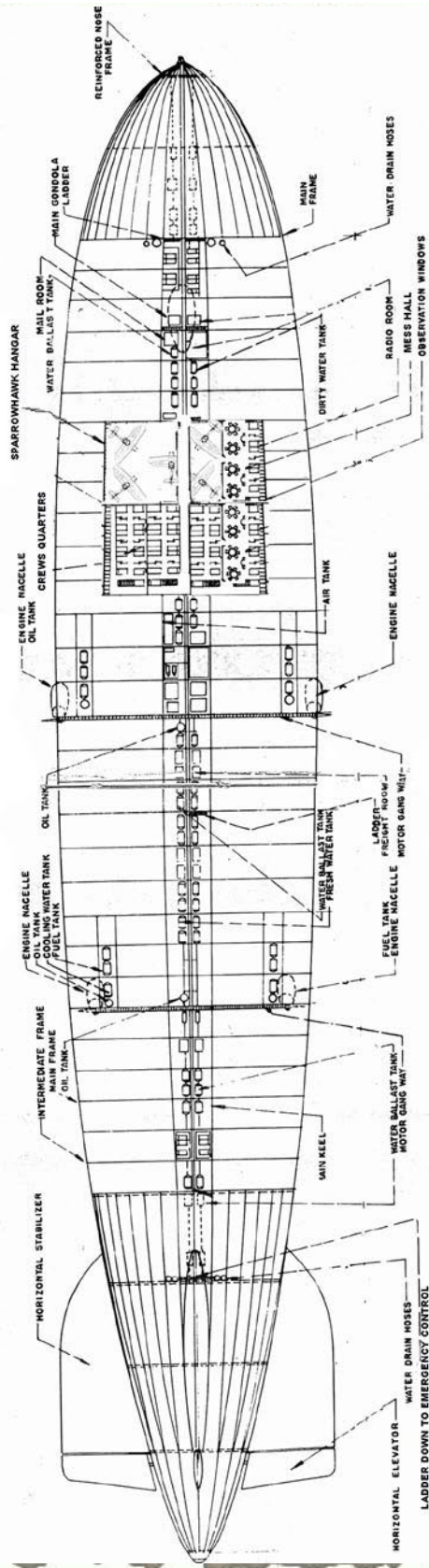
The deckplans of *Hoboken* can be found on the following page.

In the course of their inquiry, the following facts may be revealed (parentheses indicate which individuals know each fact):

- Lcdr. McCormick tried to ground Hoboken's mission to the island but Cdr. Gregory went over his head to their superior officers. They sided with Gregory, which humiliated McCormick (entire crew).
- Gregory and McCormick do not like each other. Gregory thinks McCormick is paranoid, while McCormick thinks Gregory should be forced to follow Naval Intelligence's security recommendations even though Gregory outranks McCormick (officers only).
- In letters to her husband, Gregory's wife complains of being unable to pay several debts the family owes, including car payments and doctor's bills. The wife also says

she has been giving money to her sister, whose husband is out of work. A successful Disable Device (DC 20) is needed to open the lock on the footlocker in which Gregory keeps these letters. A Spot check (DC 15) shows scratches on the lock's face as if someone has already made a clumsy attempt to pick it; Dwyer surreptitiously opened the locker before as part of his mission to incriminate Gregory. Prints made of the film in Dwyer's spy camera show that he photographed the letters from Gregory's wife (Gregory, Dwyer).

- Lt. Kessler is actually older than Gregory and has been passed over for promotion twice because of his poor attitude (Gregory, Kessler, Dwyer).
- Kessler keeps a packed parachute in his footlocker. This is the same parachute he uses in Chapter 5. Disable Device (DC 20) needed to open the locker (Kessler).
- This is Lt. Dwyer's first mission. No one knows much about him except that he's a disciplinarian. Dwyer is disliked since he seems more interested in rules than in airship operation (enlisted men).
- A Gather Information check (DC 20) with Richards, an enlisted man who works in the galley as the airship's cook, reveals that Dwyer was briefly assigned to Naval Intelligence under McCormick but that he was soon transferred to Hoboken. Richards happened to see the paperwork for the transfer while in Gregory's office one day submitting a promotion request (Richards, Gregory).



U.S.S. HOBOKEN

Deck Plan

Scale: 1 inch = 90 feet

- The officers are sworn to secrecy about Operation Zephyr. However, a Gather Information check (DC 20) together with some alcoholic lubrication reveals the plan. Alcohol is forbidden onboard so the PCs have to supply it themselves (officers only except Gregory and Dwyer).

CHAPTER FOUR: FIGHT AT FIFTEEN-HUNDRED FEET

Around midnight on the second night, *Hoboken* reaches the unnamed island somewhere southwest of the Alaskan peninsula.

Looking out into the moonlight, you see a rocky cinder cone rising up steeply in front of the airship, thick trails of smoke wafting overhead. Its slopes disappear down into a dark carpet of pine. Breakers crash onto a salt-and-pepper shore of white snow and black stone. There is no sign of habitation whatsoever, only a lonely and unfathomable wilderness.

Cdr. Gregory orders *Hoboken* into a hovering position over the island. At daybreak, the crew steers the ship to the Naval outpost and its mooring mast once it can be spotted.

An hour passes uneventfully. During this time, a PC looking out into the night either through the airship's windows or from either of the lateral catwalks and making a Spot check (DC 18) sees dark shapes glid-

ing past. They move too quickly to discern clearly. These are some of the island's fauna -- teratorms.

Suddenly, the PCs hear bloodcurdling screams from somewhere along one of the catwalks. If they rush to investigate, read or paraphrase the following:

A cold wind blows down the gangway toward you. The bouncing beams of your flashlights showcase an enormous rift in the airship's outer envelope, its tattered edges flapping inward. Then a thrashing mass on the deck of the catwalk appears in the cone of your lights. You recognize the bloody corpse of one of the crewmen beneath. Atop the man's chest swarms a horde of enormous vulture-like birds, their curved beaks scarlet with giblets of hanging flesh. They stop their feasting and, as one, turn their beady eyes to you. Beyond, more of the cackling beasts rush into your lights, scrambling along the catwalk toward you on long legs.

The teratorms, attracted by the scent of prey, have cut their way through *Hoboken's* outer envelope with their talons. Two teratorms attack for every 3rd- or 4th-level PC and three teratorms for every 5th-level PC. To avoid a lot of dice-rolling, the GM should exclude the GM crewmembers from the fight, although Gregory or 1-3 enlisted men enter the fray if it goes badly against the PCs.

Teratorn

CR 1; Small animal; HD 1d8; hp 6; Mas 10; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); Defense 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 Size); BAB +0; Grap -4; Atk +0 melee (1d4, beak); Full Atk +0 melee (1d4, beak) and -4 (1d3, 2 claws); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft. SQ blood in the air, scent; AL none; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 6, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 5.

Skills: Climb +8, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Spot +9.

Teratorns (*Teratornis merriami*) are carnivorous, condor-like birds that went extinct at the end of the last Ice Age. Standing 30 inches tall, they weigh about 30 lbs. with 14-ft. wingspans. Equipped with sharp beaks and wicked rear talons, teratorns probably ate small game and carrion, but for game purposes they are blood-crazed raptors slaving for PC flesh.

Blood in the Air (Ex): Teratorns are attracted to blood. When a PC or GM character receives his or her first wound in combat with a teratorn, the scent of blood attracts an additional 1d4 teratorns, which arrive on the scene three rounds later and attack that character. Only a character's initial wound summons teratorns; further wounds do not.

Scent (Ex): A teratorn can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Skill Bonuses: Teratorns receive a +4 species bonus on Listen and Spot checks.

While hundreds of teratorns roost in the cliffs of the volcano, only one wave attacks *Hoboken* tonight.

Optional Encounter: If the PCs survive the fight, a breathless enlisted man stumbles toward them, saying *Hoboken's* four Sparrowhawk pilots are injured (the man doesn't know where Kessler is) and 2d6 teratorns are ripping apart the top of the airship.

Someone needs to pilot one or all four of the Curtiss Sparrowhawks or go topside on foot and kill the teratorns before they pierce the gas cells. Every 10 rounds (1 minute) that the teratorns are left unmolested, *Hoboken* takes 5 hp damage (see Table 1: New Aircraft, in the Appendix).

However, once the heroes engage the teratorns (with the Sparrowhawks or otherwise), the birds break off from *Hoboken* and attack them. Note that overshooting the teratorns while they are on top of or near the airship may cause damage to *Hoboken*.



CHAPTER FIVE: COLLISION COURSE

While the heroes are battling the teratorns, Kessler, if he hasn't been killed or re-strained, seizes the opportunity to defect. He makes his way to the bridge where he knocks out the helmsman and the elevator man (the crewman who controls altitude) from behind. The officer on watch, the radio man, and other personnel have left the control car to fight the teratorns.

Kessler then puts Hoboken on a course toward the slopes of the volcano, jams the rudder and engine controls, smashes the radio and internal telephone line, and parachutes into the forest below through one of the control-car windows. From there, Kessler makes his way to the secret Japanese base within the volcano.

Upon discovering this news (perhaps the helmsman, conscious but dazed, comes running to tell them), the PCs have 30 rounds (3 minutes) to stop or change the airship's course before it collides with the volcano, utterly destroying Hoboken. The GM can schedule this encounter either immediately after the teratorn battle or, for a greater challenge, while the battle is still occurring. The GM may want to utilize a stopwatch while the PCs discuss their options, then stop it when they announce their plan of action. Subtract the discussion time from the 30-round time limit (6 seconds equals 1 round) to determine how much time the heroes have to implement their strategy.

Some possible solutions:

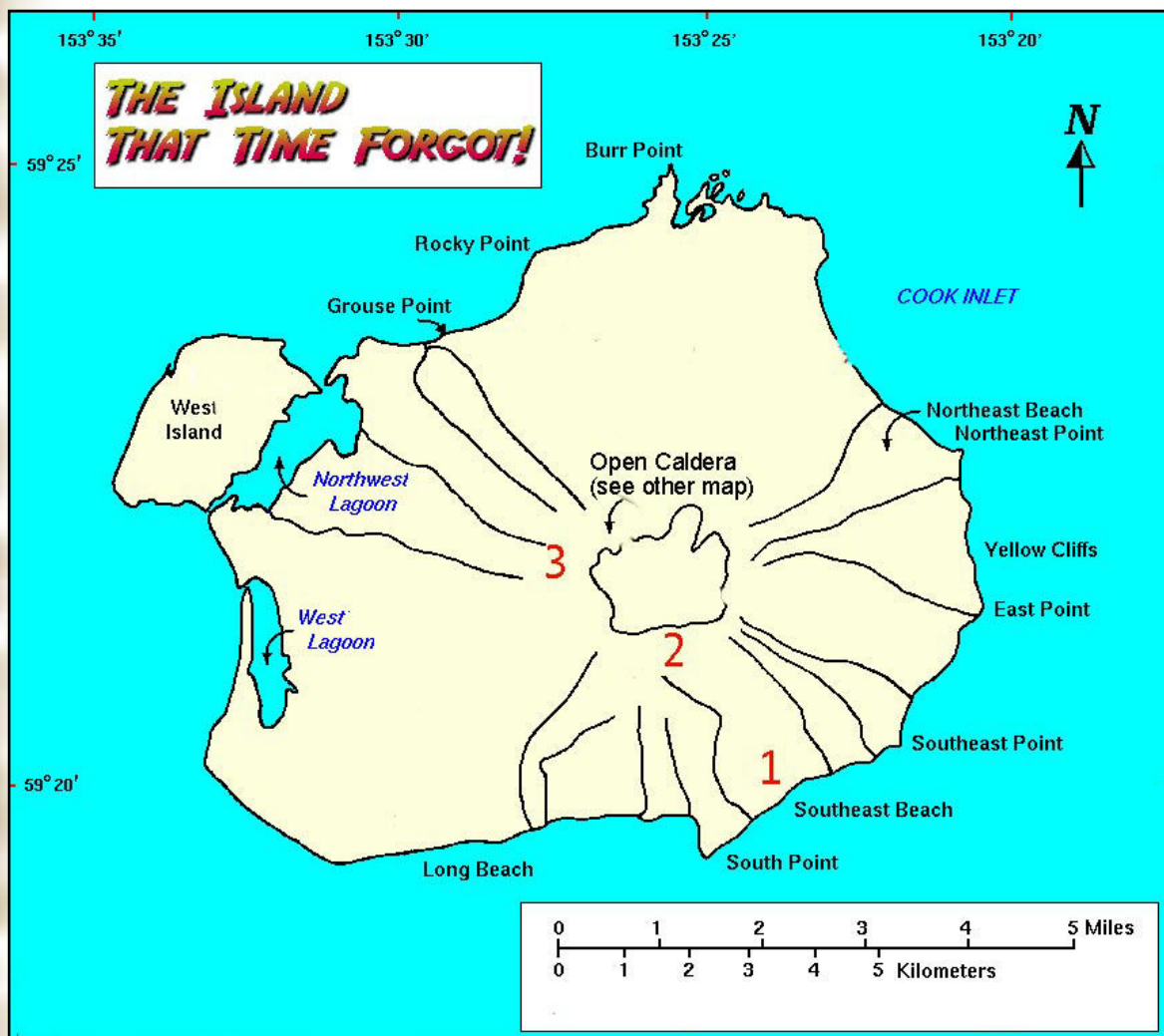
- A hero can attempt a Jury-Rig Repair (DC 20) on the helm and/or elevator controls, enabling the PCs to steer the airship away from the volcano long enough to avoid destruction. Three Jury-Rig Repairs are necessary and each takes 1 round. A full Repair of the controls is required later. A Concentration check (DC 10) is also required to make a Repair if teratorns are loose in the control car.
- The heroes can attempt to manually shut off all eight of the airship's engines, which are arranged four along each side of Hoboken. Alternatively, they can shut off just the engines along one side, causing Hoboken to veer away from the volcano. For a hero moving 30 ft. per round, it takes 1 round to climb out of the control car and another 6 to reach the forward-most engine on either side and tell the mechanic on duty to cut power. From there it takes another 3 rounds per engine to reach each of the other three engines and their mechanics on that side. Total time for an individual to reach all four engines on one side from the control cabin: 16 rounds (1 minute, 36 seconds).
- The heroes can manually override the controls by accessing the emergency control cabin located in Hoboken's bottom tailfin. It takes a hero moving 30 ft. per round 21 rounds (2 minutes, 6 seconds) to climb up from the control car, run along either of the lateral gangways, and climb down into the emergency control cabin. It takes an additional round to take control of the ship and steer it away from the volcano.

Neither the helmsman nor the elevator man recalls what happened, only that the ship was stopped when they were struck from behind. If a head count is done, 1d8 enlisted men and 1d4 officers were slain in the battle and Kessler is missing.

CHAPTER SIX: THE ISLAND THAT TIME FORGOT

(Area Numbers correspond to the map that appears in this chapter.)

The island is ringed by surf-battered rocks that make landfall impossible for anything bigger than a kayak. A rolling and verdant tundra leads uphill from the ocean, pock-marked by pools of meltwater and boulder piles. Large stands of juniper and spruce



break the terrain. At the center of the island is the blunted cone of the volcano, its rocky slopes bare of vegetation but dotted with huge teratorn nests.

The fauna of the island is Pleistocene, although with the exceptions of the teratorns and a saber-toothed cat, it's left to the GM to populate it with megafauna.

Cdr. Gregory brings the damaged Hoboken to the outpost's mooring mast at first light. Although Gregory forbids the heroes from leaving Hoboken before then, there is nothing to prevent them except the obvious physical difficulties. Personnel attempt to forcibly stop the heroes from hijacking the Sparrowhawks.

Once moored, Gregory and a 30-man contingent from Hoboken disembark to survey the outpost. They do not explore the rest of the island, including the volcano, with the exception of Dwyer, who makes sure to stick close to the PCs. Instead, Gregory and the rest concentrate on repairing Hoboken.

1: Outpost Z-1

A collection of Quonset huts have been established in a shallow depression about 300 ft. from the high-tide line on the southeast side of the island. The huts include barracks, a mess hall, offices, workshops, a small infirmary, and a radio shack equipped with a radio tower. To the north of the outpost, a strip of land has been cleared to allow light aircraft (like the Sparrowhawks) to land on the spongy tundra. There is also a short "stub" mooring mast for airships.

The outpost is deserted. The two dozen men operating the outpost were attacked by the Japanese from the secret volcanic base and captured. The Japanese have made efforts to conceal the nature of the attack, going so far as to brush away footprints, collect spent bullet casings, and leave the carcasses of teratorns to suggest that the birds attacked the outpost. However, a few clues may suggest to the heroes that appearances are deceiving:

The radio room has been smashed. While the outpost radio is inoperable, there are enough parts here to repair the radio system onboard Hoboken.

The outpost's offices have been ransacked. Documents in the offices pertain to requisitions and other day-to-day operational procedures. There is nothing regarding Operation Zephyr; these files have been removed by the Japanese. However, among the papers (Spot (DC 15)) is a line graph comparing predicted daily volcanic activity on the island to actual observed activity. These two lines match identically until two weeks ago, when the actual activity becomes much greater than the predicted activity. Although the personnel of Outpost Z-1 didn't know it, this increased activity is due to the tampering of the volcano by the Japanese geologists.

In another office, an incomplete report still in the typewriter can be Spotted (DC 10). Its author, Lt. Colbert, reports that during a patrol near the western slope of the volcano, his men discovered several fresh cigarette butts. Colbert reports there was no

sign of who left the butts.

Cold, half-eaten meals still sit in the mess hall. Many of the bunks in the barracks are unmade.

Someone examining the Quonset huts may Spot (DC 15) one of them pockmarked with bullet holes. Further, a Search (DC 20) of the area uncovers a few bullet casings overlooked by the Japanese. The casings are 8mm. A PC making a successful Knowledge (technology) check (DC 20) knows that this unusual caliber is used by Japanese-made firearms.

In one of the workshops lies the rotting carcass of a teratorn that was obviously being dissected. Nearby is a journal describing the process. The unnamed author describes the teratorn as being an extinct bird not seen since the Ice Age, and that the teratorns roost on the slopes of the island's volcano. The journal also notes that the teratorns seem agitated by the volcano's increased activity and have attacked the outpost at all hours of the day and night, but that no outpost personnel have been killed by the birds.

Heroes with the Track feat may be able to follow traces of the retreating Japanese soldiers and their prisoners from the outpost, through 3. A Survival check (DC 10) is required between areas 1 and 2, and another between areas 2 and 3.

2: Teratorn Totems

Indigenous sailors from the surrounding islands erected a half-dozen wooden totems carved to resemble stylized teratorns in the hope of keeping the deadly birds from straying too far from their home isle.

The totems, 15-ft. tall, stand arranged in a boulder-strewn glade at the southern base of the volcano. On the solstices, the islanders also revisit the totems to make offerings which usually consist of fish and whale meat. Searching (DC 20) through the old bones around the totems, PCs discover another kind of gift left by the islanders: a fistful of pearls (+4 Wealth).

A saber-toothed cat lurks in the nearby boulders, seeking to scavenge the islanders' meat or even an actual islander. The PCs fill the menu nicely.

Smilodon

CR 4; Large animal; HD 6d8+18; hp 45; Mas 17; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; Defense 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural); BAB +4; Grap +14; Atk +9 melee (1d8+6, claw); Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+6, 2 claws), +4 melee (2d6+3, bite); FS 10 ft. by 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ pounce, improved grab, rake 1d8+3, low-light vision; AL none; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +3; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 23, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Balance +6, Hide +5 (+9 in tall grass or undergrowth), Listen +3, Move Silently +9, Spot +3.

Pounce (Ex): If a smilodon leaps upon a foe during the first round of combat, it can

make a full attack even if it has already taken a move action.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the smilodon must hit with a claw or bite attack. If it gets a hold, it can rake (see below).

Rake (Ex): A smilodon that gets a hold of its target can make two rake attacks (+9 melee) with its hind legs for 1d8+6 points of damage each. If the tiger pounces on an opponent, it can also rake.

Skill Bonuses: Smilodons receive a +4 species bonus on Balance, Hide, and Move Silently checks. In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, their Hide bonus improves to +8.

Saber-toothed cats (*Smilodon fatalis*) are similar to African lions, though shorter (3 ft. at shoulder) and much heavier (700 lbs.). Their weight makes them ambush predators since they are too bulky to run long distances. Bobtailed and lacking a mane, a smilodon's most notable feature is the 7-in. canines curving out of its upper jaw.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE JAPANESE BASE

(Area numbers described correspond to the map that appears in this Chapter.)

Built offshore of the American territory of Alaska, the clandestine Japanese Imperial Navy base was established about two years ago within the volcano's caldera to research volcanism as a weapon. When the US Navy scouted and built Outpost Z-1, they overlooked the Japanese presence.

The Japanese are aware of Hoboken's arrival to the island, either from reconnaissance or from Kessler. They intend to keep a low profile, with no air or land scouting missions, until Hoboken departs. They maintain strict light discipline at night.

In addition to six civilian geologists, there are 39 Japanese soldiers manning the base.



Commander Fujita

The base's commandant ordered the attack on Outpost Z-1 when scouts from the outpost began investigating the volcano's increased activity; fearful they might discover the base, the Japanese attacked Z-1 by surprise and took the sailors prisoner. Frustrated he has been given such a backwater assignment, Fujita is a strict, merciless officer who finds satisfaction in his study of kendo, the martial art of Japanese swordsmanship.

Strong Hero 2/Dedicated Hero 2/Martial Artist 2: CR 6; Medium-size human; HD 2d8 plus 2d6 plus 2d8; hp 30; Mas 11; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 19, touch 19, flat-footed 10 (+3 Dex, +6 class); BAB +5; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee (2d6+2/19-20, katana) or +8 ranged (2d4, Nambu); Full Atk +7 melee (2d6+2/19-20, katana) or +8 ranged (2d4, Nambu); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL Imperial Japanese Navy; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +4; AP 3; Rep +1; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Occupation: Military (class skills: Demolitions, Move Silently).

Skills: Balance +2, Demolitions +2, Jump +3, Knowledge (tactics) +1, Listen +4, Move Silently +5, Read/Write English, Read/Write Japanese, Sense Motive +1, Speak English, Speak Japanese, Spot +3, Tumble +2.

Feats: Combat Martial Arts, Defensive Martial Arts, Exotic Melee Weapons Proficiency, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Weapon Focus (katana).

Talents: Ignore Hardness, Skill Emphasis

(Move Silently), Living Weapon, Flying Kick.

Possessions: Nambu Type 14 pistol, 30 rounds of 8mm ammunition, katana, uniform.

Japanese Pilots (8)

Half of these men operate the A1N2s; the others pilot the airship *Hirohito*. Since the arrival on the island of the US Navy six weeks ago, all aircraft have been grounded so the secret base isn't discovered. Now the pilots are waiting for Hoboken to clear out before resuming their scouting patrols. Sitting around with nothing to do has made the pilots irritable, leaving them to take out their aggression on the enlisted soldiers.

Fast Ordinary 3/Dedicated Ordinary 2: CR 4; Medium-size human; HD 3d8-1 plus 2d6-1; hp 25; Mas 8; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 19, touch 18, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +6 class, +1 leather jacket); BAB +3; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +5 ranged (2d4, Nambu); Full Atk +4 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +5 ranged (2d6, Colt); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL Imperial Japanese Navy; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; AP 0; Rep +2; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 8, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Occupation: Military (class skills: Navigate, Swim).

Skills: Craft (mechanical) +4, Drive +8, Knowledge (earth and life sciences) +3, Knowledge (physical sciences) +5, Knowledge (technology) +4, Listen +3, Navigate +7, Pilot +10, Read/Write Japanese, Speak Japanese, Spot +3, Swim +3, Treat Injury +2.

Feats: Aircraft Operation (airships), Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Vehicle Expert.

Possessions: Nambu Type 14 pistol, 30 rounds of 8mm ammunition, leather jacket, uniform

Japanese Soldiers (30)

Duty for the common soldiers at the secret base gravitates between tedium and torment from their officers. The recent attack on the US outpost was the most action these green soldiers have ever experienced. All of them have rudimentary training in jujitsu.

Tough Ordinary 2: CR 1; Medium-size human; HD 2d10+2; hp 16; Mas 15; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex, +2 class); BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4+2, Combat Martial Arts) or +2 ranged (2d6, Arisaka); Full Atk +3 melee (1d4+2, Combat Martial Arts) or +2 ranged (2d6, Arisaka); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL Imperial Japanese Navy; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Occupation: Military (class skills: Hide, Move Silently).

Skills: Climb +1, Craft (mechanical) +3, Craft (structural) +2, Hide +2, Knowledge (popular culture) +1, Knowledge (street-wise) +1, Move Silently +1, Read/Write Japanese, Speak Japanese, Spot +3, Survival +1.

Feats: Combat Martial Arts, Exotic Firearms Proficiency, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

Possessions: Arisaka Type 38 rifle, 60 rounds of 6.5mm ammunition, uniform.

The base consists of three dozen buildings of varying sizes built on pilings driven into the uneven rocky floor of the caldera (+4 Hide bonus beneath the buildings).

The GM can sketch out a map of building placement or roll 1d20 whenever the heroes enter a building to determine its occupants:

1-7:	Empty.
8-10:	2d4 soldiers.
11-12:	1d4 pilots.
13-14:	1d6 soldiers plus 1d4 pilots.
15-18:	2d4 soldiers plus Cdr. Fujita.
19-20:	1d6 soldiers plus 2 pilots plus Cdr. Fujita.

If shots are fired or explosives set off, soldiers or pilots in adjacent areas set off the base alarm. See chapter 8.

3: Tunnel

About 50 ft. up the western slope of the volcano is a cave mouth, about 10 ft. in diameter, which leads through the volcano to its caldera and the secret Japanese base. A series of switchbacks lead up to the mouth. It is disguised by camouflage netting, easier Spotted (DC 10) from land than from air (DC 20).

Four soldiers patrol the area in six-hour

SECRET JAPANESE BASE (WITHIN VOLCANO'S CALDERA)



shifts. Though sometimes sent out on scouting missions, generally the guards spend their time hidden behind a couple of boulders out of sight of the cave, smoking cigarettes, gossiping, and discussing their favorite Hollywood actresses.

4: Commandant's Office and Quarters.

A steep, narrow staircase leads up from this Spartan office to Cdr. Fujita's sleeping quarters. The file containing orders (in English) detailing Operation Zephyr and the establishment of Outpost Z-1, which the Japanese raiders stole from the outpost, rests on Fujita's desk.

5: Kessler's Quarters.

If Kessler successfully escaped *Hoboken* in Chapter 5, he is here in this storeroom, which has been outfitted with basic furni-

ture for him. His treachery complete, he is waiting for *Hirohito* carry him to Tokyo. Otherwise, this is just a storeroom filled with sacks of rice and other dry foodstuffs.

Kessler doesn't speak or read Japanese, so he has no contact with any of the other men in the base save the commandant, who is polite but uninterested in entertaining his American guest. The Japanese soldiers, pilots, and geologists ignore him. Bored, Kessler spends most of his time in his quarters trying to amuse himself.

Upon sighting the PCs -- and assuming his last encounter with them wasn't hostile -- Kessler leaps up and thanks them for rescuing him. He tells them he was in the control car the night the teratorms attacked, and that Lt. Dwyer, whom he suspects is a

Japanese spy, jumped him and threw him out the window. Trees broke his fall but he was captured by the Japanese and has been held hostage ever since.

Kessler, still armed with his Colt, avoids direct conflict. Instead he tries to bluff his way out of his quarters, with or without the PCs, where he can raise the alarm. Failing that, he stalls for time, hoping someone passes by who may notice the situation. If asked why the door to his room is unlocked, Kessler replies that since he would never make it past the guards at the cave's entrance, there's no reason to keep him locked up. A Spot check (DC 15) reveals the bunched-up parachute he used to escape *Hoboken* lying on a shelf in the storeroom.

Kessler bolts from the heroes as soon as possible. If a fight appears inevitable, Kessler attempts to shoot and run. If the PCs chase or attack him, Kessler fires back with his Colt or climbs into one of the A1N2s, starts it up, and rolls around the caldera, shooting at them maniacally with its twin machine guns. He cares nothing for the Japanese or their mission; his only concerns are self-preservation and self-enrichment.

Additionally, the Japanese keep mining and digging equipment in the storeroom, including drills, augurs, and three cases of dynamite, each containing a dozen sticks.

6: Laboratory.

The six civilian Japanese geologists recruited by the Imperial Navy work toward

triggering volcanic eruptions at will. If successful, the Imperial Navy intends to use this project to reawaken the two "dead" or dormant volcanoes on the Hawaiian island of Oahu, thereby destroying the US Naval base at Pearl Harbor. The geologists' research has made progress: the island's volcanic activity has been increasing within the last two weeks, disturbing the local teratorms which roost on the volcano's slopes.

Being civilians, the geologists do not fight the heroes. They each have sworn an oath of loyalty to the Japanese emperor and carry a cyanide suicide pill which works instantaneously. If possible, the geologists eat their pills rather than give up the secrets of their research. Four of the geologists are present in this area; the other two are in area 7. If statistics for the geologists are needed, use those for the Mid-Level Smart Ordinary 3/Dedicated Ordinary 3 given in the Core Rulebook.

The lab is crammed with weird equipment. Pipes and wires run from the floor to area 7. A Search (DC 10) of the papers in the room turns up a large map of the Hawaiian Islands. Though labeled in Japanese, Oahu and its two volcanoes are clearly marked as is the US Naval base at Pearl Harbor.

If all of the controls in the lab and those in area 7 are put to the maximum and left there for at least 60 rounds (10 minutes), a volcanic eruption begins to occur. The eruption does not destroy the whole island, but it does demolish the Japanese base 10 minutes after it initiates.

7: Testing Area

A large pit, steaming with hot noxious vapors, is surrounded by gauges, monitors, and other large pieces of equipment. Various rods, tubes, and pipes run from the equipment and from area 6 into the depths of the pit, where lava simmers 100 ft. down. Two geologists monitor the equipment.

If all of the controls in this area as well as those in area 6 are put into the red and left there for at least 10 minutes, a volcanic eruption begins to occur. The heroes have 10 minutes to escape the base or be destroyed along with it.

8: Radio Control Tower

The outpost monitors Japanese, Russian, and American radio transmissions. The radio room is also used to communicate with the A1N2s and *Hirohito*. Two soldiers and one pilot are present.

9: Runway

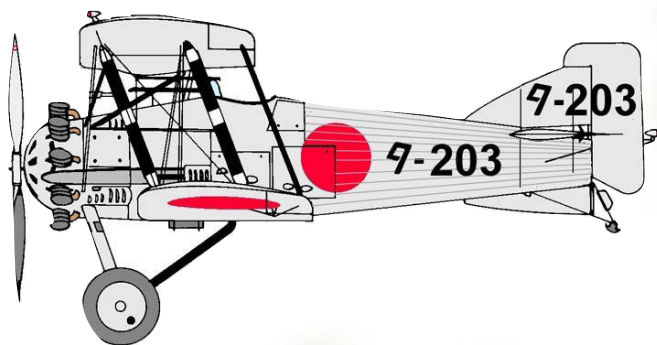
The short runway is only capable of supporting small airplanes which can take off in brief distances. Arresting wires catch landing planes. Four Nakajima A1N2 airplanes are parked on the eastern side of the runway. The GM should add an extra A1N2 for each additional PC in the party. (See Appendix for statistics on the A1N2)

Moored to a stub mast adjacent to the runway is the Japanese zeppelin *Hirohito*,

emblazoned with a gigantic rising sun. It is hidden under a canopy of camouflage netting, making it obvious from the ground but hard to Spot (DC 20) from the skies. Use the statistics and description for ZR-1 *Shenandoah* on Appendix Table 1: New Aircraft for *Hirohito*; however, *Hirohito* is armed with Nambu Type 92 machine guns instead of Lewises. Also, unlike *Shenandoah*, *Hirohito* is inflated with hydrogen. Igniting the hydrogen causes 10 damage to the zeppelin per round (Hardness modifier does not apply), killing anyone still on-board when *Hirohito* is totally consumed.

10: Brig

A lone, windowless hut sits in the shadow of *Hirohito*. Locked within are the 24 men from Outpost Z-1, guarded by a pair of Japanese soldiers sitting outside. The prisoners tell the heroes that the Japanese attacked them by surprise and overwhelmed them. All of the men are unarmed and too exhausted to fight; use the statistics for the Enlisted Men (CR 1, hp 14) for the prisoners. If *Hirohito*'s hydrogen is ignited in its moored position, it collapses on top of the brig, killing anyone inside.



CHAPTER EIGHT: HITTING HIROHITO WHERE IT HURTS

There are a number of ways the heroes can thwart the Japanese plot, including causing a volcanic eruption or judicious use of the dynamite in area 5.

The heroes may also wish to attempt a full-scale assault using *Hoboken* and its crew. Cdr. Gregory refuses on the grounds that his men are not combat infantry. However, he grants support of the four Sparrowhawks and their pilots if the heroes' plan is reasonable.

In the case of a such a large assault or if the alarm is activated during the heroes' infiltration of the base, the Japanese retreat to *Hirohito* while the Japanese pilots scramble their planes. Both *Hirohito* and the A1N2s counterattack before turning their guns on *Hoboken* in an all-out aerial battle. The heroes may attack the Japanese zeppelin from *Hoboken* or from the ground, by piloting any of the airplanes, or by boarding *Hirohito*. Note that special incendiary bullets (unavailable on *Hoboken*) are needed to ignite the hydrogen filling *Hirohito*, so the heroes may need to devise another way of setting fire to the Japanese zep if that's their goal.

If a volcanic eruption is provoked, the entire volcano begins shaking violently and the Japanese base crumbles. The whole island trembles but the heroes should have little difficulty once they are outside of the caldera. The Japanese pilots attempt to

launch their airplanes (Kessler, if alive, is sure to shoot one of the pilots and take his plane) and attack the heroes or *Hoboken*. The GM may want Kessler to escape to fight another day.

Hoboken is repaired and ready for flight as soon as the heroes return from the Japanese base. Back at NAS Sunnyvale, Lcdr. McCormick awards each PC a +2 Wealth bonus and 2 AP if the Japanese plot was foiled, the prisoners rescued, and Kessler was correctly identified as being the spy.

McCormick may commission the PCs for future missions -- perhaps by forming an exclusive "United States Zeppelin Corps." If the heroes failed, however, then the Japanese evacuate the island aboard *Hirohito* before the Navy returns with reinforcements. With their volcanic research completed, it is only a matter of time before Japanese saboteurs descend upon Oahu to reawaken its sleeping giants.

GHOULS OF THE GASBAGS

“Ghouls of the Gasbags” is an adventure for heroes of 5th to 7th level. Skills such as Climb, Move Silently, and Read/Write German may be helpful. Use the statistics and deckplans for *Hindenburg* found in the Appendix for the fictional *Nietzsche*. Because of its brevity, this scenario dispenses with the “Adventure Summary.”

The GM should emphasize the suspenseful nature of this scenario -- intended for a single gaming session -- by playing it at night under poor lighting. Also, the GM should feel free to stress sensory descriptions throughout: the battered zeppelin, the awful smells aboard, the fetid flesh of the ghouls, etc.

CHAPTER ONE: MISSION BRIEFING

The heroes are contacted by Lieutenant Commander McCormick (see “Operation Zephyr”) for a new mission. If the PCs agree to meet with him, read or paraphrase the following:

“Three months ago, the German passenger zeppelin Nietzsche disappeared en route to Rio de Janeiro. The last radio transmission from Nietzsche stated that the vessel had suffered damage in a storm over the Atlantic Ocean and was losing gas. They said were going to attempt an emergency landing. No one ever heard from them again.

Ships sent to search the area of the last radio contact discovered no sign of wreckage or survivors. Nietzsche was presumed lost at sea.

“However, two days ago, a severely distressed zeppelin with the same markings as Nietzsche was sighted off the United States coastline heading full-speed toward New York City. The airship is completely dark and all radio queries have gone unanswered. We want you to rendezvous with Nietzsche, go aboard, and discover who, if anyone, is piloting it. We also want you to take control of the ship and redirect it toward our Naval Air Station at Lakehurst. Good luck.”

The PCs should formulate a strategy for accessing *Nietzsche*. Methods include parachuting onto *Nietzsche*, then cutting the outer envelope and climbing inside; or hooking onto the zeppelin’s flying trapeze with an airplane and climbing up (this trapeze, unlike that of *Akron* or *Macon*, does not retract into the airship).

The Navy provides support -- passage in one of their airships, an airplane, parachutes -- but does not provide weapons, explosives, or personnel who actively participate in boarding *Nietzsche*. The GM should examine the PCs’ plan and devise appropriate Skill checks (Balance, Climb, Jump, etc.) necessary for success.

CHAPTER TWO: GHOST SHIP

When the heroes attempt to rendezvous with *Nietzsche* based on its last observed course and speed, the ship cannot be found. Searching for it proves fruitless until sunset, when it is finally spotted:

As the sun sinks behind the horizon, you sight your prey. It is unlike any zeppelin you've ever seen. Large sections of the outer fabric covering have ripped away, exposing the bare ribs of its frame. Pieces of envelope flap in the wind like a torn shroud. And although all four propellers are spinning at top speed, no life is discernible, and the whole -- including the control car -- is pitch black.

With the exception of two areas described below, the ship is deserted. The heroes detect signs of a struggle -- claw marks, overturned furniture, large splashes of dried blood -- as they approach the passenger section, but no bodies. The engines, meanwhile, are unmanned but in perfect condition. The interior is completely dark, necessitating the use of flashlights. Flares or other open flames ignite the hydrogen in the gas cells if the cells are ruptured by gunfire or other means; ignition causes 10 rounds of damage to *Nietzsche* per round.

Passenger Stateroom:

The passenger areas of the airship show the most signs of conflict: doors and even walls are buckled, blood and dried gore coat the walls, and a stifling smell over-

hangs it all. However, one stateroom has not been breached, although its door is severely dented and battered. A combined Strength of 50 is needed to break through the barricaded door.

Inside, the heroes find the huddled corpse of a male passenger clutching a kitchen knife. He is bruised and dressed in rags. The man died about three days ago from dehydration. On the wall, written in his own blood from a cut finger, the man has written, "*Sie werden mehr bilden*" (Translation: "They're going to make more").

Lounge:

Three ghouls, all former crewmen, crouch around the remains of a rotting passenger, gorging themselves. They attack upon sighting the heroes.

Ghouls (3)

Tough Ordinary 1/Smart Ordinary 1:

CR 3; Medium-size undead; HD 2d12; hp 14; Mas --; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +1 class, +2 natural); BAB +0; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d3+2, claw); Full Atk +2 melee (1d3+2, 2 claws) and +0 melee (1d6+1 plus disease, bite) or +2 ranged; FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ create spawn, darkvision 60 ft., disease, scent, undead; AL chaos, evil; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +1; Str 15, Dex 14, Con --, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Occupation: Blue collar (class skills: Climb, Drive, Repair).

Skills: Climb +6, Concentration +3, Craft (mechanical) +5, Drive +3, Knowledge (streetwise) +2, Knowledge (technology)

+3, Navigate +2, Read/Write German, Repair +8, Speak German, Spot +3.

Feats: Brawl, Gearhead, Multiattack, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

Possessions: Tattered uniform.

Create Spawn (Su): If a ghoul's prey contracts advanced necrotizing fasciitis (see below) from the wounds it has sustained and dies from the disease, it rises 1d3 days later as a ghoul. A remove disease spell cast on the corpse can prevent it from rising.

Disease (Su): A ghoul's bite infects the victim with advanced necrotizing fasciitis (injury; Fort DC 14; incubation period 1d3 days; initial damage 1d3 Con; secondary damage 1d3 Con; if Con damage is sustained, a second saving throw at the same DC is required; failure indicates that 1 point of the Con damage becomes Con drain instead). The disease can be arrested completely through amputation of the affected limb or surgical removal of all the affected tissue as well as some nearby healthy tissue. A cure disease spell or a successful Treat Injury check (surgery, DC 25) halts the disease. The GM should roll the check secretly; if it fails, the disease returns again in 1d3 days.

Scent (Ex): This ability allows a ghoul to detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Undead: Ghouls have the traits and immunities common to undead.

Radio Room:

The radio is completely and irreparably smashed. A chart on the floor shows the course of Nietzsche from its base in southern Germany (the town of Gletschertal; see "Where Zeppelins Dare"), across the Atlantic toward Rio de Janeiro, then ends over the Amazonian jungle. From here, another line written in a shaky, clumsy hand runs to New York. Next to the city, the same hand has written, "*Todes... dann Leben!*" (Translation: "Death... then life!"). This note was written by Capt. Schwarz after his transformation into a ghoul.

Captain's Quarters:

This small room, like every other area on the ship, has been completely ransacked. However, Searching (DC 10) the mess uncovers Capt. Schwarz's log (see handout), written in German. A hero may Spot (DC 10) an English-German dictionary lying on the floor, enabling non-fluent PCs to decipher the log, the bloody graffiti in the passenger stateroom, and the message on the radio-room chart.

Gas Cells 14, 15, and 16:

The three forward-most gas cells of Nietzsche are filled with hydrogen permeated with advanced necrotizing fasciitis, the airborne bacteria which causes transformation into a ghoul. Exposure to this gas is the same as being bitten by a ghoul (see ghoul description). All three cells show extensive repair work.

Control Car:

The ghouls have bolted shut the hatchway leading into the control car. The heroes

have to cut through it, exit the airship and Climb (DC 15) down the car's side and through the windows, or use some other method to enter the car.

Within the car, Capt. Schwarz, the skipper of *Nietzsche*, directs the actions of eight of his crewman on their course toward New York. All of them are ghouls, dressed in the ripped and bloodstained remnants of their uniforms. Their darkvision allows them to work in complete darkness.

Captain Schwartz

A veteran zeppeliner from the Great War, Schwartz was an outstanding commander of *Nietzsche* until he was bitten by one of his own ghoulish crewmembers deep in the Amazon. Having been resurrected into undeath, now his driving ambition is to marshal his recalcitrant subordinates and pilot *Nietzsche* into the streets of New York, releasing the tainted gas in its forward cells and infecting scores of people with advanced necrotizing faciitis.

Ghoul Captain (Fast Hero 3/Air Ace 2): CR 7; Medium-size undead; HD 5d12; hp 23; Mas --; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 21, touch 21, flat-footed 12 (+4 Dex, +5 class, +2 natural); BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d3+2, claw); Full Atk +6 melee (1d3+2, 2 claws) and +4 melee (1d6+1 plus disease, bite) or +8 ranged; FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ create spawn, darkvision 60 ft., disease, scent, undead; AL chaos, evil; SV Fort +1, Ref +9, Will +3; AP 2; Rep +2; Str 14, Dex 19, Con --, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Occupation: Military (class skills: Climb, Navigate).

Skills: Balance +2, Climb +4, Craft (mechanical) +7, Hide +6, Knowledge (technology) +2, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Navigate +4, Pilot +7, Read/Write English, Read/Write German, Repair +4, Speak English, Speak German, Spot +3.

Feats: Aircraft Operation, Defensive Martial Arts, Elusive Target, Heroic Surge, Multiattack, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

Possessions: Tattered captain's uniform.
Ghoul SQ: see ghoul description.

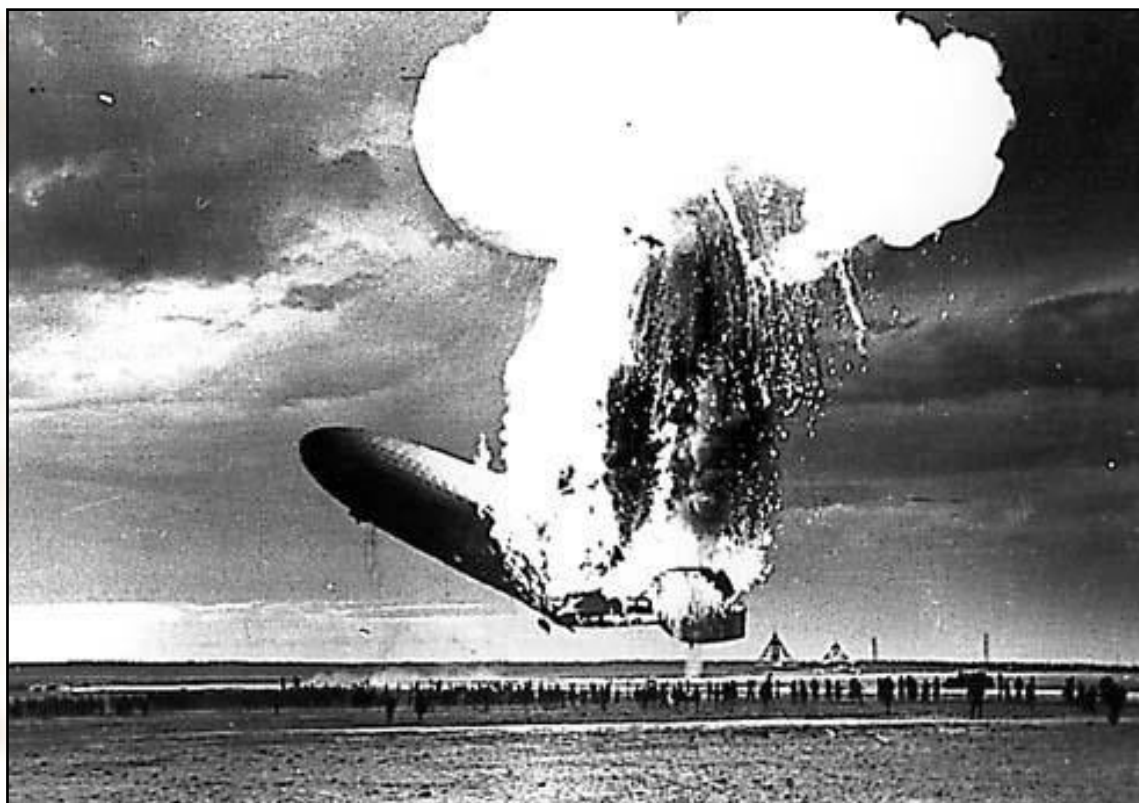
Ghouls (8): CR 3, hp 14. Use the same stats as the crew in the Lounge.



If the heroes don't stop Schwartz and divert *Nietzsche* from its course within six hours of boarding it, then the ghouls succeed in crashing the zeppelin into Times Square, releasing the poison gas in its forward cells and infecting 20d10 New Yorkers with ghouls (Schwartz and his crew jump free at the last moment to revel in the destruction). These new ghouls, of course, can infect others in turn, so an epidemic may follow.

However, if the heroes seize control of *Nietzsche* and divert it to NAS Lakehurst where the gas can be safely dispersed, McCormick rewards them with a +1 Wealth bonus. They receive no bonus if the ship was destroyed during the adventure.

If one of the PCs becomes infected during the adventure, he or she may have to seek a cure. Research (DC 10) into advanced necrotizing faciitis points to a legend that an artifact known as the Splinter of St. Boniface is rumored to heal any disease (see "Where Zeppelins Dare").



HANDOUT: CAPTAIN SCHWARTZ'S LOG

The following are the last few pages of the logbook of Captain Schwartz of the zeppelin *Nietzsche*, written in German:

August 7: All is well. Left Africa behind us this afternoon, beginning crossing of Atlantic.

August 8: Altered course to ESE toward S America to avoid storm to S.

August 9: Unable to outrun storm. Very bad weather. Damage to rudder, envelope torn in many places. Losing gas in cells 14, 15, 16. Radio damaged. Up all night.

August 10: Made emergency landing in jungle clearing. All hands & passengers unharmed. Cells 14, 15, 16 completely deflated. Unsure of exact position.

August 12: Have assigned Farber, Heinz, Weber to scout area to find water, what food they can. All other hands repairing rudder & gas cells. Radio impossible without parts. Trying to make passengers comfortable.

August 19: Farber reports finding stone pyramid 3 km away. Says there are gas fissures inside. May be able to use gas to reinflate cells 14, 15, 16. Will investigate tomorrow.

*August 20: Farber took me to pyramid. Progress slow; jungle very thick. Pyramid covered in vines, trees. Appeared to be pre-Columbian temple of some kind. Decorated with carvings of skulls & monsters eating people. Dark stains on altar at summit. Sense of unnatural events having occurred here. Inside, Farber pointed to a wall of horrific carved faces, their mouths fashioned as if they were whistling or blowing. From these came steady streams of gas. Hydrogen! But how to transport the gas to *Nietzsche*?*

August 22: Farber has ingenious plan of using fuel hoses from the engines to pipe gas from the pyramid. Ordered him to set to work immediately. I worry he is overworked. Has developed bright red rash on his chest. Dr. Lustig says it is probably due to heat & exhaustion.

August 25: Farber's plan going well. Began reinflating cell 14. Progress slow.

August 26: Farber collapsed. Rash on chest has become deep purple w/ blisters. Trouble breathing. Lustig has him in sick bay. Assigned Heinz & Weber to continue reinflation of cells. We need that gas!

August 28: Buried Farber today. Died early this morning, his flesh consumed by blisters. Lustig baffled. Reinflation continuing.

September 1: One of the passengers attacked last night. Completely mauled, half-eaten, almost unrecognizable. Jaguar? Have ordered sentries in perimeter around ship. Heinz & Weber both sick w/ rash on chest & throat. Assigned Baum & Dietz to reinflation duties.

September 3: Richter attacked & killed last night while standing watch. Saltzmann heard noise, fired, killed it. I heard gunfire, ran out. Saltzmann pointed at what he had shot. I held up my lantern to look -- it was Farber! Distorted, perverted, with enormous jagged teeth & claws, flesh a pustulant violet, but it was him nonetheless. Had he been not dead but comatose? Did we bury him prematurely? Lord have mercy on our souls.

September 7: Heinz & Weber both dead, Heinz this morning, Weber last night. Cell 14 completely inflated; have moved on to cell 15.

September 10: Baum & Dietz in sick bay with rash. Lustig has no cure.

One month since landing in this godforsaken place. What is happening to us?

September 13: Three passengers attacked last night. Their assailants crept past the sentries and into the ship. Have ordered everyone to stay close to Nietzsche. Dietz dead. Others want to burn body. I agree & order it done.

September 15: They're in the jungle. I shot & killed Richter while on watch. Attacked from behind, clawed my left shoulder. Same as with Farber -- it was him, but altered into a deformed beast. How can I have killed him when he was already dead? Baum missing from sick bay.

September 18: Impossible to get any work done. We're under constant attack. Two more crewmen attacked & killed. Ammunition running low. Lustig treating shoulder but it itches terribly.

September 19: Something tried to get into my quarters last night. I knew it was one of them. It was talking to me, telling me about resurrection & new life, free of morality & the laws of men. Asked me to open the door, embrace death and then live again unencumbered. It was Heinz's voice. I ordered it to leave & it did. If only we could finish re-inflating the gas cells and leave this evil place. Surely we are in Hell itself. Rash has appeared down my left arm.

The log abruptly ends.

WHERE ZEPPELINS DARE

“Where Zeppelins Dare” is an adventure for heroes of 5th to 7th level. A small party of 2-3 individuals is recommended. Skills such as Bluff, Demolitions, Disguise, Hide, Move Silently, and Speak German may be helpful. Use the statistics and deckplans for *Hindenburg*, found in the Appendix, for the fictional *Karl der Grosse*.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The player-characters are commissioned to destroy a Nazi radio-relay station high atop an inaccessible mountain in the Bavarian Alps. The easiest way to gain entry to the station is aboard a civilian zeppelin, which regularly reprovisions the station.

The heroes voyage across the Atlantic Ocean aboard the German zeppelin *Karl der Grosse*. Along the way they are befriended by a beautiful woman who is actually a Soviet spy on a mission to steal Nazi radio technology from the station. The zeppelin’s European terminus is the Bavarian town of Gletschertal, where the passengers disembark before *Karl der Grosse* ferries supplies to the nearby relay station. Once there, the heroes must somehow destroy the station and make their escape. Along the way, they may be helped or hindered by the Soviet spy.

CHAPTER ONE: MISSION BRIEFING

Some suggestions as to how the heroes may become involved in the adventure: Due to the mission’s covert nature and their experience with lighter-than-air craft, the mission to destroy the base is being directed by Naval Intelligence. Lcdr. McCormick, perhaps familiar with the heroes and their actions in “Operation Zephyr,” requests that they undertake the task in return for a +1 Wealth bonus.

The PCs are traveling to Europe and have secured passage on *Karl der Grosse*. Along the way, they encounter Katarina Zimmerman, a Soviet spy posing as an American agent, who attempts to recruit them to her mission to steal the Nazi radio for the United States. She doesn’t reveal that she’s actually stealing it for the USSR.

The heroes have learned that the mountain base, which was once a monastery, contains a medieval artifact known as the Splinter of St. Boniface. Motivated by either patriotism or profit (or perhaps as a cure for ghoullism), they set out to relieve the Nazis of the artifact.

However the PCs become involved, read or paraphrase the following to them, either at the beginning of the mission or during Zimmerman's recruitment efforts:

The Nazis have established a series of relay stations using the new FM radio technology stolen from the US Army's Signal Corps. The relays pick up and pass on radio signals further down the line, allowing effective communication between Berlin and Nazi agents throughout Europe. If this network is allowed to continue, it will only contribute to Germany's growing militarism and belligerence toward its neighbors.

The linchpin in the Nazis' relay network is a tiny base situated high atop a mountain in the Bavarian Alps, called Der Mönchenhaus. Built by Trappist monks in the 17th century, this small monastery was originally accessible only by ladders or baskets lowered down by the monks. The development of lighter-than-air technology now allows access to the monastery by zeppelin. The Nazis have recently occupied the abandoned monastery and established their radio base there, complete with a docking spar for zeppelins to bring supplies and personnel.

The Mönchenhaus is situated near the Bavarian town of Gletschertal, which is also the eastern terminus for the Merkur Zeppelin Company -- and Merkur is the sole contractor to provision the Mönchenhaus.

How the heroes approach the mission is left to them. The objectives may vary according to how they became involved in the mission: Naval Intelligence wants them to destroy the base, radio and all; Zimmerman wants them to help her steal the radio; and heroes after the Splinter of St. Boniface may not be interested in the radio at all.

The heroes may cross the Atlantic on the Merkur zeppelin *Karl der Grosse* or travel in some other fashion to Gletschertal. Tickets (Purchase DC 15) are available at the airship's American terminal at NAS Lakehurst, New Jersey; if the PCs are commissioned by the US military, tickets are provided.

If they request explosives from the military to destroy the base, arrangements are made to meet an agent in Gletschertal who will provide them with plastic explosives and detonators. The military refuses to provide dangerous materials that may destroy the hydrogen-filled zeppelin and all onboard before it reaches Gletschertal. A rendezvous is established for a particular time and date at a secluded pub ("*Die Drei Blinden Mäuse*") in Gletschertal; the GM may make up some cloak-and-dagger passwords for the PCs to memorize. All other equipment the heroes must provide themselves.

Optional encounter:

Prior to boarding, the PCs are attacked by a Nazi spy who has learned of the heroes' mission. Use the statistics for a Nazi officer below (CR 5, hp 43). The assassin is in plainclothes and carries a German passport, but no other details about his identity or why he attacked are available.

CHAPTER TWO: OVER THE ATLANTIC

Prior to boarding the hydrogen-filled *Karl der Grosse*, passengers' luggage is searched and all matches, lighters, and the like are confiscated, to be returned after disembarking in Gletschertal (as are personal handguns; anyone with larger firearms or explosives is detained and the police are called). Seized items are kept in a safe in the captain's quarters during the voyage.

The flight to Gletschertal takes 60 hours; the heroes enjoy the full freedom of the passenger sections of the airship. Casual discussion with any of the crewmembers (who speak both English and German) reveals that after disembarkation of the passengers at Gletschertal, *Karl der Grosse* is to be loaded with supplies and fresh personnel and then flown to the Mönchenhaus. During a four-hour layover, the supplies will be unloaded and personnel swapped. Then the zeppelin will return to Gletschertal to prepare for its flight back to Lakehurst. While the crew knows that the Mönchenhaus is a military base, no one knows its true nature as a radio relay station.

If statistics for any of the 60 crewmembers are needed, use those for the Enlisted Men (Tough Ordinary 1/Smart Ordinary 1) given in "Operation Zephyr" (CR 1, hp 14). They have no firearms.

During the voyage, one of the male PCs

is approached by Katarina Zimmerman, ostensibly a German tourist returning from the States alone. Zimmerman is actually a Soviet spy out to steal the FM radio technology from the Mönchenhaus. After some small talk, Zimmerman attempts to recruit the PC to her mission:

If the PCs have been sent to destroy the base, Zimmerman says she is a US Naval Intelligence agent dispatched to assist them. She cooperates long enough to gain entry to the Mönchenhaus, after which she attempts to steal the radio and flee by herself, leaving the PCs to be captured or killed.

If the PCs are after the Splinter of St. Boniface or have no fixed goals in mind, Zimmerman says that she is an American spy and asks for their assistance in stealing the radio for Uncle Sam. She is uninterested in the Splinter.

Zimmerman's plan to enter the Mönchenhaus is to present herself as the secretary of an accompanying Nazi officer, then travel in *Karl der Grosse* when it makes its reproduction mission. At the Mönchenhaus, she and the false officer will steal the radio and escape. What she lacks is a male companion who can play the part of the officer. If the PCs agree, Zimmerman urges them to acquire Nazi uniforms and identification papers (by mugging, theft, etc.) while in Gletschertal. In turn, she uses her forgery skills to doctor identifications. Then they may board *Karl der Grosse* and fly to the Mönchenhaus disguised as Nazis.

If the heroes refuse her offer, Zimmerman doesn't disembark *Karl der Grosse* with the rest of the passengers; instead, she hides in the framework of the zeppelin until it docks at the Mönchenhaus. She then sneaks off and tries to steal the radio by herself.

Katarina Zimmerman

Idealistic and self-assured, Katya Zhirnovsky left her native Leningrad soon after graduating university to join the Spanish Civil War. In Spain she used her gams, good looks, and natural felicity with languages to extract sensitive information from the Nationalists. She was soon recruited by NKVD (Soviet intelligence), who gave her combat training and further developed her linguistic skills for Mother Russia. Zimmerman is an exceptional forger, able to alter or create identification papers, passports, and the like.

Charismatic Hero 5/Infiltrator 3: CR 8; Medium-sized human; HD 5d6+1 plus 3d8+1; hp 46; Mas 12; Init +2; Spd 35 ft.; Defense 17, touch 16, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +4 class, +1 leather overcoat); BAB +3; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4, pistol whip) or +5 ranged (2d6, Luger); Full Atk +3 melee (1d4, pistol whip) or +5 ranged (2d6, Luger); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL USSR, godless communism; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +2; AP 4; Rep +4; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 15.

Occupation: Investigative (class skills: Forgery, Sense Motive).

Skills: Bluff +6, Disable Device +3, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +2, Forgery +10, Gather Information +3, Hide +6, Knowl-

edge (art) +2, Knowledge (current events) +3, Knowledge (popular culture) +2, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Read/Write English, Read/Write German, Read/Write Russian, Read/Write Spanish, Search +7, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +3, Speak English, Speak German, Speak Russian, Speak Spanish, Spot +4.

Feats: Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Meticulous, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Run, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

Talents: Charm (men) +5, Favor, Captivate; Sweep, Improvised Implements.

Possessions: Luger P08 (smuggled on-board), 24 rounds of 9mm ammunition, false identification papers (as Katarina Zimmerman, a German citizen), leather overcoat, women's clothes.



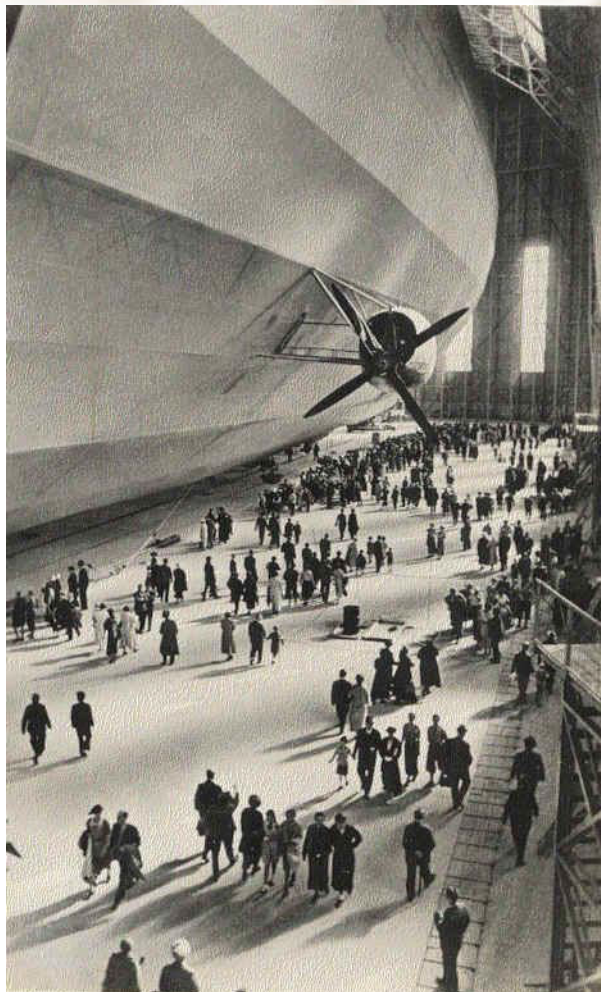
CHAPTER THREE: THE HILLS ARE ALIVE... WITH THE SOUND OF BULLETS

The town of Gletschertal (population 8,000) is an idyllic alpine town full of half-timber buildings and gingerbread window-boxes, marred only by the swastikas of Nazi flags hanging along its narrow streets. Snow-capped mountains limn the southern horizon. A train station and railway connect Gletschertal to other parts of Europe. There are numerous beer gardens and restaurants where the heroes may dine as well as pensions and inns where they may overnight. Most regular goods and services are available (including mountain-climbing and skiing gear) but not guns, weapons, or explosives.

Optional encounter:

If the PCs agreed to meet an American agent at “*Die Drei Blinden Mäuse*” to provide them with explosives, the agent never appears. He has been intercepted by Nazi spies. In his place, four Nazis arrive to arrest the PCs (use the statistics for Nazi Radio Operators; CR 3, hp 20). Note the pub offers many flammable brands of alcohol and features a roaring fireplace and a lit candle on every table. If they are captured, the PCs are taken to a Nazi base; the GM will have to ad-lib the rest. If the heroes escape, their stay in Gletschertal may become a little hot depending on how noisy and violent the encounter is.

Set in a large airfield east of town is the Merkur Zeppelin Company. Among the



airfield are several mooring masts, four hangars, and a number of offices, workshops, and equipment sheds. A chain-link surrounds the field with access monitored at guard booths; otherwise, there is little security (use the statistics for Nazi Radio Operators below for the guards; CR 3, hp 20). Buses ferry passengers and their luggage between the Merkur airfield and Gletschertal.

The Merkur fleet consists of six identical airships, one of which is under construction in the hangars. Another is also in the

hangars, undergoing minor adjustments but ready to fly. The final three are currently on voyages elsewhere.

Merkur is a civilian corporation that primarily runs passenger flights. Their proximity to the Mönchenhaus has led to an exclusive contract (an offer they couldn't refuse) with the Nazis to provision the base with supplies and personnel from Gletschertal.

Karl der Grosse docks at a Merkur mooring mast at 11 a.m. After the passengers and their cargo disembark, the ship is checked for any damage, repairs are performed, and supplies for the Mönchenhaus are loaded onto the airship. At 10 a.m. the following morning, *Karl der Grosse* leaves for the Mönchenhaus with a crew of 45 (stewards, cooks, and the like are not needed). It docks at the Mönchenhaus spar at 12 p.m. Supplies are unloaded. The airship leaves Mönchenhaus at 4 p.m., returning to the Merkur airfield at 6 p.m. This process is repeated every month.

The airship also carries 2d6 Nazi radio operators and 1d4 Nazi officers to and from the Mönchenhaus. These rotating personnel are strangers to the crew; they make small talk but otherwise don't discuss what occurs at the base. The Nazis are in uniform and are not asked for identification by the crew but they must show papers to the Merkur guards when entering the airfield. Likewise, PCs in disguise or presenting false identification papers must get past the guards' Spot and Forgery checks.

Optional encounter:

One of the officers flying to the Mönchenhaus has intelligence about the PCs planning to infiltrate the station. Somehow the PCs learn of this and must neutralize the officer before he reaches the Mönchenhaus. If he does, the station's Nazis are forewarned and gain +4 on all Forgery, Listen, and Spot checks.



CHAPTER FOUR: DER MÖNCHENHAUS

Meticulously carved from the mountain face, the “Monk’s House” never held more than a dozen men at the same time. Now its drafty halls teem with Nazis. A few of the monastery’s buildings jut from the rock and snow of the mountaintop, 5,000 ft. from the mountain’s base. The Mönchenhaus is nearly impossible to reach by any means other than zeppelin or from ropes or lines lowered down, but an experienced mountaineer making three consecutive Climb checks (DC 15) can reach its summit just as the original monks did. From the mountain, climbers can enter the monastery through its windows or the trapdoors in areas 1 and 4 (see map on following page).

The Nazis of the Mönchenhaus come in two varieties:

Nazi Radio Operator

Promising soldiers are hand-selected for the signal corps. Not only are these men in peak physical condition, they have been extensively trained in radio operation.

Strong Ordinary 2/Smart Ordinary 2:

CR 3; Medium-size human; HD 2d8+1 plus 1d6+1; hp 20; Mas 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 14, touch 14, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex, +3 class); BAB +3; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d4+2, Combat Martial Arts) or +1 ranged (2d6, MPE); Full Atk +5 melee (1d4+2, Combat Martial Arts) or +1 ranged (2d6, MPE); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL Nazi Germany; SV Fort +3, Ref +1,

Will +2; AP 0; Rep +1; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 8.

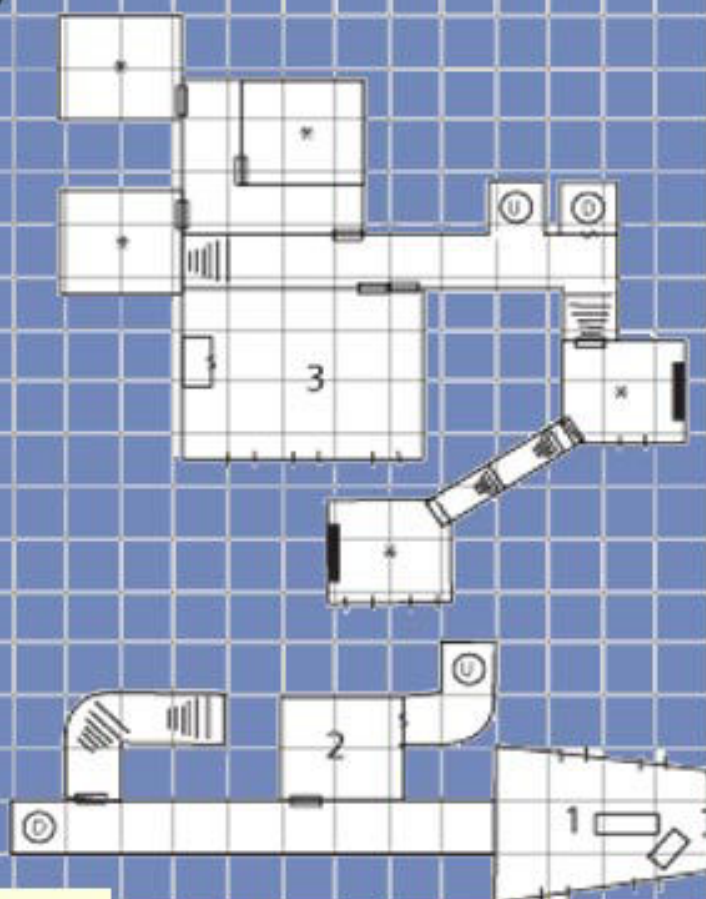
Occupation: Military (class skills: Hide, Move Silently).

Skills: Climb +4, Craft (electronics) +7, Craft (mechanical) +3, Disable Device +3, Hide +4, Knowledge (tactics) +4, Knowledge (technology) +4, Knowledge (popular culture) +1, Move Silently +4, Read/Write German, Repair +9, Search +2, Speak German.

Feats: Combat Martial Arts, Gearhead, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

Possessions: Maschinenpistole Erma, 64 rounds of 9mm ammunition, identification papers, winter overcoat, Nazi uniform.





Der Wöndchenhaus

1 square=10 feet

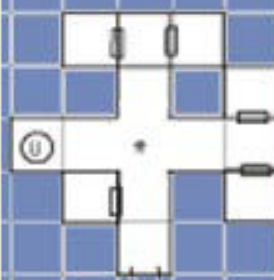
⬆ = Spiral stairs going up

⬇ = Spiral stairs going down

▬ = Fireplace

■ = Window

S = Secret door



Nazi Officer

The radio operators do all of the work; these thugs keep them in line.

Strong Ordinary 3/Tough Ordinary 3:

CR 5; Medium-size human; HD 3d8+2 plus 3d10+2; hp 43; Mas 15; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 15, touch 15, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex, +4 class); BAB +5; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee (1d4+2/19-20, knife) or +6 ranged (2d6, Luger); Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+2/19-20, knife) or +6 ranged (2d6, Luger); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL Nazi Germany; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2; AP 0; Rep +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Occupation: Military (class skills: Hide, Move Silently).

Skills: Climb +6, Drive +2, Hide +6, Intimidate +4, Jump +4, Knowledge (tactics) +2, Move Silently +4, Read/Write English, Read/Write German, Speak English, Speak German, Spot +6.

Feats: Combat Martial Arts, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

Possessions: Luger P08, 24 rounds of 9mm ammunition, knife, identification papers, winter overcoat, Nazi uniform.

The frigid hallways and chambers of the Mönchenhaus are lit by strings of bare electrical bulbs installed by the Nazis. The doors are made of heavy oak and windows are covered only by a pair of inner shutters.

Areas of interest:

Asterisked Rooms: Before play, roll 1d8 and check the following chart for each

room's occupants:

- 1-4: Empty.
- 5: 1 Nazi radio operator.
- 6: 1d4 Nazi radio operators.
- 7: 1-2 Nazi officers.
- 8: 1d4 Nazi radio operators plus 1-2 Nazi officers.

1: Basket Room

The eastern 30 ft. of this room overhangs the ground 5,000 ft. below. From here, a large basket (big enough to carry two adults) attached to a rope can be lowered and raised through a trapdoor in the floor using an enormous hand-operated winch. All pieces of the mechanism are still operational, though the Nazis do not use it.

The Nazis have bolted a zeppelin mooring spar to the side of the mountain, extending it through the room's roof and out into space. A reprovisioning zeppelin attach its nose to the end of the spar. Personnel and supplies carted on dollies may then move from the zep along the spar and down a ramp into the basket room.

An officer inventories supplies unloaded from *Karl der Grosse* by a team of ten radio operators, who disperse the equipment throughout the outpost. Exiting personnel board the ship as soon as it docks while fresh troops immediately head for their stations. The crew of *Karl der Grosse* are forbidden from entering the outpost.

2: Storeroom

Searching (DC 10) through this room's crates of canned food and supplies reveals

a box containing 10 blocks of the plastic explosive Nobel 808 (use statistics for C4/ Semtex in the Core Rulebook) and an equal number of timed detonators. An additional Search (DC 10) reveals another containing 12 Stielhandgranates. Meanwhile, a Search (DC 20) along the eastern wall reveals a secret door leading to a cobwebbed spiral staircase disappearing upwards into darkness.

3: Chapel

The monastery's old chapel has been converted into a bunkroom. At any time there are 2d4 radio operators getting some shut-eye between shifts.

The altar has been defiled with cigarette butts, garbage, and German pornography, but a Search (DC 25) along its front face reveals a secret compartment containing the Splinter of St. Boniface.

Splinter of St. Boniface:

While introducing Christianity to Germany, Boniface chopped down a tree sacred to the god Thor to build the first Christian church. This is a splinter from that tree. The fragment, about 12 inches long and an inch thick, allows anyone with a good Allegiance (GM's discretion) to cast Cure Disease once a month. It also allows the user to cast Lightning Bolt once per month. Each bolt deals 5d6 points of electricity damage, or half if a Reflex save (DC 14) succeeds. Using the Splinter's lightning ability is an attack action and does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Type: Wondrous Item (magic); Caster Level: 5th; Purchase DC: 32; Weight: 1 lb.

4: Radio Room

The large common room where the monks spent most of their time meditating and transcribing holy texts is now the Nazis' radio room. Heavy tables packed with radio equipment fill the room, manned by 12 radio operators and 4 officers at all times. A large fireplace along the northern wall keeps the chill away; a ladder bolted to the west wall leads to a trapdoor and the room's roof with its dozens of radio antennae.

The central FM unit Zimmerman needs is along the south wall; it weighs 10 lbs. and requires 10 rounds (1 minute) to disconnect it from surrounding devices. The room itself is destroyed and utterly inoperable if it sustains more than 24 hp of Concussion damage.

CHAPTER FIVE: ESCAPE FROM NAZI MOUNTAIN

Zimmerman works with the PCs as long as they cooperate toward her goal of stealing the radio unit from area 4. If the heroes hinder her at any time, she attacks or abandons them quicker than she can say, “Das vadanya, comrades.” Alternately, she may betray them to the Nazis by using her Bluff and Speak German skills to claim she is a Nazi spy.

Upon seizing the radio, Zimmerman proceeds to the control car of *Karl der Grosse* (with or without the heroes) and orders the unarmed crew at gunpoint to return to the Merkur airfield. She shoots the zeppelin’s onboard radio so they cannot communicate with authorities in Gletschertal. As soon as *Karl der Grosse* is moored, Zimmerman rushes from the ship as a truck crashes through the fence surrounding the airfield. Zimmerman jumps in with the stolen radio and the truck speeds for the Austrian border. The truck is driven by a Soviet agent while a gunner, armed with an MPE, shoots at pursuers (use the statistics for Nazi Radio Operators; CR 3, hp 20).

Besides commandeering the zeppelin, several possible exits from the relay station present themselves:

- Assuming they haven’t alerted the entire station to their presence, the heroes may simply leave on *Karl der Grosse* when it departs at 4 p.m., four hours after arriving. The heroes could somehow evade pursuers

by hiding within or on top of the zeppelin and escape when it leaves.

- The heroes may use the winch and basket in area 1 to lower themselves to the ground. They can barricade the door to the room against pursuers, but someone will have to stay behind to operate the winch. Perhaps that person could then climb down the rope (5,000 ft. of it!) to the ground.

If alarms are activated at any time throughout the adventure by Nazis in adjacent areas hearing gunfire, explosions, or other loud sounds (by making successful Listen checks), or if the radio room is destroyed with explosives while the PCs are still present in the Mönchenhaus, 2d4 Nazi radio operators plus 1d4 Nazi officers attack the heroes until the PCs either escape, are captured or killed, or slay their pursuers.

How the heroes return to the States is left to the GM. Perhaps a military pick-up has been prearranged, or the GM may want to keep the heroes on the Continent for further European adventures. They may even travel on *Karl der Grosse* on its return voyage to Lakehurst.

If their mission was to destroy the relay station and they succeeded, Lcdr. McCormick gives each hero a +1 Wealth reward; if they successfully thwarted Zimmerman’s attempt to steal the radio, each hero also receives 2 AP.

APPENDIX

Table 1: New Aircraft

Name	Crew	Pas	Cargo	Init	Maneuvr	Top Speed	Def	Hard	HP	Size	DC	Rest
Curtiss F9C-2 Sparrowhawk												
	1	0	0 lb	-1	-2	308 (31)	8	8	30	H	40	Mil (+3)
Nakajima A1N2												
	1	0	0 lb.	-1	0	261 (26)	8	8	40	H	40	Mil (+3)
LZ-129 Hindenburg												
	61	50	124 ton	-6	-4	148 (15)	2	8	55	C	50	Res (+2)
ZR-1 Shenandoah												
	22	0	27 ton	-6	-8	106 (11)	2	8	60	C	50	Mil (+3)
ZR-3 Los Angeles												
	45	0	30 ton	-6	-6	137 (14)	2	10	55	C	50	Mil (+3)
ZRS-4 Akron and ZRS-5 Macon												
	81	0	*	-6	-4	148 (15)	2	10	65	C	50	Mil (+3)
* 91 tons for Akron; 95 tons for Macon.												



Table 2: US Naval ZR (Zeppelin Rigid) Airships

	ZR-1 Shenandoah	ZR-3 Los Angeles	ZRS-4 Akron	ZRS-5 Macon
Commissioned	Oct. 10, 1923	Nov. 25, 1924	Oct. 27, 1931	June 23, 1933
Lost	Sept. 3, 1925	See below	Apr. 3-4, 1933	Feb. 11, 1935
Length	680 ft.	658 ft.	785 ft.	785 ft.
Diameter	79 ft.	90ft. 6 in.	132.9 ft.	132.9 ft.
Volume	2,115,000 cu ft.	2,472,000 cu ft.	6,500,000 cu ft.	6,500,000 cu ft.
Power	Five 300 hp Packard engines	Five 400 hp Maybach engines	Eight 560 hp Maybach engines	Eight 560 hp Maybach engines
Maximum Spd	60 mph	76 mph	84 mph	84 mph



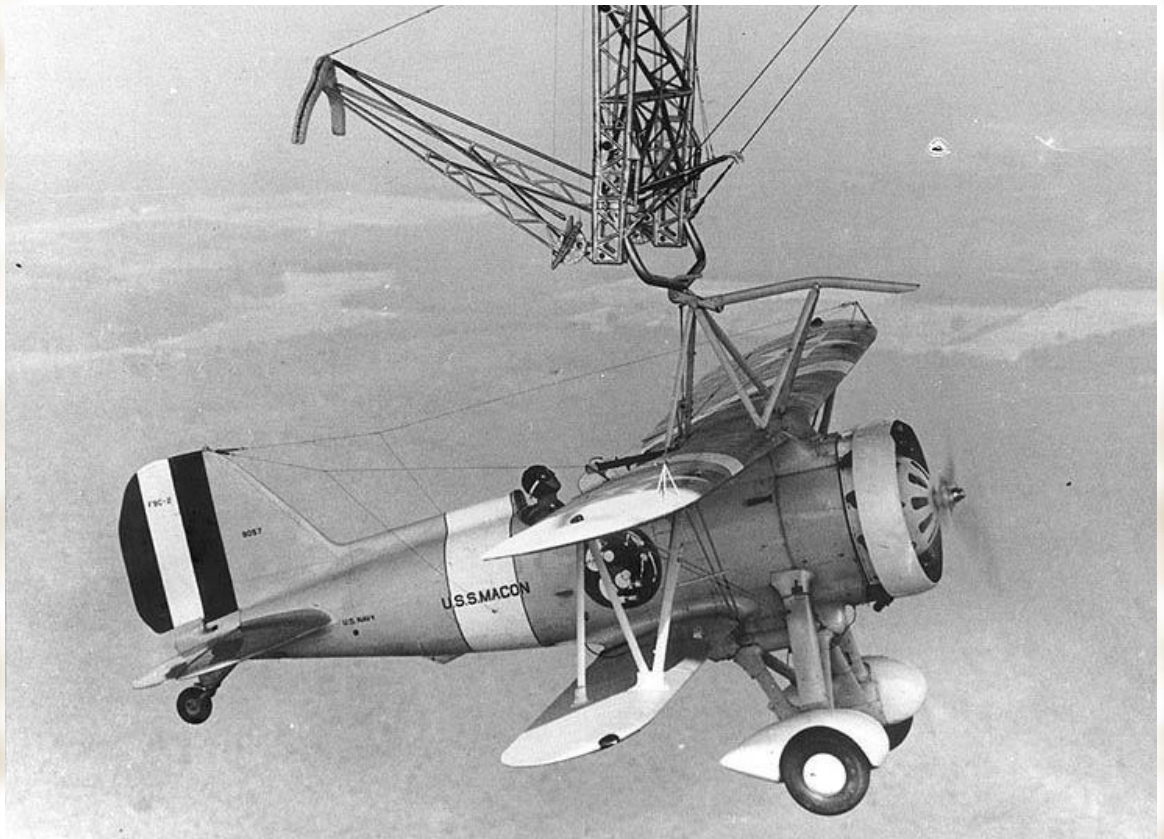
Curtiss F9C-2 Sparrowhawk

This small but fast fighter was made exclusively for the Navy's airship program by Curtiss Aeroplane & Motor Company, Buffalo, NY.

First delivered in 1932, the Sparrowhawk featured a hook mounted on top of the plane to catch the trapeze beneath the airship. Once suspended, the plane could be raised into the ship's interior. Armament consists of two .30-caliber machine guns fixed on its nose (use the statistics for the Lewis machine gun in Table 3: New Weapons). The Sparrowhawk is 4 squares long with a wingspan 5 squares wide; the fuselage is 1 square wide.

Nakajima A1N2

The A1N2 were carrier fighters for the Imperial Japanese Navy. First introduced in 1930, they were biplanes equipped with an arresting-cable hook and two 7.7mm forward-firing machine guns (use the statistics for the Nambu Type 92 in Table 3: New Weapons). The A1N2 is 4 squares long with a wingspan 6 squares wide. The fuselage is 1 square wide.



LZ-129 Hindenburg

The most famous airship in history was also the largest: 804 ft. long and 135 ft. in diameter, with space to carry 72 passengers (but only enough bunks for 50 transatlantic passengers). Its inaugural flight across the North Atlantic from Friedrichshafen to Lakehurst took place in April 1936; in May 1937, it crumbled in flames, probably the result of a build-up of static electricity and a leaking gas cell.

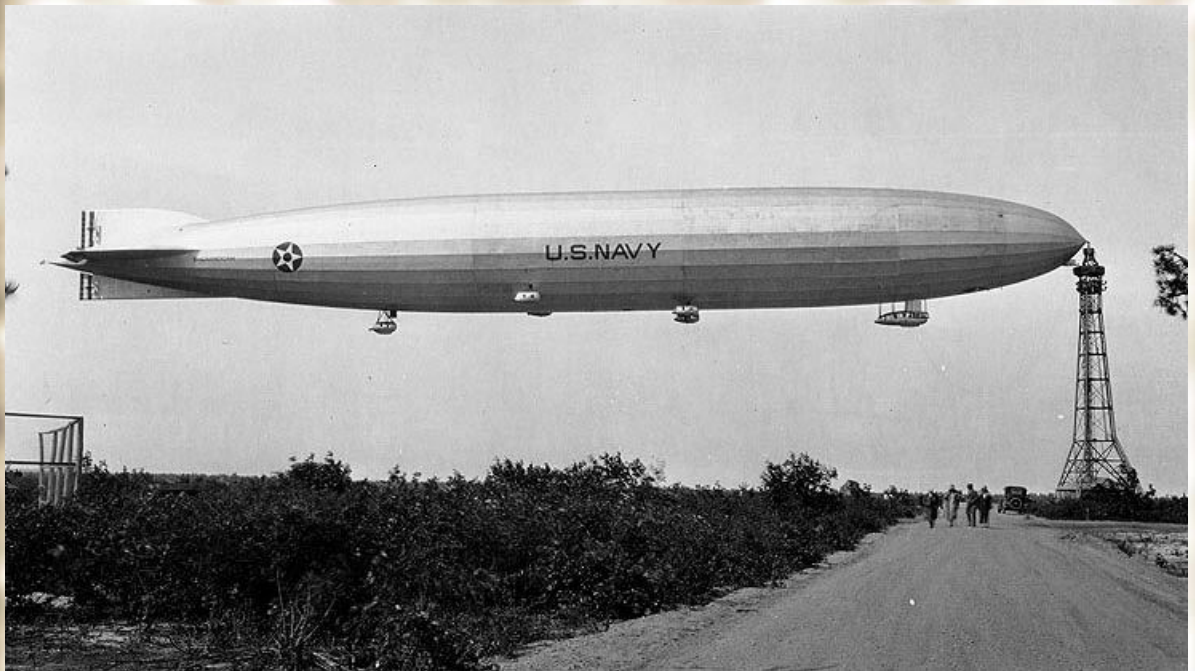
Although its passenger staterooms were tiny -- 6 1/2 ft. long by 5 1/2 ft. wide -- Hindenburg was the contemporary pinnacle of luxury, with five-course meals, showers, and even a pressurized smoking lounge situated underneath nearly seven-million cubic feet of flammable hydrogen.

Hindenburg is 161 squares long and 27 squares wide.

Complete deckplans of *Hindenburg* are provided at the end of this section. These can be used for the interiors of the fictional airships *Neitzche* and *Karl Grosse*, presented in the adventures in this book.



A photograph of the Passenger Lounge on board LZ-129 *Hindenburg*



ZR-1 Shenandoah

In 1919, Congress approved an appropriations act providing for the construction of a Naval rigid airship and the purchase of another from England. This latter airship, the hydrogen-inflated ZR-2 (designated R-38 by the British), broke and caught fire in 1921 during a trial flight, never reaching American skies. After this disaster, the Navy used helium instead of hydrogen in all of its airships.

Shenandoah had a successful two-year lifespan, being the first rigid to fly across the United States and the first to moor to a moving sea vessel, before disintegrating in a 1925 windstorm over Ohio. Outfitted with six mounted Lewis machine guns, *Shenandoah* is 136 squares long and 16 squares wide.

ZR-3 Los Angeles

Built in Germany by Luftschiffbau Zeppelin GmbH as part of war reparations to the United States, *Los Angeles* was originally designated LZ-126 by the Germans. *Los Angeles* was the first airship to successfully dock with an airplane in midair using a special trapeze system to which the pilot hooked his plane.

Of the five rigid airships utilized by the US Navy, only *Los Angeles* had a nonviolent end: after completing 331 flights, it was decommissioned on June 30, 1932 for economic reasons in favor of Akron and Macon.

In December 1934, *Los Angeles* was reinflated and used in tests (while continuously moored) until 1939, when it was finally dismantled. *Los Angeles* is 132 squares long and 18 squares wide.

ZRS-4 Akron and ZRS-5 Macon

These two airships were physically identical except for structural refinements on *Macon* which reduced its weight by four tons.

Having successfully tested docking airplanes to airships with *Los Angeles*, both *Akron* and *Macon* were designed as the world's only airborne aircraft carriers, capable of stowing up to five airplanes in a special hangar in each ship's belly (though each typically only carried four).

A pilot would catch a trapeze lowered beneath the airship with a hook on top of his airplane. The plane would then be

lifted through hangar doors into the airship, where it was connected to an X-shaped track on the hangar's ceiling. Planes could then be moved along the track to storage positions or back to the center to ready them for launch. The Curtis F9C-2 Sparrowhawk was the plane used in this capacity.

Both airships are 157 squares long and 27 squares wide and each was armed with seven Lewis machine guns.

A cut-away of the USS *Akron* is available at the end of this section.



Table 3: New Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Mag	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
Arisaka Type 38 Rifle (6.5mm)	2d6	20	Ballistic	70 ft.	S	5 box	Large	9 lb.	16	Mil (+3)
Colt M1911A1 (.45 autoloader)	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S	7 box	Small	3 lb.	15	Lic (+1)
Lewis Automatic Machine Rifle (.303)	2d10	20	Ballistic	100 ft.	A	47 box*	Large	28 lb.	22	Mil (+3)
Luger P08 (9mm)	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S	8 box	Small	2 lb.	15	Lic (+1)
Maschinenpistole Erma (MPE) (9mm)	2d6	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	S, A	32 box	Med	7 lb.	17	Mil(+3)
Nambu Type 14 (8mm)	2d4	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S	8 box	Small	2 lb.	14	Lic (+1)
Nambu Type 92 Machine Gun (7.7mm)	2d8	20	Ballistic	660 ft.	A	Linked	Huge	122 lb	22	Mil (+3)
Stielhandgranate	4d6	--	Slashing	10 ft.	1	--	Small	2 lb.	15	Mil (+3)

* The Lewis can also be outfitted with a 97-round drum. See below.

Arisaka Type 38 Rifle

The standard rifle of the Japanese Imperial Army, the Type 38 was introduced in 1905, used extensively during Japan's war in Manchuria, and eventually phased out in favor of the Arisaka Type 99 in 1939. While the Type 38 functioned well, its caliber of ammunition was mild compared to other military rifles.

Colt M1911A1

This is a slightly redesigned version of the Colt M1911 based on experience with its use during the Great War. For all practical

purposes it is identical to the M1911. The M1911A1 was the standard service pistol for United States Armed Forces between 1926 and 1985.

Lewis Automatic Machine Rifle

The gas-powered Lewis features a pistol grip on the stock and fires a 47-round drum loaded horizontally on top of the weapon. Its weight allows it to be carried by one person, although two gunners are generally required to operate it efficiently. Lewises were commonly used in aircraft as well: many World War I aces took down

their foes using a Lewis mounted on a swivel just forward of the cockpit. Mounted Lewis machine guns could be fitted with a 97-round drum which was too heavy for infantry use.

Luger P08

The distinctive Luger was standard issue to the German Navy beginning in 1904 and to the German Army in 1908. Renowned for its accuracy, the Luger P08 saw action in both World Wars.

Maschinenpistole Erma

Introduced in the 1920s, the MPE has a barrel jacket with long slots, a 32-shot detachable box magazine entering from the left, and a wooden pistol grip in the stock. It was replaced in 1938 by the MP38.

Nambu Type 14

The Japanese-made Nambu Type 14, introduced in 1925, was a common sidearm for officers of both the Imperial Japanese Army and Navy. It suffered from a weak caliber of ammunition and such poor design that it would often backfire or break in combat. On a critical miss (a natural roll of 1), a Type 14 explodes in the user's hand, causing him or her 1d4 damage.

Nambu Type 92 Machine Gun

The enormous Type 92 requires three people to use it on the battlefield: two just to carry it, and another to haul the ammunition consisting of 30-round strips.

Still, once it is set up on a tripod, it can spit death for alarming distances: it even saw use as an anti-aircraft gun in World War II. Made in Japan, the Type 92 was introduced in 1932.

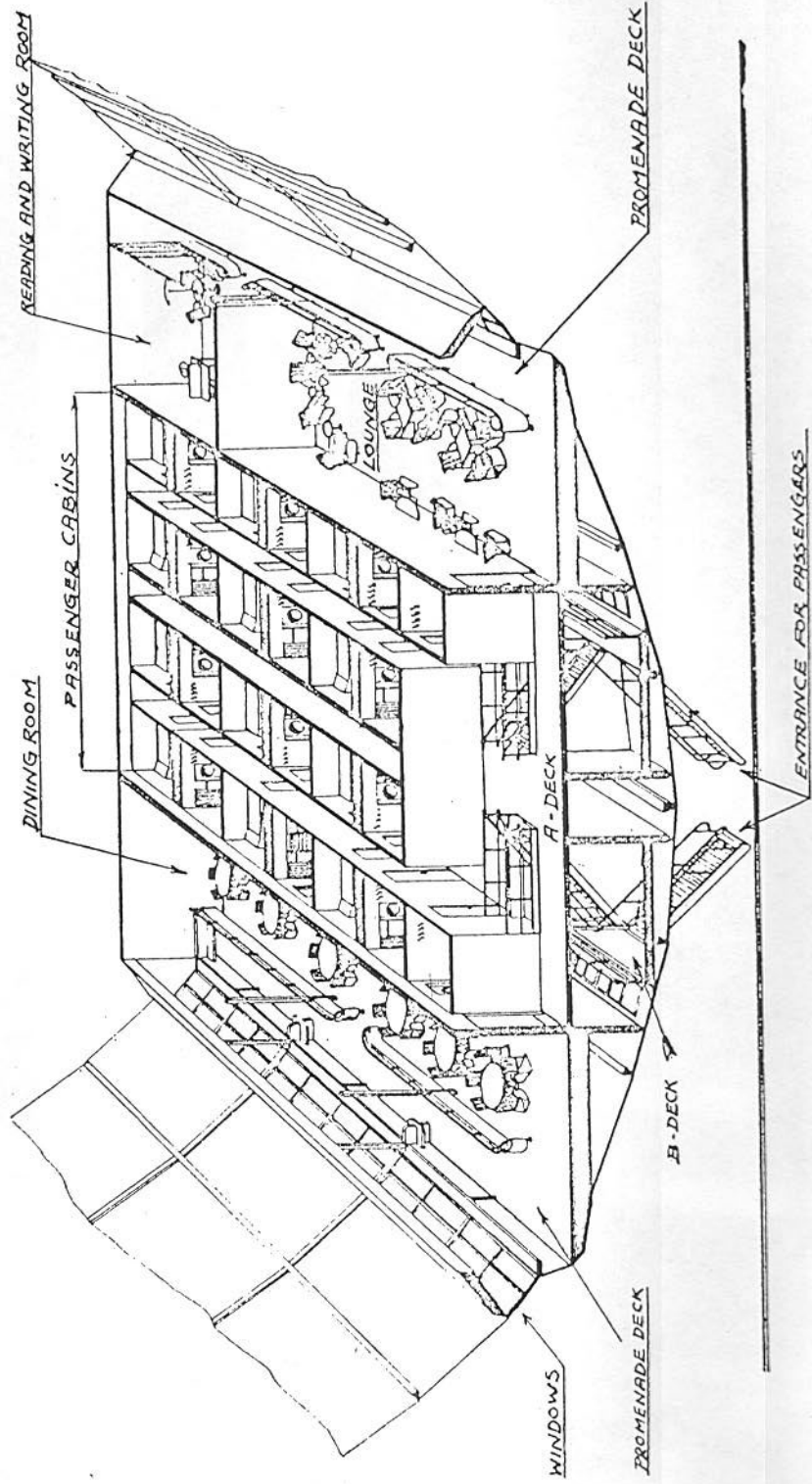
Stielhandgranate

The well-known “potato masher” German hand grenade. When the Stielhandgranate explodes, it delivers 4d6 points of damage within a 20-ft. radius (Reflex save DC 15 for half damage).

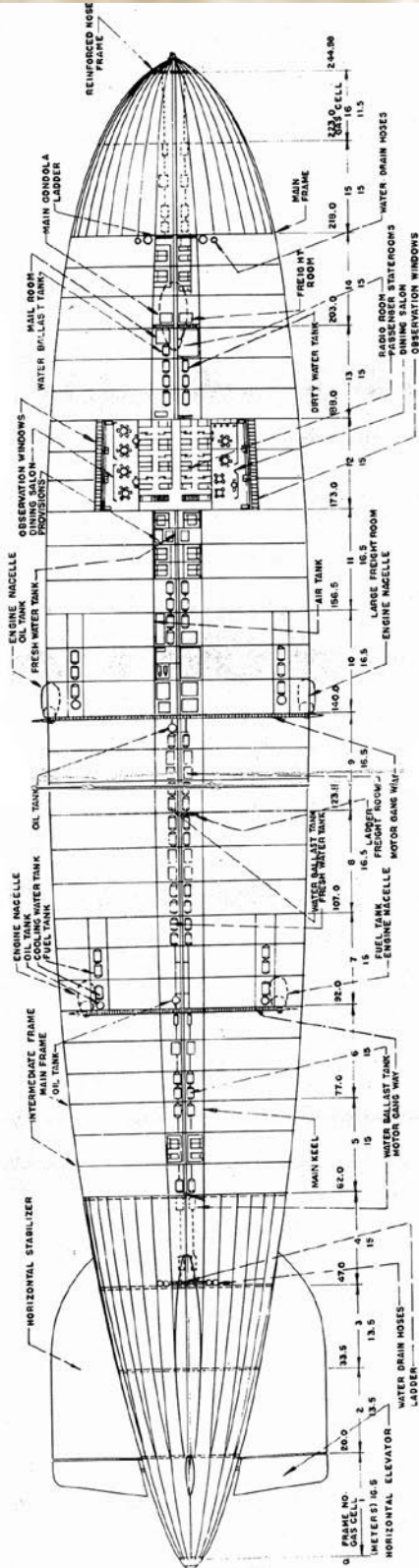
The pages that follow feature deck-plans and cut-aways of Zeppelins, for use in your **Thrilling Tales** campaigns (or any other pulp-era gaming!).

These are not gridded for D20 combat, but the scale information provided in the plans and in the descriptions found in this appendix should suffice.

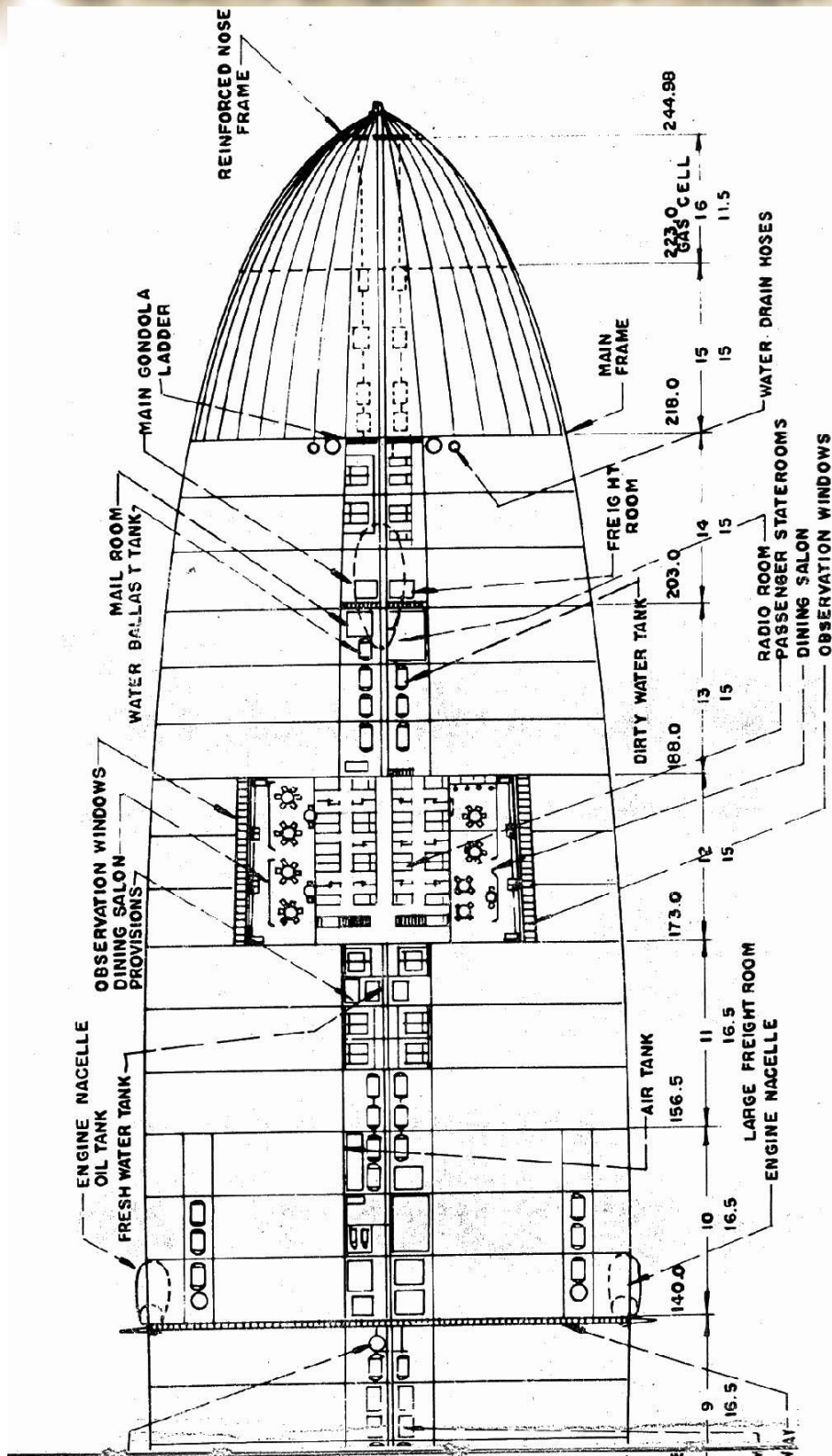
Cut-Away of the Passenger accommodations on board *Hindenburg*



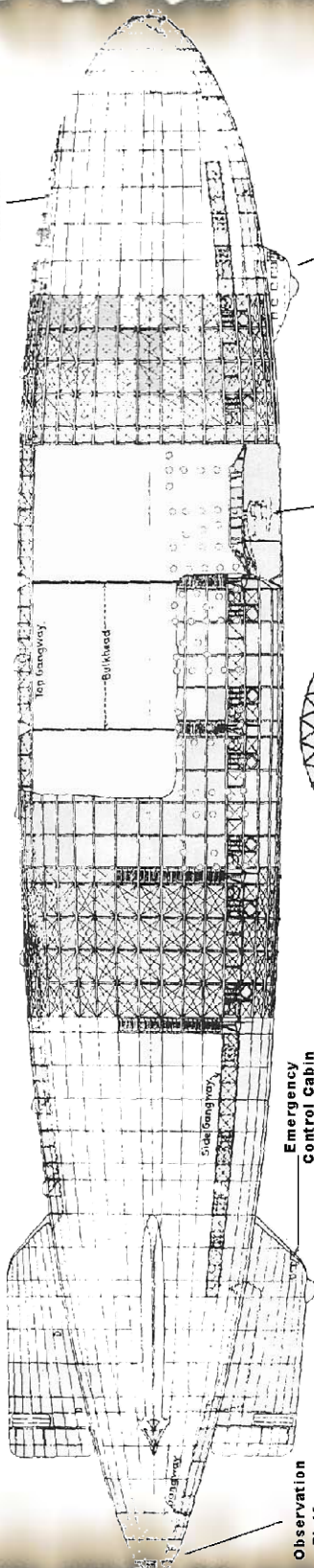
Top-down deckplan of Hindenburg (close-up follows)



Top-down deckplan of Hindenburg (FORE)

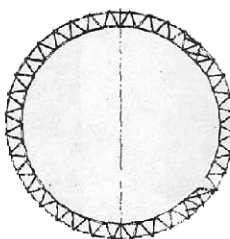
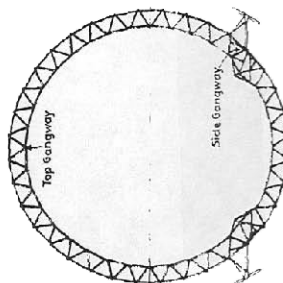


Observation
Platform



Control Car

Sparrowhawk
Hangar



Emergency
Control Cabin

Observation
Platform

U.S.S. AKRON

Length: 785 feet
Max. Diameter: 132.86 feet
Max. Width: 144.4 feet
Max Height: 155.03 feet

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MODERN D20:



THRILLING TALES



ADVANCED CLASS

BIG GAME HUNTER

ADVANCED CLASS:

BIG GAME HUNTER

Jeremiah Cole was a very ambitious man and he wasn't about to let some jungle savage ruin his diamond mining operation. That's why he called me in.

Normally, I don't hunt intelligent prey. Closest I came was a giant albino gorilla a few months back, and I still bear a scar across my cheek from a flint knife it fashioned. Heck, I've hunted quite a few exotic animals in my time, usually accompanied by some egghead or archaeologist searching for lost civilizations or hidden treasure. I enjoy the hunt, but I never considered myself a hit man.

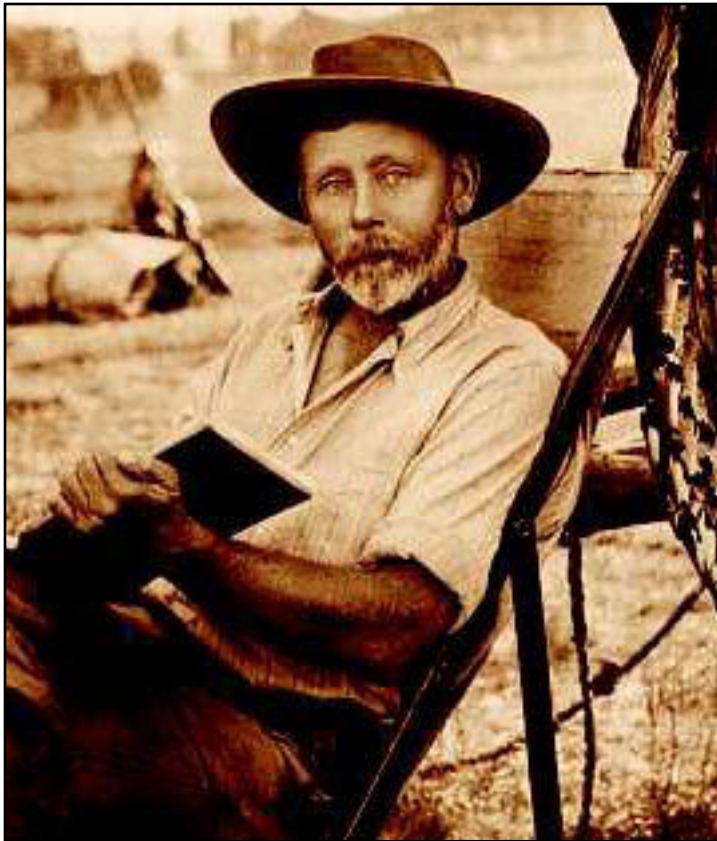
Mr. Cole wouldn't take "no" for an answer. He just kept upping the fee until he found my price. So here I am, in the heart of some African jungle, waiting for the jungle protector who was upset at Mr. Cole's treatment of the natives. I don't do politics.

I sat outside one of the newer mines as Mr. Cole's associates kept the natives moving. I remained in

the bushes, keeping an eye on the mine. I didn't have to wait long. The ground shook as a small herd of elephants stampeded near the mine, overturning the trucks and smashing equipment. Everybody

scattered. I stayed put, readying my rifle. My patience paid off, for the one who sent the elephants soon swung into view. My jaw dropped.

I don't know what I was expecting. Mr. Cole had been very vague on details, and now I know why. I was expecting a native warrior, or maybe a colonial who'd gone native. Instead, I was staring at the most stunning woman I'd ever seen, dressed in animal skins that left little to the imagination.



Still, a job's a job, and I regretted having to pull the trigger.

The Big Game Hunter is an archetype of the Pulp genre. He travels to untamed forests and jungles around the world, searching for exotic trophies. The Big Game Hunter often doubles as a guide, leading

Celebrities, Field Scientists, and Fortune Hunters through thick jungles. In the Pulp, he is often the strong man that accompanies the main hero.

The Big Game Hunter is often a villain. He is a poacher, disregarding local laws and ignoring local traditions in search of his prey. In this role he represents the unwanted “colonial” interests that pillage the land. This makes him a frequent enemy of the Noble Savage.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Big Game Hunter, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +3

Skills: Navigate (6 ranks), Spot (6 ranks)

Feats: Archaic Weapons Proficiency or Personal Firearms Proficiency, Track

Action Points: The Big Game Hunter gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time she achieves a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Big Game Hunter’s class skills are as follows: Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Demolitions (Int), Drive (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (earth and life sciences) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language, Ride (Dex), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Treat Injury (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Big Game Hunter advanced class.

Hit Die: The Big Game Hunter gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character’s Constitution modifier applies.

Ranged Weapon Focus: At 1st level, a Big Game Hunter gains the Weapon Focus class feature, providing the benefit of the feat with the same name.

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+1	+1	+2	+0	Ranged Weapon Focus, Swift Track	+1	+1
2nd	+2	+2	+2	+0	Henchman, Marksman	+1	+1
3rd	+3	+2	+3	+1	Bonus Feat	+2	+1
4th	+3	+2	+3	+1	Camouflage	+2	+2
5th	+4	+3	+4	+1	Henchman, Ranged Weapon Specialization	+3	+2
6th	+5	+3	+4	+2	Bonus Feat, Spot Prey	+3	+2
7th	+6	+4	+5	+2	Improved Critical	+4	+3
8th	+6	+4	+5	+2	Henchman	+4	+3
9th	+7	+4	+6	+3	Bonus Feat	+5	+3
10th	+8	+5	+6	+3	One Shot, One Kill	+5	+4

The Big Game Hunter chooses a specific ranged weapon. While Big Game Hunters usually choose a rifle, there are Big Game Hunters who prefer the elegance of a bow, crossbow, or spear. The Big Game Hunter must be proficient with the chosen weapon. The Big Game Hunter adds +1 to all attack rolls made using the selected weapon.

Swift Track: At 1st level, the Big Game Hunter may move at normal speed while using Track without taking the -5 penalty.

Henchman: At 2nd, 5th, and 8th level, the Big Game Hunter receives a loyal henchman who travels with him on his hunts. This henchman is an Ordinary of at least three levels lower than the Big Game Hunter. The Henchman is a full-fledged NPC, which could be developed jointly with the Player and Gamemaster. Unlike other hired help, the Henchman is unflinchingly loyal to the Big Game Hunter.

Marksman: The Big Game Hunter is an expert shot. At 2nd level he gains the Far Shot feat for free, or the Dead Aim feat if he already possesses the Far Shot feat.

Bonus Feat: At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Big Game Hunter gets a bonus feat, which must be taken from the following list. New feats appear in italics, and are described at the end of this document.

Alertness, Athletic, Brawl, Cautious, Dead Aim, Dodge, Drive-By Attack, Endurance, *Gone Native*, Great Fortitude, Guide, Improved Brawl, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Reload, Run, Shot on the



Run, Stealthy, Surface Vehicle Operation, Weapon Focus.

Camouflage: The Big Game Hunter is first and foremost a hunter. At 4th level he knows how to use his natural surroundings to his advantage while laying in wait for a target. When a Big Game Hunter has had a few minutes to conceal himself, characters attempting to target him have a 50% miss chance.

Spot Prey: The Big Game Hunter can spot prey even in hiding. Whenever the Big Game Hunter's target is concealed, the Big Game Hunter subtracts 20% from the miss chance before rolling. By spending an action point, the Big Game Hunter can eliminate the miss

chance altogether.

Ranged Weapon Specialization: At 5th level, a Big Game Hunter gains weapon specialization with a specific ranged weapon that he has applied to the Weapon Focus feat or class feature. The Big Game Hunter gets a +2 bonus on damage rolls with the chosen weapon.

Improved Critical: At 7th level, the Big Game Hunter may improve the critical threat range of the weapon he chose for Ranged Weapon Specialization by one.

One Shot, One Kill: At 10th level, the Big Game Hunter has honed the ability to take down his prey in a single shot. All threats made with the weapon chosen for Ranged Weapon Specialization is automatically considered a critical hit.

NEW FEAT

Gone Native

You've spent so much time in a particular exotic locale that you've started to understand and emulate their ways. This has given you greater expertise in this particular culture, but has a negative impact on those who feel you've turned your back on their ways.

Prerequisite: Speak Language in the culture you're adopting.

Benefit: You gain a +2 to all Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Knowledge checks that involve the culture you've adopted. In addition, you suffer no Attitude penalties that would normally be given to someone from your original culture. Unfortunately, members of your original culture treat you as one Attitude level lower than they normally would.



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THRILLING TALES



ADVANCED CLASS:

G-MAN

ADVANCED CLASS:

G-MAN

The Chief of Police frantically grabbed for the bullhorn, squinting to block out the flashing red and blue lights that lit up the crime scene like Macy's at Christmas time. Half his precincts were here in full force, and most of the others at half or better. There was a veritable sea of squad cars and paddy wagons surrounding the 5th street library and the psycho holding the entire P.S. 201 class field trip hostage there. He triggered the bullhorn and opened his mouth to speak, when he was interrupted by a nearby shout. "He's going again!"

Everyone who heard quickly dropped behind open squad car doors or dove for cover behind the wagons as the BHUDAA- BHUDAA- BHUDAA of a heavy machine gun roared from the roof of the library. Chunks of concrete and squad cars kicked up into the air as the madman behind the trigger randomly assaulted New York's finest. As the thunder of heavy caliber munitions stopped it was quickly trailed by shaky laughter on the wind. Chief O'Hara sat up and looked around. Twelve hours had passed since they first got word of children held hostage, and no progress had been made.

O'Hara spotted a commotion- two men in hats and coats were speaking with a number of his officers; when the

cops nodded and took off running, O'Hara nearly had a fit. He watched as the officers spoke to others, and could not believe it when shortly the entire line of cars began to pull back. O'Hara stormed over to the strangers, who were heading in his direction.

"What in the name of the Big Apple is going on here?!" he shouted. The two men met his gaze with a coolness that was unsettling. O'Hara nearly jumped out of his skin when a voice from behind him spoke: "I'm what's going on here."

The Police Chief spun on his heel and looked up into a pair of blue eyes that made the strangers seem friendly. A hand holding a badge flashed in front of his eyes, and the newcomer said, "Andrew Franklin, Federal Agent. O'Hara, you've done a miserable job containing the situation- this is my crime scene now."

The G-Man, slang for 'Government Man', is a federal agent typically with the F.B.I. In the world of the pulps the G-Man was known by his trench coat and fedora, traveling in packs and toting Tommy-guns. G-Men were the subject of several entire magazines, and the nation

thrilled to their exploits. From breaking up Nazi sympathizers to enforcing Prohibition, the G-Man did whatever his nation called on him to do to keep



her safe on her own shores.

Working for the Government has its perks- the G-Man has an enhanced jurisdiction, granting him powers of law enforcement that typically outstrip those of local cops; he also is generally better equipped with the latest in crime-fighting technology. The G-Man starts off as a part of a unit, learning the ropes. As he proves himself and grows in experience, the G-Man will find himself with more and more responsibility, and given more and more sensitive missions.

It's an unfriendly world out there, and it's only getting worse- your Nation is looking for the best and the brightest to come to her aid- will you heed the call?

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a G-Man a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Ability Score: Int 13 or higher, Cha 11 or higher

Base Attack Bonus: +2

Skills: Speak Language (None) 1 rank, Research (Int) 1 rank

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The G-Man gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The G-Man gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The G-Man class skills are as follows: Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int), Demolitions (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (civics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (None), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Treat Injury (Wis)

Skill Points at each level: 6 + Int Modifier

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+1	+1	+1	+2	Jurisdiction, Only the Best	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+1	+2	+3	Big Brother	+2	+0
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+4	Bonus Feat	+3	+1
4th	+2	+2	+3	+4	Cross-training	+3	+2
5th	+3	+3	+3	+5	Signature Kit, Team Effort	+4	+3
6th	+3	+3	+4	+5	Bonus Feat, Safehouse	+4	+3
7th	+4	+4	+4	+6	Cross-training	+5	+3
8th	+4	+4	+5	+6	Bonus Feat	+5	+3
9th	+5	+5	+5	+7	Cross-training	+6	+4
10th	+5	+5	+6	+8	Promotion	+6	+5

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the G-Man advanced class.

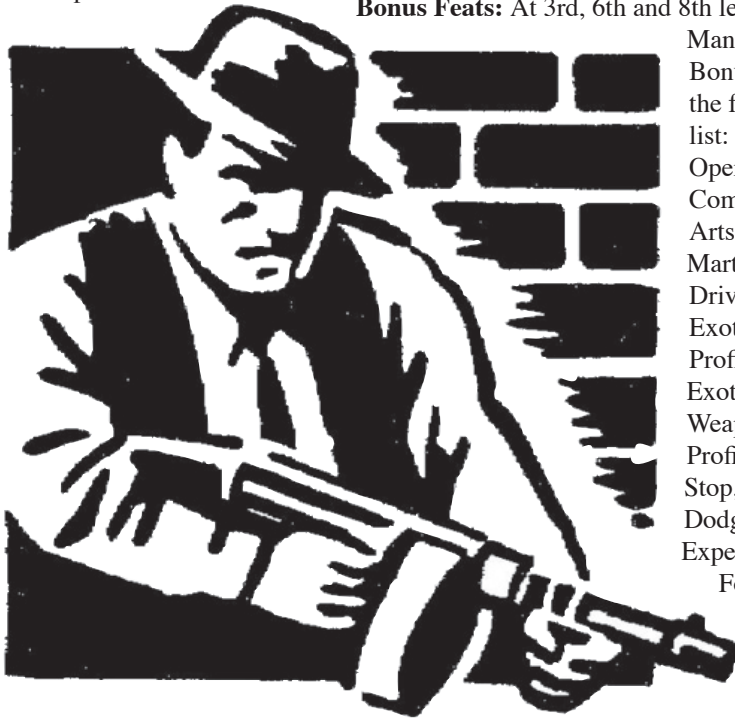
Jurisdiction: As a Federal Agent, the G-Man can override local law enforcement, command rescue personnel (such as firemen) and generally get his way. Starting at 1st level, by showing ID (flashing his badge) and declaring "Federal Agent!", the G-Man gets a +2 bonus to either Intimidate or Bluff. If successful he will get the cooperation of the citizen or law enforcement in question. When in a crisis situation (such as a hostage situation or train wreck) he receives a bonus equal to half his G-Man level, stacked with the normal +2.

Only the best: The Government has access to the latest high-tech equipment, and the G-Man benefits from that. Starting at 1st level he adds his Advance Class level to his Wealth bonus when determining if an item is available for a mission. His Wealth bonus does not lower, even if he would normally reduce his Wealth bonus because of this purchase. If the G-Man does not return the equipment after the mission, his Wealth bonus does lower by 1.

Big Brother: At 2nd level and above, the G-Man has access to virtually unlimited information on any public information, and quiet a lot of private. By 'calling in' a license number, an address, or a

name, the G-Man can obtain any information the Game Master determines the Government would know about that individual or establishment. Some examples would include; full name, vital record (Blood Type, Date of Birth, etc), last known address, owner of establishment, etc. The G-Man rolls his Research Skill and gets a bonus equal to his level in this Advance Class. He may Take 10 or 20 with this check, or he may make the check normally if he needs the information quickly. He must have access to radio or telephone to call in his request to his agency.

Bonus Feats: At 3rd, 6th and 8th levels, the G-Man chooses a Bonus Feat from the following list: Aircraft Operation, Combat Martial Arts, Defensive Martial Arts, Drive-By Attack, Exotic Firearms Proficiency, Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency, Force Stop, Vehicle Dodge, Vehicle Expert, Weapon Focus



Crosstraining: At 4th, 7th and 9th levels, the G-Man can cross train with another government agency, gaining additional skills and learning how that agency operates. The G-Man can chose which school he attends, and gains the listed bonuses as well as a +4 Diplomacy bonus whenever dealing with active or retired members of that agency. The G-Man may ignore prerequisites when gaining a feat this way.

Spy School: +2 bonus to Disguise and +1 rank in both Speak Language and Read/Write Language

(must chose same language).

Military: gain bonus feats Burst Fire and Exotic Firearms

Secret Service: +2 bonus to Spot and bonus Feat Vehicle Dodge

Signature Kit: At 5th level the G-Man may choose one personal firearm, one melee weapon, one general special equipment, and one vehicle. In addition to any mission-specific equipment, the G-Man is always equipped with his Signature Kit -- he does not have to return the equipment unless he leaves service. In addition, should any item be lost or destroyed, it will be replaced before the start of the next mission.



Team Effort: At 5th level the G-Man may call on his own team of agents. Whenever he needs to work on a case and implements this feature, he may add a bonus equal to half his G-Man level to the following skills. Decipher Script (Int), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (any) (Int), Research (Int) .

This represents the pool of expert resources he has to draw on, and using this Feature takes as much time as if he had Taken 20. Additionally, the Game Master and Player should determine what other skills the team may have and allow the G-Man to make a check using that skill even if it normally cannot be used unskilled. Any use of this Feature requires the G-Man to be able to communicate the situation to his team and receive the answer.

Safe House: At 6th level the G-Man has accumulated enough weapons, equipment and knowledge to have a Safe House. This is a physical

location, be it an apartment, a warehouse, a store or even a cave, the location of which is unknown to the G-Man's own agency.

The Game Master should take some time to stock the Safe House with the Player, making Wealth checks with half the bonus available from the 'Only the best' feature. The Game Master is the final arbiter of whether a particular piece of equipment or weapon is available.

Promotion: At 10th level the G-Man has come to the attention of the Power's That Be, and earned a promotion to the equivalent of a Director level. The G-Man gets a +3 bonus to his Wealth and a +4 bonus to Diplomacy checks when dealing with anyone of his own agency. In addition he has the authority to organize joint agency efforts, such as a local police raid or surveillance. The DC to do so is 25, and a success results in 2d6 officers and agents placed under his command for 1 week per level, or until completion of the stated task (whichever comes first).

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MODERN D20:



THRILLING TALES

ADVANCED CLASS:

GUMSHOE

ADVANCED CLASS:

GUMSHOE

Mack Brolin sloshed gin over two sticky shot glasses and slid half the pair across his desk to the weeping blonde in front of him. He hated this part of his job- hell, he would have to think harder than he wanted too to find a part he did like, lately. Normally he would stay as far away from cheating husband cases as he could and still pay the bills- but Andrea Smith was the leggiest, blondest...healthiest dame who'd come through his door in years, and as close as Mack was to his .38 special, it didn't exactly keep him warm at night.

He'd been in the business long enough to know something was screwy- wives as put together as Mrs. Smith didn't get cheated on very often. He watched her knock back his offered drink and then followed suit. She blew her nose daintily and then refilled their glasses for him, setting down her pocketbook next to the bottle. Her pocketbook with the silver handles. Mack added ten percent to the figure he had in his head.

"Mr. Brolin, Johnny Chin is my dry cleaner- he told me you were very discrete. Can I count on you to be discrete...Mack?"

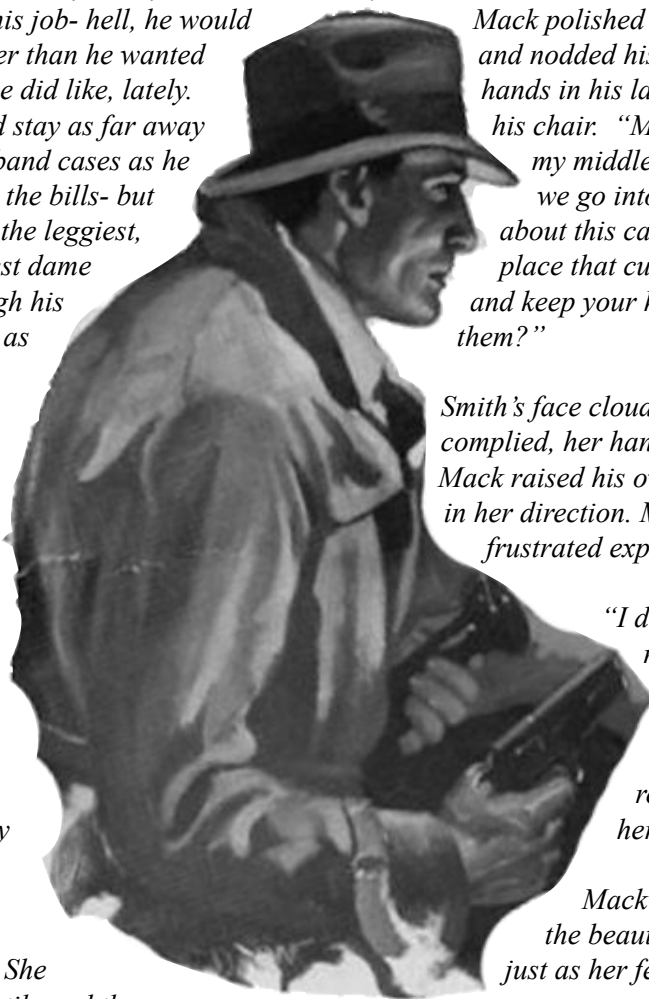
Mack polished off his second drink and nodded his head. He folded his hands in his lap and leaned back in his chair. "Mrs. Smith, discrete is my middle name. However, before we go into any more particulars about this case, can I ask you to place that cute revolver on the desk, and keep your hands where I can see them?"

Smith's face clouded over as she complied, her hands moving slowly as Mack raised his own, pointing his .38 in her direction. Mack smiled at her frustrated expression.

"I don't keep that big mirror in the corner to look at my pretty mug, Mrs. Smith. Now, why don't you tell me your real reason for coming here tonight?"

Mack felt a bit of alarm as the beauty in front of him smiled just as her features began to blur.

"Clever, Mr. Brolin- Chin told me your were clever too. But he also told me you couldn't resist blondes or gin. I hope you don't mind, I added a little something special to yours."



All the alarms were going off as Mack's piece fell from his nerveless fingers and he slumped forward. His vision faded out, as did his last thoughts of the evening. "Damn....second time this month..."

The Gumshoe, P.I., Detective; they all refer to the tough-as-nails, rough around the edges, hard boiled investigator of the pulps. A file cabinet filled with cases, a weather-beaten desk, a name on the door and a reputation for getting his man- many times this is all a Gumshoe has to call his own- but while his life is often unglamorous, it is hardly ever boring.

The Gumshoe can be a person's last hope- when the police don't seem to care and you haven't a friend in the world, you can call on him- his door is always open. Just don't be surprised to see a chalk outline or two on the way up the stairs.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Gumshoe a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Ability Score: Int 12 or higher, Con 11 or higher

Base Attack Bonus: +2

Skills: Investigate (Int) 3 ranks, Gather Information (Int) 3 ranks

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Gumshoe gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Gumshoe gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+1	+2	+1	+1	Home turf, Fisticuffs, Office	+1	+1
2nd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Fisticuffs, Citizen's Arrest	+2	+2
3rd	+2	+3	+2	+1	Home turf, Contact	+3	+2
4th	+3	+4	+2	+1	Office, Citizen's Arrest	+4	+3
5th	+4	+4	+2	+2	Home turf, Hard Bitten	+4	+3
6th	+4	+5	+2	+2	Fisticuffs, Citizen's Arrest, Contact	+5	+4
7th	+5	+5	+3	+2	Home turf, Deductive Reasoning	+5	+5
8th	+6	+6	+3	+3	Citizen's Arrest, Hard Bitten	+6	+5
9th	+6	+7	+3	+3	Home turf, Contact	+6	+6
10th	+7	+8	+3	+3	Enough Rope, Satellite Office	+7	+7

Class Skills: The Gumshoe class skills are as follows:

Bluff (Cha), Demolitions (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gamble (Wis), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (crime) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Read/Write Language (None), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis),

Home Turf Advantage: The Gumshoe knows his turf and, more importantly, knows how make the most of it. Starting at 1st level the Gumshoe gets a +2 bonus to any of the following skills when used in his 'turf', due to his extensive knowledge of the inhabitants, laws, layout and resources in this area: Diplomacy, Drive, Gather Information, Hide, Investigate, Knowledge (crime), Navigate, Search, Spot, and Survival. At 1st level his turf is the block his office is located on. At 3rd level this area expands into the neighborhood the block is in. At 5th level the turf encompasses into one adjoining neighborhood, and increases by one neighborhood every second level thereafter.

Note- this feature duplicates in any city in which the

Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (None), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Treat Injury (Wis)

Skill Points at each level: 6 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Gumshoe advanced class.

Gumshoe opens a Satellite Office.

Fisticuffs: The Gumshoe makes a living on the edge of the law, and as such does his best to avoid ventilating citizens. In order to bring his quarry down, he often has to resort to a good old-fashioned haymaker over a more permanent solution. At 1st level the Gumshoe gains the



Feats Brawl and Knockout Punch. At 2nd level the Feat Improved Brawl is gained, and at 6th level Improved Knockout Punch is gained.

Office: At 1st level the Gumshoe starts with an office with the barest of essentials...sometimes just a desk with one drawer, a filing cabinet, and a chair for clients to sit in. If the Gamemaster agrees, the character can live in an adjoining room, although he may have to hide that fact from the landlord. At 4th level the Gumshoe's career has advanced enough that he can afford to outfit his place of business a bit more respectably- the player and Gamemaster should decide together on equipment, size of the office, etc. When in his office the Gumshoe feels most at home, and gets double his Hometown Advantage bonus. He also gets a +2 defensive bonus while in his Office- often the only thing between him and an assassin's knife in the back on a rainy October evening... At 10th level a Satellite Office can be opened in another city, and will be fully equipped and staffed as needed.

Contacts: At 3rd, 6th and 9th levels, the Gumshoe gains a Contact. This Contact is a full-fledged NPC, which could be developed jointly with the Player and the Gamemaster. The Contact should be an expert in their field and very well connected. The character can approach a Contact once per adventure or act, and request a favor (usually access to information or a location beyond the character's ability, or specialized equipment or

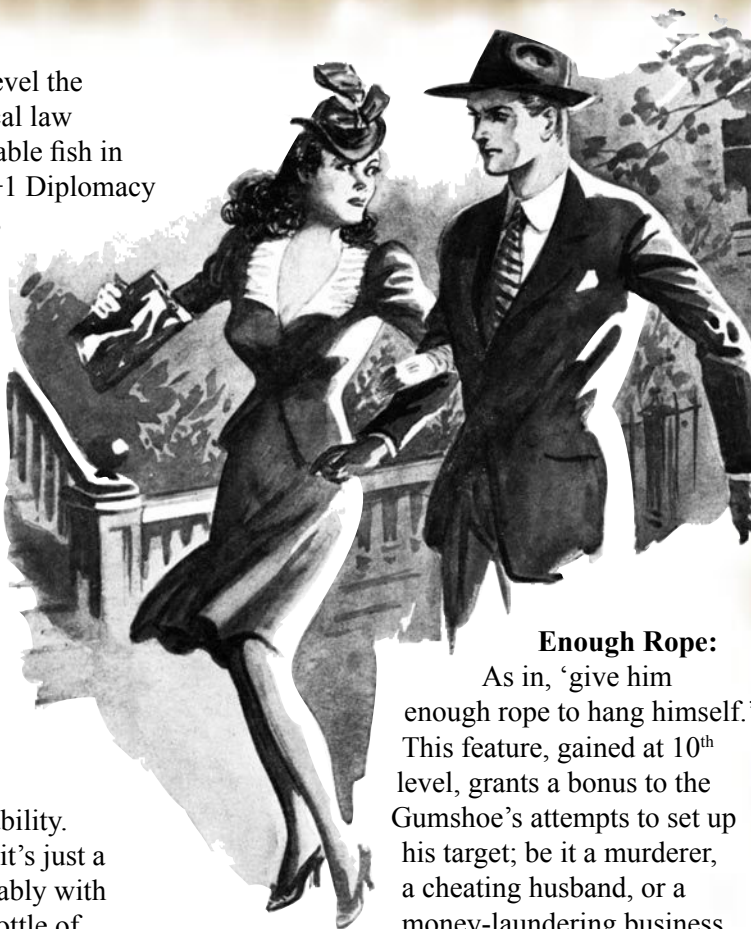


service.) The Gamemaster will determine the likelihood of the request being granted, based on the possible negative impact to the Contact; the Gumshoe will attempt a Diplomacy skill check at +4, modified by any roleplaying bonuses. The purpose of the Contact is to not only serve as an advantage to the character, but a roleplaying opportunity as well. Some ideas for Contacts are: data processor at the Police Department, numbers runner for a local crime boss, and local newspaper reporter.

Hard-bitten: At 5th level the Gumshoe has escaped enough trash compactors, sinking cars, burning buildings, and beat-down sessions to have developed a thick skin. The character gains two of the following feats: Endurance, Great Fortitude, or Toughness. They gain the remaining feat at 8th level.

Citizen's Arrest: Starting at 2nd level the Gumshoe is recognized by the local law enforcement authorities as a tolerable fish in their pond. The character gets a +1 Diplomacy bonus when dealing with the cops or any other civic authority. This bonus becomes +2 at 4th level, +3 at 6th, and finally +4 at 8th. This bonus does stack with the Gumshoe's Hometown Advantage. In addition, the Citizen's Arrest feature makes actions taken by the character legal jurisdiction in a court of law, providing he did not break the law...or at least, cannot be proven to have broken the law.

Deductive Reasoning: At 7th level the Gumshoe has developed an exceptionally keen deductive ability. Sometimes the facts are all there, it's just a matter of sorting them out- preferably with your feet up on your desk and a bottle of Scotch at your elbow. To use this feature the Gamemaster must approve- typically this would be used near the middle or end of an adventure, when all the facts have come to light, or at least been offered. If the character is stumped, he can retreat to his office or other secluded area, and spend time working out the facts. The character can spend one Action Point for a 'flash of inspiration' from the Gamemaster. The Gamemaster would then provide enough information to fill in the gaps in the Gumshoe's investigations up to that point. This shouldn't be a total gimme, but enough information to lead the Player to the 'a-ah!' moment he needs.



Enough Rope:

As in, 'give him enough rope to hang himself.' This feature, gained at 10th level, grants a bonus to the Gumshoe's attempts to set up his target; be it a murderer, a cheating husband, or a money-laundering business partner. Once the Gumshoe is sure of his facts, he can lay a trap for the criminal to incriminate himself in a recreation of the crime scene, or an ambush where the target comes to silence an invented witness, or any other of countless scenarios. Enough Rope gives a +4 bonus to the following skill checks when the Gumshoe is setting up the trap, and working to spring it: Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Forgery, Hide, Perform, and Sleight of Hand. This bonus also applies to convincing the right people to be on hand to witness the springing of the trap, such as the jilted spouse, the cops, etc.

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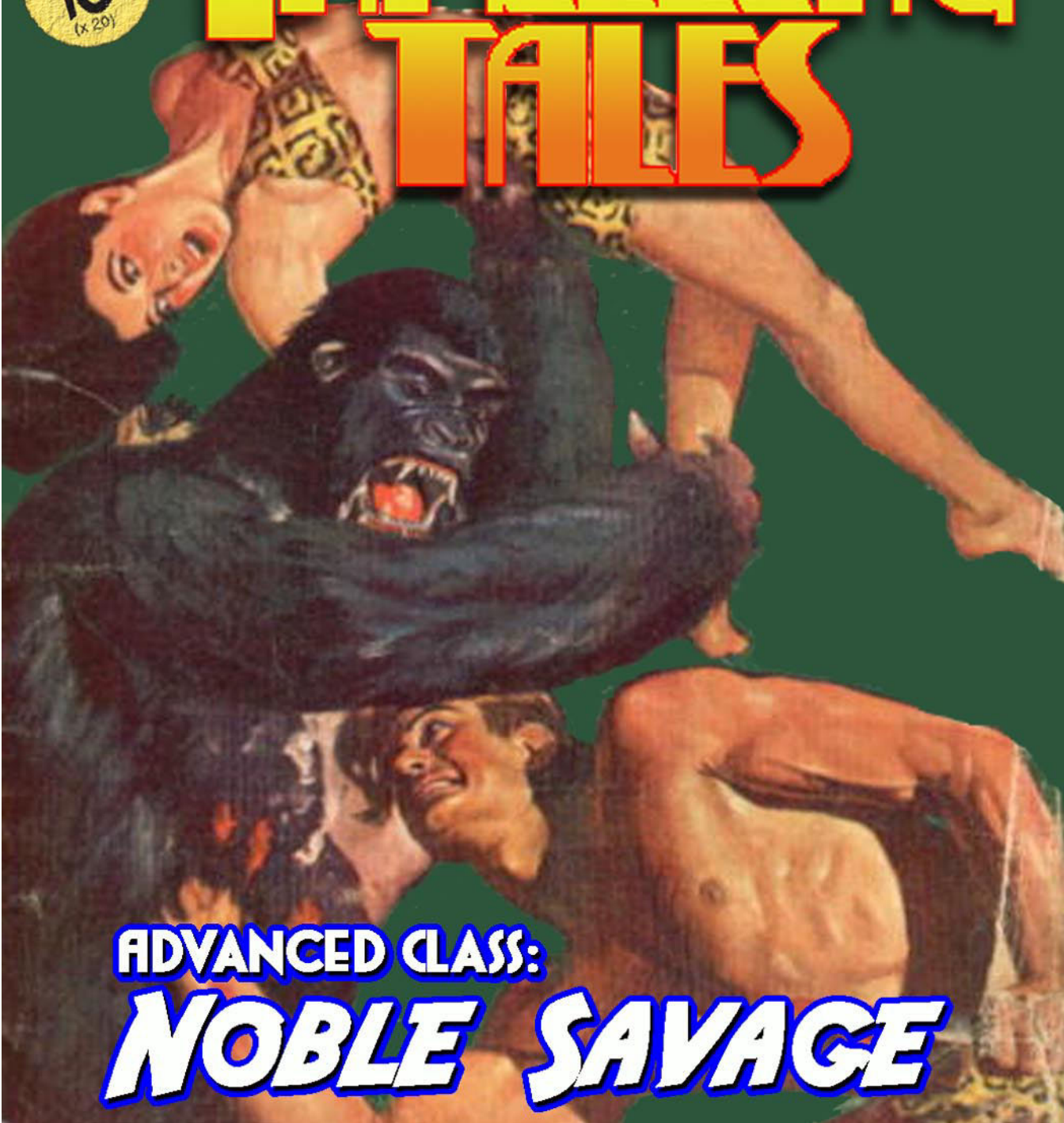
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D20 MODERN:

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THRILLING TALES



ADVANCED CLASS:

NOBLE SAVAGE

ADVANCED CLASS: *NOBLE SAVAGE*

Kamba crept silently along the upper branches of the tree, watching the column of men hack their way through the jungle beneath him, machetes clearing a wide swath ahead of them.

The night-birds had cried their alarm at this intrusion, and for once, their agitation was justified. Kamba had discovered the bodies of the Tumutu villagers that these men had tortured to death. The intruders had pried from them the secret of the location of the Lost City.

Kamba did not know the tribe of these intruders, but as they marched through the jungle, each marked by the emblem of a crooked cross, his instinct told him that the secrets of the Lost City could not be allowed to fall into the hands of such men.

He grabbed his spear in both hands, and leapt from the branch, bursting through the leafy canopy to land in a fighting crouch directly in front of the column of men. His green eyes flashed dangerously, and a low, animal growl rumbled from deep within him.

The men at the head of the column dropped their machetes, and the hired pack-bearers fled, all shouting "Kamba! Kamba!"

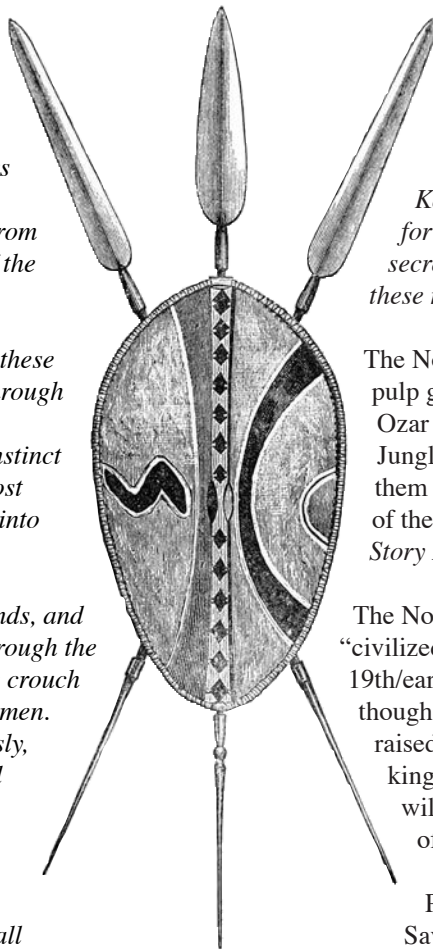
Sturmbannfuehrer Eberhardt, the man in command of the expedition, heard the shouts of the porters, and saw the golden-maned figure advancing on his

men, spear in in hand.

"Gott im Himmel! It is Kamba--Lion-man of the Congo! "

The order to fire never escaped Eberhardt's lips. He found himself staring, dumbfounded, at a 3-foot length of spear protruding from his chest.

Kamba drew his knife and stalked forward with dire purpose. The secret of the Lost City would die with these men.



The Noble Savage is an archetype of the pulp genre. Examples include Ki-Gor, Ozar the Aztec, Sheena: Queen of the Jungle, and, of course, the forefather of them all, Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan of the Apes, who first appeared in *All-Story Magazine* in October 1912.

The Noble Savage is a person from a "civilized culture" (as defined by late-19th/early 20th century standards) who, though incredible circumstances, was raised by creatures of the animal kingdom--trained to survive in the wilderness and attaining the pinnacle of human physical potential.

Pulp tales featuring the Noble Savage usually involved the character presented as the King of their savage domain, protecting the natural world from the machinations of some villain or another, although on occasion, the Noble Savage's adventures would taken them to the civilized world, where they would

inevitably demonstrate their innate superiority in any environment.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Noble Savage, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Attribute: Dexterity 15+, Strength 15+

Skills: Handle Animal (3 ranks), Survival (6 ranks)

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Noble Savage gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Noble Savage gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Noble Savage's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are as follows: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int),

Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Noble Savage advanced class.

Totem: The Noble Savage was raised by creatures of the wild, and develops the skills used every day by his animal patrons. Through the awakening of an untapped potential within, the Noble Savage gains special talents and abilities considered foreign to other members of his native species.

At 1st level, the Noble Savage selects a totem animal from the list on the next page. Once

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+2	+2	+0	Totem, Animal Companion, Feral	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+3	+3	+0	Master of the Wild	+2	+1
3rd	+2	+3	+3	+1	Uncanny Dodge, Bonus Feat	+2	+1
4th	+3	+4	+4	+1	Totem	+3	+2
5th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Uncanny Dodge, Bonus Feat Master of the Wild (2/day)	+3	+2
6th	+5	+5	+5	+2	Feral Senses, Bonus Feat	+4	+3
7th	+5	+5	+5	+2	Totem, Uncanny Dodge	+4	+3
8th	+6	+6	+6	+2	Master of the Wild (3/day), Feral Voice	+5	+3
9th	+6	+6	+6	+3	Totem, Uncanny Dodge	+5	+4
10th	+7	+7	+7	+3	Totem, Master of the Wild (4/day)	+6	+4

the totem animal is chosen, it may not be changed unless otherwise approved by the GM. This totem represents the species who raised the Noble Savage, and whose abilities he or she will emulate. The Noble Savage gains 1 new ability of the player's choice from the list of abilities provided for that totem. Another ability (from the same list) may be chosen at 4th level, 7th level, 9th level and 10th level. The Noble Savage may not select any ability multiple times, unless otherwise specified in the description.

TOTEM ANIMALS

LION:

Toughness	+3 hit points*
Ambush	+4 competence bonus to all Hide Checks
Stalking	+4 competence bonus to all Move Silently Checks
King of the Jungle	+4 competence bonus to all Intimidate Checks
Pounce	Can make a full attack after a move action if attacking in the 1st round.

* May be selected multiple times



CHEETAH:

Speed	+5 ft. to Speed*
Center of Balance	+2 competence bonus to all trip attacks *
Moving Target	+1 bonus to Defense
Quick Reflexes	+1 bonus to Reflex saves
Trip	can attempt to trip an opponent (+3 check mod) after a successful attack, without making a touch attack, or provoking an attack of opportunity

* May be selected multiple times

APE:

Deceptive Intellect	+2 skill points*
Master Climbers	+4 competence bonus to all Climb Checks
Animal Agility	+4 competence bonus to all Tumble Checks
Quick Movement	+1 bonus to Defense
Jungle Warrior	doubled critical threat range w/ unarmed attacks

* May be selected multiple times

BEAR:

Sturdy Build	+3 hit points*
Natural Swimmer	+4 competence bonus to all Swim Checks
Inner Might	+1 bonus to Fortitude saves
Thick Skinned	+1 bonus to Defense
Great Strength	+1d6 damage to unarmed attacks

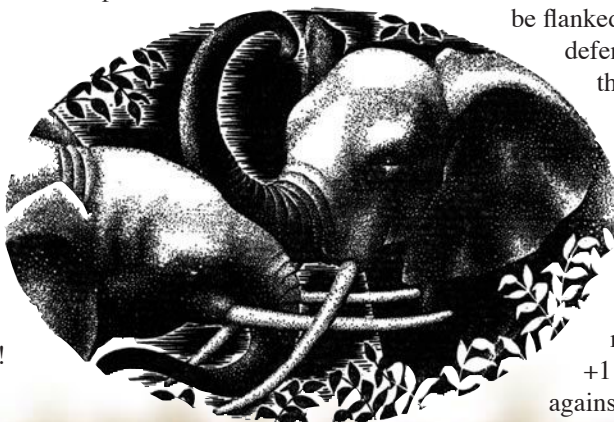
* May be selected multiple times

WOLF:

Skilled Hunter	+2 skill points*
Tracker	+4 competence bonus to all Survive Checks
Hard Target	+1 bonus to Defense
Pack Tactics	+4 bonus to melee attacks when flanking
Trip	can attempt to trip an opponent (+3 check mod) after a successful attack, without making a touch attack, or provoking an attack of opportunity

* May be selected multiple times

Other Totem animals can be created, with the approval of the GM. The pulps included examples of Noble Savages raised by such strange choices as Elephants and Vultures!



Animal Companion: As a child of the wilderness, the Noble Savage typically looks to creatures of the wild for friendship. At 1st level, the Noble Savage may start with an animal companion—a lifelong friend with whom the Noble Savage has established complete trust. The Noble Savage's companion may be any animal type (with the GM's approval), and may have up to 3 Hit Dice.

Feral: As a creature of the wild, the Noble Savage possesses an animalistic nature. At 1st level, the Noble Savage gains a +3 bonus to all Handle Animal and Intimidate checks.

Master of the Wild: At 2nd level and above, the Noble Savage gains the ability to call on the natural talents of his animal heritage once per day, performing amazing feats of skill and athleticism. Each round, the Noble Savage gains a +10 circumstance bonus to any one class skill of his choice. The Noble Savage may choose a new skill each round, but he gains the bonus on only one skill per round. This ability lasts for a number of rounds equal to 3+ the Noble Savage's Constitution modifier.

At 5th level, the Noble Savage can do this twice a day. At 8th level, three times a day, and at 10th level, four times a day.

Uncanny Dodge: At 3rd level and above, the Noble Savage retains his Dexterity bonus to Defense when caught flat-footed or struck by an unseen attacker.

At 5th level, the Noble Savage can no longer be flanked. The exception to this defense is that a character with the uncanny dodge ability at least 4 levels higher than the Noble Savage can still flank.

At 7th level, the Noble Savage gains a +1 bonus to Reflex Saves made to avoid traps, and a +1 dodge bonus to Defense against all attacks made by traps.

At 9th level, these bonuses rise to +2.

Bonus Feat: At 3rd, 5th, and 6th level, the Noble Savage may take a Bonus Feat. The feat must be taken from the following list.

Alertness, Animal Affinity, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Athletic, Brawl, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Elusive Target, Endurance, Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency, Frightful Presence, Great Fortitude, Heroic Surge, Improved Brawl, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Track, Weapons Finesse.

Feral Senses: At 6th level, the Noble Savage gains the use of Feral Senses, gaining a +2 bonus on all Listen and Spot checks (+4 if the character already has the Alertness feat).

Feral Voice: At 8th level, the Noble Savage gains the ability to mimic the sounds of animals, from mating calls to threatening roars. The Noble Savage makes an opposed Knowledge (nature) check against a Listen check in order to imitate the sounds of any small, medium or large animal. This can be used to trick others, or to attract the attention of other animals in the area, making them react appropriately (a lion's roar, for example, might draw other lions to investigate, or make gazelles run, etc.).



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PULP VILLAINS: **NAZIS**

A SOURCEBOOK FOR

THRILLING TALES

OR ANY MODERN D20 GAME

PULP VILLAINS: NAZIS



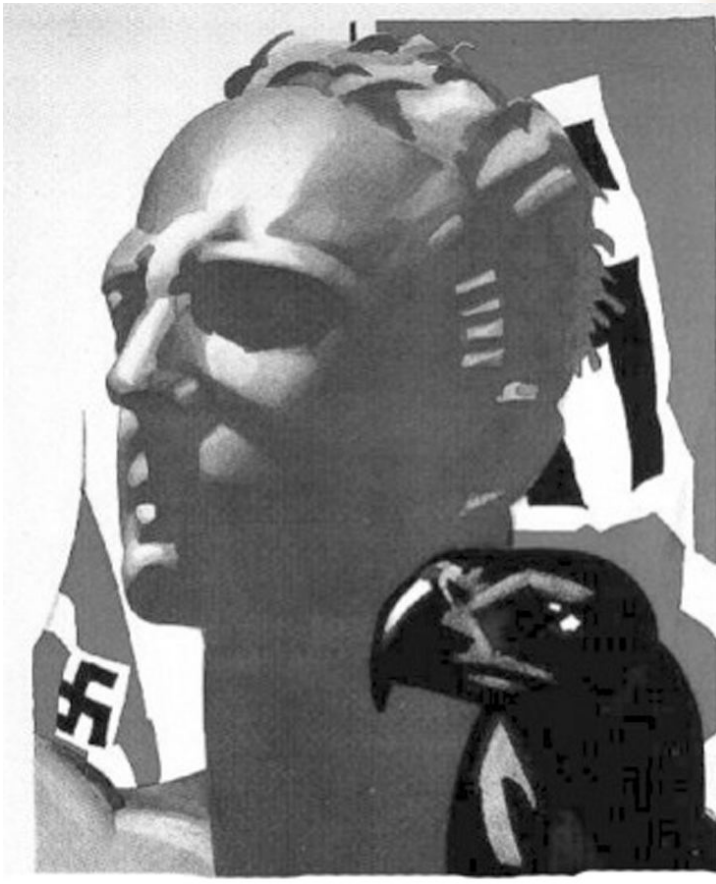
The Green Falcon hung precariously by his fingers from the metal gantry. Below him, the distant ground was visible through the open maintenance bay of the zeppelin. Above him, the barrel of a gun, held in the leather-clad hands of SS Major Reinhardt Kritzinger.

The Nazi cocked the Luger, ready to fire at the helpless form that dangled below him. "So this is the end of the famous Grünfalke. Pathetic. You will die unknown, unmourned...and a failure. The delivery of the poison gas via this airship is already complete. We will release it, and the prevailing winds will carry it into New York City. The death toll will be tremendous...and the shock of it will completely break the spirit of this mongrel nation."

Kritzinger grinned maniacally as he saw one of the Green Falcon's hands lose its grip and slip off the gantry.

"You're forgetting something." The Green Falcon said calmly. "The poison gas is flammable....and so is hydrogen." His hand came back into view, gripping a chromed .45.

The weapon spat death in the enclosed space, as the Green Falcon let go of the gantry and fell, still firing. Bullets ripped through the gas bags all around the Nazi, and ricocheted off the metal supports, throwing sparks.



The Hindenberg erupted into a huge ball of flame over Lakehurst, New Jersey...and the secret cargo of poison was consumed in the conflagration.

...and what of the Green Falcon?

Well that is another tale....

Perhaps no other group makes as perfect a villain for pulp RPG campaigns as the Nazis. They are the embodiment of evil, and suited for any tale, whether it is a straightforward tale of espionage, or a far-fetched story of occult powers and super-science.

Ironically, for much of the run of the pulps themselves, the Nazis weren't featured as villains that often, until late in the thirties when conflict with them began to seem inevitable. The earlier pulps avoided real-world politics, in favor of featuring obviously fascist villains from made-up nations.

THE RISE OF THE NAZIS

In the years following World War I, Germany was ruled by a democratic Republic. The Weimar Republic was an unstable government, and was constantly under attack from both left-wing and right-wing reactionary political parties, fighting to shape the future of the country and wrest control away from the Republic.

Many of these reactionary organizations were occult societies formed during the previous century. Among these were the New Templars, the Runic Order, and the Thule Society, an occult group obsessed with racial purity, anti-Semitism, national pride and militarism.

The Thule Society sponsored a miniscule political party, the German Worker's Party -- in reality little more than the strong arm of the Thules, thugs that

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they could use against other groups. All of that changed with the arrival of Adolf Hitler.

Hitler was born in 1899 in Austria. An undistinguished student, Hitler had several unsuccessful attempts to become a student of art in the Vienna College of Fine Art, and was forced to take several menial jobs performing manual labor.

Jewish citizens were very prominent in the cultivated society of Vienna, and Hitler saw them as blocking his rightful ascendance as a great artist. This anti-Semitism, coupled with a growing fascination with the Aryan ideal of German culture,

AN IMPORTANT POINT

This supplement is in no way an effort to downplay the very real evil represented by the Nazi ideology--nor does it intend disrespect to the memory of the millions killed by the Nazi regime. It is simply an examination of two-dimensional villains as portrayed in the pulp genre. Real-life Nazis are a serious subject. Pulp Nazis are scene-chewing Evil Villains. This supplement deals with the latter.

would shaped Hitler's political opinions.

During the First World War, Hitler served as a corporal in the German army. He fought bravely, being awarded the Iron Cross, and was wounded in combat. During his hospitalization, he heard of the German defeat. He believed that Germany had been betrayed from within.

When he was discharged from the hospital, he found himself, like many of his comrades, unemployed. Like many disaffected veterans, he joined one of the paramilitary, political organizations—the German Workers' Party.

By 1920, the German Workers' Party changed its name to the National Socialist German Workingmen's Party (abbreviated as the Nazi Party). By his skill as a fiery orator and efficient organizer, Hitler became the *Führer* (leader) of the Party in 1921.



The Party adopted an emblem, the swastika -- an ancient symbol used by Buddhists and western occultists. Through the party's newspaper, Hitler fiercely denounced the Treaty of Versailles and the socialists who had, he believed, delivered a 'stab in the back' to Germany in 1918.

Under Hitler, the party which had begun as a strong-arm group to protect the interests of the Thule Society, organized its own strong-arm group -- the *Sturmabteilung* (also known as the S.A., Stormtroopers, or Brownshirts) to protect the Nazi meetings and disrupt the meetings of other parties, such as the Communists.

In November 1923, Hitler and his S.A., joined by other militant reactionaries, tried to overthrow the Weimar Republic. They carried out a coup d'état in Munich, but the Bavarian government suppressed them. In April 1924, Hitler was put on trial and was sentenced to five years' imprisonment at Landsberg prison, but in a typical display of the leniency the Weimar Republic showed to the right-wing, he was released after serving only 9 months.

While in prison, Hitler laid down the basic ideas behind the Nazi movement in his book, *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle).

Hitler divided mankind into two groups: the Aryans (the master-race) and the non-Aryans (the slave races). The Germans, he asserted, were Aryans, and destined to rule the world. Hitler said that the Jews were the most vicious of the slave races, having caused the German defeat in World War

I by encouraging the socialists in the November Revolution in 1918 which overthrew the Kaiser.

Hitler suggested if Germans wanted their nation to be strong again, they had to believe in the *Führer* -- Hitler himself. He would remove the Jews from Germany so that they would not pollute the German blood by intermarriage. Then he would replace the parliamentary government by Nazi rule—the rule of an elite who accepted orders from Hitler alone. The Nazis would nationalize the big business, provide employment for all workers, implement land reforms for peasants and destroy the chains placed upon the German people by the Jewish

capitalists. Hitler claimed that he would make Germany economically self-sufficient. He would abolish the humiliating Treaty of Versailles, bring about the union of all Germans in a single German state (the *Grossdeutschland*) and, in order to provide for additional living space for the nourishment of the future generations ('*Lebensraum*'), Hitler proposed to conquer eastern Europe.

With a party platform which appealed to many Germans, the Nazis took part in the national elections. However, in times of economic prosperity, the Nazis could make little headway.

In the election of May 1924, only 32 Nazis were elected to the Reichstag. In December 1924, the number dropped to 14. Despite the poor election results, the Nazi Party still showed a sturdy growth in these years. By 1929, the total party membership was 178,000.

The Nazis began to receive financial support from industrialists who saw the Nazis as an anti-socialist and anti-communist tool which could be used to keep the left-wing in check.

Hitler strengthened his control of the party by forming his personal body-guard, the *Schutzstaffel* ("Defense Unit"), also known as the SS or Blackshirts.

With the Great Depression, the Nazis saw their opportunity. In October 1929, the New York Stock Market suddenly collapsed. American investors recalled their short-term loans from Germany, sending the economy into a tailspin. In early 1931, one of Germany's three largest banks collapsed. The German economy depended largely on American

loans. Without American loans, production dropped drastically, and exports dried up. By 1932, a quarter of the working population of Germany was unemployed.

Faced with economic hardship, the Germans lost any faith they might have in the democratic Republic. It was not surprising that they turned to extreme parties for desperate remedies. In the general election of September 1930, the Nazis won 6.5 million votes, took 107 seats in the Reichstag and became the second largest party in the country. The Communists obtained 4.5 million votes and 77 seats. Although the Social Democrats remained the largest party, it had lost much popularity and support.

The unpopularity of the government was shown in the presidential election of April 1932. The Republican coalition put forward Von Hindenburg. He was re-elected with nineteen million votes. But Hitler, who also entered himself for election, won thirteen and a half million votes.

In the next six months, the government tried to get a Reichstag majority by holding two elections. The first took place in July.

In that election, the votes for the Nazis more than doubled. The Nazis won 230 Reichstag seats and became the largest single party in the Reichstag.

Disappointed by the results of the election, the government held another in November. However, in this election, the Communists made tremendous gains and won 100 seats in the Reichstag. Many influential businessmen and landlords became alarmed at the spectre of a Communist Revolution in Germany, and so the conservative Nationalists decided that their cause could be served by supporting Hitler, a staunch anti-communist.



On January 28, 1933, Von Hindenburg invited Hitler to be the Chancellor of Germany.

It took Hitler only eighteen months to concentrate all of the power into his own hands.

The first thing he did was to arrange for an election so as to secure a pro-Nazi majority in the Reichstag. To prepare for Nazi success in the election, Hitler appointed party member Hermann Goering as Minister of Interior of Prussia and ordered the S.A. and S.S. to launch assaults on the anti-Nazi political parties.



On 27 February, the Reichstag building was burned down and the Communists were falsely accused of using the fire as a signal for Communist insurrection. In the guise of defending the country from an alleged Communist Revolution, Hitler asked for emergency power from President Hindenburg.

In a wave of hysteria over the perceived Communist threat, President Hindenburg signed a decree suspending the civil liberties guaranteed under the Constitution. Henceforth, the German citizens had no personal liberty, no freedom of speech, no freedom of assembly, and no freedom of expression. They were subject to house searches and arrest and could be tried by the special People's Courts. Hitler made use of this presidential emergency power to immediately arrest five thousand Communist officials.

In the Reichstag election that followed, the Nazis

banned the Communist and Socialist newspapers. The Nazis also made use of the radio stations to broadcast propaganda. The Stormtroopers marched in the streets in a show of force to influence the election. Still, less than one half of the electorate (43.9%) voted for Hitler, so that only with the aid of the Nationalists (8%) was Hitler able to obtain a bare majority in the Reichstag.

Hitler wanted to transfer all legislative power of the Reichstag to himself, but any change in the Constitution required a two-thirds majority in the Reichstag. Thus Hitler arrested 81 Communist deputies, and bribed the Nationalist Party and the Centre Party. As a result, in March 1933, the Nazis outvoted the Social Democrats by 444 to 94 and passed the Enabling Bill which gave Hitler unlimited power to draft and pass any laws without the Reichstag. The German Constitution was destroyed.

Hitler wasted no time in consolidating his power. The Law of Reconstruction of the Reich (January 1934) abolished the state legislatures and subordinated them to the central government at Berlin. Trade Union offices were raided by the S.A. and S.S. troops. Soon afterward, all political parties except the Nazi Party were declared illegal.

The time then came for Hitler to deal with his political rivals within the party. Ernst Roehm, the Chief of Staff of the S.A., was Hitler's chief political rival. Roehm had at his command 2 million Storm-troopers (S.A.). This constituted a great threat to Hitler's political position, since he feared that The S.A. might absorb the smaller German Army, leaving Roehm in command of the nations entire military force. Therefore, Hitler decided to get rid of Roehm and the S.A.

On 29th June, 1934. Hitler, accompanied by the *Schutzstaffel* (SS), personally arrested Ernst Roehm. During the next 24 hours 200 other senior SA officers were arrested. Many were shot as soon as they were captured but Hitler decided that Roehm should be allowed to commit suicide but, when Roehm refused, he was killed by two SS men.

The purge of the SA was kept secret until it was announced by Hitler on 13th July. It was during this speech that Hitler gave the purge its name: Night of the Long Knives.

Hitler claimed that 61 had been executed while 13 had been shot resisting arrest and three had committed suicide. Some historians have argued that as many as 400 people were killed during the purge. In his speech Hitler explained why he had not relied on the courts

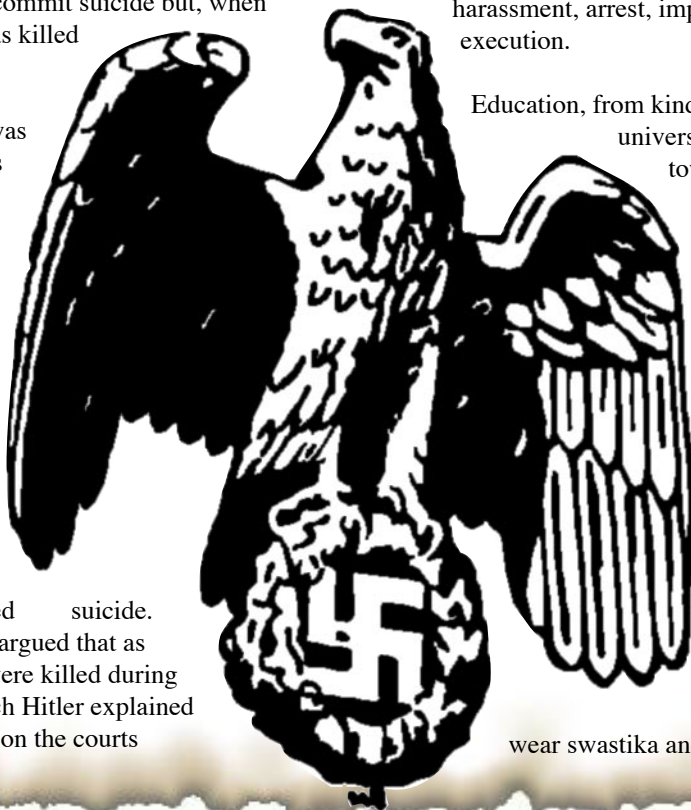
to deal with the conspirators: "In this hour I was responsible for the fate of the German people, and thereby I become the supreme judge of the German people. I gave the order to shoot the ringleaders in this treason."

When President Von Hindenburg died in August 1934, Hitler announced that he would combine in himself the offices of President and Chancellor. He used a combined title, *Führer und Reichskangler* (Leader and Reich Chancellor and Supreme Commander-in-Chief). Army officers took the oath of allegiance to Hitler personally. Hitler's personal dictatorship was now complete. The Third Reich was officially proclaimed.

THE THIRD REICH

The Nazi control of Germany was absolute. The entire nation was indoctrinated to the Nazi ideology. Those who did not adhere to the new directives found themselves the subjects of state-sponsored harassment, arrest, imprisonment or execution.

Education, from kindergarten to university, was geared towards the total immersion of Germany's youth in the tenets of the Nazi ideology. Boys (10-18 years old) were sent to the Hitler Youth, girls (10-18 years old) to the Hitler Maidens. School textbooks were re-written along Nazi lines and University professors were required to wear swastika and take an oath of



allegiance to Hitler.

Dissent within Germany was handled by the secret state police (*Geheime Staatspolizei* - abbreviated to Gestapo), an organization which began as the political department of the Prussian police during the Weimar Republic. With Hitler's rise to power, Hermann Goering became the interior minister of Prussia, taking over the Prussian political police and naming Rudolf Diels as its executive director.

The suspension of civil liberties following the Reichstag fire in 1933 gave the Gestapo complete freedom to impose "protective custody" (*Schutzhaft*) and to prevent undesirable political activities. When Goering was made Prime Minister of Prussia on 11 April 1933, the Gestapo was separated entirely from the overall police structure.

Heinrich Himmler eventually established SS control over the political police and concentration camps in all Germany, including Prussia, where, as Goering's deputy, he took over the Gestapo on 20 April, 1934.

Although throughout Germany the concentration camps came under the control of the SS, the Gestapo had the power to send its victims to them and could determine the prisoners' fate.

By September 1935, the famous Nuremberg Laws were issued. The Laws, in effect, deprived Jews of German citizenship and forbade them to marry 'Aryans'. Jews were excluded from participation in the German political and cultural life. Severe hardships were inflicted on Jews in their daily life (e.g. the need to sit in a separate part of the bus).



As time went on, the treatment of the Jews became worse and worse. They had their property confiscated, personal liberty deprived and eventually were forcibly relocated to ghettos, where they were confined. The persecution grew exponentially worse, and eventually the ghettos were emptied into the concentration camps. It is estimated that 6 million Jews perished under Nazi rule during the rule of the Third Reich.

During the mid-thirties, the Nazis began to re-militarize Germany, in anticipation of their planned conquest of Europe. The plan required the nullification of the Treaty of Versailles and the annexation of all German-speaking countries into the Reich. Hitler then planned to conquer France and Soviet Union before moving on to Britain. Italy would be run as a client state, under the fascist dictator Benito Mussolini.

The first step was to rebuild the German army, which had been kept small by the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. The Nazi industrial machine began to build aircraft and armor, under cover of supposedly civilian projects like the development of new tractors and the nationalized airline.

Hitler announced that he would add 36 new

divisions to Germany's Armed Forces. In 1936, German soldiers marched into the demilitarized Rhineland. The Treaty of Versailles was completely destroyed, as neither France nor Britain lifted a finger to stop the German invasion.

As early as 1933, Hitler had been pushing for the annexation of Austria. The Austrian chancellor, Engelbert Dollfuss, responded by outlawing the Austrian Nazi Party. The party continued to operate illegally, with German support, and on July 25, 1934, Austrian Nazis occupied the Parliament building and murdered Dollfuss.

Dollfuss' successor, Kurt von Schuschnigg, was pressured by the Germans into making concessions, which included lifting the ban on the Austrian Nazi Party and the placement of pro-Nazi ministers in key positions. In one final desperate move on March 9, 1938, Schuschnigg called for a popular vote on Austrian independence. Hitler's response to this was to demand that the vote be postponed and that Schuschnigg resign...and three days later, he sent German troops into Austria.

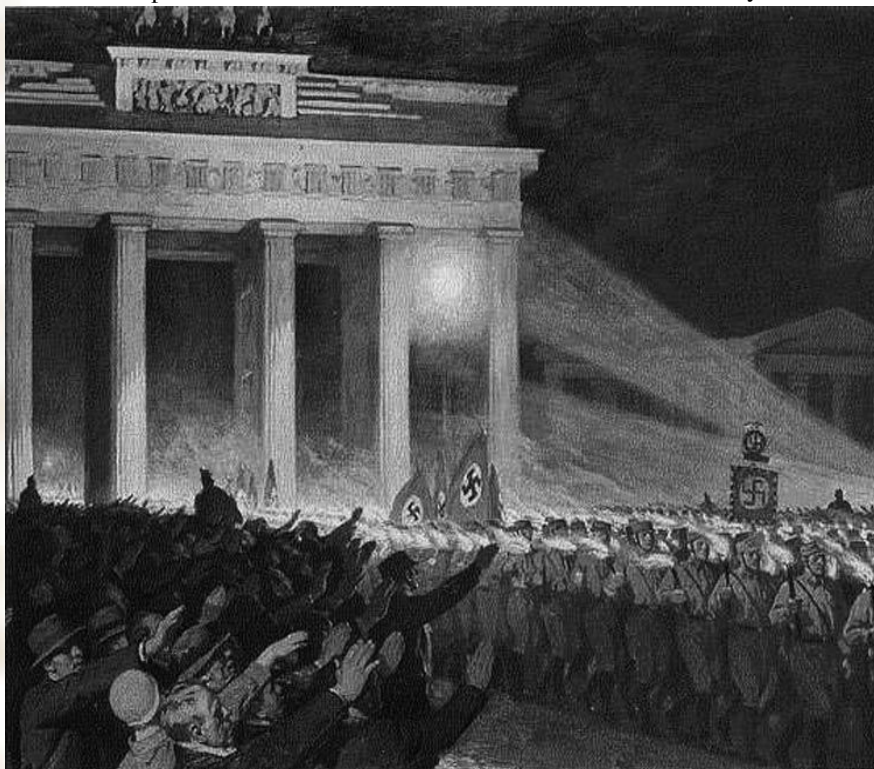
A Nazi puppet is sworn into office as Austria's Chancellor, and the new ministry is composed entirely of Nazis. France invited Italy and England to examine the events, but Italy declines stating that they "regard the events in Austria as the outcome of a preexistent state of affairs and as the free expression of the feelings and good will of the Austrian people, unequivocally confirmed by the imposing public demonstrations with which the events were greeted."

On March 15th, delirious crowds greeted Hitler as he paraded triumphantly through Vienna, and on April 10th, Hitler held his own election, and 99 percent of Austrians voted in favor of the annexation (*Anschluss*).

France and Britain protested, but weakly. British Prime Minister Chamberlain claimed that Germany was required to consult with England, France and Italy before acting, but this demand is ignored by Hitler. Realizing the threat that Germany's new position placed upon Czechoslovakia (now nearly surrounded by the Third Reich), Chamberlain

assured the Czechs that England would support them.

However, by the fall of 1938, England, France and Italy would force the Czechs into handing territory over to the Germans, and by the close of the decade, the Third Reich's invasion of the rest of Czechoslovakia and invasion of Poland began the Second World War (which brought the pulp era to a close).



NAZI WEAPONS

The following table provides statistics for weapons used by the Nazis which appear in the NPC stat blocks presented later in this book.

Note that these tables only detail weapons that were available to the Nazis up until the end of the 1930s. Some of the more famous weapons of the Reich were not developed until the 40s.

Handguns

(Require the Personal Firearms Proficiency Feat)

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
Luger P-08	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S	8/32 box	Small	2 lb.	15	Lic (+1)
Mausers C96	2d8	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S	10 box	Small	2 lb.	17	Lic (+1)
Walther PPK	2d4	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S	7 box	Small	1 lb.	15	Lic (+1)
Walther P-38	2d6	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	S	8 box	Small	1 lb.	16	Lic (+1)

Luger P-08

One of the world's most recognizable handguns, the Luger was the standard officer's sidearm for the Third Reich. The 9mm Luger is available with either a standard 8-round clip, or a unique 32-round "snail" drum magazine.

Mausers C96

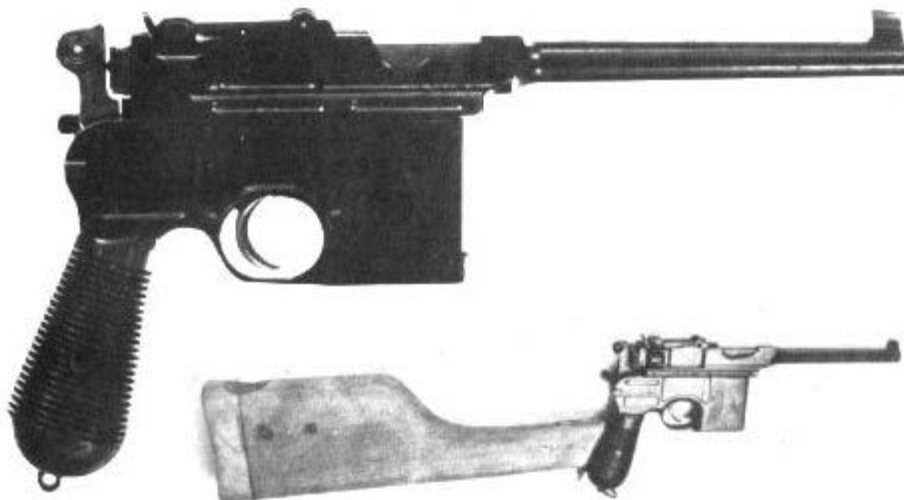
Also known as the "broomhandle", due to its distinctive grip, the Mauser is unusual in that its magazine of 7.62mm bullets is in front of the trigger guard, and not housed in the grip, as is standard with most autoloaders. The Mauser can also be fitted with a stock, allowing it to be fired while braced against the shoulder (+1 to hit). Gamers probably know this weapon best as the basis for Han Solo's blaster prop.

Walther PPK

The trademark weapon of certain superspies, the .32 PPK is a small, simple and reliable autoloader with a design that dates back to 1930. It was often carried by high-ranking German officers who did not wish to carry the heavier Luger. The PPK was also the favored weapon of the Gestapo.

Walther P-38

This 9mm pistol was designed as a modernized, more easily manufactured replacement for the Luger in 1938. Nazi agents and mad scientists on the "cutting edge" of technology will be armed with the P-38.



Longarms

(Require the Personal Firearms Proficiency Feat)

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
Mauser M32	2d8	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	S,A	20 box	Small	2 lb.	18	Lic (+1)
MP-38/40	2d6	20	Ballistic	50 ft.	S,A	32 box	Med	5 lb.	19	Mil (+3)
MPE (Erma)	2d6	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	S, A	32 box	Med	7 lb	17	Mil (+3)
Gewehr 98K	2d10	20	Ballistic	90 ft.	S	5 box	Large	8 lb.	17	Res (+2)

Mauser M32

The first widely-used true machine pistol, the 7.62mm M32 is an automatic fire version of the C96. The weapon is nearly impossible to fire without the stock in place -- without the stock, the firer suffers a -8 penalty to hit.

MP (Maschinenpistole)-38/40

The most famous German submachinegun, the 9mm MP-38/40 was commonly referred to as the "Schmeisser," although Hugo Schmeisser was not on the weapon's design team. Originally available in late 1937 (the MP-38), and 1939 (the MP-40), the models are essentially identical.

MP (Maschinenpistole)E (Erma)

The predecessor to the MP-38, the Erma was introduced in the 1920s. The 9mm MPE has a barrel jacket with long slots, a 32 shot detachable box magazine entering from the left, and a unique wooden pistol grip in the stock. The weapon was used by the SS.

Gewehr 98K

The bolt-action Gewehr 98K was the standard service rifle of the German army from 1898 to 1945, and was reputed to be one of the finest military rifles ever produced. The 7.92mm weapon (use 7.62 Rifle ammo in the main rulebook for pricing) was reliable, durable, and accurate. Fitted with a scope, it could be pressed into service as a sniper rifle.

Heavy Weapons and Explosives

(Require the Exotic Firearms Proficiency Feat)

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
MG-13	2d8	20	Ballistic	110 ft.	A	25 box	Huge	24 lb.	21	Mil (+3)
MG-26	2d8	20	Ballistic	100 ft.	A	30 box	Huge	21 lb.	21	Mil (+3)
MG-34	2d10	20	Ballistic	110 ft.	A	Linked	Huge	26 lb	22	Mil (+3)
MG-37T	2d10	20	Ballistic	100 ft.	A	Linked	Huge	40 lb.	22	Mil (+3)
Panzerfaust	10d6 *	—	—	150 ft.	1	—	Large	8 lb.	17	Mil (+3)
Stielhandgranate	4d6 *	—	Slashing	10ft.	1	—	Small	2 lb.	15	Mil (+3)

*this weapon does special damage. see description.

MG (Maschinengewehr) -13

The MG13 was a light machinegun constructed by rebuilding the old Dreyse gun left over after WW1. Used 7.92 shells (use 7.62 Rifle for ammo prices).

MG (Maschinengewehr) -26

A Czech weapon, where it was known as the ZB26, the 7.92 MG26 was used by the Nazis as a light infantry support weapon.

MG (Maschinengewehr) -34

The 7.92 MG34, introduced in 1934, was the mainstay of the Wehrmacht until 1942, when it was replaced by the superior MG42.

MG (Maschinengewehr) -37T

Another Czech weapon in 7.92mm, the MG37T was used by the German army as a tank-mounted machinegun.



Panzerfaust

A hand-held, single-shot, shape-charged anti-tank weapon, easily manufactured and designed to be cheap, one-use weapons to be used with little training.

When the Panzerfaust hits its target, it explodes like a grenade or other explosive, dealing it's 10d6 points of damage within a 10-foot radius (Reflex save DC18 for half damage). Because its explosive is a shape-charge designed to penetrate the armor of tanks, the Panzerfaust ignores up to 10 points of hardness if it strikes a vehicle, building or object. This applies only to the object struck, not other objects within the burst radius.

Stielhandgranate

The well-known "potato-masher" hand grenade. When the Steilhandgranate explodes it delivers its 4d6 points of damage within a 20-foot radius (Reflex save DC15 for half damage).

Gamemasters who are fully embracing the pulp feel and giving their Nazi villains access to

occult powers or the high-tech inventions of mad scientists should feel free to make use of weapons and equipment from any other supplement for Modern D20 play. Players can face minions of the Third Reich armed with rocket packs, ray guns, spellbooks and more.

NAZI VEHICLES

The chart on the following page features statistics for common vehicles available to the Nazis during the 1930s. Again, remember that many of the more famous vehicles were only developed after the start of the war, and therefore lay outside the scope of this supplement.

GROUND VEHICLES

Name	Crew	Pass	Cargo	Init	Maneuver	Top Speed	Defense	Hardness	HP	Purchase Size	DC	Restriction
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Motorcycles

BMW R12	1	0	0lb.	+0	+2	165(16)	10	5	18	M	23	Lic (+1)
(w/sidecar)	1	1	0lb	-1	+1	140(14)	10	5	22	L	25	Lic (+1)
SdKfz 2	1	1	500 lbs.	-2	-2	105 (10)	10	10	25	L	30	Mil (+3)

Cars

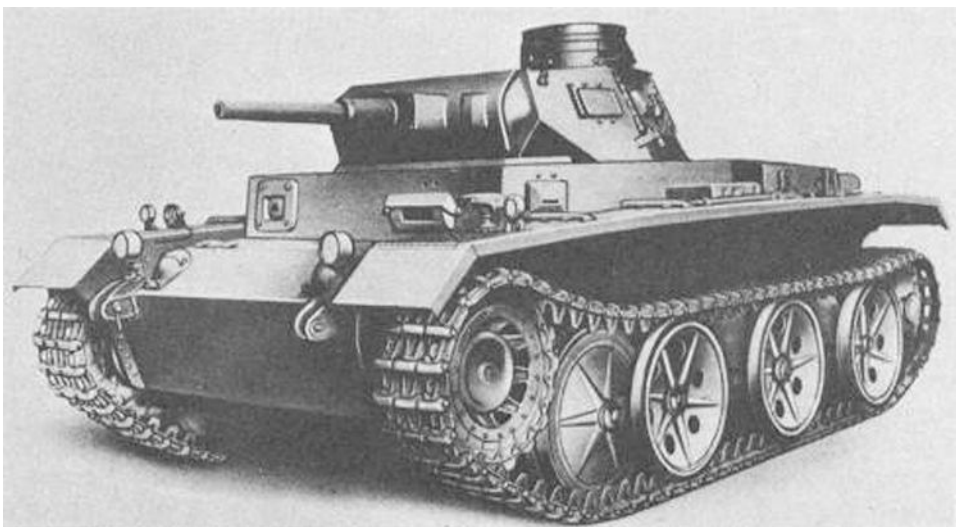
Mercedes 500K Staff Car	1	4	475lb.	-2	-1	220(22)	8	5	34	H	37	Lic (+1)
Mercedes 328WK Wehrmacht Kübelwagen	1	4	675lb.	-2	-2	175 (17)	8	10	34	H	33	Mil (+3)

Truck

SdKfz 7 Zugkraftwagen (Half-Track)	1	10	16,000lb.	-4	-4	165(16)	6	10	40	H	35	Mil (+3)
note: This vehicle is armed with either a single 37mm cannon, or a quad-mount 20mm cannon.												
SdKfz 231 Schwere Panzerspähwagen	1	3	9,000lb.	-2	-2	175(17)	8	10	38	H	34	Mil (+3)
note: This vehicle is armed with a single 20mm cannon and a MG13												

Military Vehicles

Panzerkampfwagen III (tracked tank)	5	0	450lb.	-4	-4	50 (5)	6	15	52	G	45	Mil (+3)
note: This vehicle is armed with a single 37mm cannon and a MG34												
SturmGeschütz III (tracked tank)	4	0	300lb.	-4	-4	70 (7)	6	20	60	G	47	Mil (+3)
note: This vehicle is armed with a single 75mm cannon and a MG37T												



BMW R12

A sturdy well-built motorcycle, available with or without a sidecar, used by the Third Reich as a vehicle for scouts or couriers. Famously appeared in the “jousting” scene in *The Last Crusade*.

SdKfz 2

A treaded motorcycle half-track, the Sd. Kfz. 2 Kettenkraftrad was originally conceived as a light support towing vehicle for mountain troops, but found favor with all Wehrmacht troops, especially those in the Eastern Front where it's excellent cross-country ability allowed it to maneuver in the mud-bogged roads and the mountainous Caucasus region.

Mercedes-Benz 500K Staff Car

The ubiquitous long black convertible with Reich flags mounted on the forward wheel wells, used to ferry Nazi officers in style.

Mercedes-Benz 328WK Wehrmacht Kübelwagen

A lightly-armored all-purpose multi-terrain car for military use. Filled a similar role to the American Jeep.

SdKfz 7 Zugkraftwagen

A treaded half-track truck, used primarily as a weapons platform for anti-aircraft and infantry support duties. The most common varieties of the Zugkraftwagen were armed with either a single 37mm cannon, or quad-mounted 20mm cannons.

SdKfz 231 Schwere Panzerspähwagen

A six-wheeled truck, with a rear 4-wheel drive, used for hauling and infantry support. The Schwere Panzerspähwagen was armed with a single 20mm cannon and an MG-13 on a swivel mount.



Panzerkampfwagen III

One of the Reich's famed Panzer tanks, the Panzerkampfwagen III was relatively lightly armed and armored, with 15mm armor and a 37mm cannon.

SturmGeschütz . III

The SturmGeschütz (Assault Gun) was designed using the main hull of the Panzer III. Originally designed as support artillery weapon it was later up gunned with a massive 75mm cannon and used as a tank-killer, where it was a great success.



Vehicle Weapons

(Require the Exotic Firearms Proficiency (cannons) Feat)

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
20mm cannon	3d12	20	Ballistic	150 ft.	A	Linked	Huge	*	*	*
37mm cannon	5d12	20	Ballistic	150 ft.	S	1	Huge	*	*	*
75mm cannon	10d12	20	Ballistic	150 ft.	S	1	Huge	*	*	*

* Weight, purchase DC and restriction rating do not apply. These weapons are part of the vehicles on which they are mounted.

OTHER VEHICLES

Name	Crew	Pass	Cargo	Init	Maneuver	Top Speed	Defense	Hardness	HP	Size	Purchase DC	Restriction
Aircraft												
Junkers JU-87D-1 Stuka (divebomber)	2	0	0lb.	-2	+1	400 (40)	6	5	30	G	40	Mil (+3)
note: vehicle is armed with 2 machineguns in the wings (use MG-34) and one 250kg bomb (use stats for 100 blocks of C4, Modern page 124)												
Messerschmitt Bf109 (fighter)	1	0	0lb.	-1	+1	500 (50)	6	5	28	G	40	Mil (+3)
note: vehicle is armed with 2 machineguns in the wings (use MG-34)												
Junkers JU-52 (transport plane)	2	17	5,000lb.	-4	-4	220 (22)	6	5	44	G	45	Mil (+3)
note: vehicle is armed with 4 MG-34s in passenger-operated emplacements (1 fore, 1 aft, 1 port, 1 starboard)												
Zeppelin (Airship)	60	100	30,000lb.	-4	-4	275 (27)	6	5	54	G	50	Mil (+3)
note: weapons packages vary. If hit with an incendiary attack and a critical hit results, the hydrogen in the gas bags ignite, destroying the airship and doing 6d6 burn damage to all within.												
Naval craft												
Type VII A U-boat (surface)	42	8	5,000lb	-4	-4	80(8)	6	5	50	G	50	Mil (+3)
(submerged)				-2	-2	40(4)	8					
note: vehicle is armed with a 75mm deck gun, 11 torpedoes in 4 forward tubes (use stats for 10 blocks of C4, Modern page 124 , with a range increment for firing of 150)												

Junkers JU-87D Stuka

Stuka is the abbreviation of the German word *Sturzkampfflugzeug*, which designated all dive bombers. The main fighter/bomber used by the Luftwaffe, the Stuka would play a major role in the Blitzkrieg that swept across Poland, northern Europe and France.

In the later years of the war, the Ju 87 had a successful second life as an anti-tank weapon, striking armor columns from above.

Messerschmitt Bf109

One of the best air superiority fighters ever built, the Messerschmitt was the predator of the skies. The Bf109 was the Luftwaffe's standard single-seat fighter from 1935-1943 and was able to outfight or outrun virtually all opposition. The fighter was used primarily for intercept and bomber escort duties.



Junkers JU-52

Nicknamed "*Tante Ju*" (Auntie Ju) by German troops, the Junkers Ju-52 was the most famous transport of the Third Reich. The Ju-52 served as an airliner for many nations, including the German Lufthansa and eventually entered service as a troop transport for the Reich. The Ju-52 was slow and very lightly armed against fighters, but was used from the 30s right through to the end of the war.



Zeppelin

Nothing says "pulp Nazis" like an airship. These massive air vehicles have become iconic images. During the 1930s, the German company Zeppelin Luftschifftechnik constructed and operated several airships as a commercial airline, travelling across Europe, and eventually across the world. Vessels like the Graf Zeppelin and the Hindenberg, despite being civilian vessels, were emblazoned with the swastika by Hitler's order, so that the graceful giants could be seen as symbols of German might. Even though their use during this period of history was mostly civilian, GMs should feel free to throw players up against military airships as well...they're just too cool not to use!



Type VIIA U-boat

Another iconic Nazi vehicle, the U-boats travelled the Atlantic in predatory "wolfpacks", harassed shipping, delivered Nazi spies onto unsuspecting enemy beaches, and carried secret archeological discoveries to hidden island fortresses! There were many types of U-boat -- the statistics provided here correspond to the Type VIIA, provided as an example.



NAZI ARCHETYPES

The pages that follow contain NPCs that represent the most common archetypal uses of Nazis as represented in pulp stories, cliffhanger films and modern homages.

Nazi Soldier (Wehrmacht)

The average Nazi rank-and-file goon, ready to goose-step, seig heil and get socked in the jaw by our stalwart heroes.

For the purposes of pulp gaming, the Wehrmacht soldier is essentially the equivalent of an orc in a standard fantasy game. He's there to follow orders, and will fight fiercely against any opposition, only surrendering in the face of overwhelming power.

Strong Ordinary 1 CR 1; Medium-size humanoid; HD 1d8+1; HP 6; Mas 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 13, touch 13, flatfooted 11 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +1 class); BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4+2/19-20, knife), or +3 ranged (2d6+0, MP-38/40); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Occupation: Military (Drive, Knowledge [Tactics])

Skills: Climb +4, Drive +3, Handle Animal +0, Knowledge (Current Events) +3, Knowledge (Streetwise) +2, Knowledge (Tactics) +3, Repair +2, Spot +1, Survival +1, Swim +4

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Brawl, Personal Firearms Proficiency

Possessions: knife, MP-38/40; Wealth +6



Nazi Soldier (SS)

The *Schutzstaffel* represent a tougher and more fanatical variety of the Nazi goon. Use these guys when you want to provide more of a challenge to your player-characters.

Tough Ordinary 1/Strong Ordinary 1 CR 2; Medium-size humanoid; HD 1d10+2 plus 1d8+2; HP 15; Mas 15; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 13, touch 13, flatfooted 12 (+0 size, +1 Dex, +2 class); BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4+2/19-20, knife), or +2 ranged (2d6+0, MP-38/40); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1; AP 1; Rep +0; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Occupation: Military (Drive, Knowledge [Tactics])

Skills: Climb +4, Concentration +4, Craft (mechanical) +2, Demolitions +2, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +6, Search +2, Spot +3, Survival +2

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Brawl, Personal Firearms Proficiency

Possessions: knife, MP-38/40; Wealth +6

Nazi Officer

Now we're getting to the true pulp villains. Use officers as the main villains for adventures featuring the Third Reich. When your player-characters are more powerful, use a Nazi officer as the henchman of an even more powerful and insidious villain!

Dedicated Hero 3/Strong Hero 2/Soldier 4 CR 9; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d6+3 plus 2d8+2 plus 4d10+4; HP 51; Mas 13; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16, touch 16, flatfooted 16 (+0 size, +0 Dex, +6 class); BAB +7; Grap +9; Atk +9 melee (1d4+2/19-20, knife), or +8 ranged (2d6, Luger P-08); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +6; AP 4; Rep +1; Str 15, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 14.

Occupation: Military (Drive, Knowledge [Tactics])

Skills: Climb +3, Demolitions +6, Disable Device +4, Drive +8, Gather Information +4, Handle Animal +3, Intimidate +8, Investigate +4, Jump +7, Knowledge (Current Events) +7, Knowledge (History) +8, Knowledge (Tactics) +17, Knowledge (Technology) +6, Listen +9, Navigate +5, Pilot +3, Profession +4, Read/Write Language +2 (German, English, French), Sense Motive +6, Speak Language +2 (German, English, French), Spot +8, Survival +6, Swim +4, Treat Injury +4

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Combat Expertise, Combat Martial Arts, Exotic Firearms Proficiency (heavy machine guns), Far Shot, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Weapon Focus (Luger), Weapon Focus(MP-38/40)



Talents (Dedicated Hero): Skill Emphasis (Knowledge [Tactics]), Aware

Talents (Strong Hero): Ignore Hardness

Talents (Soldier): Weapon Focus, Weapon Specialization, Tactical Aid

Possessions: knife, Luger P-08; Wealth +15

Gestapo Goon

This instrument of the secret state police should be an omnipresent threat any time that your player-characters travel into areas that lie under the control of the Reich. The heroes should be watched at every step, wondering when the Gestapo will strike suddenly, and whisk them away to a windowless interrogation room...or worse.

Dedicated Hero 2/Tough Hero 1 CR 3; Medium-size humanoid; HD 2d6+4 plus 1d10+2 plus 1; HP 20; Mas 15; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 15, touch 15, flatfooted 13 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +3 class); BAB +1; Grap +0; Atk +0 melee (1d4+1, Pistol whip), or +3 ranged (2d4+0, Walther PPK); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +7; AP 1; Rep +2; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 11.

Occupation: Law Enforcement (Gather Information, Intimidate)

Skills: Bluff +1, Drive +4, Gather Information +3, Intimidate +7, Investigate +3, Knowledge (Current Events) +1, Knowledge (History) +1, Knowledge (Streetwise) +1, Knowledge (Tactics) +3, Listen +8, Sense Motive +6, Spot +7

Feats: Alertness, Brawl, Iron Will, Low Profile, Personal Firearms Proficiency

Talents (Dedicated Hero): Skill Emphasis (Intimidate)

Talents (Tough Hero): Robust

Possessions: Walther PPK; Wealth +6

Nazi Spy

Another iconic Nazi villain, the Spy operates as a Fifth Column within a target nation, engaging in espionage or sabotage on the orders of his or her superiors. Spies are tasked with stealing military secrets, assassinating political targets and many other dastardly deeds, unless your player-characters can track them down and uncover the hidden menace!



Dedicated Hero 3/Fast Hero 2/Infiltrator 2 CR 7; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d6+3 plus 2d8+2 plus 2d10+2; HP 24; Mas 9; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 18, touch 18, flatfooted 17 (+0 size, +1 Dex, +7 class); BAB +4; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, Sap), or +5 ranged (2d6+0, Walther P-38 (w/silencer)); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +6; AP 3; Rep +-1; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 8.

Occupation: Military (Hide, Move Silently)

Skills: Balance +3, Bluff +1, Climb +0, Disable Device +2, Disguise +2, Drive +3, Escape Artist +4, Gather Information +2, Hide +10, Investigate +11, Jump +0, Knowledge (Streetwise) +8, Knowledge (Tactics) +4, Listen +11, Move Silently +11, Pilot +2, Read/Write Language +2 (German, English, French), Search +3, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +4, Speak Language +2 (German, English, French), Spot +8, Tumble +4

Feats: Alertness, Attentive, Combat Martial Arts, Deceptive, Low Profile, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Stealthy

Talents (Dedicated Hero): Skill Emphasis (Gather Information), Empathy

Talents (Fast Hero): Evasion

Talents (Infiltrator): Sweep, Improvised Implements

Possessions: Sap, Walther P-38 (w/silencer); Wealth +9

Nazi Temptress

One of the stranger archetypes to develop during the pulp era, and which continues to the present day (for example, in *The Last Crusade* and *Hellboy*), is that of the Nazi Temptress: an evil agent of the Third Reich who uses her feminine wiles in an attempt to seduce our stalwart hero. The archetype in the pulps was often simply an excuse to engage in some blatant dominatrix-themed titillation.

Occasionally, the Temptress is irredeemably evil, serving as an example of Beauty actually being the Beast. In these cases, the allure of the character is set in stark contrast to her horrible acts. In other cases,

however, she can be swayed (naturally, having never met the “right guy”) and convinced to betray the Nazi cause at a suitably dramatic moment in the adventure.

Charismatic Hero 6 CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; HD 6d6+0 plus 3; HP 24; Mas 11; Init -1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 11, touch 11, flatfooted 12 (+0 size, -1 Dex, +2 class); BAB +3; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4+0, knife), or +2 ranged (2d6+0, Luger P-08); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +5; AP 3; Rep +4; Str 11, Dex 9, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 18.

Occupation: Dilettante (Intimidate)

Skills: Bluff +12, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +2, Gamble +5, Gather Information +13, Intimidate +7, Investigate +7, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) +4, Knowledge (Art) +5, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +8, Knowledge (Business) +4, Knowledge (Civics) +4, Knowledge (Current Events) +6, Knowledge (Popular Culture) +6, Knowledge (Streetwise) +4, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +5, Listen +6, Perform +13, Profession +7, Read/Write Language +4 (German, English, French, Russian, Italian), Sense Motive +6, Speak Language +4 (German, English, French, Russian, Italian), Spot +5

Feats: Alertness, Attentive, Deceptive, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Toughness, Trustworthy

Talents (Charismatic

Hero): Charm, Favor, Captivate

Possessions: knife, Luger P-08; Wealth +11



Nazi Scientist

*“Nuzzink in ze vurld can
schtopp me NOW! Bwah-ha-
ha-ha-haaaa!!!”*

You know the type. The Nazi scientist is bent on world domination via technological superiority...and, in pulp adventures, that means Giant Killer Robots, Flying Saucers, Secret Mind Control Devices and the ever-present Death Ray.

They can be used as either the main villain of an adventure, or as the research specialist working for a more powerful individual.

This archetype is built using the Mad Scientist advanced class, another release in the *Thrilling Tales* line available from Adamant Entertainment.

Smart Hero 4/Mad Scientist 5

CR 9; Medium-size humanoid;
HD 4d6+4 + 5d8-5; HP 33;
Mas 8; Init +2; Spd 30 ft;
Defense 15, touch 15, flatfooted 15 (+0 size, +2
Dex, +3 class); BAB +5; Grap +2; Atk +5 melee
(1d4+0, Pistol whip), or +7 ranged (2d6+0, Walther
P-38); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third
Reich; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +4; AP 8; Rep +3;
Str 10, Dex 15, Con 8, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Occupation: Academic (Knowledge [Earth and Life Sciences], Knowledge [Physical Sciences], Knowledge [Technology])

Skills: Bluff +8, Computer Use +6, Craft (chemical) +7, Craft (electronic) +15, Craft (mechanical) +16, Craft (pharmaceutical) +7, Craft (structural) +5, Decipher Script +8, Demolitions +11, Disable Device +8, Drive +6, Gather Information +4, Investigate +6, Jump +2, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) +5, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +6, Knowledge (Current



Events) +6, Knowledge (Earth and Life Sciences) +13, Knowledge (Physical Sciences) +15, Knowledge (Tactics) +7, Knowledge (Technology) +15, Pilot +6, Read/Write Language +2 (German, English, French), Repair +12, Research +13, Sense Motive +2, Speak Language +2 (German, English, French), Spot +4, Tumble +4

Feats: Builder (Craft [electronic], Craft [mechanical]), Cautious, Combat Expertise, Gearhead, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Studious.

Talents (Smart Hero): Savant (Craft [mechanical]), Plan

Talents (Mad Scientist): Weird Science (4/3/2), Scientific Improvisation, Inspiration

Possessions: Walther P-38 ; Wealth +12



Nazi Sorcerer

Hitler's obsession with the occult is a matter of historical record—even the Nazi party itself began as the political arm of an occult society, the Thule Gesellschaft. In 1935, Heinrich Himmler founded the *Studiengesellschaft für Geistesurgeschichte Deutsches Ahnenerbe* (Society for Research into the Spiritual Roots of Germany's Ancestral Heritage), known simply as the Ahnenerbe. The official purpose of the organization was to travel the world searching for evidence of the ancient Aryans. Records exist that indicate that the Ahnenerbe also

studied the occult sciences.

The Nazi Sorcerer is an operative of the Ahnenerbe, well-versed in magical practices (most likely based on the Nordic runes or other Germanic sources).

Smart Hero 6/Mage 3 CR 9; Medium-size humanoid; HD 6d6+12 plus 3d6+6; HP 50; Mas 15; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16, touch 16, flatfooted 14 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +4 class); BAB +4; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4+1, knife), or +6 ranged (2d6+0, Luger P-08); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Third Reich; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +9; AP 4; Rep +3; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Occupation: Shadow Scholar (Decipher Script, Knowledge [Arcane Lore], Read/Write Language)

Skills: Bluff +2, Concentration +5, Craft (chemical) +13, Craft (electronic) +8, Craft (mechanical) +7, Craft (pharmaceutical) +11, Decipher Script +16, Demolitions +6, Disable Device +6, Disguise +2, Forgery +10, Gather Information +7, Investigate +17, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) +23, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +8, Knowledge (Current Events) +7, Knowledge (Earth and Life Sciences) +7, Knowledge (History) +10, Knowledge (Physical Sciences) +8, Knowledge (Tactics) +8, Knowledge (Technology) +13, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +8, Navigate +6, Profession +6, Read/Write Language +6 (German, English, French, Latin, Hebrew, Arabic, Sanskrit), Research +17, Search +9, Sense Motive +3, Speak Language +6 (German, English, French, Latin, Hebrew, Arabic, Sanskrit), Spellcraft +5, Use Magic Device +1

Feats: , Attentive, Combat Martial Arts, Deceptive, Educated (Knowledge [Arcane Lore], Knowledge [Technology]), Heighten Power, Iron Will, Meticulous, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Studious

Talents (Smart Hero): Savant (Knowledge [Arcane Lore]), Plan, Exploit Weakness

Talents (Mage): Arcane Skills, Arcane Spells (*Daze, Detect Magical Aura, Light, Read Magic, Magic Missile, Sleep, True Strike, Invisibility, Protection from Bullets*), Summon Familiar, Scribe Scroll

Possessions: knife, Luger P-08; Wealth +10

TAKE THAT, FRITZ! (NAZI PLOT IDEAS)

The Nazis make excellent villains for use in your pulp campaign adventures, largely because of the expectations of the players. You say “pulp” to the average gamer, and you can be sure that he or she is anticipating landing a solid right hook on the jaw of a vile Nazi, while saving New York City from certain destruction.

You should be careful not to over-use the Third Reich, however. They lose their effectiveness as villains if the players start to suffer from “Nazi Fatigue.”

Remember that during the 1930s, the Reich was involved in a build-up to war readiness. Nazi operations should be largely covert...

Gamemasters shouldn't have Nazi troops travelling via rocket-pack to invade the United States, unless you're intending for your campaign to veer in alternate history...which is not to say that there isn't fun to be had with that sort of campaign. Just be sure that your players are aware that's what you're going for. After all, the baseline pulp campaign is assumed to take place in at least a close approximation of the real world. Don't stretch your player's suspension of disbelief unless you've been up front about your intentions from the beginning.

Espionage Adventures

The style of adventure that keeps its feet most firmly in the real-world soil, espionage adventures either pit your player characters against the secret machinations of Nazi agents within another nation, or conversely send the player-

characters in to infiltrate the Reich itself.

The most time-honored of these plot ideas is where the heroes must stop Nazi spies. The plot line usually goes along these lines: Nazi agents have stolen the plans for some super-secret military technology (it always seems to be either plans for a prototype aircraft or a bomb-sight for some reason), and the player-characters must catch the spies before they can successfully smuggle the technology out of the country.

A variation on this is the discovery that a Nazi agent is operating in a position of power. The player-characters are armed with the knowledge that the agent exists, but are unaware of the agent's identity. The adventure focuses on uncovering the spy. This sort of adventure is more suited to campaigns that





are less fantastic and more realistic in feel.

Espionage adventures can be set within the Reich as well, with player-characters sent in to steal secret plans themselves (turning the standard plot described above on its ear). Adventures within the Reich should be fraught with the danger of discovery -- player-characters should be hunted by agents of the Gestapo every step of the way.

Another iteration of the infiltration plot has the player-characters travelling into the Reich to rescue someone from the grip of the Nazis. Perhaps a Jewish scientist held against his will and forced to work on a doomsday weapon, or an American spy who has been captured by the Gestapo...either way the player-characters must find their way into Germany, avoid capture themselves, and participate in a break-out.

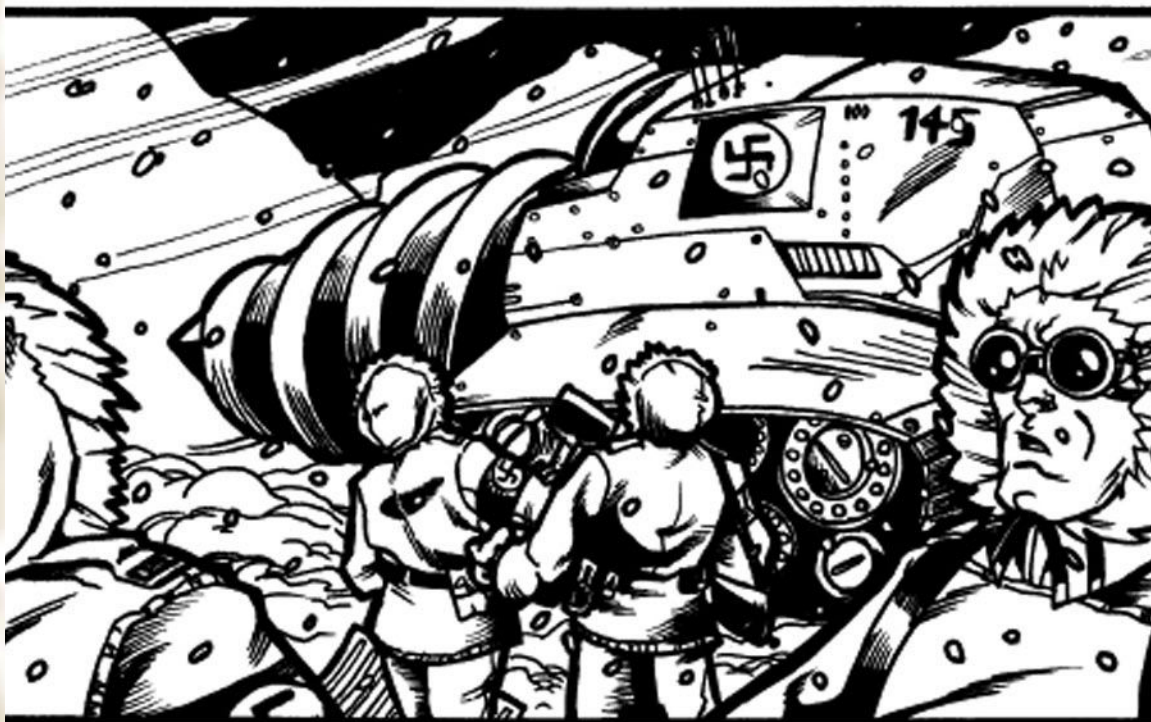
Enjoyably, these sorts of missions almost always seem to feature the prisoner being held in some Bavarian castle, which provides the Gamemaster with the perfect opportunity to run the pulp RPG equivalent of a standard “dungeon-crawl” adventure!

Military Adventures

Generally speaking, open conflict with the Nazis doesn't really occur until the start of the Second World War, which marks the end of the pulp era. Given that, there isn't much opportunity for adventures featuring military action against the Reich.

Pulp magazines of the time got around this by cooking up wars with thinly-veiled fictional fascists, or by setting military action during the First World War (for example, *G-8 and His Flying Aces*).

However, there is nothing preventing Gamemasters from engaging in secret military escapades: after all, the Flying Tigers engaged in war with Japan long before the United States officially followed suit. A campaign featuring the player-characters as a private mercenary unit fighting on the side of freedom and right (something along the line of *Sky Captain's Flying Legion*) could easily engage the Nazis. Combat could occur on secret island bases, military expeditions deep in the jungle...anywhere were a “little war” could be fought without attracting the attention of the rest of the world.



Fantastic Adventures

Most pulp campaigns, however, are going to contain elements of the fantastic. It's fun, after all, and one of the things that attracts gamers to the style of play. Primarily, there are two directions that a GM can take when adding elements of the fantastic: Science Fiction and the Supernatural (although enterprising GMs can combine the two for some truly mind-boggling concepts!)

Science Fictional elements usually take the form of technological advances (either already in the possession of the Nazis, under development by Nazi mad scientists, or the subject of Nazi theft).

Historically, the Nazis spent a great deal of time and money investigating and developing new technologies (the V-1 and V-2 Rockets, for example), so the introduction of fantastic technology is not as far a stretch as it would be otherwise. It is a relatively small leap from the V-2 to Nazi spacecraft, after all.

German atomic research is another great idea to spring upon player-characters, since they have the benefit of historical hindsight to know how close the Reich was to developing nuclear weapons, and what would have happened had they done so before the U.S.

Even more fantastic, yet still based in historical fact, is the idea of a German heat ray. After the end of World War II, American investigators found papers discussing the possibility of deploying a solar mirror in orbit, which could focus the sun's rays upon ground targets like a child cooking ants with a magnifying glass. Discovering secret Nazi plans to build such a device, and destroying it, would make a suitably exciting adventure for any hero.

The Nazi fascination with Antarctica also can provide Gamemasters with fodder for adventures. Claimed by Germany in the 1930s, and christened *Neuschwabenland* (New Swabia), the South Pole has long been the subject of conspiracy theories about the Reich's activities there. Perhaps your player-characters can discover Nazi efforts to find the long-rumored entrance into the Hollow Earth,

where representatives of the Third Reich hope to form an alliance with the subterranean empire that rules the World Below. Can your heroes stop the alliance before dinosaur-mounted troops come spilling out of the New York City subways?

The Reich was equally interested in Tibet, believing it to be one of the homes of the original Aryans. Ernst Schäffer, a German hunter and biologist, participated in two expeditions to Tibet, in 1934 and 1936. The Ahnenerbe sponsored him to lead a third expedition in 1938.

Their mission was to make contact with the Aryan forefathers in Shambhala and Agharti (two hidden subterranean cities said to exist beneath the Himalayas). The cities were said to be the guardians of secret occult powers and super-science, and the missions sought their aid in harnessing those powers for the Nazi cause.

According to the stories, groups of Tibetans purportedly came back to Germany and started lodges known as “the Society of Green Men.” It doesn’t take much effort on the part of the Gamemaster to work these rumors into plots involving super-science, the occult, or both.

The plot ideas even get jucier when you take into account that of the two hidden cities, Shambhalla (also known as Shangri-la) was associated with higher cosmic powers, while Agharti was associated



with more primal energies. It’s easy to place them in the roles of a “good” hidden city and an “evil” one. Perhaps the Society of Green Men are Agharti Adepts aiding the Reich, and the player-characters have to discover the hidden city of Shambhalla and ask for their assistance in combating their ancient rivals.

Of course, today's gamers are more than familiar with the concept of the Nazis looking for supernatural assistance, thanks to the Indiana Jones films.

Whereas the search for the Ark of the Covenant never was an actual Nazi archaeological project, the Reich did actively search for the Holy Grail and acquired the Spear of Destiny.

The Holy Grail, the cup supposedly used at the Last Supper, and which is said to have caught Christ's blood as it fell from the cross, was the subject of a search by Nazi archaeologist Otto Rahn. Rahn believed that the Grail had been carried to the South of France by the Cathars in the 13th century. Rahn received a commission in the SS from Himmler himself, and searched for the Grail, before inexplicably resigning his commission in 1939 and disappearing. What had he discovered, and what happened to him?

The Spear of Destiny is the spear of the Roman centurian Cassius Longinus, who is said to have used it to pierce the side of Christ. Legend has it that the Spear made whomever possessed it invincible. Stories are told of it passing down through history, in the possession of such men as Louis IX of France, Charlemagne and Napoleon. A spear, either the actual Spear of Destiny or a false relic (depending upon who you listen to), was on display at the Vienna Hofmuseum, and was confiscated by the Nazis after their annexation of Austria.

It was shipped via an armored SS train to Nuremberg on October 13th, 1938, where it remained for six years in St. Catherine's Church before being moved to an underground vault for



protection. Some stories say that the Spear was taken to the SS Castle at Wewelsberg.

During the final days of the war in Europe, the United States 7th Army took possession of the Spear in the name of the United States government. Within 90 minutes of the United States capturing the Spear, Adolf Hitler committed suicide. The Spear was returned to the Royal House of Hapsburg shortly thereafter, where it now rests, once again, in the Vienna Hofmuseum. (Although rumors persist that the Spear is a copy, with the true Spear either being kept by the United States, or perhaps by agents of the Reich).

Gamemasters looking to play on this particular theme can have Ahnenerbe-sponsored archaeological expeditions to the far corners of the globe: Egypt, Africa, South America; searching

for anything from occult artifacts to Lost Cities. This allows adventures which cross the lines into standard pulp genres like jungle stories, fortune hunting, or Lost Worlds.

Which leaves us with another standard Nazi adventure plot, wherein the forces of the Third Reich dabble in Things That Man Was Not Meant to Know.

Obviously, the Nazi Sorcerer is the best archetype to use for such adventures, but an occult angle can be added to almost any other variety of plot. Perhaps Nazi agents are looking to steal the copy of the *Necronomicon* held in the library collection of a small New England university. Or perhaps a Nazi scientific experiment causes some kind of dimensional rift, and Things Even Worse Than Nazis come through.

Plots involving the Nazis meddling with this sort of power should be marked by an unbelieving arrogance. At no point should a Nazi villain ever assume that he is in over his head. The firm belief in their status as the Master Race should be the villain's achilles heel in these situations (and, in some cases, the very cause of the danger in the first place!).

Gamemasters can also mix the Nazis with traditional supernatural pulp elements, such as mummies, werewolves, ghosts and vampires. See the *Hellboy* graphic novel series (and film) for suggestions on methods for doing this. The sudden realization that the SS officer whom they've been facing is actually a sorcerous vampire should be enough to put pause to even the most headstrong hero!

CONCLUSION

However you decide to use them, the Third Reich should give the player-characters a villain that they can sink their teeth into. Comfortably couched in starkly contrasted terms of good and evil, the Nazis allow the players to fight against the greatest evil the modern world has ever seen.



In the end, perhaps the best thing about using Nazis as villains in your pulp campaigns comes down to the comfort of historical hindsight: the sure knowledge that, even if the player-characters fail, the Nazis are eventually defeated in the long run.

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PULP VILLAINS: *PERILS* OF THE ORIENT

by
C.L. Werner

Through the fog of pain that pounded against the inside of his skull, Detective John Brandon tried to focus his

senses, struggling to make sense of his surroundings. As hard as he tried, he couldn't. He'd been tracking a scurvy Chinaman named Liu Hsien through the dank, dripping tunnels that ran beneath Hoptown. Liu Hsien was

the last link in a white slavery ring that had been operating from Hoptown, kidnapping young women and turning them into opium-addicts before selling them to Sal 'the Crow' Corvino's mob to staff their brothels up in Lincoln Heights.

Brandon closed his eyes, trying to remember what had happened. His men had raided the dirty little curio



shop Hsien used as a front for his slimy operation. The slavers hadn't given up without a fight, but Brandon had made certain his squad went in expecting trouble. Shotguns worked wonders when it came to evening

the odds, especially in the warren of grimy basements and tunnels that spread beneath the curio shop. The cops were still mopping up the last of Hsien's thugs when Brandon spotted the ring leader himself dart to one of the basement walls. The Chinaman's

nimble fingers quickly worked a hidden catch and the wall slid aside, Hsien swiftly darting into the opening behind it. There was no time for Brandon to call to his men. He lunged at the opening as the wall started to slide back into place, the secret door slamming shut inches behind him. He hesitated for a moment, wondering if he could figure out a way to open the door from his side and jam it open for his men, but the footsteps of the fleeing Hsien echoed back to him from down the tunnel and he decided he didn't have the time.

He was on his own.

Brandon groaned at his own impulsiveness. With some of the city's finest backing his play, things might have turned out different. Instead, he'd plunged after Hsien by himself, through dank tunnels dripping with slime and stagnant water. He couldn't begin to make sense of the twisting, turning maze, simply chasing after the Chinaman. If he lost sight of Hsien, he knew he might never find his way out.

Then, from the dripping shadows, dark shapes had sprung at them. He heard Hsien's frightened squeal as the slaver was crushed to the brick floor by a wiry man dressed in black. Other attackers fell on Brandon, but he beat them back with his pistol, cracking the butt of the gun against shaven skulls. Then one of the flailing fists of his attackers had planted itself in his stomach. The

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detective doubled over in pain. Dimly he was aware of a firm hand closing against his shoulder. There was a sensation of pressure, then everything faded to black.

Now he found himself in some wild, impossible scene straight out of the Arabian Nights. The filthy tunnels he had been chasing Hsien through were gone. In their place was a monolithic hall, elaborately carved wooden pillars supporting a painted ceiling where dragons and fiery lions prowled. The walls of the hall were hidden behind curtains of silk and teakwood screens, the floor covered in a fabulous tile mosaic. Claw-footed bronze braziers illuminated the scene, their smoke casting a dim haze across the painted ceiling. At the end of the hall, Brandon saw an enormous seat, almost a throne such was its extravagance and enormity. The sides of the chair were cast to resemble writhing Chinese dragons, their fanged mouths forming the feet of the chair, their intertwined legs forming the seat and back. The detective marvelled at the fantastic creatures, for they seemed cast from gold, their talons and teeth picked out in pearl, their gleaming eyes crafted from rubies.

Brandon tried to move closer to the opulent throne, but found that his arms were held securely behind him. He turned his head and found a burly Asian standing to either side of him. The men were darker in complexion

than the Chinese of Hoptown, with a more compact and weathered look about them. Each man wore Eastern garb, black pants and a black tunic with long, flowing sleeves. A yellow sash circled their waists and Brandon could see a ripple-bladed knife with an ornamented hilt tucked beneath the elaborate sashes. The faces of the men were stoic, as expressionless as stone, but Brandon could see the cruel, sadistic ember that smouldered in their eyes.

Just past his own captors, Brandon saw Liu Hsien, the Chinese slaver held securely between another set of the black-garbed guards. Hsien's sallow features had paled into an ivory hue and sweat dripped from his body. Brandon was struck by the look of abject terror that filled the criminal's face, a look such that even twelve years on the beat had not prepared him to see. The detective hastily turned away, feeling Hsien's terror beginning to infect him. He didn't want to know what made the Chinaman afraid, and he tried not to let his imagination consider the question.

Movement at the edge of the chamber drew both Brandon's and Hsien's attention. The silk drapery was pulled aside and a lithe figure stepped into the room followed by another pair of black-garbed guards. Brandon felt his pulse quicken as the figure emerged fully into the light, revealing a raven-haired woman, her exotic Chinese

features framed by long, flowing tresses. A scarlet dress embroidered with writhing serpents clung to her lean figure, accenting every voluptuous curve, her slender legs visible through the slit that ran up the side of the dress. The woman's intense eyes swept across the hall, lingering for a moment on Brandon, before turning toward Hsien. Her eyes narrowed as she saw the slaver and she turned to one of the guards. Brandon could not hear what command she gave the man, but whatever she said had the guard sprinting from the room. She looked back at Hsien, then allowed a final, lingering gaze in Brandon's direction before striding across the hall toward the throne.

Brandon watched the woman walk across the hall, understanding that whatever was going on, whoever she was, she was in charge here. At least she didn't appear to be any friend of Liu Hsien. That might work in his favour, once he found out whatever was going on. The woman walked to the throne and stopped. Instead of seating herself in the golden chair, she adopted a position beside it. The alarm bells started to go off in Brandon's mind. Apparently she wasn't in charge after all. Somehow, he felt that his chances had just taken a dramatic turn for the worse.

From somewhere beyond the shrouded walls, a gong sounded, the booming note echoing through the gloom. Hsien

gave a moan of horror and Brandon knew that whatever it was that the slaver feared, it was not going to remain unknown much longer. Long minutes passed, minutes filled with a brooding silence, only Hsien's moans intruding upon the quiet. Brandon could feel the tension in the air, the horrible expectancy. The only thing he could liken it to was the time he'd been pressed face-first against an alley wall waiting for one of Corvino's gunsels to saw him in half with a chopper. He'd managed to get out of that situation, but he didn't think luck would be so kind a second time.

Behind the silk curtains, Brandon heard a pair of hands clap together twice. One of the swarthy guards hurried to that section of wall, pulling the silk drape back even as he knelt and abased himself. The guards holding Brandon and Hsien also bowed their heads, Hsien following their example. The detective shook aside the hand that pressed against his neck, trying to bow his head. Whatever was coming, he wanted to meet it head on. The gesture of defiance drew the attention of the woman beside the throne, but he could not read the expression in the look she gave him.

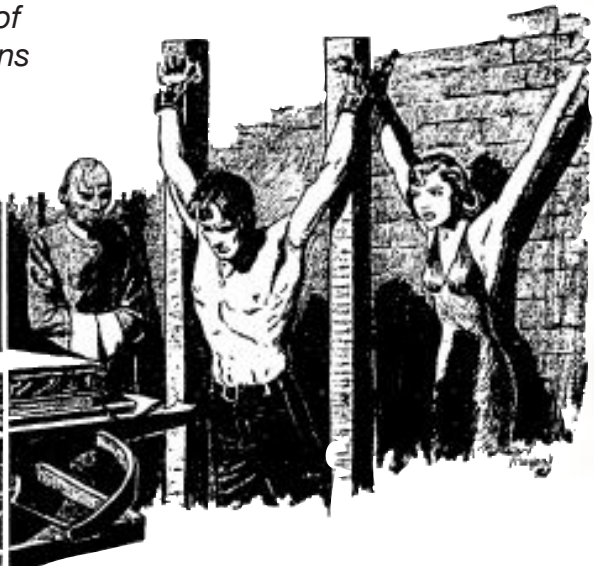
A shape emerged from the shadows behind the curtain. As the man came into the light, Brandon saw that he was a Chinaman dressed in a long yellow robe, red dragons crawling across the garment. A black hat topped with a

tassel covered the man's head. The face beneath the hat was thin, almost skull-like, with prominent cheeks and deep-set eyes. The nose was small and set close to the face, the mouth an almost lipless slit across the bottom of his face. Long black moustaches drooped down over his narrow chin. The overall impression was one of malevolence and terrible power.

The Chinese ignored Brandon, but did look straight into Hsien's terrified face. A cruel smile split his skull-like face. He turned and stalked across the hall, seating himself in the Dragon Throne. The Celestial extended his hand and Brandon could see that it was emaciated, almost claw-like, the nail on the small finger grown to grotesque length after the fashion of the Mandarins of old.

'Brother Hsien,' the Celestial said, his voice like sand scraping against stone. 'I must protest this unseemly breach of protocol. It is most rude to call upon a gentleman unannounced.' Though he kept his voice even, almost without emotion, Brandon could feel the threat in the Chinaman's words. Hsien pulled free of his guards, throwing himself to the floor, sobbing in Cantonese as he grovelled before the throne. The Celestial gestured with his hand and the guards pulled their charge back to his feet.

'Have you no manners, Brother Hsien?' the Chinaman scolded, his voice still devoid of emotion. 'My other guest may not understand the tongue of our homeland. It would be rude for us to exclude him. Please, restrict yourself to English, Brother Hsien.'



'Ppplease... noble Wu Sin... hhhhave mercy... on mmmiserable Liu Hhhsien...'

As Brandon heard the slaver speak the name, he felt ice fill his veins. Wu Sin! The name was infamous throughout Hoptown! There wasn't a hatchetman or tong thug who didn't fear Wu Sin, the man they called the Jade Talon! But the department had never found any evidence that the man actually existed, most of the force, himself included, had long ago decided Wu Sin was nothing more than some imaginary devil conjured up by the denizens of Hoptown to scare their children. He looked again at the imposing, skeletal man seated on the golden throne. If there was a real Jade Talon, the sinister Mandarin certainly fit the bill.

The Jade Talon gave Liu Hsien an indulgent smile. 'Mercy, Brother Hsien? After you have violated the laws set down by our society? After you have allowed my operation in Lincoln Heights to suffer such a set back? After you have lead this...' the Celestial's fiery eyes turned toward Brandon for the first time and the detective cringed as he felt that smouldering gaze burn into his flesh, '...honourable person to my very doorstep?' Wu Sin glanced at the woman beside him. She nodded her understanding. Stepping away from the throne, she clapped her hands together. More guards emerged from behind the teakwood screens. They scrambled across the hall, quickly

rolling back the carpets, exposing a large, circular trap door.

The woman walked to the trap door. Kneeling, she pressed a button concealed within the mosaic. The trap door slowly lifted, exposing a black pit. Liu Hsien started screaming as the guards holding him pushed him toward the hole. Brandon struggled against his own captors as they also started to advance.

'Hsien! Stop your snivelling!' the woman snarled. 'You dishonour your ancestors with your cowardice!'

'Let the cur die in whatever way he sees fit,' Wu Sin reprimanded her. 'One cannot expect a rat to die like a tiger. At least the dacoits may find his screams amusing.'

Brandon struggled against the dacoits holding him, but the Burmese held him in an iron grip. He glared at the fearsome Jade Talon, mustering his courage to confront the fiend. 'Don't do this! Don't kill this man!'

Wu Sin turned his smouldering eyes toward Brandon again. This time he could feel the malice emanating from the Chinaman's gaze. 'Stop worrying about him, Detective Brandon. Start worrying about yourself.' The Jade Talon gestured to the dacoits holding Hsien. Immediately the guards pushed the screaming slaver into the pit. Hsien's wails were interrupted by the

sound of snapping bone, then resumed with an agonized intensity. The dacoits holding him pushed Brandon forward, offering him a clear view of the pit.

The pit was twenty feet deep, its stone walls smoothed to an almost glass-like consistency. The bottom was littered with bits of bone and strange clumps of what looked like dirty cotton. Hsien was in the centre of the pit, crumpled in a ball, his legs broken in the fall, screaming like a banshee. Brandon looked up to find the exotic Chinese woman and Wu Sin standing on the far side of the pit, both of them staring down at Hsien. The woman's face was a mixture of disgust and expectancy, the Jade Talon's was pulled into a leer of eager anticipation.

Something moved along the wall of the pit, crawling out from a burrow gouged in the floor. Brandon leaned forward, his curiosity overcoming even the horror of the situation. It was some kind of animal, but he couldn't decide what. A rat? Some kind of dog? Maybe some kind of Chinese jaguar? He could see the thing pushing aside the bones that partially covered its hole, could make out legs pawing at the obstruction, legs that were covered in thick black hair. Hsien's screams became even more frantic as the slaver saw the movement. He crawled desperately toward the smooth walls, dragging his broken limbs behind him.

Brandon cringed away as the thing emerged fully from its burrow. Disbelief caused his mind to recoil from what he had seen, disgust boiled within his stomach. It was impossible, it couldn't have been what he thought it was!

'Detective Brandon, does my pet offend your delicate western sensibilities?' the Jade Talon mocked him. Brandon fought down his revulsion, forcing himself to look back at the spectacle unfolding in the pit. He hadn't imagined it, the hideous thing was still there, slowly, remorselessly scuttling across the floor toward Hsien. As big as a boar, its legs as thick and long as a man's arm, its fangs the size of daggers, its loathsome body covered in coarse black hair, the thing was a gigantic tarantula. Hsien's hands pawed hopelessly at the smooth walls, trying to pull himself up from the spider's lair.

'Few western eyes have seen what you are seeing now, Detective Brandon,' Wu Sin told him. Now that he had forced himself to look, Brandon found himself unable to tear his eyes away from the hideous spectacle. 'These spiders are found only in a few mountain valleys deep in the hinterlands of Mongolia.' A note of pride insinuated itself into the Jade Talon's voice. 'Of course, they don't grow as big as my pet. I used my humble skill with the sciences of chemistry and electro-magnetism to, shall we say, unlock its full potential.'

Hsien's screams rose to an impossible pitch as the spider finally reached him. The sight of the spider's fangs stabbing down into the man's abdomen finally broke the terrible fascination that had taken hold of Brandon. He looked up from the pit, staring into Wu Sin's cruel eyes.

'You're a madman!' the detective spat.

The Jade Talon smiled at Brandon's outburst. 'Perhaps, Detective Brandon, but very soon I will be in control of this entire city, from the lowest street beggar to the most decadent socialite. This city, and every thing in it will live or die by the will of Wu Sin.'

Brandon tried to pull free from his guards, to seize the smirking Chinaman and throw him into his own spider pit. One of the dacoits that had been holding Liu Hsien smashed a fist into Brandon's head, stunning him and quieting his struggles. The skeletal Celestial nodded as he watched his guards subdue the unruly detective.

'Unfortunately, my spider will be eating with Brother Hsien for several weeks,' the Jade Talon apologized. 'I am afraid that we will need to make different accommodations for you, Detective Brandon.' Wu Sin paused as the woman standing beside him touched his arm. He nodded again.

'It appears my sister has taken an interest in you, Detective Brandon,' the

Jade Talon hissed. Brandon did not like the grim humour he saw on Wu Sin's thin face. 'After a few hours in her tender care, you will come to wish I had another spider.'



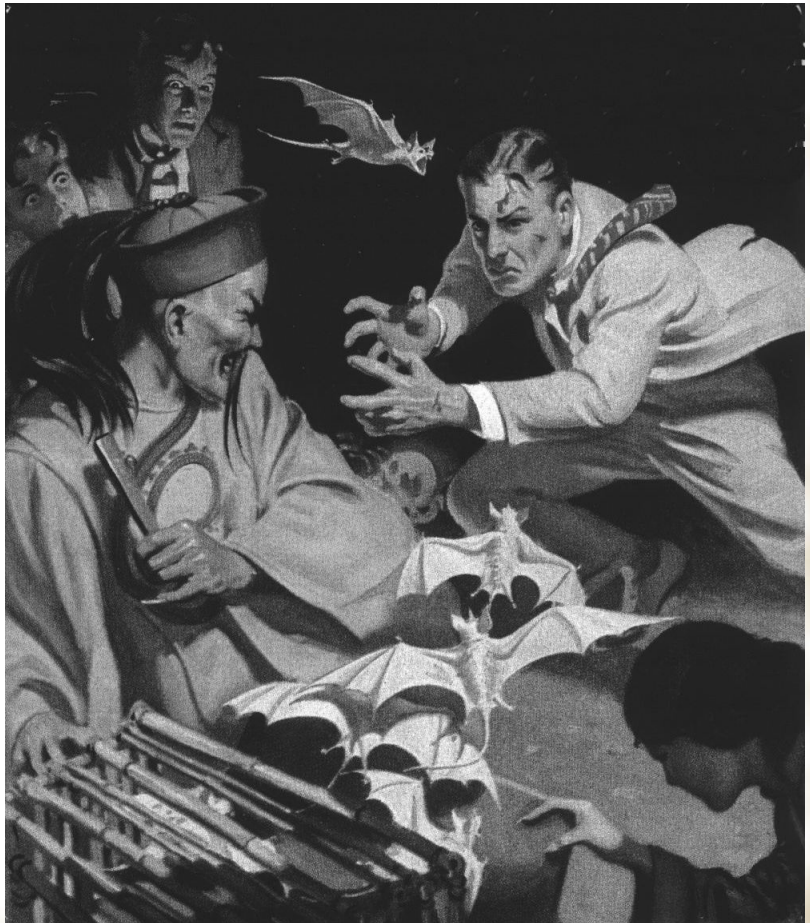
INTRODUCTION

From the exotic, mysterious East they come to menace western civilization, to challenge all that decent, God-fearing men hold virtuous. With hatchet and knife, pistol and poison, they strike from the shadows. All the cruelty and ruthlessness of ancient races lurks behind their sallow faces and almond eyes.

Like a creeping scourge they slither into the great cities of the world, to plot and plan their insidious schemes.

Some seek only to plunder the people of the West, to slake their greed with the dark rewards of crime. Others come to steal not wealth but knowledge, stopping at nothing to take the secrets of the world's great thinkers and intellects and carry that wisdom back with them into the East. The worst, however, have still more nefarious goals in mind: nothing less than the destruction of western civilization, to cast down the old order and rebuild it in the image of the Orient's imperial dynasties.

These are the Perils of the Orient, the sinister villains who swarmed across the pages of pulp magazines from the very beginning in the late 1800's to the very end in the 1950's. They worked their evil in the cinemas of the day and even radio was not free from their twisted machinations. They would carry on into the successors of the pulp magazines –comic books – and would even bring their particular brand of villainy to an upstart medium called television well beyond the hey-day of the pulps that spawned them.



It was called the 'Yellow Peril' and it was a staple of popular fiction by the 1930's. The formula changed depending upon the medium and the capabilities of the creator. At its most base, a Yellow Peril story was one that preyed upon and exploited the fears and ignorance of its audience, playing upon racial stereotypes of the time as a way of enhancing its own impact.

Such stories were often rife with their own ignorance, penned by men who perhaps had never even seen a Chinese, much less been farther east than St Louis. Yet, with only the slightest of research, perhaps limited to consultation of a few magazine articles, an experienced pulpster could bluff his way through an entire novella, depending upon the greater ignorance of his audience to get away with his own. The exotic aura of the almost mythical Orient, combined with the oft-times racist fears of the day, served to create a great demand for Yellow Peril stories, and their popularity ensured that virtually every great pulp hero of the day would find himself running against some inscrutable villain dressed in a mandarin's garb.

Some authors, however, treated their subject with a great deal more care and dignity, though today these stories are almost universally lumped together with their cruder imitators. Certainly the greatest writer associated with Yellow Peril fiction was Sax Rohmer, who penned his first novel about his

famous creation, the insidious Dr Fu Manchu, in 1913 with *The Mystery of Dr Fu-Manchu* and concluding only in 1959 with *Emperor Fu Manchu* and Rohmer's death.

Fu Manchu certainly shared in the villainous qualities that were the trademark of his predecessors and countless descendents, but combined with a depth of character that made him every bit as three-dimensional and unique as a Sherlock Holmes or a Captain Nemo. Fu Manchu wasn't the standard cackling megalomaniac that populated most Yellow Peril fiction, but rather was in many ways a flawed hero, but for one thing he'd have been on the side of the angels rather than civilization's mortal adversary.

In Fu Manchu's case, the thing that drove him to villainy was not his own ambition, but those of the European powers. In the time that the first Fu Manchu stories were written, much of the Orient was controlled by European nations. The French had made a colony of Vietnam, for instance, while the British were defacto rulers of Burma and the Dutch held what is now Indonesia. Fu Manchu was driven to his grandiose plans for conquest and empire-building as a reaction to this unrestrained Western imperialism.

Rohmer used him not merely to evoke the fears of his audience, their distrust of the 'inscrutable Oriental' but to also shine a light at what the 'White Peril'

was doing to the cultures and people of the Orient. As Rohmer often pointed out in his books, and as many of his detractors fail to understand, what Fu Manchu was trying to do in Europe and America was no different than what Europeans and Americans were already doing in places like Hong Kong and the Philippines. Far from being a one-dimensional racist heavy, in the hands of Rohmer, the Yellow Peril became a mirror to show the ugly reflection of colonialism and cultural imperialism. Rohmer, who was an Orientologist and had studied quite exhaustively the cultures of the East, always took care to maintain a degree of moral relativism with Fu Manchu. He is not so much the villain because he is evil, but because he is 'on the other team'.

Other Yellow Perils stood somewhere between the stereotypical menaces of Poverty Row serials and the multi-faceted Dr Fu Manchu, with his underlying social and political symbolism. These were exotic villains who, while still certainly Oriental, provided their menace out of good old fashioned bad guy motivation – greed, megalomania and revenge. These characters were handled without the racist overtones of their less cultured counterparts, what made them evil was not their culture or background, but their own individual failings – just like any other villain. A good example of this would be the many Oriental villains that came against The Shadow,

especially when Walter B Gibson was behind the Maxwell Grant pseudonym. While lurking in the back alleys of Chinatown, employing hatchets instead of gats and adorning their hideouts with expensive rugs and jade sculpture, at their core these characters were often little different than the gangsters and mad scientists The Shadow also had to contend with. The great Shiwan Khan, one of The Shadow's arch-rivals, was evil because of who he himself was, not due to some wicked quality inherent in the Mongolian race, as a less sensitive Yellow Peril purveyor would no doubt have suggested. To further illustrate the point, oftentimes The Shadow would find Chinese allies to contend with his Oriental foes, rallying tongs to oppose some nefarious crime lord operating in their midst.

Game Masters will no doubt want to include Oriental villains at some point or another in their campaign, if for no reason than for the same reason they appeared every few months in the pages of The Shadow – to break up the monotony of mobsters and mad scientists. GMs more familiar with the pulp era will want to include them simply because of how large a part the 'Yellow Peril' played in the fiction of the day. And, of course, there is the simple fact that even today the East is still an exotic land of mystery and adventure to those living in the West, and by utilizing characters from the East, a GM can evoke some of that mystery



and wonder. As has hopefully been illustrated, there is nothing inherently racist in presenting Oriental foes in a campaign. Every people and culture will produce its bad apples, and the ancient cultures of the East are no exception. It is when the theme is oversimplified, playing into stereotypes, when it is extended to such a degree that it seems every Chinese in New York is an agent of the Black Dragon Tong, that the GM is straying into the excesses that made much of this sort of fiction reprehensible.

Perils of the Orient walks a fine line between the historical excesses of Yellow Peril fiction and the more respectable appreciation for the cultures of China and Japan that a more enlightened and informed society has embraced. In these pages will be presented some of the most common

themes that were evoked in the pulps – from Mongol warriors dreaming of a new empire to sinister Tibetan monks with terrible powers of mysticism and mesmerism, all the usual suspects have been rounded up and presented for your consideration.

The reader may feel, at times, that the fine line between excess and understanding has been crossed, but it should be borne in mind that the characters presented here are not representative of their entire culture, any more than a murderous Thug is indicative of India's vast population or a jack-booted Nazi represents the entire German ethnic group. A game centred around the themes of heroics and adventure will, by definition, focus upon the unusual and the extraordinary – and you will find the **Perils of the Orient** to be both.

THE MASTERMIND REVISITED

Any discussion of pulp Oriental villains begins with the Mastermind, the criminal fiend who manipulates both the faceless legions of his minions and the stalwart heroes arrayed against him like pieces on some vast chessboard. He is the heart of the beast, the great intellect behind the campaign of robberies, murders and kidnappings that has gripped the city in fear. The Mastermind is representative of villains like Fu Manchu, Yen Sin, Wu Fang and Shiwan Khan. Presented properly, a Mastermind can become the focus of an entire campaign, as the players try to thwart his machinations. But to do so, the GM should carefully consider the Mastermind's motives, methods and assets.

No two Masterminds are alike, and even within the bottommost dregs of the pulps, there were wild (and often ridiculous) variations upon the basic theme. Generally speaking, however, there are two main types of Mastermind. The first is the simple criminal. Certainly his ambitions – and his greed – are far in excess of the common mobster or tong boss, but still, at the end of the day, the Mastermind is focused upon gathering more wealth and extending his criminal empire.

The second sort of Mastermind is an entirely different creature. While certainly not above using the criminal scum of the underworld to achieve

his ends, this sort of Mastermind is an idealist who does not see himself as a criminal. The idealist Mastermind will have a much less mundane objective than his criminal counterpart. He might see himself as a patriot trying to expand the prestige and power of his homeland (under his own brilliant guidance, naturally) or he might be the fanatical agent of some strange Eastern sect, sent to avenge some slight against his temple. Such Masterminds will often be extremely principled men, which again makes them distinct from the usual mobster and madman.

Regardless of motive, regardless even of their cultural and social backgrounds, Oriental Masterminds in pulp stories shared several distinct character traits. Perhaps the most dramatic was a blood chilling nonchalance toward human life and suffering. Masterminds would regularly remonstrate their underlings with hideous mutilations for the slightest infraction, with a swift and brutal death being the price for anything more severe. Torture, something mobsters would use infrequently, is a staple of the Mastermind and where the methods of the average gangster would be limited to brass knuckles and a blow torch, the tortures employed by a Mastermind would be elaborate affairs, as ingenious as they were insidious.

Another quality shared by almost all Oriental Masterminds was an extreme sense of honour. A Mastermind will be very reluctant to give his word, but when he can be forced to give it, he will keep it. Of course, such agreements are kept to the letter rather than to the spirit and a GM should pay particular attention to whatever oath his players might exact from a Mastermind. Insisting that they be released from the Mastermind's Mongolian dungeons, for example, might result in the heroes being deposited in the middle of the Gobi desert without food or water – the Mastermind has kept his word, after all. So long as the letter of any agreement is kept, a Mastermind's honour will be satisfied.



Oriental Masterminds, regardless of their motivations, will always use at least one exotic method of dealing death to their enemies. From a covey of Ninja assassins, to special Cambodian snake venom, to deadly Indonesian tarantulas, an Oriental Mastermind will always have some unique way of killing those who stand in his way. The more resourceful Masterminds will have an entire array

of exotic ways of committing murder, perhaps even several of their own creation if they are given a few levels in the Mad Scientist advanced class. This is, perhaps, the most important habit of the Mastermind to develop since it will often be the first sign to the heroes that their unseen adversary is something more than the usual criminal.

The archetype below is a reasonable approximation of an Oriental Mastermind. He is built using the Mastermind advanced class and the Mad Scientist and Mesmerist advanced classes, all available through Adamant Entertainment's **Thrilling Tales**. It should serve more as an example for GMs, however, rather than a ready-to-use villain to be plopped down into their campaign. Given the scope a well-run Mastermind can offer, GMs should always strive to develop their own unique villain, devoting as much if not more time and consideration in the process as any hero being run by the players.

ORIENTAL MASTERMIND

Smart Hero 4/ Mastermind 8/ Mad Scientist 2/ Mesmerist 2; CR 14; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 4d6+4 plus 8d10+8 plus 2d8+2; hp 94; Mas 12; Init +2; Spd 30'; Defense +19, touch 19, flat-footed 18 (+0 size, +1 Dex, +8 class); BAB +8; Grap +8; Atk +8 melee (1d4/19-20 knife) or +8 ranged (2d6/20 Luger); FS 5' by 5'; Reach 5'; SQ; AL: Sinister cult or secret society; SV Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +12; AP 15; Rep +8; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 15.

Occupation: Academic (Knowledge skills [physical sciences, history, philosophy])

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +12, Craft (chemical) +16, Craft (electronic) +14, Craft (mechanical) +12, Craft (pharmaceutical) +10, Decipher Script +4, Diplomacy +3, Disable Device +5, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +6, Forgery +6, Gather Information +8, Handle Animal +8, Hide +8, Intimidate +14, Investigate +4, Knowledge (arcane lore)

+4, Knowledge (behavioural sciences) +6, Knowledge (current events) +4, Knowledge (earth and life sciences) +12, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (physical sciences) +10, Knowledge (streetwise) +4, Knowledge (tactics) +5, Knowledge (technology) +10, Knowledge (philosophy) +8, Knowledge (underworld) +8, Listen +12, Move Silently +6, Open Lock +3, Profession +3, Read/Write Language (Mandarin), Read/Write Language (Cantonese), Read/Write Language (Japanese), Read/Write Language (English), Read/Write Language (Mongolian), Read/Write Language (Latin), Read/Write Language (French), Read/Write Language (German), Repair +8, Search +4, Sense Motive +14, Sleight of Hand +2, Speak Mandarin, Speak Cantonese, Speak Japanese, Speak English, Speak Latin, Speak Mongolian, Speak French, Speak German, Speak Afghuli, Spot +9.

Feats: Builder (Craft chemical), Defensive Martial Arts, Frightful Presence, Infamy, Iron Will, Leadership, Simple Weapons Proficiency

Talents (*Smart Hero*): Linguist, Trick

Talents (*Mastermind*): Minions, Ill-gotten Gains, Crime Network, Nefarious Influence, Lair, Devil's Own Luck, Halls of Power

Talents (*Mad Scientist*): Weird Science, Scientific Inspiration

Talents (*Mesmerist*): Hypnotic Ability, Hypnotic Trance, Trick

Possessions: knife, Luger, wealth +12



EAST MEETS WEST

When gold was discovered in California, one of the largest migrations from the East began. Waves of immigrants from China and Japan began to arrive in the cities of the western coast of the United States. Trying to find a better life, to make their fortune in the gold fields, most of these immigrants found instead back-breaking toil, crushing poverty and racism every bit as extreme as the rigid class systems of their homelands.

Chinese immigrants in particular became a common fixture in the American landscape of the late 1800's, providing a source of cheap labour that was ruthlessly exploited by big business, especially the railroad industry. For their efforts, these immigrants faced racial segregation and intolerance far in excess of even what was inflicted upon the former slaves of the South. Chinese immigrants were subject to 'Exclusion Acts' which prevented them from voting or becoming citizens, extra taxes simply for being Chinese, and ruthless oppression at nearly every level. The 'importation' of Chinese, Japanese and Mongolian women was outlawed in many states, ostensibly to combat prostitution but with the overall intention to prevent the Oriental population from increasing. Throughout it all, the Chinese bore the injustice imposed on them by the American government with all the stoicism

dictated by their Confucian philosophy, trying their best to succeed even in a land that made it clear they were not wanted.

One of the effects of the segregation policies implemented across America and in many European nations was the creation of Chinatowns in many cities. Chinese and other Oriental immigrants were severely restricted by law as to where they could settle and purchase property. Much like the 'Red Light' districts of the day, the intention was to confine these 'undesirable' elements within one part of the city, and the borders of these Chinese districts were often brutally enforced, if not by the official law-keepers then by vigilante mobs. This forced segregation resulted in neighbourhoods that reflected the architecture and culture of China or Japan rather than America. Signs in shop windows would be written Cantonese more often than English and the tones of Oriental languages would echo through the streets.

Due to the severe restrictions placed upon them, Chinatowns quickly found they had no more room to grow. Despite attempts to outlaw immigration from China, the flow of Chinese into America continued almost unabated. Forced to live in specific neighbourhoods, Chinatowns became exceedingly crowded and overpopulated. One way in which the enterprising early residents of these areas attempted to alleviate

the cramped condition was to expand their neighbourhoods in the only way segregation laws allowed. Almost every Chinatown developed a complex and vast network of tunnels beneath them, complete with their own shops and businesses. Some of these tunnels even extended beyond the surface confines of Chinatown, something that was taken advantage of by all manner of smugglers and criminals. This underground activity, combined with the xenophobic prejudices of the general population, gave Chinatowns a particularly unsavoury and sinister reputation. Many became renowned as lawless pits of vice and wickedness, rife with bordellos and opium dens, ruled by murderous tongs.

This attitude towards Chinatowns lasted for decades, it was not until 1943 and WWII that the 'Chinese Exclusion Act' was repealed, and Chinatowns from New York to LA were often the setting for tales of murder and intrigue in the pages of the pulps. Chinatowns (and the more infrequent Japantowns) made valuable bases of operation for Oriental Masterminds, allowing them to blend into the local population and providing them with a ready source of foot soldiers to further their nefarious plans. While historical tongs were secret societies created by Chinese immigrants for mutual security and assistance, the tongs in the pulps were almost always presented as organized criminal fraternities, something like Chinese versions of the Mafia. Their

activities would normally be restricted to the boundaries of Chinatown, but a particularly troublesome hero could sometimes cause a tong to venture beyond their own territory.

Although historically, the tongs in most American Chinatowns were becoming much more mellow in the 1930's, curbing the murder and mayhem that had characterized the tong wars that raged in Californian Chinatowns for sixty years, the tongs that appeared in the pages of the pulps were particularly vicious and bloodthirsty, ready to kill at the drop of a hat. Usually while maintaining the serene smile of a Celestial.

Tong members, as presented in the pulps, tend to be very savage and uncompromising, while at the same time displaying a marked cowardly streak. Once things go bad, the thugs of a tong will quickly disperse, scurrying back to their underground tunnels and disappearing into the Oriental populace of Chinatown. They will more often be equipped with knives, blackjacks and garrotes than they will pistols or other firearms. It is a rare tong indeed that has the resources and modernization in place to outfit its enforcers with Tommy guns and other automatic weapons. One weapon that pulp tongs seemed to have a particular place for was the hatchet, a small hand axe used by tong assassins to brutally eliminate those who had earned the ire of their organization.

An Oriental mastermind operating out of a Chinatown will often take over one or more tongs, then try to eliminate or unite any other gangs operating out of the district. These masterminds need not be the 'threat to civilization' variety, as often as not the sort of mastermind who controls and uses tongs has a much more 'western' mindset and much less grandiose objectives – often content with 'merely' establishing a city-wide criminal empire.

TONG SOLDIER

Fast Ordinary 1; CR 1; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 1d8+2; HP 7; Mas 14; Init +2; Spd 30'; Defense +15, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +3 class); BAB +0; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4/19-20, knife or 1d6/20 sap); FS 5' by 5'; Reach 5'; SQ; AL: Tong organization; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +0, AP 0; Rep +0; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Occupation: Criminal (Hide, Move Silently)
Skills: Climb +2, Escape Artist +2, Hide +3, Knowledge (Streetwise) +1, Move Silently +3, Read/Write Cantonese (or Mandarin or other appropriate Oriental language) +1, Sleight of Hand +2, Speak Cantonese (or Mandarin or other appropriate Oriental language)
Feats: Simple Weapons Proficiency, Brawl, Archaic Weapons Proficiency
Possessions: knife, sap, wealth +1

VETERAN TONG SOLDIER

Fast Ordinary 1/Tough Ordinary 1; CR 1; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 1d8+2 + 1d10+2; hp 14; Mas 14; Init +2; Spd 30'; Defense +15, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +3 class); BAB +0; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d4/19-20, knife or 1d6/20 sap); FS 5' by 5';

Reach 5'; SQ; AL Tong organization; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +0; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Occupation: Criminal (Hide, Move Silently)
Skills: Climb +3, Escape Artist +2, Hide +4, Knowledge (Streetwise) +2, Move Silently +4, Read/Write Cantonese (or Mandarin or other appropriate Oriental language) +1, Sleight of Hand +2, Speak Cantonese (or Mandarin or other appropriate Oriental language), Spot +2, Survival +2
Feats: Simple Weapons Proficiency, Brawl, Archaic Weapons Proficiency
Possessions: knife, sap, wealth +1

TONG ASSASSIN

Fast Ordinary 1/Tough Ordinary 1/ Strong Ordinary 3; CR 3; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 1d8+2 plus 1d10+2 plus 3d8+6; hp 33; Mas 14; Init +2; Spd 30'; Defense +16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +4 class); BAB +3; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d6/20 hatchet or 1d8/20 fu); FS 5' by 5'; Reach 5'; SQ; AL Tong organization; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Occupation: Criminal (Hide, Move Silently)
Skills: Climb +6, Concentration +2, Escape Artist +3, Hide +5, Knowledge (Streetwise) +3, Move Silently +5, Read/Write Cantonese (or Mandarin or other appropriate Oriental language) +1, Sleight of Hand +2, Speak Cantonese (or Mandarin or other appropriate Oriental language), Spot +4, Survival +4, Intimidate +3.
Feats: Simple Weapons Proficiency, Brawl, Archaic Weapons Proficiency
Possessions: hatchet or fu, knife, wealth +2

THE DRAGON LADY

The Femme Fatale Advanced Class is excellent for representing another fixture of pulp stories – the sensuous Asian crime boss commonly described as ‘the Dragon Lady’.

While it is true that most Oriental cultures at the time placed severe restrictions on the role women could play in society, there were some women who were too independent and too resourceful to quietly accept the place society had allowed for them. The Dowager Empress of China is one example of a Chinese woman who wielded extreme power during her reign, manipulating both Chinese and Western elements within her empire to her own benefit, most notoriously during the so-called ‘Boxer Rebellion’ of the 1890’s.

China Mary, a historical character who operated out of Tombstone, Arizona during the town’s heyday in the 1880’s is another example of a powerful, female Chinese. China Mary essentially ran Tombstone’s Hoptown, operating bordellos, opium dens and even some legitimate businesses such as restaurants and laundries. Such was her power in Hoptown, that no Chinese could be hired or paid without the arrangement going through China Mary. She was a very impulsive and headstrong woman, once running off with a blacksmith to Tuscon only to



be brought back to her husband by a bounty hunter.

In fiction, the Dragon Lady had much in common with fiendish masterminds like Dr Fu Manchu or Wu Fang. She could be expected to be merciless, intelligent and resourceful. Even more than her male counterparts, a Dragon Lady would also be quick

to anger and exceedingly vindictive, even to the point of breaking any agreements or promises previously made. Henchmen of a Dragon Lady were even more prone to feeling the lash, and even petty failures might result in mutilation or death on the order of their mistress. One thing guaranteed to earn a Dragon Lady's murderous attentions was anything approaching insubordination. Perhaps because of the male-dominated cultural background, a Dragon Lady would be very quick to eliminate any challenge to her authority.

Dragon Ladies were uniformly attractive, and were quite skilled at using their sensuous, exotic looks to best effect. Many a pulp hero felt himself drawn toward temptation in the arms of a Dragon Lady. A Dragon Lady's affections might be feigned, and often were, in order to gain some useful service from a man who could not be bought – for money that is. However, a Dragon Lady was equally prone toward irrational attractions, usually with a pulp hero working toward the destruction of her organization. The object of a Dragon Lady's genuine affection would be safe from harm, even when sparing the hero was at odds with the best interest of the Dragon Lady's plans. But woe to any other woman in the hero's life, for a Dragon Lady would be exceptionally inventive in removing such rivals.

DRAGON LADY

Charismatic Hero 3/ Femme Fatale 5; CR 6 ; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 3d6+3 plus 5d8+5; hp ; Mas 12; Init +2; Spd 30' ; Defense +16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +4 class); BAB +3; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4/19-20 knife) or +3 ranged (2d6/20 derringer); FS 5' by 5'; Reach 5'; SQ; AL: Tong organization or secret society; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +5, AP 10; Rep +4; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 17.

Occupation: Entrepreneur (Bluff, Gamble)

Skills: Balance +5, Bluff +8, Concentration +5, Disguise +9, Gamble +5, Gather Information +9, Handle Animal +3, Hide +5, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (behavioural sciences) +2, Knowledge (business) +4, Knowledge (current events) +4, Knowledge (streetwise) +4, Move Silently +7, Perform (act) +5, Perform (dance) +6, Perform (sing) +4, Read/Write Mandarin, Read/Write Cantonese, Read/Write English, Read/Write French, Read/Write German, Read/Write Italian, Read/Write Japanese, Sense Motive +8, Speak Mandarin, Speak Cantonese, Speak English, Speak French, Speak Japanese, Tumble +7

Feats: Deceptive, Exotic Features, Iron Will, Leadership, Simple Weapons Proficiency,

Talents (Charismatic Hero): Charm, Favor

Talents (Femme Fatale): Lollapalooza, Minions, Discern Lie, Tough Cookie (Combat Martial Arts), Easy Mark, Sob Story, Tough Cookie (Defensive Martial Arts)

Possessions: knife, derringer, wealth +8

THE MYSTERIOUS ORIENT

The lands of the Orient were places of mystery and adventure in the pages of the pulps. Here were vast, uncharted regions where lost civilizations and hidden cities might yet be found. The ancient civilizations of the East had developed into exotic and inscrutable cultures that no Westerner could ever hope to truly understand. Fortunes could be made in these strange lands, but danger was never far behind.

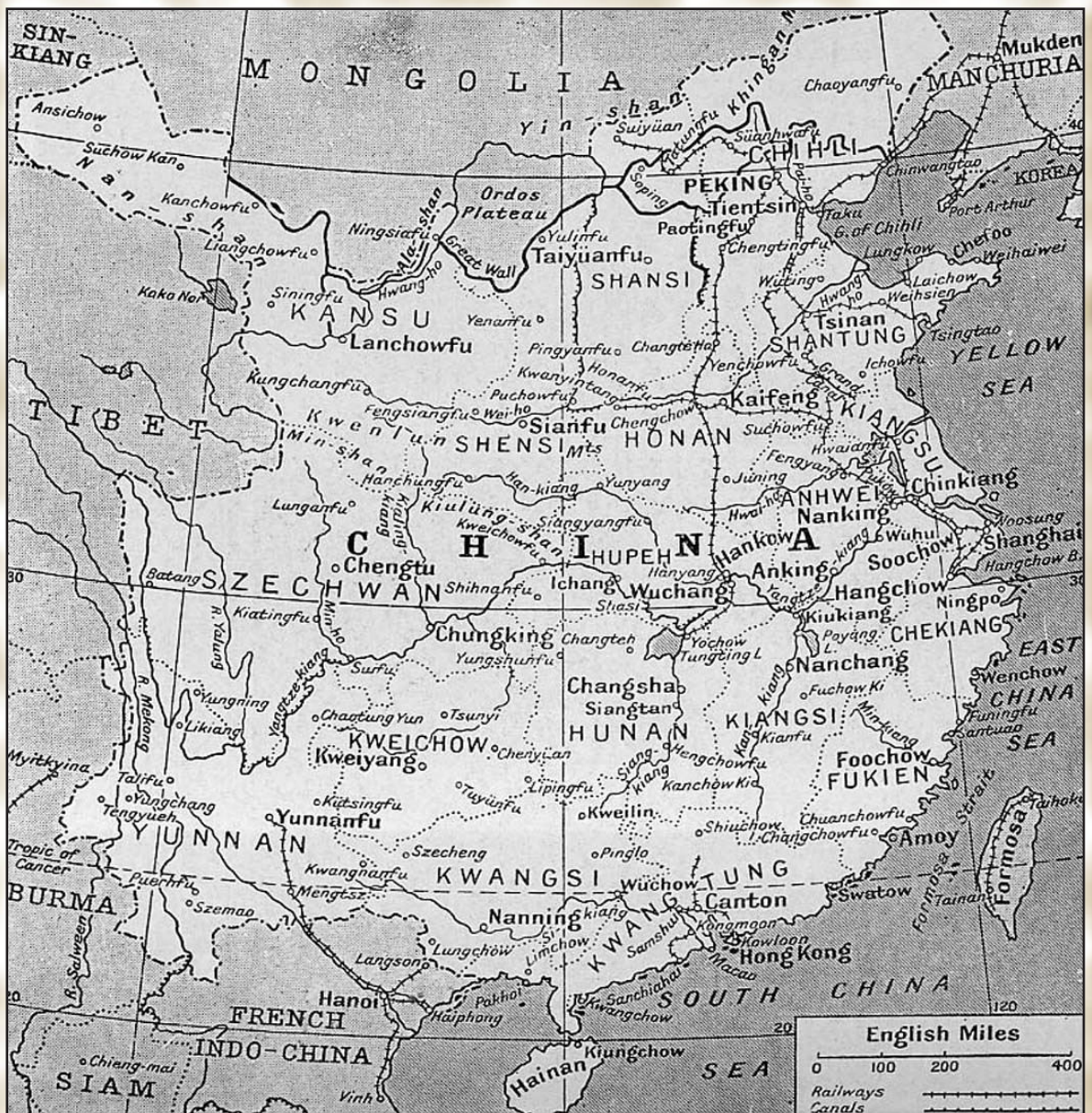
Historically, the 1930's was a time of great change and turmoil in the Orient. Western powers governed large portions of Asia. The British Empire encompassed Burma and Malaya, as well as the Chinese port city of Hong Kong. Vietnam was ruled as French Indo-China by France. The Dutch Republic had possessions in Java and the other islands which constituted its colony of the Dutch East Indies. Following the Spanish-American War, the United States adopted the Philippines as a territory.

China herself was a land of anarchy and strife. Following the destruction of the Imperial dynasty, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists maintained official control over China, but beyond the great cities, real dominion over the land rested in the hands of military warlords. The problem of maintaining control over the remote regions of China would only grow worse as Mao Tse-Tung's communists

grew in number and power in the north of the country, incited into rebellion by Soviet support. Manchuria, one of China's most ancient provinces was invaded by Japan in 1932, initiating a conflict in Asia that would only really end with the close of WWII. Renaming the region 'Manchuko' and placing Emperor Pyui as their puppet governor of the conquered realm, the Japanese would use Manchuria as a spring board for their ambitions elsewhere.

Mongolia, the land that had given birth to the mighty Mongol Empire, an empire that had stretched from China to the Nile, was undergoing its violent entry into the modern world. The echoes of Genghis Khan which carried on in the god-kings who had ruled Mongolia for centuries were being swept away by the new Soviet-backed communist government. Even with the Soviet army marching freely through the wastes of Mongolia, the land was still a breeding ground for bandits and robber princes of every description. In far flung corners, the followers of god-kings such as Seng Chen Gegen and Bodgo Gegen could still be found, adhering to the old ways in defiance of their communist rulers.

Forbidden Tibet, a mysterious mountain world of ice and snow, ruled by its priest-lords was even more an enigma than any of the other lands of the East. Here was the domain of the lamas and their strange eastern mysticism. Here was the lost world



where no Westerner was permitted to walk. Tales of the Abominable Snowman had already reached Europeans, and the strange world of Tibet seemed the logical hiding place of such a sinister creature. It would not be until the German Ahnenerbe SS mounted an expedition to this mountain

kingdom that Western eyes would behold its ancient splendours.

Of all the nations of the Orient, it is Japan that exists as a stable and independent society. The Japanese Empire has rapidly modernized, boasting an impressive navy and a

well-equipped and highly trained army. By the 1930's, in addition to the Pacific possessions lost by Germany in WWI, Japan's Empire includes Korea and Manchuria, lands that will provide the raw resources for the even greater expansions envisioned by the militarist faction within the Japanese Diet.

In the pages of the pulps, Oriental villains operating in the West would often bring minions and henchmen with them from their homelands, supplementing the crude abilities of westernized Orientals with the more specialized skills of their ancient traditions. Pulp writers were often quite free with the nature of the followers an Oriental mastermind might gather to himself. A Chinese mastermind, for instance, might include Mongolian warriors and Burmese Dacoits among his retinue, while a Japanese spy master might make use of savage jungle natives or even Indian stranglers. The only hard and fast rule was that these characterful killers be exotic and evocative of the public perception of the 'mysterious Orient'.

ENEMIES FROM THE EAST

What follows are profiles and descriptions of some of the more common Oriental villains that featured in the pages of the pulps. They can be used as a sampling of the sort of exotic 'specialists' a criminal mastermind might employ. It is a good idea to develop at least one type of 'specialist' when designing a mastermind as this will create a 'signature' henchman type, allowing players to quickly recognize the hand of their Oriental nemesis without ever setting eyes on the villain himself. More powerful and resourceful masterminds might include several types of 'specialists', Dr Fu Manchu for example was often portrayed as drawing his agents from across the globe and might include any number of different nationalities among his men, however there should always be a prevalent type of minion, one that is employed more often than any other. Again, drawing examples from literature of the time, Dr Fu Manchu commonly employed Dacoits while Shiwan Khan would use Mongol warriors.



DACOITS

Real Dacoits are armed robbers, a class of bandits in India who are characterized by the ferocity of their attacks (no doubt hoping to scare their victims into submission and eliminate the need to use the weapons they carry). In the pages of the pulps, however, Dacoits were quite different. Due no doubt to the influence of Sax Rohmer, Dacoits were more often from Burma rather than India. While still fierce and armed, Dacoits also became masters of stealth and acrobatics, able to sneak into homes and infiltrate government buildings without making a sound. Pulp Dacoits will often be equipped with grapples or climbing claws to facilitate entry into upper floor windows and may go barefoot to increase their agility while climbing. The weapons favoured by a pulp Dacoit will almost always be knives, especially throwing knives, though they will sometimes employ strangler's cords as well. A pulp Dacoit is characterized by unswerving loyalty as well, thinking nothing of sacrificing his life if there is a chance of furthering his master's plans.

Dacoit

Fast Hero 4; CR 3; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 3d8+6; hp 18; Mas 14; Init +2; Spd 30' ; Defense +17, touch 17, flat-footed 15 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +5 class); BAB +3; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d3/19-20 katar or 1d4/19-20 keris); FS 5' by 5'; Reach 5'; SQ; AL: Secret society or cult; SV Fort +2, Ref +2 , Will +0, AP 8; Rep +0; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

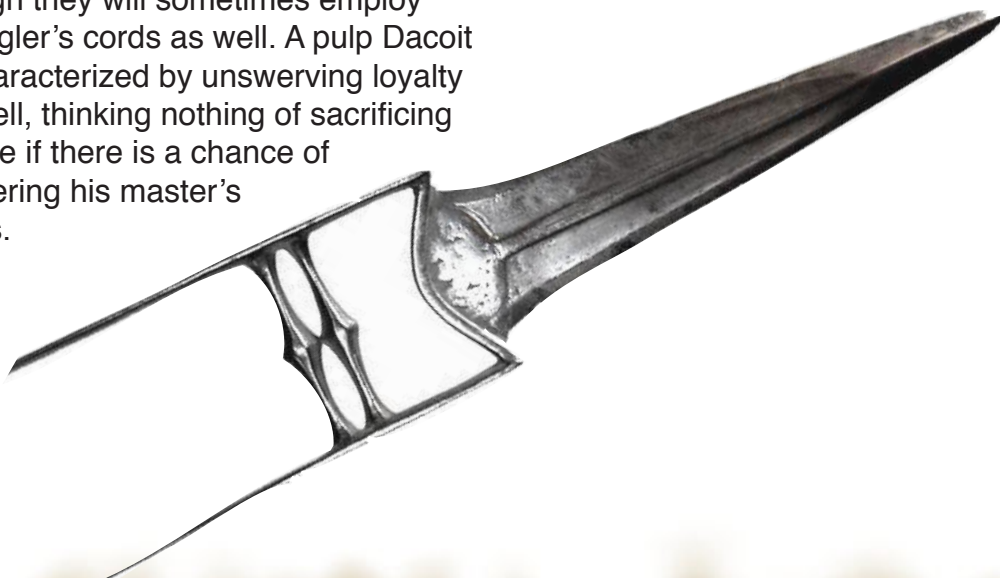
Occupation: Criminal (Hide, Move Silently)

Skills: Balance +4, Climb +5, Escape Artist +4, Hide +6, Knowledge (streetwise), Move Silently +8, Read/Write Cantonese, Read/Write Burmese, Sleight of Hand +2, Speak Cantonese, Speak Burmese, Tumble +4

Feats: Acrobatic, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Combat Martial Arts, Stealthy

Talents: Evasion, Opportunist

Possessions: katar, keris, wealth +1



MONGOLIAN WARRIORS

In the era of the pulps, the last vestiges of the ancient Mongolian culture would sometimes be brought into the cities of the Western world. The prospect of a new Genghis Khan ascending from the fragmented lands of the Orient to forge a new Mongol Empire was a theme repeated often in pulp stories, serials and films. Among the most potent weapons such a would-be god-king might command were Mongolian warriors.

The Mongolian warrior of the pulps was a powerful, strong soldier, steeped in the military traditions of the ancient past. Sword and spear, bow and arrow, these were the weapons the Mongolian warrior would use to serve his master and destroy those who would oppose his rise to power. Often dressed in lacquered armour, armed with his medieval weapons, a Mongolian warrior created a very vivid and memorable minion for any mastermind he served. Although skilled at shadowing a target, a Mongolian warrior showed little patience for tactics in general, almost always taking the most direct route to eliminate an enemy. Even more fiercely loyal than a Dacoit, a Mongolian warrior would rather die than fail his divine master.

Mongolian Warrior

Strong Hero 3; CR 3; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 3d8+6; hp 21; Mas 15; Init +1; Spd 20'; Defense +18, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+0 size, +1 Dex., +5 armor, +2 class); BAB +3; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d10/19-20 tulwar or 1d4/19-20 knife); FS 5' by 5'; Reach 5'; SQ; AL: Secret society or cult; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1, AP 6; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Occupation: Military (Climb, Move Silently)

Skills: Climb +4, Handle Animal, Intimidate +2, Jump +3, Move Silently +3, Profession, Read/Write Mongolian, Speak Mongolian

Feats: Simple Weapon Proficiency, Archaic Weapon Proficiency, Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (Medium), Brawl

Talents: Melee Smash, Improved Melee Smash

Possessions: Lamellar armor (treat as chainmail), tulwar, knife



NINJA

Although almost unknown in the era of the pulps, Ninja have become a fixture of many modern 'neo-pulp' story dealing with Oriental themes. Ninja are assassin-spies from Japan, experts at stealth and murder. The origins of the ninja stretch back into the misty past of feudal Japan when peasant farmers found it necessary to protect themselves from roving bands of bandits and samurai.

Unable to compete on an equal footing with well-armed bandits and well-trained samurai, the peasants employed guerrilla tactics to defend their villages and farms. Over the centuries, such skills were honed to an amazing degree and incorporated unique martial arts techniques. Because ninja were peasants, and therefore not bound by the strict code of honour the samurai lived by, Japanese lords often used them for espionage, infiltration and assassination, all duties that were beneath the dignity of a samurai. A ninja in a pulp setting will be used for similar duties by the mastermind he or she serves.

Ninja, while extremely professional, will not display the suicidal kind of loyalty shown by Dacoits or Mongolian warriors. If things go bad, a ninja's first thoughts will be of escape, though he might return at a more opportune time to avenge the dishonour of being routed by his enemies. The main

thing to bear in mind is that a ninja will always strike when circumstances are most in his favour.

Ninja in fiction will typically wear all black suits with a head covering that leaves only the eyes exposed. They employ a wide variety of tools and weapons in carrying out their assignments, from smoke bombs, grappling claws, throwing stars and the shinobigatana sword to caltrops and firecrackers. Anything that might help confuse, disorient and impair an enemy can be expected to find its way into a ninja's bag of tricks. Under no circumstances will a ninja even consider fighting fair.

Ninja

Fast Hero 4/ Martial Artist 3/ Infiltrator 4; CR11; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 4d8+8 plus 3d8+6 plus 4d8+8; hp 66; Mas 15; Init +3; Spd 30'; Defense +23, touch 23, flat-footed 23 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +10 class); BAB +8; Grap +8; Atk +8 melee (1d6+2/19-20 shinobigatana or 1d6+2/20 nunchaku or 1d4+2/19-20 sai) +8 ranged (1d4/19-20 sai or 1d4/19-20 shuriken); FS 5' by 5'; Reach 5'; SQ; AL: Ninja clan; SV Fort +5, Ref +12, Will +3, AP 12; Rep +3; Str 15, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Occupation: Cloistered (Concentration, Sense Motive)

Skills: Balance +9, Climb +6, Concentration +5, Disable Device +5, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +8, Hide +12, Jump +6, Knowledge (Streetwise), Listen +5, Move Silently +12, Read/Write Japanese, Search +5, Sense Motive +3, Sleight of Hand +3, Speak Japanese, Spot +6, Tumble +9

Feats: Alertness, Archaic Weapon Proficiency,

Blind-Fight, Combat Martial Arts, Combat Throw, Defensive Martial Arts, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Stealthy

Talents (*Fast Hero*): Evasion, Uncanny Dodge

Talents (*Martial Artist*): Living Weapon 1d6, Flying Kick

Talents (*Infiltrator*): Sweep, Improvised Implements, Improved Evasion

Possessions: shinobigatana, nunchaku, shuriken (20), sais (2)

MARTIAL ARTIST

In the days of the pulps, the exotic unarmed combat techniques developed in the Orient were still things of wonder and mystery, with all sorts of wild and imaginative attributes assigned to them by a largely ignorant western world. At this time, almost superhuman abilities such as dodging bullets and killing a man with a sinister 'death touch' were held as common elements of these strange and sinister fighting styles practised in the East. Of the numerous schools of the martial arts, only Japanese karate and judo were widely known in the East. Indeed, many pulpsters would refer to Chinese martial artists as 'judo masters' as a way of conveying and explaining the extraordinary abilities they employed. It would not be until well after WWII and the exposure of western soldiers to Oriental cultures that a greater understanding of these remarkable arts would become more common, leading directly into the Kung-Fu phenomenon of the 1960's and '70's.

Any Oriental Mastermind worth his salt will probably have at least one Martial Artist in his entourage, perhaps as a valued lieutenant or a deceptively unimposing bodyguard. A Martial Artist can also fulfil the role assassin or spy, using his unique skills to confound the conventions of western authorities. The below profile depicts an experienced and talented Martial Artist who could serve as a ranking member of a mastermind's organization.

Martial Artist

Tough Hero 4/ Martial Artist 3; CR 7;

Medium-sized humanoid; HD 4d10+8 plus 3d8+6; hp 52; Mas 14; Init +3; Spd 30'; Defense +18, touch 18, flat-footed 15 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +5 class); BAB +6; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d8+2/20 nangun or 1d8+2/19-20 do); FS 5' by 5'; Reach 5'; SQ; AL: Martial arts dojo; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +2, AP 9; Rep +1; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Occupation: Athlete (Balance, Jump, Tumble)

Skills: Balance +5, Climb +6, Concentration +6, Escape Artist +5, Hide +5, Intimidate +4, Jump +4, Move Silently +7, Read/Write Cantonese (or other Oriental Language), Speak Cantonese (or other Oriental Language), Spot +1, Survival +1, Tumble +6.

Feats: Combat Martial Arts, Defensive Martial Arts, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Alertness, Knockout Punch, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Combat Reflexes

Talents (*Tough Hero*): Remain Conscious, Second Wind

Talents (*Martial Artist*): Living Weapon 1d6, Flying Kick

Possessions: nangun, do, wealth +1

JUNGLE TRIBESMEN

While many of the civilizations in the Orient boast centuries of culture and history, philosophical and scientific development, there also exist, even today, isolated societies that continue to subsist at almost stone age levels. These isolated tribes linger in some of the most remote and unforgiving lands it is possible to imagine: the festering swamps of New Guinea, the fever-ridden jungles of Vietnam, the sweltering hill-country of Burma's remote interior. These are lands that test a man every day, demanding his every effort be devoted to the simple task of staying alive. There is no time for poetry and invention in the jungle, only the brutal struggle between man and unforgiving nature. The people who dwell in these places are rugged and hard, survivors who have become as primeval as the land they inhabit.

Tales of headhunters and wild men never failed to captivate western audiences, and when such savages were depicted in the misty lands of the Orient, the captivation was made all the more enthralling. One of the

earliest of these 'primitives' to appear in popular fiction was the character of Tonga in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Sign of Four*, one of the earliest of the Sherlock Holmes stories. Tonga was depicted as hailing from the Andaman Islands, a sharp-toothed pygmy killer who employed a blowgun in his murders. The example of Tonga carried on for decades, filling the pages of the pulps with innumerable imitators. Everyone from the Shadow to Doc Savage would have their wits and courage tested by these savage throwbacks to a more primordial age. Perhaps the best known of the pulp-



age savages are the Tcho-Tcho people created by horror writer H. P. Lovecraft. Presented as diminutive, barely-human cannibals, the Tcho-Tcho exemplified the bestial ferocity of an earlier epoch, an atavistic reminder of mankind's repulsive past.

A Mastermind who makes use of Jungle Tribesmen often presents himself as a god, or at least an instrument of a god's will. Superstition and fear are the only things that can bind such primitives to the command of an outsider. Their uses are limited, clearly their ability to understand or interact with the modern world is limited at best. However, for brutal, merciless killers, it is hard to imagine anything more horrible than the snarling visage of a dwarfish cannibal as he scurries silently up the side of a fire-escape. Normally, a Mastermind will tend to have only a single Tribesman in his entourage, but more ambitious ones could conceivably have spirited an entire clan from their jungle homes. A wise Mastermind employs these fiends with caution, however. Any sign of weakness on his part could get the Tribesmen wondering about his claims of divinity...

Jungle Tribesman

Tough Hero 2; CR 2; Small-sized humanoid; HD 2d10+4; hp 16; Mas 14; Init +2; Spd 30' ; Defense +15, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +2 class); BAB +1; Grap -3; Atk +3 melee (1d8+1/20 spear); FS 5' by 5'; Reach 5'; SQ; AL: Jungle Tribe; SV Fort +4, Ref +3 , Will -1, AP 6; Rep +0; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Occupation: Primitive (Climb, Jump, Survival)

Skills: Climb +4, Concentration +2, Jump +2, Move Silently +3, Speak Tribal Dialect, Spot +1, Survival +1

Feats: Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Track, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Endurance, Stealthy, Elusive Target

Talents: Remain Conscious

Possessions: spear



BLACK MONK

The mystics of Tibet and Nepal were source many pulp writers plundered when in need of a 'scientific' explanation for magical effects in a story. Yoga, Buddhism, and even Confucian philosophy were laced with exotic, almost arcane, trappings in the pages of the pulps. The extraordinary feats described in travellers' tales brought back by those who had visited the Orient were expanded upon until the Buddhist monasteries high in the Himalayas became synonymous with astral projection, levitation, telepathy and even stranger accomplishments of mental awareness and spiritual discipline.

Naturally, the pulps made ready use of public perceptions of the arcane arts of the East. The Shadow's amazing abilities to 'cloud men's minds' was attributed to studying under Tibetan monks. More often, however, the mystic arts developed in the hermitages of Mongolia and Nepal were depicted in a more sinister light. The Shadow's nemesis, Shiwan Khan, for example, was a master of these exotic techniques of hypnosis and telepathy.

In the fiction of Robert E Howard, renowned creator of Conan of Cimmeria, an entire black order of evil Buddhist monks was based in the remote wastes of Mongolia, a twisted society of depraved minds that had unlocked secrets mankind was

never meant to know, capable even of torturing the physical body into new and horrible shapes, transforming one trespasser into their domain into a living werewolf.

In the occult works of the time, two mystical kingdoms were held to be hidden within the vastness of the Himalayas: Shambhalah and Agharti. While Shambhalah was presented as a utopian ideal of morality and good, Agharti was a sinister and wicked place where sorcerers delved into the lost wisdom of vanquished civilizations in their quest to dominate the entire world. These adepts of Agharti would sometimes venture in the outer world, spying on the lands they plotted against.

Black Monks represent these nefarious mystics from the forbidden East. Masters of mental disciplines and powers far beyond anything known in the West, a Black Monk presents a truly formidable challenge. While appropriate to be used as a master criminal in his own right, a Black Monk might find himself as an ally or agent of another villain. To really give heroes a workout, perhaps several Black Monks have journeyed from their hidden monasteries to plague the civilized world. The important thing for the GM to bear in mind is the motivation behind a Black Monk's excursion into the western world. Black Monks have forsaken the needs and desires of common men, and they have little to

share in the base motives of lesser criminals. Fulfilling prophecy, seeking to reclaim lost relics, or revenge against the defilers of ancient tombs are just some of the purposes that can drive a Black Monk.

Black Monk

Dedicated Hero 1/ Mesmerist 7/ Martial Artist 1; CR 9; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 1d6+1 plus 7d6+7 plus 1d8+1; hp 42; Mas 12; Init +2; Spd 30'; Defense +16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +4 class); BAB +4; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee (1d8/20 nangun); FS 5' by 5'; Reach 5'; SQ; AL: Monastic order; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +9, AP 11; Rep +4; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Occupation: Cloistered (Concentration, Sense Motive)

Skills: Bluff +5, Concentration +11, Handle Animal +4, Hide +4, Intimidate +11, Jump +3, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) +12, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +4, Knowledge (philosophy) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +3, Read/Write Tibetan, Read/Write Mongolian, Read/Write Cantonese, Sense Motive +12, Sleight of Hand +4, Speak Tibetan, Speak Mongolian, Speak Cantonese, Speak English, Speak Yeti, Spot +7, Survival +2

Feats: Combat Martial Arts, Defensive Martial Arts, Focused, Frightful Presence, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Trance

Talents (*Dedicated Hero*): Empathy

Talents (*Mesmerist*): Hypnotic Ability, Hypnotic Trance, Trick, Command Word, Winning Smile, Lengthy Trance, Compulsion

Talents (*Martial Artist*): Living Weapon 1d6

Possessions: nangun, prayer beads, wealth +2



ORIENTAL ARMORY

The following table presents some of the archaic weapons commonly employed by Oriental villains in the blood-soaked pages of the pulps.

Archaic Melee Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Size	Weight	Purchase DC
Do	1d8	19-20	Slashing	Med	4lb	17
Fu	1d8	20	Slashing	Med	5lb	15
Gou	1d6	20	Slashing	Med	4lb	17
Katana	2d6	19-20	Slashing	Large	8lb	19
Katar	1d3	19-20	Piercing	Tiny	1lb	16
Keris	1d4	19-20	Piercing	Small	1lb	17
Naginata	1d10	20	Slashing	Large	15lb	15
Nangun	1d8	20	Bludgeoning	Large	10lb	12
Nunchaku	1d6	20	Bludgeoning	Small	2lb	15
Qiang	1d8	19-20	Piercing	Large	4lb	13
Shinobigatana	1d6	19-20	Slashing	Med	3lb	17
Tulwar	1d10	19-20	Slashing	Med	5lb	13

Ranged Archaic Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range	Size	Weight	Purchase DC
Sai	1d4	19-20	Piercing	10'	Small	1lb	13
Shuriken	1d4	20	Piercing	20'	Tiny	1lb	13

WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

Do – The Do is a straight sword used in China, roughly the same size and shape as the western broadsword.

Fu – The Fu is a Chinese combat axe. It is used one-handed and a skilled practitioner will typically employ one in either hand. The Fu is the preferred weapon of Tong assassins, though most are forced to employ the hatchets that are more common in western cities.

Gou – The Gou is another Chinese sword. Unlike the Do, it is not a straight sword, but has a hooked blade that is designed to slash enemies.

Katana – The Katana is the famed sword of the samurai of Japan. With the increasing militarization of Japan, the Katana is once again being seen as a status symbol and Japanese officers will carry hastily made, mass produced Katanas with them into the coming world war. The Katana is a slashing weapon honed to an incredibly fine edge, more akin to a giant razor than a sword.

Katar – The Katar is a punch dagger used by thieves and assassins in India, Burma and Indonesia. These weapons are small and designed for concealment, delivering a deadly surprise when hidden within a clenched fist. The Katar is one of several

weapons associated with Dacoits in the pulps.

Keris – The wavy-bladed Keris is a large knife used by the people of the Philippines, Java and Thailand. It is a stabbing rather than slashing weapon and hideously lethal in the hands of a skilled fighter.

Naginata – The Naginata is a Japanese spear with a curved steel blade. It is a slashing rather than stabbing weapon and historically was used by infantry to defend against mounted samurai in a fashion similar to the European pike.



Nangun – The Nangun is a Chinese combat staff made from wax wood. The weapon can deliver brutal, bone-shattering strikes that can quickly subdue an adversary.

Nunchaku – Developed by Okinawan and Japanese peasant farmers as a way of getting around laws that prohibited the possession of edged weapons, the Nunchaku consists of a pair of sticks attached at one end by a length of chain or rope. In the hands of a skilled practitioner, Nunchaku can be used to deliver a rapid and disorienting flurry of strikes and even overcome the reach of adversaries with swords and spears.

Qiang – In China, the spear is held as the ‘king of weapons’. The Qiang consists of a leaf-shaped steel blade fitted to a seven foot long wooden shaft. A tassel of horse-hair is attached just beneath the blade, both to disorient an enemy and to soak up blood once the weapon is stabbed into the body of an opponent.

Sai – Typically Sais will be used as a pair, one held in either hand. The weapon is a blunt dagger that originates in Okinawa. It is a largely defensive weapon, used to disarm enemies by means of catching an attacker’s blade with one of the blunt projections that frame the central blade of the Sai. They are sometimes depicted as being used in more

offensive styles and can be thrown in a manner similar to a javelin.

Shinobigatana – Shorter than the Katana used by samurai, the Shinobigatana is a razor-edged sword employed by Ninja, typically constructed with baser materials and less craftsmanship than the elaborate artistry involved in fabrication of a Katana.

Shuriken – Coming in a wide variety of shapes, sizes and materials, Shuriken are small blades that can be thrown at enemies or used in hand-to-hand combat. Traditionally they were fabricated from household materials such as needles and coins. Typical shapes include nail-like spikes, bladed stars and razor-edged discs.

Tulwar – Although a weapon originating in India and which spread west into Afghanistan and Persia rather than east into Burma and Thailand, the curved Tulwar nevertheless was frequently found in use by ceremonial guards in the lair of many a fiendish Oriental Mastermind. Although the curved blade is designed for slashing an enemy, the sharp point of the weapon can also be used for stabbing.

HORRORS OF THE ORIENT

The villains of the East did not come alone when they turned their cruel eyes on the West. The fiendish nightmares of an entire continent and thousands of years of civilization and culture came with them. No Oriental villain worth his salt did not have some hideous and revolting creature lurking within his lair, ready to deliver a horrible death to those unfortunates who earned the villain's ire. Poisonous vermin of every description slithered and crawled through the pages of a Yellow Peril story, from venomous lizards to enormous centipedes and spiders. An Oriental villain was often quite inventive when employing such inhuman assassins, designing cages that would slowly lower a victim into a pit of snakes or a pungent perfume that would draw a giant scorpion across half a city in search of its odorous target.

Sometimes the inhuman agents of an Oriental villain were even more bizarre. Trained crocodiles, intelligent apes, gigantic lizards, nothing was too strange or wild for the pages of the pulps to present to readers. Indeed, the stranger the better was often the rule of the day.

Below are a few unusual creatures from the Orient that will fit in quite well even in a campaign that is running with a restrained element of the fantastic.

ALLGHOI KHORKHOI

The infamous 'Mongolian Death Worm' is a feared inhabitant of the Gobi Desert. Despite its name, the creature is not actually a worm at all, but a highly venomous primitive viper. Small, nearly blind, and quite sluggish, the Allghoi Khorkhoi relies upon its uncanny camouflaged scales and deadly venom to subdue prey and protect itself from predators. In the Gobi, they prey upon insects and small lizards, lurking just beneath the sand until the snake detects the vibrations of the creature's approach. It then launches itself from the sand, stabbing its poisonous fangs into the prey. Because the snake hunts by vibrations in the sand rather than sight or smell, it will often attack animals much too large for it to devour, including human beings. It is this propensity to attack anything that comes close to it that has made the Allghoi Khorkhoi such a menace to the inhabitants of the Gobi. Fortunately, the serpents are extremely rare and seldom encountered.

Some of the mystics and god-kings of Mongolia have captured these snakes in the past and used them as deadly guardians within treasure vaults and tombs. The floor of the chamber in which the snakes are placed is covered with a thin layer of sand. Since the snakes move by burrowing through the sand, and since their scales blend in perfectly, the lethal vipers are all but invisible to someone who does not know what to look for. Less scrupulous

individuals sometimes use the Allghoi Khorkhoi as a method for terror, the superstitious dread with which the Mongolians regard this snake cannot be understated. A fierce warrior who would happily wade into machine gun fire can be reduced to a whimpering child simply with the threat of the Allghoi Khorkhoi.

The Allghoi Khorkhoi is a good representative of the type of poisonous creatures an Oriental villain might keep as pets, guardians, or executioners.

Allghoi Khorkhoi

CR 3; Small Animal; HD 1d6+1; hp 4; Mass 2; Init +3; Spd 10', burrow 10'; Defense 13, touch 10, flat-footed 10 (+2 size); BAB +3; Grap -4; Atk +5 melee (1d3-1 plus poison, bite); FS 5' by 5; Reach 5'; SQ poison (DC18), tremorsense; AL none; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will -2; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 7, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 4, Cha 2.

Skills: Hide +6 (doubled in sand)

Feats: Weapon finesse (bite).

Poison (Ex): Bite – Fortitude save for ½ effect; save DC 18; Paralysis/2d10 hp damage

Tremorsense (Ex): The Allghoi Khorkhoi can sense anything that comes within 60' of it provided the creature or object is in contact with the ground and is moving. Almost blind, these snakes can only see unmoving objects that are within 5' of them.

BURU

The Buru is a large semi-aquatic lizard that hails from the remote valleys of the Himalayas. It is blue-black in colour, fading to an off-white along the belly. The scales are small and fine except along the back, which is covered in a layer of tougher, plate-like scales. The lizards grow to over 15' in length, sporting long, whip-like tails and enormous clawed feet. While its body resembles that of monitor lizards such as the Komodo dragon, the Buru's head is narrower and sharper, its powerful jaws filled with flat molars rather than sharp fangs. A herbivore, the Buru dwells in swamps and marshland, spending much of its time in the water except when sunning itself in the early morning. Much of the Buru's habitat has been destroyed by the native populations of the valleys, reclaimed from the swamps for use as rice fields. As a result, the lizards have become extinct in many of their former territories.

The Buru is a throwback to the time of the great reptiles and just the sort of unusual creature a hero might find haunting the lair of an Oriental villain. While normally inoffensive to humans, the lizards can be 'trained' after a fashion to act as guards for a villain who is patient and resourceful enough to accommodate them. The intelligence of a Buru is quite limited, the reptiles are pure instinct. They can be tricked into a heightened state of alertness by the simple expedient of aggravating

their keen sense of smell. By feeding the Burus a diet of specific pungent variety, a villain can cause the lizards to associate the smell with food. Treating a corridor or chamber so that it exudes this food smell will aggravate any hungry Burus placed in it, causing them to become increasingly aggressive and agitated. Especially brutal villains might also douse a captive in the scent of a Buru's normal diet, then loose the lizards to hunt down the unfortunate. By the time the slow-witted Burus realise that what they have tracked down isn't a tasty melon but a stringy G-man, it will be much too late to do the victim much good.

Buru

CR 7; Large animal; HD 7d8+9; hp 41; Mas 17; Init +2; Spd 30', swim 50'; Defense 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; BAB +2; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+4 bite); Full Atk +5 melee (1d10+4, tail slap, 1d6+4 bite); FS 10' by 10'; Reach 10'; SQ Scent; AL none; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will -1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 8, Cha 2.

Skills: Climb +4, Hide +7 (+11 in swamps, marshes), Move Silently +6

ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN

The mysterious creature that reputedly haunts the Himalayas first came to the attention of Western civilization in 1925 with reports from a British mountaineering expedition. Some of the Sherpa guides pointed out a strange object climbing down the lower slopes. Although it was hard to make out details, the shape was undeniably bipedal and the movement distinctly unnatural and inhuman. The story was soon carried in newspapers across the world, the Tibetan word *yeti* mistranslated by the British press as 'Abominable Snowman'. The fascinating enigma would grip the imagination of the world and ignite a controversy that continues to fuel both derision and speculation.

The Yeti is a huge, ape-like biped, standing between 8 and 12 feet in height and weighing perhaps as much as 1,000 pounds. It walks upright, like a man, and leaves behind enormous footprints in the ice and snow. Although popular culture has since depicted the Yeti as possessing white fur, actual sightings and tradition depicts the creature as brown, black, or more rarely a dirty grey. The creature's immense strength and endurance are renowned, it is capable of carrying off livestock and, in tradition, Tibetan women. While the Tibetan traditions blur the line between the Yeti's existence as a real animal or a demon of the mountains, scientific speculation has sometimes pointed toward

Gigantopithecus a giant ape that inhabited China in prehistoric times.

The Abominable Snowman was a fixture of popular media during the pulp period. The Yeti menaced explorers in the pages of pulp magazines such as *Weird Tales* and even *Doc Savage* as well as adventurers in radio programs

such as 'Escape'. The creature was depicted as savage and ferocious, echoing the 'killer ape' popularized on the silver screen, but also presented as something more than merely an animal. The Yeti is a creature with intelligence and the ability to reason, not a simple brute governed by instinct and natural cunning. It is this intelligence that some



Eastern mystics can exploit to gain control over a Yeti, bringing the horror down from the high mountains and into the shadows of civilization.

The below profile better depicts a 'traditional' Yeti than the version presented in standard d20, removing the more 'elemental' aspects of the creature and making it a 'normal', if highly

unusual, animal. The Tibetans actually speak of three man-beasts that inhabit the Himalayas, the diminutive *meh-teh*, the *yeh-teh*, and the truly monstrous and gigantic *dzu-teh*. A GM who wants to explore all three possibilities could employ the below profile to depict a *yeh-teh* and use the 'advanced yeti' from the d20 Modern SRD to depict the even bigger *dzu-teh*. It would also be appropriate for a GM who really wants to blur the lines between science and mysticism to give Yetis the power of speech, possessing a language all their own and which some ascetics may have learned from ancient Tibetan texts. The image of a Black Monk conversing with a Yeti in a language of snarls and whistles is certain to make heroes even more uneasy.

Yeti:

CR 5; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 10d10 +30; hp 80; Mas 16; Init +1; Spd 40'; Defense 15, touch 9, flat-footed 14; BAB +6; Grap +14; Atk +9 melee (1d6+6 claw); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+6, 2 claws); FS 10' by 10'; Reach 10'; SQ cold resistance, darkvision 60'; AL none; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +5; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 9.

Skills: Climb +10, Hide +10, Move Silently +10, Survival +7

Feats: Track

Cold Resistance: Inured to the frigid temperatures at the roof of the world, a yeti is highly resistant to the damaging effects of cold. A yeti will always take half damage from a cold-based attack, taking one-quarter damage from cold-based attacks that have their damage reduced with a successful saving throw.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The following are adventure seed ideas using Perils of the Orient:

- An Oriental Mastermind has decided to expand his operations, allying himself with another force of evil: The Nazis. He has struck an arrangement: He will provide the Nazis with industrial secrets (stolen by his operatives), and in return, the Nazis will allow him to smuggle opium from New York to Los Angeles via their zeppelin, *Die Walkuriye*, which is making a promotional world-wide tour. The Nazis believe that helping “the Devil of Chinatown” spread his drugs throughout the United States will further weaken “a decadent and corrupt society,” leaving it ripe for Nazi takeover.

- A cabal of Black Monks, from the hidden city of Agharti, have come to the Player Characters home city, in order to recover priceless Tibetan mystical artifacts which have been brought back from the Himalayas by an unwitting explorer, under the mistaken impression that the artifacts are merely curios and works of art.

The Black Monks try first to locate the items by kidnapping the explorer from a reception at the Geographic Society Club, but the items have already been sent to the museum. The Player Characters will have to uncover the plot, defend the explorer, and prevent the Monks from getting their hands on the artifacts.



- A number of prominent citizens are discovered murdered in hideous and bizarre fashion. Investigation by the Player-Characters will reveal that all of the victims are shareholders in a railroad company. Further investigation will reveal that the victims were the sons and daughters of the original founders of the company, and that the company was responsible for the deaths of a great many Chinese workers during the construction of its rail lines in the West.

An Oriental Mastermind, who views himself as the heir to Mandate of Heaven, is taking revenge for the ill treatment of his race at the hands of the westerners, as the first part of his plan to consolidate support among the Chinese community worldwide... and then to form a World Empire, with himself on the throne.



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PULP VILLAINS: *THUGEE*



A SOURCEBOOK
FOR

**THRILLING
TALES**

OR ANY OTHER
MODERN d20 GAME

PULP VILLAINS: *THUGEE*

INTRODUCTION

They strangle unsuspecting travelers on dark country roads. They glide through New York's glittering streets clinging to shadows, carrying fear and death in their yellow scarves. They dance and debauch, brutal thugs masking their villainy behind a façade of ancient mysticism.

They are the Thuggee, a cult of murders whose history and myth stretch back to the time of Herodotus. They terrorized India's roadways for at least six hundred years. Each year they killed travelers by the tens of thousands. Eventually a single man stood up to them, ferreted them out of the dark places, and hung them high for all to see.

The British Empire hung thousands of Thuggee in the period between 1830 and 1850. Thousands more fled rather than pay for their

crimes. By the end of the 19th century the terrible cult vanished from India. In the fictional world of the pulps, though, the cult persisted into the modern world.

Charismatic conmen use its rituals to disguise their sinister schemes. Remnants of the original Thuggee continue their murderous rites.

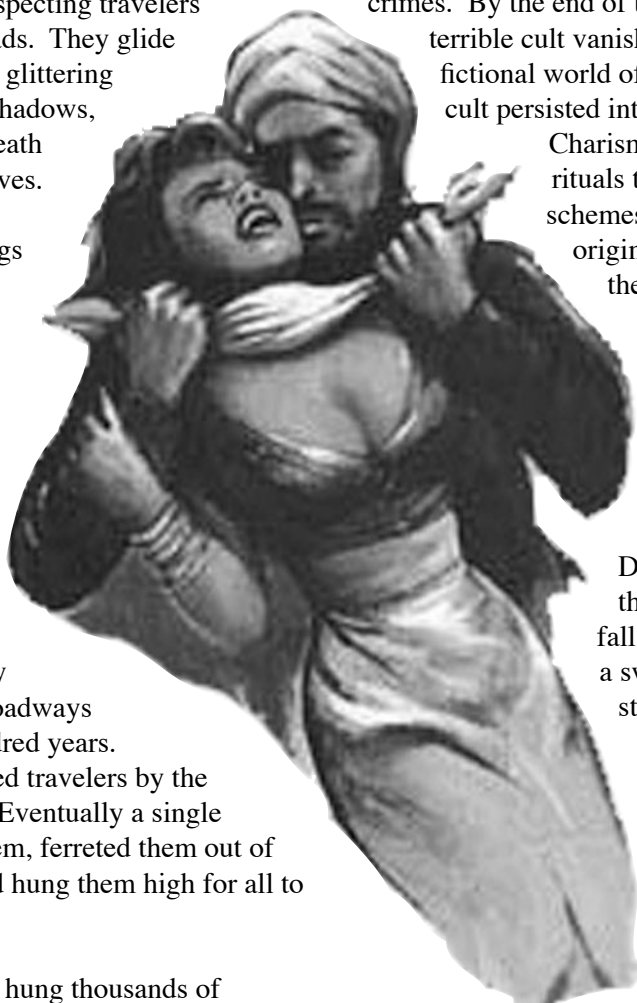
Rebels and terrorists hide their very modern ambitions under the strangling cord and the pick-axe.

Do you dare oppose them? Or will you too fall to a cunning smile and a swiftly applied yellow strangling cord?

IN THIS BOOK

Welcome to *Pulp Villains: Thuggee*, a book in Adamant Entertainment's **Thrilling Tales** line

of pulp fiction roleplaying aids. This book examines the Thuggee, a cult Kali-



worshiping assassins who murdered countless thousands during over least six centuries. They routinely slaughtered travelers by the hundreds yet maintained such secrecy and organization that few acknowledged their existence until a single crusading Englishman drove them into the light.

This book starts with an examination of the historical Thuggee cult. It goes on to describe three separate “Thuggee organizations”, each suitable for inclusion in a pulp themed campaign. These three cults can play a minor role in an existing campaign or act as a primary campaign motivator, depending entirely on the Game Masters needs.

After exploring the Thuggee, this book presents a method to generate entirely new cults.

This method allows Gamemasters to quickly create cults in the same vein as the Thuggee: societies dedicated to their goals and willing to ignore any social prohibitions standing in their way. He does this by assigning the group between one and seven descriptors, each with accompanying descriptions, group attribute modifications, and suggested methods for further development.

This cult creation method segues into cult F/X and feats associated with cult membership. These extra abilities give antagonists and protagonists new options suitable for games ranging from non-magic adventure games to minor supernatural/psychic effects similar to those found in the “psychic detective” sub-genre.

The pre-made characters and cult sheet in Appendix A and B bring together the tools presented in proceeding chapters. Appendix A provides “drop in” characters tailored to Thuggee cults and wielding cultic F/X. Appendix B provides a sheet for recording

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22-4 7-4 4-14-10 25-21-5

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GM-created cults and their adjective/attributes

CHAPTER ONE : THE THUGEE

The historic Thuggee's saga reads like something out of an adventure novel. It has shining heroes, villains so vile they barely qualify as human, and a nasty intersection between religious fervor and material interest. Its sensational and scandalous nature inspired several best sellers, not to mention a judicial campaign reaching into India's darkest shadows.

In many ways, the Thuggee provided the model writers used to create cults in pulp fiction. They organized themselves into hereditary gangs. These gangs operated in secret and communicated among themselves using a indecipherable cant. When not engaged in their murderous deeds Thuggee lived ordinary lives, had families, and contributed to their communities. In other words, they were everything we imagine a secret society to be: lethal, organized, and completely invisible to the outside world.

In the real world it took a man of remarkable dedication to bring them down. In the world of the pulps it will take more than that: it will take courage, determination, and a fistful of bullets.

The English word "thug" comes from the Hindu word *thag*, meaning a cheater or a thief. In general use a thug is a ruffian, a tough who does what his betters tell him. Gangsters employ thugs to beat people to a pulp. Smarmy business men with connections to gangsters hire these slope-browed simians to intimidate weak-willed customers.



Originally, though, the word described something far more dangerous than a class of criminal bottom feeders. Thugs terrorized India for centuries, murdering travelers and stealing the property. Thuggee, their system of beliefs and practices, organized a network of assassins, informers, merchants, and politicians unrivaled in human history. This network turned religious murder into a profitable enterprise, capable of literally mustering an army and ignoring authorities until one man finally brought them to justice.

This section starts by describing the historical Thuggee cult and its grizzly end. It then goes on to describe three different fictional versions of the Thuggee. The first outlines a loosely organized group of psychotic killers under the command of a criminal mastermind. The second suggests a possible continuation of the original Thuggee cult, assuming their goddess actually interceded to protect a her followers. The third outlines a hybrid between these two approaches, describing a rebel fascist organization structured using the ideas of the original Thuggee cult.

All four of the Thuggee cults described below use the Organisation Rules from Mongoose Publishing's *OGH Horror* (which are presented again in this book). The attributes

for the historical Thuggee cult represents the author's best guess as to the Thuggee's actual capabilities; the other three derive from the cult creation method outlined in the second section of this book: Creating Cults.

Note on Descriptors

Chapter 2 introduces the concept of descriptors; adjectives used clarify aspects of a cult's personality and role in the game. The number of descriptors a cult receives depends on how important it is to the plot, how often it appears, and whether it is of ancient or modern origin.

For more information on descriptors, their use, and the questions associated with them please refer to Chapter 2.

THE HISTORICAL THUGEE

The Indian "thugs" came to the attention of the East India Company during the 1820s through Captain William Sleeman's Herculean efforts. This young British captain boldly assaulted a centuries old institution of murder and robbery without consent from the local authorities. Ignoring centuries of Company policy he interfered in local affairs, hunted down bandits, and eventually changed life for Indians throughout the sub-continent.

The organization Captain Sleeman destroyed operated throughout India. Princes and kings gave it tacit assistance in return for vast wealth. Its members, both Hindu and Muslim, engaged in wholesale murder during the summer months then returned to their ordinary lives. They passed the cult's wealth and its terrible secrets to their children, indoctrinating their sons in murder before their eighteenth birthday.

Descriptors:

Ancient Occasional Opponent (3

Descriptors): Greedy*, Murderous, Scattered

*required by Ancient designation

Attributes:

The historical cult might possess the following attributes:

Hit Points: 14,000

Force: 30 (+10)

Response: 10 (+0)

Resources: 24 (+7)

Information: 20 (+5)

Occult: 10 (+0)

Influence: 20 (+5)

Skills: Disguise (Inf) +15, Forgery (Info) +15, Gather Information (For) +20, Intimidate (For) +20, Knowledge (Current Events) (Infl) +15, Knowledge (Streetwise) (Info) +15, Research (Info) +15, Search (For) +20

Feats: Arsenal, Covert, Secure Base x4

Descriptor Modifiers: +2 bonus to Resource checks, operatives add +10 to Intimidate checks, DR 7/- against organizational attacks.

Quick Description:

The Thuggee cult uses murder to further its greed and desire for goods. They have a decentralized structure but the leaders know each other fairly well.

Extended Description:

Herodotus mentioned a people known for strangling their victims in his Histories, written in the fifth century BCE. Nineteen hundred years later, in the 14th century CE, a "Thug" financed a mercenary army to repel an Afghani invasion in northern India. Four hundred years after that, the British suddenly took an interest in the unexplained disappearance of 40,000 people every year from India's roads. They found, to their horror, a loosely organized

group capable of murdering everyone in a caravan or plucking one traveler out of a crowd and killing him.

The thugs participated in a cult called “Thugee”. In theory the cult worshiped Kali in her aspect as goddess of destruction. Hindus and Muslim’s participated in the cult, despite the obvious religious conflict between monotheistic beliefs and Kali worship.

Practically speaking, though, Thugee and the thugs were a family business. Fathers and uncles inducted young men into the practice early then passed on their positions as they retired. They disposed of their ill-gotten gains through centuries old channels, funding kingdoms and armies throughout the sub-continent.

Thugs lived ordinary lives during most of the year; many became respected members of their communities. They practiced trades, ran businesses, raised families: all of the things expected of normal citizens. However, they also took long “trips” into India every year. For three or more months they stalked the

countryside in search of the proper targets.

Selecting a target required careful consultation of omens and proper ritual practice. It also involved an element of practical assessment. The thugs rarely moved unless they outnumbered their target by at least three to one. Reliable accounts describe them murdering caravans of 100 or more, so they obviously traveled in groups of at least 300 at times.



Thugs did not attack their foes in screaming waves, waving knives and shooting guns. Instead they joined their victims as fellow travelers. They could journey with a potential victim for months, usually posing as guards or

entertainers, before finding the perfect moment to strike. When that moment came they attacked on a pre-arranged signal. Two thugs held the target, kicking him repeatedly in the genitals as a distraction, while a senior thug strangled him with a yellow scarf.

After completing their rituals and burying the bodies in unmarked graves, the thugs disposed of the victims’ possessions by selling them to

established governments. This influx of wealth supported several of the larger central Indian states, giving the thugs somewhere to hide while they prepared to resume their ordinary lives.

Among themselves the thugs spoke a secret language. Although clearly of Hindi origin, this language differed from its root language enough to prevent casual interception. Even so, they did not speak it in public, reserving it instead for their planning sessions and communications within the cult while not out seeking victims.

The Thuggee cult continued almost unopposed until 1820. In that year a captain in the British Army, one William Sleeman, discovered their existence. For the next twenty years he hunted down thugs wherever he could find them. He might not have succeeded, but early in his operation he captured several cult leaders. The kind of person willing to casually murder hundreds of innocents also, to the good captain's benefit, will also usually turn on his compatriots in return for considerations. These leaders helped Captain Sleeman round up and hang thousands of their fellow thugs despite sometimes stiff local opposition.

For all practical purposes the cult ceased to exist by 1840, though the East India Company continued to issue regulations about them into the middle of the 19th century. Captain Sleeman's exploits and the confessions of several Thuggee leaders became best-selling novels after suffering various degrees of fictionalization. The real events were, after all, almost too much for an educated readership to believe.

Characters

Any campaign involving the historical Thuggee cult should touch upon at least the following characters:

Ameer Ali (Male Human Charismatic Hero

5/Fast Hero 4): Ameer Ali, a Thuggee member and leader, confessed to over six hundred killings during his years as a cult member. His recorded, then fictionalized, confessions became the basis for "The Confessions of a Thug", an instant best-seller in 19th century Britain. Charming, sophisticated, and intelligent, his complete lack of moral compunctions about murder or betrayal fascinated readers for almost one hundred years. Characters might encounter him in any one of a number of disguises or meet him after his capture in their quest to destroy the Thuggee.

Captain William Sleeman (Male Human,

Dedicated 7): Mr. Sleeman came to India as a police officer and left a Major-General after a twenty year campaign against the Thuggee. At the start of his career he is a well-built, intelligent young man fired by high ideals and a sense of righteousness. By the end he suffers from the debilitating effects of living in a tropical environment for two decades, though he still carries himself with great dignity. Characters who encounter him early in his career will find him accessible and charming as he tries to recruit them to his cause. Later in his career Mr. Sleeman's wife smooths over his hard edges and occasional bouts of temper as he nears the end of his long quest.

Feringeea (Male Human, Charismatic 9):

This magnetic young man styled himself as the "Prince of the Thuggee". Charming and educated, he almost escaped Captain Sleeman but turned himself in after Sleeman took his

mother, wife, and children into custody. His assistance proved invaluable as he turned over thug leaders all over the Indian sub-continent.

Adventure Seeds and Plot Hooks

The historical Thuggee might appear in any number of stories:

- 1) Characters in a historical campaign could become involved with Captain Sleeman during his early days as a policeman. His fanatical devotion to changing India will put him at odds with the Company executives, the local authorities, and the Thuggee themselves.
- 2) In the later part of his campaign Sleeman becomes a very public and important figure. The characters may find themselves assigned to protect him as the Thuggee, practiced deceivers and assassins, make a final effort to remove their opponent.
- 3) Indian characters may take on the role of Thuggee defending their ancient and honorable calling from interference by the colonial powers. In between bouts of murder they will have to defend their leaders, mislead the authorities, and perhaps even assassinate the meddling Englishman who brought all of this about.

THE THUGEE CULT OF PERSONALITY

After the destruction of the historical thugs English and Indian conmen began to use its rituals and traditions as a cover. They took popular accounts of the Thuggee, mixed it with their own agendas, and produced an amalgam of East and West even more terrifying than the original.

The cult below follows one such hybridization to its logical conclusion. It describes the efforts of an English conman (Duncan Turnbull) to cover his crimes under the aegis of a long dead cult. His ability to manipulate the weak-minded lower-classes, along with his absolute belief in his personal superiority, lend this cult a hard pulp edge.

Descriptors:

Modern Important Opponent (5 Descriptors): Cell, European, Fearsome, Greedy, Murderous*

*Required by Modern designation

Attributes:

Hit Points: 3,100

Force: 17 (+3)

Response: 12 (+1)

Resources: 21 (+5)

Information: 10 (+0)

Occult: 8 (-1)

Influence: 14 (+2)

Skills: Craft (Info) +10, Disguise (Inf) +12, Forgery (Info) +10, Search (For) +13

Feats: Covert, Financial Sway, Secure Base x2

Descriptor Modifiers: Organization never appears to have more than 1/10th its actual size, Organization reduces time of Knowledge (Popular Culture, Tactics) by 1/2, +2 to Resources checks, Organization operatives'

add its Influence modifier bonus to their Gather Information skill checks, Organization operatives' add its Force modifier bonus to their Intimidate skill checks

Quick Description:

The "Thuggee" use popular fear of their name and outright murder to bully people into handing over their material wealth. They have a highly decentralized structure in which each leader only knows one other leader. The "Grand Priest" knows all of the cells but none of their leaders know him by his real name or face.

Extended Description:

In 1892 Duncan Turnbull went to the bar in London for the third time. The charges of criminal misconduct, fraud, and murder were enough to insure his speedy removal from society. Then, in a daring move assisted by three accomplices, he escaped from prison on the date of his sentencing. On the run and beyond the law he cooked up a grand scheme.

After leaving his accomplices where the authorities could find them Duncan vanished. A year later, rumors circulated though the underworld of coves showing up in shadowed alleyways. Though dead bodies, especially those of young men, appeared daily, something about these new murders caught people's attention. Each young man had a yellow scarf wrapped around his neck. Each one also had his head smashed in by something big, heavy, and sharp.

At first the authorities ignored the threat. After all, dozens of madmen and anarchists used the yellow scarves every year in a vain hope to confuse investigations. Two years into the crime spree, though, a group of constables turned up dead. Their strangled and mutilated bodies, posed in mockery of some ancient

Indian sexual text, incited public outrage and belated official action.

Scotland Yard took four weeks to track down and apprehend the criminals. The investigation lead them though sordid opium dens, the Thames warehouses, and into London's darkest heart. In a stunning raid they captured twelve men and a vast assortment of Indian paraphernalia. Under interrogation the men claimed descent from the original Thuggee cult, long though exterminated. They even produced papers proving the claim, though these papers later proved to be forgeries.

The investigators closed the case after the raid and confessions. They filed it away as a bit of left over business from the British Empire's early years. A month later, rumors again surfaced of more men and women murdered by strangulation. Close investigation, though, revealed no foundation to the accusations.

A decade later, in New York, the cult surfaced again. This time the aggressive New York Police Department had its hands full with gang wars, turf battles between political factions, and the constant pressure of new immigrants from Europe and Asia. Since it looked like one group of odd-colored men murder other odd-colored men, their captains decided to ignore it.

The streets of New York proved a fertile place for the burgeoning cult. It recruited men from the lowest rungs of society, gave them wealth, and taught them to kill. Eventually cells began to grow in other cities, some as far west as Chicago.

Duncan Turnbull becomes William Sleeman

The new Thuggee came into being when Duncan Turnbull vanished. He decided, at the spur of the moment, to re-invent himself. Using his

skills as a confidence man and actor, along with things he learned reading trashy novels in jail, he created a new persona “Mr. William Sleeman, Importer.” In order to finance this change he contracted a number of down and out Indian criminals. To make his story more believable he provided the men with false documents “proving” their descent from the ancient Thuggee families.

Upon this flimsy foundation “William Sleeman” built an international criminal empire. Independently organized cells of thugs murdered travelers, tourists, and immigrants in vast numbers. They would travel to a new city or burrough each season, murder and rob, then return home to their cover-lives as upright citizens. All of the stolen goods moved through Sleeman’s import business, effectively laundering them while simultaneously tying the enterprise into the local business community.

When Sleeman lost the first cell he relocated from the familiar environs of London to New York City. There he found a seething immigrant population, an inattentive police force, and lax import/export laws. In short, nearly perfect ground for his efforts. Disaffected men, cut off from their traditional moral and ethical authorities, happily signed on with his “thugs” in an attempt to make something of themselves.

Cult Members

The cult recruits members exclusively from the lowest of the low. Cell leaders seek out the unenfranchised, the newly arrived, and those who have potential but cannot quite make it on their own. They set these men up with legitimate, if low earning, businesses. They give them language training. They help them to put their children into schools and schedule medical care for those who need it.

In return the cell inducts them into the business. The new members learn a secret language made of up “Indian sounding” words that has no real rhyme or reason. One week every three months they go on a trip to an out of town location where they watch older cult members stalk, strangle, and rob anyone who looks like a good target. Once they have participated in enough murders the cult leader inducts them into the society.

No cult member knows much about the other cells. The cell leader, an appointed position, only sees their leader once per year and then on a day chosen by the “Grand Leader”. Loot is left in large blind drops, from which it mysteriously vanishes within a few days.

When not actively engaged in their murderous trade the cult members live ordinary lives. Most own small shops specializing in the garment trade or groceries. None acknowledge other cult members on the street, though they meet once a month to perform stylized rituals to the Dark Goddess Kali.

Unlike the real Thuggee this cult does not select its targets though an elaborate system of omen-reading. Instead they use purely pragmatic criteria for selecting victims. Their newfound faith and techniques cannot cover over their lowly origins.

Cult Environments

The cult does not maintain a central base of operations. When in their “normal” lives the cult members dwell and work in small shops. When on the road they stay in cheap hotels and boarding houses.

Cult Encounters

Though it would be convenient cult members do not wander around in Indian turbans

with necklaces of human skulls around their necks. They dress conservatively, either in the well-tended clothes of a factory worker or the middle of the road shirt and jacket of successful businessmen. They present a friendly, even cooperative, face until they lull the target.

When the target feels perfectly safe they strike. One member attempts a choking attack from the rear while at least one other distracts the target by pummeling him. If the target breaks free the thugs flee by the fastest possible route.

Characters

Any campaign involving the Thugee cult of personality might encounter the following characters:

Duncan Turnbull aka William Sleeman (Male Human Charismatic 10): Mr. Sleeman openly immigrated to the United States in 1896, bringing with him an active import business specializing in fine artifacts from around the world. His constant supply and cheap prices made him an instant favorite with the cash conscious but status climbing upper-middle class and criminal elements. The more established old money families continued to use their own dealers. Within a year he built up four cells, and has since established another dozen scattered throughout the states. He then hires pawn-brokers and locals to pick up the stolen goods and sells the loot in cities far away from where they were first nicked.

In person Duncan's almost hypnotic voice and aura of confidence lure people into a hazy daze from which they emerge after several hours. His flashing dark eyes and sardonic wit put even the most hardened investigators at ease, even when he directs his mockery towards them. Connections in the upper reaches of government and society prevent any serious

investigation of his activities, even if he were revealed as a Thugee strangler.

Jericho Ameer (Male Human Charismatic 4): Jericho came to this country poor, tired, and sick. His "uncle" Mr. Sleeman took him in, gave him a job, and eventually elevated him to a position of respect. Now Jericho runs a cell in Cleveland Ohio. His mostly Polish and Eastern European cell hunts in Chicago, Toledo, and occasionally Philadelphia.

Miriam (Female Human Dedicated 2): Miriam came to the United States with her husband. Now he runs a small business in New York, refitting rich-men's shoes. Though she does not like the way they look at her, she does appreciate how much money her clients lay down when they come into the back room for fittings. However she has become very concerned about her husband. His constant black moods get even worse after he comes back from his visits to Chicago or New York in search of good shoe leather. She has started to ask the other local wives for help and may eventually go to the local parish priest even though she is Muslim.

Adventure Seeds and Plot Hooks

The cult of personality could easily become a main campaign villain. Cleaning out a cell could take an entire adventure; defeating Duncan himself would tax even the most psychopathic adventurers.

1. The characters encounter a Thugee group while traveling between two other adventure sites. The Thugee attack them in the middle of the night, leaving one or more of the character's in critical condition. This brutal introduction to the Thugee could spark a long (or short) set of adventures in which our heroes search out their foes,

only to discover they have vanished back into the darkness.

2. One of the character's long-standing friends dies while on a business trip. Some time later, in another part of the US, the character's see a signature item (e.g. a unique engraved pen or broach) for sale in a pawn shop window. The shop owner is not a cult member but he bought the item in a lot from Sleeman Imports.
3. The characters begin to do business with Mr. Sleeman or one of his representatives, selling items of dubious providence to the importer in return for good cash. Eventually a crusading police officer comes to speak with them, inquiring about their activities. The officer's investigation, though brushing up against the characters' activities, really focuses on Sleeman's import/export business and its connection to a small ring of murderers the policeman uncovered.

THE THUGEE: ANCIENT SURVIVORS

The body of knowledge called Thugee supposedly came as a revelation from the goddess Kali. She gave her chosen people the right and obligation to murder, knowledge of how to do so safely, and the ability to read omens which would guide them to suitable targets. Such knowledge should have protected them from a mundane extermination campaign, even one launched by the much lauded British Rajah.

Divine knowledge did indeed protect this

version of the Thugee survivors. In fact, Mr. Sleeman's campaign successfully destroyed the heretics and unbelievers who infested their cult over the centuries. With the detritus gone the chosen ones can now renew their vows in secrecy.

Descriptors:

Ancient Occasional Opponent (3

Descriptors): Centered, Murderous, Prideful*

*Required by Ancient designation

Attributes:

Hit Points: 4,000

Force: 18 (+4)

Response: 12 (+1)

Resources: 18 (+4)

Information: 14 (+2)

Occult: 20 (+5)

Influence: 10 (+0)

Skills: Decipher Script (Occ) +12, Disguise (Inf) +10, Forgery (Info) +16, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) (Occ) +19, Search (For) +18

Feats: Artifact, Covert, Fanatical Loyalty, Library (Arcane Lore), Secure Base

Descriptor Modifiers: Organization cannot hide its size. It heals damage at twice the normal rate, Organization operatives' add its Force modifier bonus to their Intimidate skill checks, +2 to Occult checks

Quick Description

Kali saved the families of the current Thugee from the maelstrom ignited by Mr. Sleeman in his one-man quest to make India more European. In awe and celebration they worship her in the way she commanded: each man murdering one stranger each year and each woman maintaining the façade of an ordinary life. The Thugee High Priest comes from the family who received Kali's vision in 1820. The other cult members obey without question or hesitation.

Extended Description

In the beginning Black Kali chose from among the people those who could worship her as she desired. To these men she taught the art of reading omens, the skills of the strangling cord, and the words which none other could hear. Her chosen children did as their goddess commanded and all was good.

Over thousands of years, though, her children lost their way.

Many fell into decadent practices, murdering without recourse to the proper rituals. They lost the knowledge of true omens, instead taking every turn of a leaf or sudden shower as a sign from the goddess herself. Some became no better than common thieves, killing for their own glory rather than the goddesses.

Eventually Black Kali stretched forth her hands. With one taloned fist she grasped a an Englishman's heart. With another she smote the pretender's minds, making them blind to their oaths of loyalty. With a third she opened the eyes of the last remaining man of faith. To this last man she gave a list of names; the names of Thuggee who might be brought to see the light.

As the Englisman slaughtered his way though the false Thuggee, the faithful man (named Dhuliji Lahiri) raced ahead to save those who

the goddess named. He drew the faithful into the deep jungle where they lived in a small village while the fires burned out.

The Thuggee emerged from seclusion once the British turned their attention to other matters. Mr. Lahiri caused them to scatter throughout the country under an injunction to commit no crimes for the next decade. They established new identities, business, and families. Some emigrated to Europe; others stayed in their homeland or went east to the Americas.



In 1860 the Thuggee resumed their murderous ways. Quietly, in groups of no more than thirty, they gathered to hear Lahiri's instructions. Once properly motivated they stalked the roadways, selecting targets using the ancient omens and murdering them in the old ways.

Three generations of strangers have come into the business since those fateful first days. The group maintains its emotional fervor and discipline, though some of the fourth generation may fall to greed's temptation. After all, each strangler group possesses the accumulated wealth of thousands of victims; a fat target for an ambitious man.

In order to avoid the failure of the first cults, the High Priest maintains iron control over group activities. He declares the hunts,

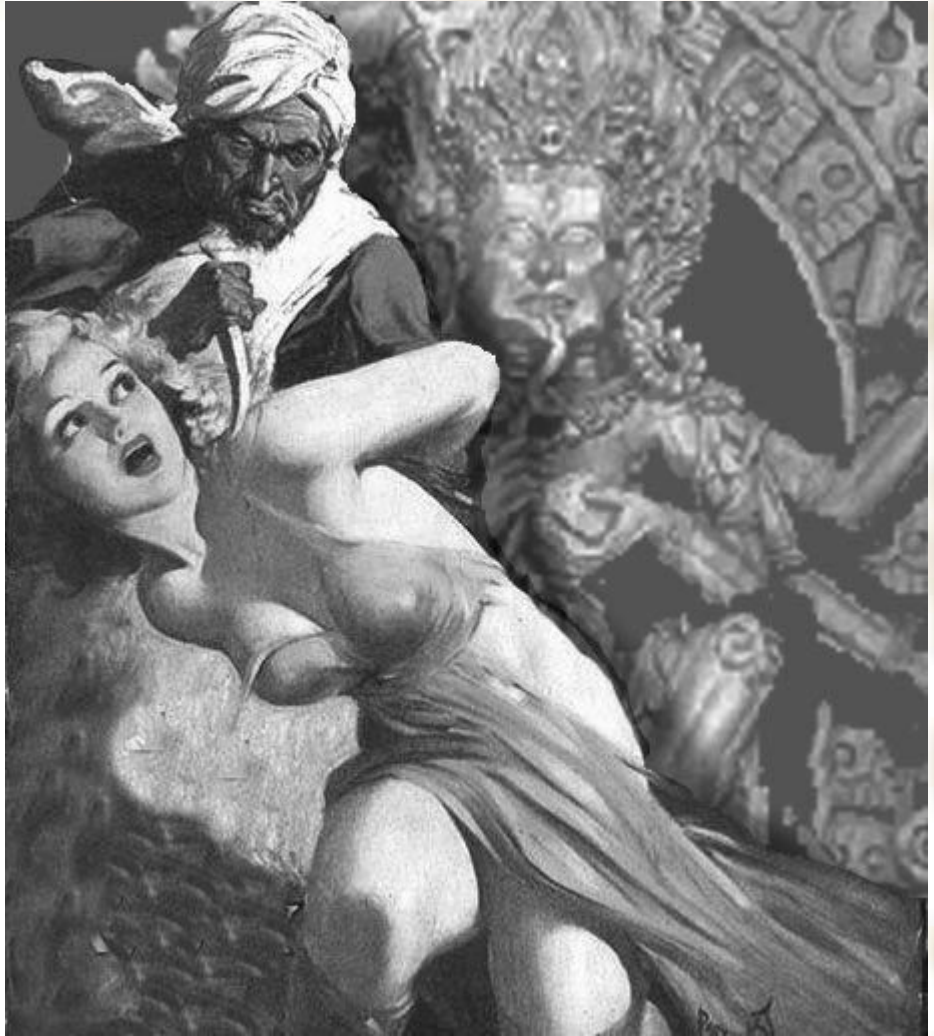
disposes of the loot, and determines who will advance or fall from grace. The later sentence carries with it deadly repercussions. After all, those who turn against the goddess cannot be allowed to live.

The Thugee communicate among themselves using a variation on the language spoken by the fallen cult. They also send messages, even telegrams, in this elaborate code.

Cult Members

All members of the ancient survivors come from the families who survived Sleeman's purge. Each proudly traces their lineage back to a single man chosen by the goddess herself for deliverance.

In the intervening decades the cult's spread from its mountain fastness has necessitated some thinning of the chosen bloodlines. Once a thug moves out into the world the High Priest expects him to marry local and raise his family as a part of the growing cult. Females must petition the High Priest for permission to marry; males may marry whomever their father selects for them.



The High Priest also chooses and sends a local group's leader from among the members of his family. This allows him to retain central control and maintains orthodoxy. It also angers many of the younger thugs, especially those who live in the United States or Europe.

Cult Environs

Cult members do not jeopardize their cover by storing cult materials in their homes. A home invasion or legitimate search of such a place will turn up nothing of importance.

However, the local cult members all pay to support a small, secluded shrine to Kali. The shrine will always be at least thirty miles from any cult member's home. Here they gather once a season to receive messages from the grand temple and the High Priest, to perform their secret rituals, and to bask in Kali's glory. Failure to attend a meeting results in the local leader disciplining the member either by verbal reprimand or by killing one of his family members.

The local shrines communicate with the main shrine in India via special couriers. These couriers carry messages to the shrines, leaving them at times when no cult member is in attendance. Each courier receives extensive training in subterfuge and conditioning to resist questioning. Should he be captured he will try to destroy his messages before ending his own life.

The Thuggee built their primary temple on the site of the village Kali revealed to them. Isolated by jungle and mountains, it functions as an impenetrable fortress for them to retreat into in times of need. The lavish temple itself houses almost one hundred thugs; the village supports another three hundred. The couriers and local leaders come from the families living in the temple, so as to insure their loyalty to the higher cause.

Cult Encounters

The ancient survivors engage in ritual murder rather than whole-sale banditry. They use the same tactics as the historical Thuggee (strangulation and mass attacks from surprise) and make liberal use of their ability to bluff and confuse targets.

Characters

Any campaign involving the ancient survivors should include some or all of the following characters:

Dhuliji Lahiri (Male Human Fast 4/

Dedicated 4/Charismatic 6): The now ancient Dhuliji Lahiri still presides over the reformed Thuggee cult from the jungle-bound temple in India. He communes with his goddess daily, though he does not always share the results of his visions. His withered frame and lank white hair speak to the decades of his service to his goddess. The immense strength with which he can turn a strangling cord manifestly demonstrates her favor. The other thugs worship him almost as much as they do their goddess.

James Sinha (Male Human Strong 2): James grew up in New York City. He played with men who now make their livings as gangsters, confidence men, shop keepers, and factory workers as a boy. As a man, the contract between their growing wealth and his cult mandated simple lifestyle galls him. Why should a strapping young man like himself, blessed with good looks and the wits God gave a man, live in poverty while sending riches to some old man back in the old country? His questions resonate with the new generation of Thuggee even as their elders try to teach them the ways of the cord and pick-axe.

Ajita Lahiri (Female Human Charismatic 6): Even though mocha-skinned Ajita comes from the direct line of the High Priest she cannot inherit a position of power in the cult. By tradition she should have married, settled down, and built a cover identity for some local cult leader. Instead the smoky-eyed beauty talked her father into making her a courier. So she travels the world, amusing her self with the businessmen she meets, and delivers messages

to out of the way towns where she cannot show her face. Fortunately her skills as disguise and deception match her arresting looks and charm.

Adventure Seeds and Plot Hooks

The ancient survivors might become a major campaign villain but they work best as a shadowy threat. Characters encountering them might not even realize they are anything more than a slightly exotic street gang. Only later, when the cult plays its hand, should they begin to realize it might be even more sinister than they initially imagined.

Some examples of this kind of story include:

1. Low level characters operating in New York (or another large city) might encounter James Sinha as he breaks away from the main Thugee cult. His group of young, dissatisfied thugs apply their murderous methods to local crime. Just as the characters close in on them, the elder thugs remove the younger entirely, leaving behind their strangled bodies and a vast sum of money as reparation.
2. One of the male characters might encounter Ajita during her travels. Their interlude together at first seems like a throw-away scene. A little later, the character finds himself under attack by assassins of Indian descent. It turns out the High Priest is well aware of his daughters activities and prefers to “silence” men she spends time with.
3. In a game with some occult overtones the characters may become involved with one of the

ritual murders. After all, the Thugee murder as a form of worship, an act which could call forth dark powers. Occult investigators might be dragged from murder site to murder site until they eventually uncover the cult’s methods of operations.

4. The cult kidnaps one of the characters’ close friends or family members (usually a beautiful woman or girl) as a special sacrifice. In order to get her back the characters can race the kidnappers, fail to catch them at a port, and then travel to India in order to save her before the time of sacrifice. Eventually they wind up trekking through the jungle and storming the main temple.



THE THUGEE: INSURGENT FIGHTERS

Historically the Thuggee avoid direct interference in politics. However, the British intrusion of their morality into Indian affairs inevitably lead to a backlash against them. In this case, even though the Thuggee themselves vanished a number of patriotic men recreated the cult with the expressed purpose of driving the British from the sub-continent.

These thugs use the old methods of deception and strangulation to rid their homeland of the oppressive outsiders. Their carefully target murders serve to destabilize and terrify the foreign population. The British respond by increasing their security and applying even more pressure, leading to an ever escalating cycle of violence from which neither side will back down.

Descriptors:

Modern Occasional Opponent (3

Descriptors): Indian, Intimidation, Murder*

*Required by Modern designation

Attributes:

Hit Points: 5,000

Force: 20 (+5)

Response: 14 (+2)

Resources: 10 (+0)

Information: 16 (+3)

Occult: 10 (+0)

Influence: 12 (+1)

Skills: Decipher Script (Info) +11, Demolitions (Resp) +10, Disguise (Resp) +10, Forgery (Info) +11, Gather Information (For) +13, Knowledge (Civics) (Infl) +9, Knowledge (Tactics) (For) +13, Search (For) +13

Feats: Arsenal, Emergency Response, Fanatical Loyalty, Widely Known

Descriptor Modifiers: Organization reduces time of Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) and Search by 1/2, Organization operatives' add its Influence modifier bonus to their Gather Information skill checks, Organization operatives' add its Force modifier bonus to their Intimidate skill checks

Quick Description

A nationalist Indian cult that masks political ambitions under the cover of a famous belief system. They use the fear of the Thuggee and carefully executed assassinations to achieve their goals.

Extended Description

Mr. Sleeman unleashed a tide of change when he destroyed the Thuggee. His obsession catalyzed a shift in British policy from accommodation and trade to outright political and military domination. The Indian Rajah responded in a typically incoherent fashion. Some capitulated, others accommodated, a rare few resisted but quickly fell to the superior coordination and firepower brought to bear on them.

The duty of resistance therefore fell to the common men. Indians of many castes decried their domination by outsiders with no respect for their ancient ways. Most simply complained. A few took up arms, leading doomed rebellions. The smartest reached back into recent history for inspiration.

This inspiration came in the form of several popular novels released in Britain during and after Mr. Sleeman's efforts. They detailed a complicated, dangerous secret cult with brutally effective methods. These murderers slaughtered Indians by the thousands for centuries without being discovered. Their methods, properly updated, would undoubtedly work just as well in the modern world.

From this initial idea sprang one of the most effective resistance and terrorist organizations ever imagined. Operatives working in coordinated teams began a wholesale slaughter of British officials and foreign civilians. The murders used the strangling cords and spoke in gibberish, but only as a smoke screen to cover the modern methods of mayhem they espoused. Many openly admitted their membership, using the terror inspired by the popular history to force otherwise unwilling collaborators into the fold.

By the turn of the century this highly organized society of killers works on a steady agenda. They assault government officials, civilian contractors, and travelers in large numbers. Captured operatives are murdered in their prison cells, left dangling from the ceiling on yellow silk scarves. Local community members who talk to the authorities usually vanish, or suffer in anguish as some beloved family member vanishes in their place.

The thug network fuels its efforts with robbery and murder for hire. The surprisingly public contacts flaunt their affiliations, selling stolen goods almost openly though away from the British Raj's military force. Most of these public contacts truly know little of the organization; they receive their funds and pass messages through dead drops of various sorts.

Cult Members

The modern insurgency gets its members from those who wish to overthrow the British rule of India. Anarchists, communists, patriots, and psychotics all find a place among them. They come from many castes and places, bound together in common cause.

The insurgency members never engage in their

crimes near their own homes. Taking a page from the thugs' old techniques, they always travel a considerable distance before executing a mission. This distance helps to shield them from detection, as well as making it more difficult to trace them if they somehow get caught.

When home they maintain a façade of normal activity. Almost all of the "cultists" work as seasonal laborers, giving them an excuse to travel frequently and maintain a low-profile lifestyle suitable to their needs. Most do not have families, as the risks they take exact a heavy toll on their time and livelihoods.

The insurgency leadership works at a fever pitch. Most have abandoned their ordinary lives, instead choosing to live in secluded jungle villages. From these locations they send out tactical leaders who "activate" a local group then lead it to its target.

Cult Environs

The cult can strike anywhere. Unlike the real Thug, they engage in mass assaults and direct attacks, though they also use the tried and true ruses that made the Thug so famous.

The individual members live simply, usually in single room huts in the slums surrounding large cities. The command lives just as meanly but stays in isolated jungle villages where the authorities rarely venture. These villages hold no more than forty men and a handful of women kept on for their services.

Cult Encounters

Characters can encounter this group in one of three ways: as a screaming horde of insurgents, as traditional thug, and as assassins in the night.

The insurgent thuggee operations involve large groups of semi-literate Indians whipped into a pseudo-religious frenzy. A single thuggee leader uses religious iconography and hokey rituals to convince a large group of angry men that they are Kali's chosen. After a suitable period the leader unleashes this mob in an orgy of violence directed at any foreigners in the area. He then vanishes back into the jungles until he reappears somewhere else to start the cycle all over again.

Traditional thuggee thievery supports this cycle with both funds and materials. Bands of operatives wander India's lonely back-country roads looking for travelers to waylay. They prefer to target Europeans but will happily murder natives as well. These operatives use the traditional methods but supplement them with firearms, chemical weapons, and explosives.

The assassins also adopt modern methods but with a far more lethal intent. These thuggee come out of the jungle and usually strike under the cover of a screaming horde. As the authorities try to deal with the chaos caused by a sudden uprising the assassins sneak in and strike with surgical skill. They murder leaders, plant false documents, destroy hardened targets, and generally wreak havoc in the government infrastructure. These thuggee also take responsibility for murdering any captured operatives and will commit suicide rather than accept capture.

Characters

Encounters with the modern insurgents could involve any one of the following characters:

Devendara Pattanayak (Human Male Tough 3): By day ebon-skinned Devendara works in a stone quarry, cutting out stone blocks that

will eventually become tables and sculptures for the British authorities. At night he engages in wrestling matches and other sports in an attempt to work out his frustrations. He also attends meetings of an ancient society, the cult of the Thuggee, where a masked priest leads the congregation in chanting and prayers to the goddess Kali. When the time comes he will take up the strangler's noose and help set things right. Fortunately the time will come soon.

Boli Verma (Human Male Charismatic 6): Soft spoken and intense, Boli easily passes himself off as a deal in rare goods and occasional middleman for individuals in search of an elegant beauty for the evening. His soft voice becomes strident, even commanding, when it issues from behind the elaborate mask he wears at the secret meetings. There he allows his oratory skills free reign, cajoling and inflaming the simple men who come to hear him speak. When the time is right he will unleash his hounds then disappear back into the jungle from whence he came.

Hidhan Nagchaudhuri (Human Male Fast 8/Infiltrator 4): Working as a house servant, especially one skilled in the fine art of being unobtrusive, allows Hidhan to scout out his targets long before the covering riots begin. His precise English and gentle manners put the targets at their ease while his keen mind plans out the details of their demise. His only weakness is his addiction to challenge; he cannot resist a little extra fun while on the way out from an assignment.

Adventure Seeds and Plot Hooks

Although masquerading as a religious organization the modern insurgents are nothing more than anarchists and provocateurs.

Characters might encounter them in any of the following ways:

1. They could simply stumble across one of the meetings or a hidden village. The thugs immediately respond with lethal force, even before the characters discover anything. Characters being what they are they will probably escape, leading to an escalating series of dramatic encounters culminating in the destruction of one or both groups.
2. The characters take a contract to protect a British magistrate as he
3. Characters engaged in other business wake up to find the city burning down with them in it. Mobs screaming “Kali, Kali, Kali” race around, dragging foreigners out of their beds and strangling them in public. The characters can choose to cower like beaten dogs or attempt to stop the madness. Meanwhile a group of assassins cuts through the government quarter like a bad wind, leaving bodies and fires in their wake.



CHAPTER TWO: CREATING CULTS

Chapter One describes the historical Thugee cult and gives three “pulp fiction” variations of the cult as it might appear in the 1920s to 1940s. This chapter extends these descriptions into a generalized cult creation system so Gamemasters can create cults unique to their own games.

It does this by outlining an adjective based system, in which the creator assigns a number of descriptors to a cult. Each descriptor provides a useable block of narrative information, a bonus to the organization’s attributes, questions for further group development, and presentation suggestions.

CREATING CULTS: SUMMARY

Pulp fiction presents cults as organizations motivated by a fanaticism. The cult members may pretend to be normal men in public; some even hold high offices. In private, though, their activities shock and horrify even the most jaded of men. Once exposed, the cult gathers its members to protect its inner secrets rather than fade into the background. After all, the heroes must die so they cannot spread their knowledge to others.

Pulp Villains: Thugee expands upon the organization rules presented in Mongoose Publishing’s *OGL Horror* by assigning the cults a set number of descriptors. Each descriptor provides bonuses and/or a penalty to specific organizational abilities, feats, or skills as described in the *OGL Horror* rules. These descriptors also affect how the organization reacts in a narrative sense, giving the Game Master some guidance in the creation of

consistent villainy.

The creation process goes through the following steps:

- 1) Decide you wish to create a cult,
- 2) Determine whether the cult is of ancient or modern origin,
- 3) Determine the cult’s narrative weight and appropriate number of descriptors,
- 4) Assign the descriptors and record their modifiers,
- 5) Record the quick descriptions, and then
- 6) Decide if the quick description provides enough information or go into the detailed creation questions.
- 7) Use the included Organization Rules to create the cult’s statistics.

CULT, OR NOT TO CULT?

The first decision, whether or not to make an organization a cult, is less obvious than it seems. The pulps certainly contained stories about a vast number of cults. Pulp heroes also went head-to-head with anarchists, fascists, socialists, communists, slave traders, psychotics, and just about every form of degenerate humanity the authors could imagine. Many of these antagonists did not work together or share the elements required of a cult.

By definition a cult is a group of people who share religious or spiritual beliefs. Political organizations, business collations, and lone madmen do not qualify. Groups organized around a practical purpose (e.g. overthrowing a government or preserving the status quo) do not qualify. Groups designed to protect a specific place, defend a blood line, or destroy the world might or might not qualify, depending on the circumstances.

Additionally, cults in the pulps demonstrate fanatical devotion to their cause. Cult members rarely turn against their beliefs. The cult leaders command instant respect and unwavering obedience. Captured cult members would rather die than reveal their secrets; many come pre-programmed with suicide directives implanted in their minds through the cult's indoctrination procedures.

The religious or spiritual aspect must also come into play. Cults in the pulps almost always worship forgotten gods, people pretending to be forgotten gods, or strange creatures from other worlds. All will claim ancient lineage, though many originate in the world's immediate past.

Answer the questions below if you have any doubts as to whether the organization functions as a cult:

- 1) Does the organization have a religious or spiritual doctrine?
- 2) Does the organization ostensibly exist to promote its doctrine?
- 3) Does the organization demand and receive fanatical loyalty?
- 4) Does the organization claim an ancient tradition?

If you answer yes to one or two questions the organization is most likely not a cult. If you answered yes to three or more questions the organization displays enough cult-like attributes to continue.

CULT ORIGIN: ANCIENT OR MODERN?

Assuming the organization passes the above test for cult-like attributes, the Game Master needs to decide whether it is of ancient or modern origin. This choice affects what descriptors you will commonly select and the cult's role in the game world.

Ancient Cults

Ancient cults appear most often in games with fantasy or horror elements. They can trace their descent over hundreds, if not thousands, of years. This lineage may break from time to time but the overall sense of continuity remains intact. More importantly, the cult retains access to resources and secrets emanating from the depths of time. Many have knowledge of things man was not meant to know and honestly cannot understand without going insane.

Pulp ancient cults typically embody an emotion or primitive concept. They come creeping out of the shadowy past in an attempt to drag the bright present back into the darkness of superstition and doubt. Ancient cults with a relatively modern face or modern objectives still have this seamy underside. In order to simulate this embodying function, all ancient cults must select at least one emotional descriptor.

In the era of the pulps, authors and readers rarely distrusted progress, corporations, and all the trappings of modern civilization. The horrible excesses of World War I sullied the mix, but people generally placed the blame for it on "old ways of thinking". A cult trying to exert its power in the modern world represents a horror, an aberration all right-thinking men will do anything to stop.

Modern Cults

Modern cults appear most often in games with mystery or and science-fiction elements. They are, almost universally, scams run by various charismatic figures. The leader cloaks his true intentions behind a façade of occult or religious mumbo-jumbo. Some of this façade comes from ancient texts and forbidden knowledge; most the conmen make up on the spot so they can fool the rubes.

Pulp modern cults typically have some kind of practical purpose hidden under the religious façade. The cult members usually know nothing of this purpose. The leader and his trusted lieutenants will definitely know it, though they do not share it with outsiders.

In order to simulate this practical function all modern cults must select on methods descriptor.

In the era of the pulps, authors and readers fully expected charismatic conmen to overwhelm the “unwashed masses”. Racism and classism ran rampant though the era’s business, politics, and fiction. When incorporating a modern cult into a game, play up these aspects without directly stepping on our modern outrage at

these attitudes. Fill the cult’s rank and file with illiterate, uneducated men and women who unquestioningly obey their betters. The upper-crust should contain individuals of wealth and distinction, preferably with good educations, who can banter with the characters while ordering their minions into the breach.

Mixed Cults

The ancient and modern cult descriptions deal with the simplest and most obvious variations on the cult theme. You can mix and nest the two concepts almost infinitely, creating for example:

- 1) A cult of modern lineage that accidentally taps into an ancient cult’s knowledge,
- 2) A cult of ancient lineage that has a religious duty to create the modern age, or
- 3) A cult of modern lineage with a modern leader whose followers secretly adhere to an ancient cult from a forgotten past.



NARRATIVE WEIGHT AND NUMBER OF DESCRIPTORS

All cults, whether ancient or modern, have a number of descriptors. This number can be based off of one of two things: the organizations size or its importance to the game's narrative (its narrative weight). The size measurement allows the Gamemaster to comfortably build organizations from the small to the massive and fits in with the game mechanics used by the organization rules. The narrative weight measurement requires a trickier balancing act, and assumes the game world unfolds as the characters interact with it.

When using the organization's size to determine the number of organization descriptors consult the following table:

Table 2-1: Maximum Number of Descriptors by Size

Size	Number of Descriptors
Local Organization	1
Local Government Section	3
State Level Organization	5
National or Multi-national Organization	7

When using narrative weight, the Gamemaster must decide how important the organization is to the game. An organization the characters rarely interact with and that has very limited impact on their activities has correspondingly little narrative weight even if it boasts a hundred thousand members. Conversely a very small organization playing a dominant role in the story may have five or more descriptors even though barely a dozen men claim membership.



The chart below provides the recommended number of descriptors based on the organizations narrative weight:

Table 2-2: Maximum Number of Descriptors by Narrative Weight	
Size	Number of Descriptors
Minor role or one-shot appearance	1
Occasional opponent (appears once every four to six sessions)	3
Important opponent (appears every two or three sessions)	5
Primary antagonist (drives the plot)	7

An organizations narrative weight may change over time as the game evolves. As an organization's weight increases, increase the number of descriptors. As it decreases, suspend any bonuses and penalties from descriptors in excess of the maximum allowed number.

THE DESCRIPTORS

The descriptors mentioned in the previous sections provide the Gamemaster with information about the cult in an easy to reference format. Each descriptor provides a flavorful hook, a brief description, a bonus and/or penalty to the organization, and questions for further development.

Descriptors are organized into the following groups: *emotion*, *method*, *origin*, and *structure*. Emotion descriptors indicate the cult instills specific emotional states in its members. Method descriptors suggest the groups "signature" method of operation and can be easily combined. Origin descriptors provide bonuses and penalties to the organization based on its lineage and association with specific

traditions. Structure descriptors point out an important aspect of the group's hierarchy or organizational methods.

DESCRIPTORS VS DISCRPTION

The descriptors highlight the things important to the organization; anything not directly under their influence can be however the Gamemaster wishes it to be. For example, the GM may describe a local modern cult with the "Wealth" method (1 total descriptor) as having a "cell structure" without necessarily giving it the descriptor bonus for "Cell".

Table 2-3: Descriptors by Category

	Effect
Emotion	
Desperate	+2 to Occult checks
Envious	+2 to Response checks
Greedy	+2 to Resources checks
Lustful	+2 to Influence checks
Prideful	+2 to Occult checks
Wrathful	+2 to Force checks
Method	
Corrupt	Organization operatives' add its Resources modifier bonus to their Diplomacy skill checks (bribery)
Deceptive	Organization operatives' add its Response modifier bonus to their Forgery skill checks
Fearsome	Organization operatives' add its Influence modifier bonus to their Gather Information skill checks
	Organization operatives' add its Information modifier bonus to their Sense Motive skill checks
Murderous	Organization operatives' add its Force modifier bonus to their Intimidate skill checks
Origin	
African	Organization reduces time of Intimidate and Repair by 1/2
Ancient	Organization reduces time of Decipher Script and Research by 1/2
Arabic	Organization reduces time of Knowledge (Theology) and Research by 1/2
Celtic	Organization reduces time of Disguise and Treat Injury by 1/2
Eastern	Organization reduces time of Diplomacy checks by 1/2
Egyptian	Organization reduces time of Knowledge (Art) and Decipher Script by 1/2
European	Organization reduces time of Knowledge (Popular Culture, Tactics) by 1/2
Indian	Organization reduces time of Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) and Search by 1/2
Greco-Roman	Organization reduces time of Knowledge (History, Physical Sciences) by 1/2
Structure	
Cell	Organization never appears to have more than 1/10 th its actual size
Centered	Organization cannot hide its size. It heals damage at twice the normal rate
Circuit	Organization may take 10 on Response checks but suffers a penalty equal to its Response modifier on all Force checks
Monolithic	Organization may take 10 on Force checks but suffers a penalty equal to its Force modifier on all Response checks
Scattered	Organization cannot take 10 or 20 on a skill check. It gains DR equal to its highest attribute modifier against attacks by other organizations

EMOTION DESCRIPTORS

On the surface, the emotion descriptors describe a particular tenor of emotional frenzy the cult incites in its followers. Everyone involved with the cult, from the highest echelons of leadership to the lowliest thugs, displays this emotion in varying degrees of sophistication. Heavy-knuckled bruisers express their feelings with their fists while the cultured elites engage in lofty discourses about obtuse philosophical principles.

On a philosophical and narrative level a cult's emotion descriptors describe its primary psychological function. The cult both inspires its members to the emotion and embodies that emotion's power in the fictional world. For example a cult of wrath both inspires great rage in its minions and functions as an external representation of the characters' wrath in the world.

This later point is particularly important in pulp games. Pulp heroes have a lot of problems, both personal and professional, but rarely lose control of their masks. An opposed cult with an emotional element can act, in a narrative sense, as the heroes' dark alter ego, doing all of the things he wants to do but is too civilized to admit to.

The emotional descriptors include desperate, envious, greedy, lustful, prideful, and wrathful.

Desperate

The cult's founder revealed to them one of the world's great truths. They know nothing matters and the world will continue as it has for ages until it finally drowns in its own accumulated filth. All human creatures dance out their lives on the end of unseen strings, taking whatever pleasure they can before they

lay down to rot in the earth.

Quick Description

The cult revels in its lack of hope.

Effect

The cult receives a +2 bonus to its Occult attribute checks.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's despair.

1. Does the cult believe the world will continue in its present state or find freedom from its misery?
2. How do the cult members express their despair?
3. How does the cult inculcate despair into its members?
4. Does the cult look to a single event or source as the "cause" of life's meaninglessness?

Envious

The cult's founder showed them the world is not fair. This does not come as news to anyone, but he also taught them they deserved all of the things denied them by the world's unfairness. Cosmic forces, random chance, or the will of the gods denied them their rightful place. The cult members must rise up and reclaim whatever was wrongfully taken from them.

Quick Description

The cult knows someone denied them their rightful place.

Effect

The cult receives a +2 bonus to its Response checks.

Questions for Detailed Description:

The following questions help flesh out the cult's envy.

1. Does the cult believe it can ever achieve its goals?
2. What exactly does the cult feel entitlement towards?
3. How do the cult's members manifest this envy in their ordinary lives?
4. How does the cult inculcate envy into its members?
5. What happens when the cult finally gains something it envies?

Greedy

The cult's founder revealed to them the foolishness of seeking out spiritual pleasures. Only the things of this world, wealth and gold and jewels, can bring pleasure. Only the wealthy can know peace because only they can afford to live well. Wealth, and its trappings, is a sign of divine favor and enlightenment.

Quick Description

The cult desires wealth and power.

Effect

The cult receives a +2 bonus to Resources checks.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's greed.

1. What specifically does the cult desire?
2. What is the cult's favorite form of wealth?
3. Which cult members control access to the cult's wealth?
4. How does the cult inculcate greed into its members?
5. How does the cult's greed manifest in the cult members' lives?

Lustful

The cult's founder taught his followers to revel in the flesh. He showed them that the path to spiritual bliss lies first through then beyond pleasure and pain. Staid society created its moral limits to prevent ordinary people from ascending past their limits.

Quick Description

The cult revels in the body's pleasures.

Effect

The cult receives a +2 bonus to Influence checks.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's lust.

1. What forms of debauchery does the cult encourage?
2. What forms of debauchery does the cult prohibit?
3. How does the cult inculcate lust in its members?
4. Does the cult allow outsiders to participate in some of its activities? If so, which ones?

Prideful

The cult's founder told his followers a flattering truth. He claimed they numbered among the chosen, the divine children selected for salvation from among the corrupted masses. Their divine superiority granted them license to do as they will. Everything else, from the plants to the people, exists only to serve the chosen.

Quick Description

The cult rests secure in the knowledge of its own salvation.

Effect

The cult receives a +2 bonus to its Occult checks.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's pride.

1. What central event provides the cult with its sense of superiority?
2. Does the cult believe this superiority will manifest as material or spiritual wealth?
3. How does the cult instill its pride in the members?
4. What happens when the cult encounters a group with equal pride?

Wrathful

The cult's founder taught his followers to unleash the fury in their souls. They can answer every slight, every insult, and every denigration with absolute violence and overwhelming anger. By giving into their basest desires they transcend human limitations, becoming like onto gods.

Quick Description

The cult's anger and vengeance spill beyond all civilized bounds.

Effect

The cult receives a +2 bonus to Force checks.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's wrath.

1. What targets dominate the cult's wrath?
2. Why does the cult feel such fury towards those targets?
3. How does the cult inculcate fury into its members?

4. How do the cult members manifest this fury in their daily lives?

METHOD DESCRIPTORS

On the surface the method descriptors describe the cult's preferred technique for eliminating problems. They deploy these techniques to achieve their nefarious ends, running roughshod over whoever dares stand in their way. The slightly more cultured approach taken by the cult's leaders simply acts as a velvet glove over the method's steel fist.

On a narrative level the method descriptor shows what happens when a good thing goes too far. Heroes in the pulps bribe, deceive, bully, lie, and fight but they do so with respect for the norms of their times. Cults display no such respect. They do what they want, go as far as they want, and in so doing become villains.

The method descriptors include corrupt, deceptive, fearsome, manipulative, and murderous.

Corrupt

The cult knows everyone feels desires they cannot admit to. Everyone wants things they should not have. They exploit this truth, offering up whatever the individual desires if he will give in to their will.

Quick Description

The cult encourages giving in to temptation in order to get its way.

Effect

A cult member may add the cult's Resources modifier (if positive) to their Diplomacy skill

checks when attempting to bribe a target. This bonus only applies if the member acts under his cult's orders.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's approach to corruption.

1. Does the cult prefer monetary, moral, or fleshy corruption?
2. What corruptive methods does the cult forbid its members to use?
3. Does the cult permit the cult members to use corruptive techniques in their daily lives?
4. Does the cult use corruption to control its own members?

Deceptive

The cult knows men rarely see past the surface of events. They therefore mastered the use of misdirection and confusion, distracting their potential foes from the reality of their actions.

Quick Description:

The cult's activities are always hidden under multiple layers of misdirection.

Effect

A cult member may add the cult's Response modifier (if positive) to their Forgery skill checks when preparing false clues. This bonus only applies if the member acts under his cult's orders.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's approach to misdirection.

1. How many layers of deception does the cult usually lay between its activities and the outside world?
2. How many layers of deception exist between the cult leaders and the cult

members?

3. How does the cult react when a layer of deception is revealed?
4. When does the cult tell the truth?

Fearsome

The cult studied the fear lurking in every man's heart. They know how to call it forth, how to bend it to their will, and how to use it as a harrying lash on the back of any who dare to oppose them.

Quick Description

The cult knows how to make cowards of the bravest men.

Effect

A cult member adds the cult's Influence modifier (if positive) to his Gather Information skill checks when acting on the cult's orders.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's fearsome methods.

1. What signature method does the cult use to strike fear into men's hearts?
2. Does the cult use fear to control its own members?
3. Why do people fear the cult's influence?
4. Can the cult act openly to cause fear or must it act in secret?

Manipulative

The cult knows the flattering lies men prefer to cloak their actions in. They know the use a whispered word to make a man turn his back on his brother and the trick to inciting hatred between friends. Let others dance at the end of the world's puppet-strings; they have seized a few of the threads for their own use.

Quick Description

The cult's mastery of sweet words lets them control other's actions.

Effect

A cult member adds the cult's Information modifier (if positive) to his Sense Motive skill checks when he targets an opponent selected for him by his cult's leadership.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's use of manipulation.

1. How does the cult search for ways to control its targets?
2. What is the cult's favorite lie?
3. How does the cult respond when others discover its actions?
4. What does the cult do when it faces a particularly tough target?

Murderous

The cult exploits the paralyzing terror gripping men's hearts when they face death. They also realize personal death holds no fear for some people. Even the most fearless opponent, though, must store his heart somewhere. When faced with such a foe the cult will mercilessly hunt for something whose loss he does fear. This search leaves behind a trail of bodies wide enough for even the most bumbling detective to follow.

Quick Description

The cult murders those who oppose it.

Effect

A cult member may add the cult's Force modifier (if positive) to his Intimidate skill checks when he openly acts in the cult's name.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's murderous methods.

1. What is the cult's signature killing method?
2. Does the cult allow the members to select their targets?
3. How does the cult deal with law enforcement?
4. Does the cult prefer to directly target its opposition or slaughter the target's loved ones before going in for the kill?

ORIGIN DESCRIPTORS

On the surface the origin descriptors describe the cult's point of origin or at least the origin it claims for itself. The cult's litany, physical trappings, insignia, ranks, and rituals all reflect this claimed genesis. Each origin carries with it a long and distinguished history, as well as iconography and mythology already present in the characters' minds.

Practically whether a cult really originates from its described culture depends on whether it numbers among the ancient or the modern cults. Ancient cults almost always stem from a secret tradition passed down though some occult transmission to the present day. Modern cults adopt the trappings of an ancient culture to hide their true intentions. In both cases the rank and file believes the cult to be a secret transmission; only the upper echelons really know the truth.

This knowledge dichotomy creates an interesting weakness in modern cults claiming an origin descriptor. If the characters can somehow expose the truth about the cult they can, at the GM's option, inflict direct organization damage to the cult. This damage

equals 1d6 HP per point of the party's total Charisma modifiers.

The origin descriptors include African, Ancient, Arabic, Celtic, Eastern, Egyptian, European, or Greco-Roman.

African

The cradle of human life and the birthplace of human civilization spawned cults of many types. These cults worship pagan gods of animal aspect. They also hold secrets passed down from the ancient past, secrets of building and making forgotten long before the men of Europe painted the first cave walls.

African cults make extensive use of body-painting, drums, ritual diagrams, and spears. They call upon gods with African names who demand offerings of tobacco, grain, and blood.

Quick Description

The cult's rites clearly show their origin in darkest Africa.

Effect

The cult's approach and worship allows it to reduce the time it takes to reduce the time of organizational Intimidate and Repair skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. What part of Africa did the cult's founders originate from?
2. Does the cult conform to "standard" voodoo practices?
3. Does the cult favor human or animal sacrifices?
4. Does the cult meet in daylight or at night?

Ancient

In the ancient days of humankind's ascension above the animals, he believed many things. Some of these ancient beliefs persist into the modern world. Others, fortunately, vanished when the good news came to Europe. The cult's persistence and worship of things man was not meant to know continues, though, and all right thinking people would certainly rise up to destroy it if they could.

Ancient cults make extensive use of flutes, strange eldritch chants, alien looking head-dresses, and exotic robes. They generally worship creatures with outlandish names and perform rituals "unthinkable to common men."

Quick Description

The cult protects ancient secrets man was not meant to know.

Effect

The cult's moldering libraries and ancient pedigree allows them to reduce the time for organizational Decipher Script and Research skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. Describe the secret man was not meant to know in twelve words or less.
2. How does the cult preserve its forbidden knowledge?
3. What ancient culture derived from the cult's founders' inability to keep the secret?
4. How does the cult prevent others from discovering their secret?

Arabic

The economic, political, and scientific secrets of Arabia did not die when the Ottoman Empire collapsed. Indeed, Arabic cults persist into the modern world, fostering the Muslim cause. These secretive organizations hold vast libraries drawing on the best of eastern and western scholarship.

Arabic cults follow the monotheistic rules of Islam. They generally exist either to promulgate a specific political agenda or to protect a profound scientific insight.

Quick Description

The poetic beauty of Arabic culture informs the cult's rituals.

Effect

The organization is heir to the accumulated wisdom handed down from Classical culture. This knowledge allows them to reduce the time for organizational Knowledge (Theology) and Research skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. Does the cult allow non-Muslims to join?
2. When does the cult meet?
3. Does the cult maintain Muslim holidays?
4. What rules of Islam does the cult allow its members to break?

Celtic

The cult inherited the druid's wisdom and power. This unbroken occult tradition stretches from the present day into the dim and misty past, in which mortal men worshiped a Goddess with four faces. It also incorporates

the Kabbalah, Roman mythology, and a fair dose of Victorian anthropology.

Celtic cults take their trappings from Irish and Welsh culture. They make offerings of blood and grain to gods and goddesses who represent aspects of an all-encompassing Deity of indeterminate sex. Most also seek a restoration of their priesthood's place in the social hierarchy.

Quick Description

The cult traces its roots back to the ancient druids.

Effect

The cult's history of deception and healing allow it to reduce the time required for organizational Disguise and Treat Injury skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. Do the cult leaders claim druidic titles?
2. Does the cult practice human sacrifice? If so, does it limit its sacrifices to criminals or will it take anyone?
3. Does the cult still use the Ogham script?
4. Does the cult wish to restore the druid's power over civil society?

Eastern

From a distance the differences between Japanese, Korean, and Chinese beliefs tends to blend together. In the pulps, this blending produces "Eastern" cults which share the same features regardless of their point of origin. All Eastern cults practice a hodgepodge of ancestor worship, alchemy, and mystical practices aimed at some vague goal titled "enlightenment."

Eastern cults take their trappings from Chinese and Japanese culture. Low tables, lush fabrics, and elaborately embroidered robes all help to set the mood.

Quick Description

The cult's origins in the Far East lend it an exotic air.

Effect

The organization has extensive practice in manipulating others. It reduces the time required for organizational Diplomacy skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. What country does the cult original come from?
2. Does the cult believe in the superiority of Eastern culture?
3. Does the cult engage in alchemical or mystical practices?
4. Does the cult use opium or other drugs to control its members?

Egyptian

In ancient Egypt men and women worshiped strange gods by offering up mountains of gold. They built great tombs and monuments which to this day remain some of the world's greatest wonders. The cults descended from these great people maintain their traditions, and their occult secrets, into the modern world.

Egyptian cults generally favor architecture and costumes appropriate to a British view of ancient Egypt. They wear gold masks and headdresses, perform rituals to hundreds of different gods, and try to steal mummies in

order to reanimate them.

Quick Description

Rites handed down from the ancient Egyptians bind the cult to its holy purpose.

Effect

The organization possesses extensive archives and secrets of artistic expression. It reduces the time requires for organizational Knowledge (Art) and Decipher Script skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. Which of the Egyptian gods does the cult serve?
2. Does the cult use hieroglyphs for written communication?
3. Does the cult intend to restore Egypt's glory or does it have another plan in mind?
4. What secret about Egyptian history does the cult guard?

European

Occult and scientific knowledge flowered during the Renaissance. Eventually science proved the superior of the two. However, some occult revelations survived in the guise of secret societies and cults. These cults protect their secrets with fanatical zeal.

European cults enjoy the trappings of the Renaissance. They dress in fancy costumes and hold masked balls where cult members mingle with the highest levels of society. Their rituals draw strongly from European scholarly magic and involve magical circles, amulets, and other objects of power.

Quick Description

The cult came into being as a result of the Enlightenment. They hide the true secrets discovered during that hectic time until the common man can finally understand them.

Effect

The organization constantly monitors modern advances. This knowledge allows it to reduce the time required for organizational Knowledge (Popular Culture) and Knowledge (Tactics) skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. What is the cult's country of origin?
2. Does the cult engage in mystical practices or does it fancy itself scientific?
3. What is the cult's ultimate goal for humanity?
4. What one thing would the cult change about the modern world?

Indian

Cults originating in the great Indian subcontinent can worship a seemingly infinite pantheon of gods or goddesses. They sometimes even engage in this worship despite seemingly obvious theological clashes. For example, Muslims might worship a goddess without for a moment considering the implications to their Islamic faith.

Indian cults worship before massive statues of multi-faced, multi-armed deities. They engage in decadent behaviors no right-thinking man would condone in public. Most use architecture and details from their home country to create a cult space where members feel like they are back in the old country

regardless of their actual geographic location.

Quick Description

The cult springs up from the fertile ground of India's religious cacophony.

Effect

The organization's experience and deep appreciation of the human condition allows it to reduce the time or organizational Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) and Search skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. Which god or goddess does the cult worship?
2. Is the cult considered a respectable form of worship in India?
3. Does the cult allow its members to hold other religious beliefs?
4. Does the cult allow non-Indians to join?

Greco-Roman

The Greeks and the Romans created the basis of European civilization. Their laws and philosophy profoundly influence everything from real estate transactions to codes of professional conduct. Cults claiming descent from this ancient tradition worship the old gods. They also engage in the perversions so beloved by both cultures.

Greco-Roman cults sport the trappings of Greek and Roman culture. They wear togas at their rites, speak in Latin or Greek, and worship gods like Zeus or Saturn. Most favor large marble halls for their meeting places. Many keep slaves despite the practice's dubious legality.

Quick Description

The cult traces its lineage back to the golden ages of Classical thought.

Effect

The cult's long history and profound understanding of Classical science allows it to reduce the time of organizational Knowledge (History) and Knowledge (Physical Sciences) skill checks by one-half.

Questions for Detailed Description

The follow questions help flesh out the cult's ethnic origin.

1. Does the cult follow Greek or Roman fashions?
2. Would the cult describe itself as a mystery religion or a philosophical school?
3. Do the cult members communicate among themselves in Latin or Greek?
4. Does the cult enjoy the excesses of Greek and Roman life more than the intellectual stimulation of its philosophy?

STRUCTURE DESCRIPTORS

The structure descriptors serve the straightforward purpose of describing the cult's internal hierarchy. This hierarchy protects the upper echelons from distraction and interference while allowing them to pass orders to the seething masses below them. They expect, and receive, absolute obedience. At least, they receive absolute obedience until the heroes somehow foil their dastardly plan.

The structure descriptors include cell, centered, circuit, monolithic, and scattered.

Cell

A cult with a cell structure organizes itself into small autonomous groups. Cell members do not know anyone in the cult beyond their immediate circle. Cell leaders might know one other leader but will usually receive their instructions through a blind drop or other anonymous communication method.

Quick Description

The cult possesses a highly decentralized structure in which each leader only knows one other leader.

Effect

The organization's decentralized structure allows it to hide. No matter how much investigation it suffers it never appears more than one-tenth its actual size.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's internal structure.

1. How does the cult recruit new cell members?
2. What blind methods does the cult use to pass information from cell to cell?
3. Do the cell leaders have any way to contact a central cultic authority?
4. How does the cult insure orthodoxy among cell members?

Centered

A centered cult maintains strong internal leadership and relatively strict hierarchies. Power is distributed throughout the organization, with local leaders making decisions for their own groups without seeking permission from above. The organization responds quickly to damage but is easily monitored.

Quick Description

The other cult members obey the leadership without question or hesitation but local leaders remain some control.

Effect

The cult's centralized command structure makes it impossible for it to hide its size, though it can use organization skills to foil investigations. However, its efficient approach to management also allows it to heal organizational damage at twice the normal rate.

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's internal structure.

1. Where is the cult's central headquarters located?
2. How much autonomy do the local leaders possess?
3. Why does the cult rely on centralized authority?
4. How does the cult deal with heretics?

Circuit

The cult's leaders make regular trips to the local chapters. The chapters themselves do not have a formal local leader; instead they must wait for the leader to arrive before taking action. Most chapters develop an informal leader of some sort who can take care of small problems without waiting for approval.

Quick Description

The cult's leaders move from chapter to chapter, spreading hope and good news as they go.

Effect

The cult's hands-on approach to leadership makes it highly responsive but somewhat lacking in the direct application of power.

The cult may take 10 on Response checks but suffers a penalty equal to its Response modifier on all Force checks

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's internal structure.

1. How do the leaders travel when moving from chapter to chapter?
2. How many times a year does a chapter encounter a leader?
3. How long does the leader stay with the chapter?
4. How many chapters does a leader visit each year?

Monolithic

The cult's leader clutches the reins of power in his tight fists. No one in the organization may take action without direct orders from the leader himself. Some particularly aggressive subordinates may act without instruction under the belief it is easier to ask for forgiveness than permission.

Quick Description

The cult focuses all of its resources and power into a single man.

Effect

The cult's focused leadership approach allows it to concentrate power but slows down its responses. The cult may take 10 on Force checks but suffers a penalty equal to its Force modifier on all Response checks

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's internal structure.

1. Does the cult believe its grand leader to be of divine origin or appointment?
2. What does the cult do when someone

- oversteps their bounds?
3. Does the cult leader have the power of life and death over his followers?
 4. Does this monolithic structure conflict with the cult's philosophy and avowed beliefs?

Scattered

A scattered cult is linked together by chains of tradition rather than organization. Its chapters and members may exist anywhere. Many do not even know about the others or have only the dimmest awareness of their involvement with a larger organization. At the same time, they will help one another when they can, even going so far as to lay down their lives for complete strangers.

Quick Description

The cult has a decentralized structure but the leaders know each other fairly well.

Effect

The cult's highly disorganized approach makes it difficult to coordinate resources. It cannot take 10 or 20 on a skill check. However, it gains DR equal to its highest attribute modifier against attacks by other organizations

Questions for Detailed Description

The following questions help flesh out the cult's internal structure.

1. How did the cult become so scattered?
2. Do members of different cult chapters recognize one another as brothers in the same organization?
3. How much control does each chapter leader have over his minions?
4. How do the chapter leaders interact with one another?

QUICK OR DETAILED CULT CREATION

A cult with a full set of descriptors has enough information listed in the "Quick Descriptions" to act as a plot element. By using the pre-built characters in the back of this book the GM can be up and running with a cult in a matter of a half-hour or less.

However, many GMs will want even more detail about their cults. For these GMs the "Questions for Detailed Descriptions" sections provide a starting point for further work. Using these questions he can produce almost endless details to satisfy his players' or his own curiosity.

In order to use the questions first amass the lists from all of the cult's descriptors into a single list. Then sort the questions into related groups, jotting down notes and potential answers while doing so. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to sort the questions. Each Game Master will see different connections between them. Those connections, and how they influence the answers to other questions, add depth and texture to the cult.

The questions provide a guide to laying out the cult's membership requirements, environs, and the kinds of encounters characters will have with it. As with the sorting, there is no right or wrong answers, just varying degrees of detail and imagination applied to the cult's background.

All that remains is to create the cult using the Organization Rules which follow.

ORGANIZATION RULES

Organizations are described much like other Game Master characters, with ability scores, skills, and feats.

ABILITY SCORES

Like a character, an organization is defined by six ability scores and has skills, feats, and hit points. These function in a similar way to those of any character. An organization reduced to 0 hit points is destroyed, while an organization with an ability score of 15 has a +2 bonus.

The six ability scores are:

Force (For): Analogous to Strength, Force measures how powerful an organization is in terms of military might. An organization with a low Force might be able to hire thugs to beat someone up, while an organization with a High Force might have summoned demons, assassins, or even a private army. Force modifies how help and protection the characters get from the organization or how the organization will oppose them.

Response (Resp): Analogous to Dexterity. The higher an organization's Response score, the faster and more agile it is. If the characters are working for a group with a low Response, it might take weeks or months before they get help. A group with a high Response might be constantly monitoring the characters' actions, ready to step in at a moment's notice.

Resources (Reso): Analogous to Constitution, Resources measures the financial strength and backing of the organization. A group with high Resources might be extremely wealthy or have huge stockpiles of equipment or treasure. Resources modifies how big a Wealth bonus characters get from being part of the

organization. It also adds to the organization's hit points, as the higher the Resources the more resilient it is.

Information (Info): The equivalent of Intelligence, this measures how much scientific knowledge and research ability the organization has. A group with low Information lacks laboratories and researchers; a group with high Information has vast archives. Information modifies the amount of research and background data the characters can get from the organization, as well as how many skill points the organization has.

Occult (Occ): Analogous to Wisdom, Occult measures how much magical or mystical power and knowledge the organization has. A low Occult score indicates very little stored information on the occult and only a minor occultist on its payroll. An organization with a high Occult has an extensive magical library and a whole staff of occultists on its payroll.

Influence (Infl): The equivalent of Charisma, Influence measures how much pull the organization has. An organization with high Influence can deal with governments and national groups. An organization with a low Influence might have trouble altering the opinion of its neighbors. Influence modifies a character's Reputation.

Organizations do not roll for ability scores; instead the Game Master assigns the scores. Alternatively, let the players build their own organization by buying ability scores from a points budget.

A minor, local organization might have 20-40 points to spend on ability scores. A fringe cult or section of a large government group like a police precinct might have 50-80 points. A major national organization or worldwide

organization might have 100 or more points.

Unlike characters, organizations buy ability scores using points on a one-to-one basis.

APPLYING ABILITY SCORES

Force: Roll Force whenever a question of sheer manpower comes up for an organization. Force also determines how much damage an organization can do.

Response: Response determines how aware the organization is of the characters' actions. It also serves as a form of Initiative—an organization with high Response will respond quicker to a character's requests.

Resources: Each character may add the Resources modifier of the organization to their Wealth bonus (do not subtract if the Resources modifier is negative). If they do so, then the materials or services they acquire from a purchase check are technically the organization's and not their own.

Also, increase or decrease the hit points of the organization by 5% multiplied by the organization's Resources modifier.

Information: Information determines how many skill points the organization has. An Information check can be used to determine if the organization knows something offhand. Occult: Occult measures both how much practical mystical knowledge the organization has, as well as its occult defenses and resources.

Influence: If the character identifies himself as a member of the organization (and the organization is known), the character applies the organization's Influence modifier to his Reputation bonus. This can actually reduce the character's Reputation bonus.

HIT POINTS

The hit points of an organization are calculated as follows:

- +1 for each individual member
- +5 for each member with special skills (such as a character)
- +10 for each influential leader
- +20 for each major stronghold or headquarters

ORGANIZATION SKILLS & ACTIONS

An organization has a number of skill points equal to four times its Information score. Organizations can select from the table on the following page.

In general, an organization makes skill checks just like a character and with similar effect. For example, a librarian character trying to locate an obscure news article would make a Research check (1d20 + the character's Research skill ranks + Int bonus) against DC 15. An FBI agent character could make a request for his organization to do the same and the GM would make a Research check for the FBI (1d20 + the FBI's Research skill ranks + Info bonus) at the same DC.

Of course, the FBI has a very high Research skill and huge Info bonus. The disadvantages of going through an organization instead of the character making the check himself are:

- Requests made of an organization can be tracked or intercepted.
- Cigarette-smoking men could nefariously interfere with the result of the Research check.
- Requests take a great deal of time, often much longer than it would take the character to do the task himself.

ORGANIZATION SKILLS

Skill	Ability	Uses	Time Required
Computer Use	Info	Hacking, computer security, programming, searches	8 hours
Craft	Info	Building specialized equipment	48 hours
Decipher Script	Info or Occ	Breaking codes, analyzing ancient tomes	24 hours
Demolitions	Resp	Disarming bombs	-
Disguise	Resp or Infl	Arranging for disguises for the characters	4 hours
Forgery	Info	Forging documents, IDs	8 hours
Gather Information	For or Infl	Door to door searches, surveys, rumor control	48 hours
Intimidate	For or Infl	Gunboat diplomacy or subtle political pressure	24 hours
Investigate	Info or Occ	Crime scene investigation	8 hours
Knowledge			
Arcane Lore	Occ	Information on occult, aliens	48 hours
Art	Info	Information on art history, art world rumors	24 hours
Behavioral Sciences	Info	Psychological analysis	24 hours
Business	Info	Information on business world, business rumors	24 hours
Civics	Infl	Information on law and legislation, politics	48 hours
Current Events	Infl	Information on current events, scanning the news	8 hours
Earth and Life Sciences	Info	Information on biology, botany, geology, etc.	48 hours
History	Info or Occ	Information on history	48 hours
Physical Sciences	Info	Information on chemistry and physics	48 hours
Popular Culture	Infl	Entertainment rumors and news	8 hours
Streetwise	Infl	The word on the street	8 hours
Tactics	For	Strategic and tactical advice	8 hours
Technology	Info	Information on cutting-edge technology and devices	12 hours
Theology and Philosophy	Occ	Information on religions and philosophy	48 hours
Repair	Info	Repairing specialized equipment	1 week
Research	Info	Digging through public records, libraries, etc.	48 hours
Search	For	Searching an area for a runaway	24 hours
Treat Injury	Reso	Medical treatment	1 week

REQUEST TIMES

Request Modifier	Time
-5	One month
-4	Three weeks
-3	Two weeks
-2	One week
-1	Three days
	One day
+1	12 hours
+2	8 hours
+3	4 hours
+4	1 hour
+5	30 minutes
+6	10 minutes
+7 or more	Instantly

Some situations give a bonus to the Response modifier:

Situation	Modifier
Emergency!	+3
Characters are geographically distant from the organization	
Outside usual scope of activities	-2
Remote area	-4
Extremely isolated area	-6
Lost	-8

Making Requests

A character can submit a request for assistance just by making a telephone call. However, every organization takes some time to process such a request and provide aid. The organization's Response modifier determines how quickly it responds.

If the character is in bad standing with the organization, a penalty may be applied to Response (usually -2 or -4).

Each skill check has a time requirement: add the response time to the time required for the skill check to work out how long it will take for the characters to get the results of the skill check.

In addition to making skill checks, an organization can also perform the following actions:

- The organization can take 10.
- The organization can keep rerolling, but each attempt takes the normal Response time.
- The organization can take 20, but it takes 10 times longer than normal.



ORGANIZATION ACTIONS

Action	Ability	DC	Time
Minor military support (two police officers/thugs)	Force	10	5 min.
Significant military support (police squad, assassins)	Force	12	10 min.
Major military support (SWAT team, snipers)*	Force	15	30 min.
Overwhelming military support (helicopter gunships)*	Force	20	8 hours
Loan of advanced or heavy weaponry*	Force	15	24 hours
Car rental	Response	5	1 hour
Plane tickets to anywhere	Response	15	1 hour
Helicopter*	Response	20	1 hour
Aid another with Investigate, Knowledge, or Research	Information	5	24 hours
Casting a spell*	Occult	15	48 hours
Spreading rumors	Influence	10	48 hours
Rumor control	Influence	15	24 hours
Cover-up	Influence	20	24 hours

*Requesting any of these too often will really annoy the organization. Also, not every organization can provide these actions. Asking your local police station to cast a spell for you will get an immediate response, but not the one you were asking for.

ORGANIZATION FEATS

Most organizations have one feat per two important characters (basically, one per two player characters or influential GMCs) to a maximum of three for a local organization, six for a national, or twelve or more feats for a massive, world-spanning group.

Arsenal

The organization has a large stockpile of weaponry.

Benefit: The organization has a +5 bonus to Force checks for requisitioning weaponry and has access to military-grade or illegal gear.

Artifact

The organization has access to an ancient mystical artifact or alien device of considerable power. The organization knows a little about the artifact but has not yet fathomed its full power.

Benefit: The characters can gain access to the artifact if the organization makes an Occult check (DC 15).

Special: The organization may take this feat more than once.

Covert

The organization's very existence is concealed.

Benefit: The organization gives no Reputation increase (or decrease), but its members are "off the grid" in terms of fingerprints, police records, and so on, which gives the characters considerably more latitude when it comes to avoiding the attention of the authorities.

Emergency Response

The organization is always on standby to help the characters.

Benefit: The organization has a +5 bonus to Response for the purposes of determining

Response time.

Fanatical Loyalty

The organization demands absolute faith from its members.

Benefit: Organization members may add the group's Occult bonus to Will saves for the purposes of resisting mind control effects.

Financial Sway

The organization is adept at using its financial muscle to influence other groups

Benefit: The organization may use Resources instead of Influence for the purposes of pulling political strings.

Forensic Laboratory

The organization has a well-equipped forensics laboratory.

Benefit: The organization has a +2 equipment bonus to Investigate checks. If a character uses the forensics lab, he gets a +4 equipment bonus to Investigate and Treat Injury checks.

Hospital

The organization has a private medical facility.

Benefit: The organization has a +4 equipment bonus to Treat Injury checks.

Library

The organization has an extensive reference library dealing with a particular subject.

Benefit: Choose a subcategory of the Knowledge skill (such as Knowledge (arcane lore) or Knowledge (technology)). The organization has a +2 equipment bonus to that particular type of Knowledge check. If a character uses the library, he gets a +4 equipment bonus to that particular type of Knowledge check.

Special: The organization may take this feat more than once.

Occult Library

The organization has a comprehensive library of occult texts.

Prerequisite: Library of Knowledge (arcane lore)

Benefit: Members capable of casting arcane spells are treated as having an additional +1 to their Intelligence modifier for the purposes of learning, casting, and preparing spells.

Research Lab

The organization has a well-equipped research laboratory

Prerequisite: Forensic Laboratory

Benefit: The organization has access to a research laboratory, which gives it a +2 equipment bonus to Craft, Investigate, Repair, and Knowledge (technology) checks. It can also produce specialized equipment in half the normal time.

Secure Base

The organization's headquarters is protected by state of the art security systems.

Benefit: The organization gains +20 hit points and the headquarters is well defended.

Special: The organization may take this feat more than once.

Widely Known

The organization is famous

Benefit: Members gain an additional +5 bonus to Reputation, but they will also attract attention wherever they go.

DAMAGING AN ORGANIZATION

Every organization has a number of hit points. This is an abstract value that measures how much disruption the organization can take to its structure and plans before collapsing. Losing all its hit points does not mean that every single member of an organization is killed—a group may be forced to disperse long before it loses all its members.

ORGANIZATION DAMAGE

Event	Hit Points Lost
Member lost or killed	1
Leader or officer lost or killed	2d6
Major base destroyed	3d10
Plot foiled	1d10



CHAPTER THREE: THUGEE FEATS AND F/X

The Thuggee, in all of their incarnations, rely on stealth and subterfuge to carry out their nefarious purposes. Their success, or failure, depends on split second timing and the ability to communicate with one another secretly using plain language.

Some of the cult's incarnations possess additional, dangerous powers conferred upon them by their goddess. These powers, represented as F/X in d20 Modern, enhance their ability to detect prey and elude capture.

NEW FEATS

All versions of the Thuggee and similar cults might grant their followers access to several special feats described below.

Cant

You can speak and read a secret or forbidden language.

Prerequisite: None

Benefit: When you select this feat you select one cult or occult society. You can communicate with other members of the cult who also have this feat using a secret language that others do not know. Those overhearing your conversation cannot decipher it, though they may record it for later decoding. Decoding a conversation requires a Decipher Script skill check (DC 25).

Special: You must be a member of the cult whose cant you wish to select.

Coordinated Strike

You can coordinate your sneak attacks with others who have the same gift.

Prerequisite: Evasion

Benefit: When two or more characters with this feat attack the same target they are always considered to be flanking even if they are not directly opposite one another.

Normal: The ability to perform a sneak attack is evaluated on an attacker by attacker basis.

Special: A Fast Hero may select Coordinated Strike as one of his bonus feats.

From Behind

When your target is completely unaware of your presence you can strike deadly blows.

Prerequisite: Stealthy

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to attack and a bonus equal to your Intelligence modifier to damage when making a melee attack against a target during the surprise round.

Special: A Fast Hero may select Coordinated Strike as one of his bonus feats.

Knee and Cord

You have mastered the art of strangling.

Prerequisite: +3 base attack bonus

Benefit: When you succeed in a grappling attack and use a strangling cord you automatically inflict an additional +1d6 damage.

Reading

You know the tells separating marks from hawks.

Prerequisite: Wis 13+

Benefit: As a standard action select one target within visual range. You and the target make a contested Diplomacy vs. Bluff check. If you succeed you may ascertain one of the following pieces of information: the target's CR, his skills, one skill rank of your choice, or one of his attributes. This ability does not allow

you to determine the target's special attacks or special qualities.

Special: A Charismatic Hero may select Reading as one of his bonus feats.

THUGEE F/X

Faithful Thuggee can, at the Games Master's option, become Acolytes. The goddess Kali grants her Acolytes the following additional spells: Hand of the Goddess and Ritual Dedication.

Hand of the Goddess

Conjuration

Level: Acolyte 3; **Components:** V, S, M;

Casting Time: Attack action; **Range:** Touch;

Target: One creature; **Duration:** 1 round/

level; **Saving Throw:** Will negates; **Spell**

Resistance: Yes

When an acolyte invokes the *hand of the goddess* he calls upon Kali's own might to assist him in his attack. Any one medium size or smaller target he touches (with a touch attack) within a number of rounds equal to his acolyte level enters into a grappling contest with an invisible foe. The foe possesses unlimited hit points, a base attack bonus equal to the acolytes, and Strength equal to the acolytes level + his Wisdom. The two continue to grapple until the spell's duration elapses.

Ritual Dedication

Illusion

Level: Acolyte 2; **Components:** V, S, M;

Casting Time: 1 hour; **Range:** Touch;

Area: 30 ft. emanation from touched point;

Duration: Permanent; **Saving Throw:** None;

Spell Resistance: No

Kali gives her servants the ability to conceal

their crimes. The ritual dedication creates a subtle illusion, serving to turn aside those who would discover the murders committed by her devotees. After slaughtering his targets the acolyte must pray for Kali's blessing for one hour.

Once complete, the spell creates an illusion which masks the crime's traces. Increase the DC of any Investigation, Research, or Search skill check to investigate the crime by the acolyte's Wisdom modifier. Spells and psionic abilities attempting to probe the action fail if the caster fails to beat a DC equal to the acolyte's level +10 on a caster level check.

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE CHARACTERS

The following characters appear in the Thug cults.

Thug (Human Charismatic Hero 1/Fast Hero 1): CR 2; Medium human; HD 1d6+2 plus 1d8+2; hp: 11; Mas 14; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 13, touch 13, flat-footed 13; BAB: +0; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee garrote grapple (1d4+1); Full Atk +1 melee garrote grapple (1d4+1); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; AP 1; Rep 2; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 13

Skills: Bluff +8, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +7, Gather Information +5, Move Silently +4, Perform (any one) +5, Profession +4

Feats: Cant, Deceptive

Talents (Charismatic): Fast Talk

Talents (Fast): Evasion

Possessions: Garrote, normal clothes

A lowly beginning thug does not yet understand the subtle art of strangulation or the skills used by his betters to select their marks. His role is to work under the direction of more experienced murderers, slowly building his skills until he can one day wield the noose himself. To that end he cultivates the art of deception and studies the methods employed by his betters.

Thugs are the lowest rank in all four of the Thuggee cults described in Chapter 1. They will run away rather than fight an armed and aware opponent.

Thug Strangler (Human Charismatic Hero 3/Fast Hero 2): CR 5; Medium human; HD 3d6+6 plus 2d8+4; hp: 27; Mas 14; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 15, touch 15, flat-footed 15; BAB: +3; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee garrote grapple (1d4); Full Atk +4 melee garrote grapple (1d4); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +2; AP 1; Rep 2; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 14

Skills: Bluff +13, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +10, Gather Information +10, Hide +6, Move Silently +6, Perform (any one) +8, Profession +7

Feats: Cant, Coordinated Attack, Deceptive, Stealthy, Trustworthy

Talents (Charismatic): Fast Talk, Dazzle

Talents (Fast): Evasion

Possessions: garrote, normal clothes

When a Thug finally participates in enough murders he becomes a strangler. The stranglers

act under the direction of the group leader, separating targets from the masses in order to murder them in a quick and effective fashion. Each strangler specializes in lulling his victim into a sense of security, then striking from surprise with the assistance of others.

The historical and ancient survival thuggee will not attack unless there is one strangler and at least two thugs for each target. The other two cults, being less cautious in their evil, may attack with lesser odds.

Although a strangler is a respected member of the thug community he still has a long way to go in honing and developing his skills.

**Thug Leader (Human Charismatic Hero 5/
Fast Hero 4):** CR 8; Medium human;
HD 5d6+10 plus 4d8+8; hp: 42; Mas 14; Init
+0; Spd 40 ft.; Defense 17, touch 17, flat-
footed 17; BAB: +5; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee
garrote grapple (1d4+1); Full Atk +6 melee
garrote grapple (1d4+1); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.;
Reach 5 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will
+5; AP 1; Rep 4; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 9,
Wis 13, Cha 14

Skills: Bluff +17, Diplomacy +17, Disguise
+12, Gather Information +12, Hide +10,
Move Silently +10, Perform (any one) +12,
Profession +9

Feats: Cant, Coordinated Attack, Deceptive,
From Behind, Knee and Cord, Iron Will,
Reading, Stealthy, Trustworthy

Talents (Charismatic): Charm, Dazzle, Fast
Talk

Talents (Fast): Evasion, Increase Speed

Possessions: garrote, normal clothes

The Thuggee cell leaders mix deception and psychosis into a deadly brew. These charming killers can hold a polite conversation on nearly any topic, engage in intimacies, and then strangle their companion without hesitation. They watch over the stranglers and young thugs, guiding their charges in the ancient ways of the Thuggee.

When not out murdering people the thug leader plays a vital role in his local community. His charisma and organizational skills make him a logical choice for official roles like local sheriff, judge, or even mayor. The leader will not break his cover while in normal life, though he will use whatever power he wields to thwart investigations into the Thuggee.

Historically the average Thuggee leader did not prove to be very loyal. When confronted with their crimes he agreed to incorporate in return for a pardon or reduced sentence. It seems that the kind of man who can murder without compunction might not possess the highest moral or ethical qualities.

**Acolyte of Kali (Human Charismatic Hero
2/Dedicated Hero 3/Acolyte 5):** CR 10;
Medium human; HD 2d6+2 plus 3d6+3 plus
5d8+5; hp: 45; Mas 13; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.;
Defense 16, touch 16, flat-footed 16; BAB:
+6; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee garrote grapple
(1d4+1); Full Atk +7/+1 melee garrote grapple
(1d4+1); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.;
SQ Divine skills, divine spells, rebuke undead,
combat casting; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4,
Will +8; AP 1; Rep 6; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 13,
Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 14

Acolyte Spells Prepared (5/5/4/2, save DC

12+ spell level): 0 – *detect magical aura x2, read magic x2, virtue*; 1st – *command x2, cure light wounds, shield of faith x2* ; 2nd –*augury, hand of the goddess x2, ritual dedication*; 3rd – *animate dead, bestow curse*

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +9, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +4, Gather Information +9, Handle Animal +7, Knowledge (arcane lore) +8, Knowledge (theology and philosophy) +8, Listen +8, Perform +7, Read/Write (Hindi, Sanskrit), Sense Motive +6, Speak Language (Hindi, Sanskrit), Spellcraft +7

Feats: Alertness, Archaic Weapon Proficiency, Cant, Deceptive, Educated, Knee and Cord, Reading, Trustworthy, Educated

Talents (Charismatic): Fast Talk

Talents (Dedicated): Empathy, Improved Aid Another

Possessions: ceremonial robes, garrote, holy symbol

Historically, the leaders of the Thuggee demonstrated many skills including the ability to hide up to ten thousand murders a year. However, in the pulps the greatest of the Thuggee wield an even more sinister power: magic itself. They use the secrets taught them by Black Kali to hide their crimes and dominate anyone in their way.



An acolyte of kali does not go on the long murder pilgrimages. Instead he squats in a hidden temple, issuing orders to the thugs under his command.

CULT SHEET

DESCRIPTORS:

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ATTRIBUTES

HIT POINTS:

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SCORE

MOD

FORCE:

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RESPONSE:

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RESOURCES:

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INFORMATION:

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OCCULT:

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INFLUENCE:

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SKILLS:

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FEATS:

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