

JUSTICE

CAMPAIGN BOOK



JUSTICE INC.

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CAMPAIGNING



THE CAMPAIGN

In this section of the *Justice Inc.* rules you will learn most of the things you need to know to be able to create and run pulp adventures. The Campaign section will provide you with an overview of the different types of adventures which were common in the pulps. It will take you through the intricacies of plotting and preparing for an adventure. Lastly, we'll give you a large section on the era of the pulps so you can give your games the correct feel, and so your players can

"role-play" their parts easily and entertainingly.

It's best if you read it over once to get the general gist of what's being said. By the time you get through the sections about the era, plots and adventures should begin to form themselves in your mind. Rereading sections of this book to help expand your ideas will then be natural and work well.

Enough belaboring the obvious. Welcome to the pulps!

CREATING A *JUSTICE INC.* CAMPAIGN

Before the discussion of campaign design begins, a term or two should be defined just so we're all dealing from a common background. A campaign is a game where characters or plots continue over a long series of gaming sessions. Each session would take several hours; maybe one evening a week. The players could find themselves involved in a long adventure where each session brings their characters to new places and new dangers. When they finally track down the object of their search, resolving their adventure to their satisfaction, the campaign would be finished.

A second type of campaign game, often encompassing the first, is sometimes referred to as a "saga system". In this system, the players use the same characters, and take them through several adventures. The adventures might be simple scenarios that take only one or two nights to play out, or might be long campaigns that take many gaming sessions to finish. On a larger scale, a group of gamers might alternate in the role of Gamemaster, allowing the characters of each player to adventure in scenarios created by various Gamemasters.

None of the above systems of campaigning is better than any other. Each gaming group will probably find

one style suits them better than another; but this shouldn't eliminate the other styles totally. Just because John Hawkstar, psychic detective, normally doesn't get involved in the Nazi hunting campaign you run, this doesn't mean he shouldn't be allowed to "guest star" in an adventure where the Nazis are using magical items to forward the cause of world domination. Be flexible, and your gaming will be much better for it.

Campaigning as applied to *Justice Inc.* will probably be best served by looking upon each adventure as another story in a series about a group of characters. This concept accurately reflects the reality of the pulps, and will give you the best handle on how to go about plotting out adventures. This still allows you a great deal of leeway. While Doc Savage novels tended towards being complete, at least one villain came back for revenge! Fu Manchu constantly bedeviled Nayland Smith no matter what our hero tried to do. Nick Carter's adventures regularly shifted from detective or adventure yarns to the suave realm of spy thrillers. Action and adventure were the only elements demanded in the pulps.

IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THE PULPS

The Pulps (that is, those cheap pulp-paper magazines of the '20s and '30s) covered as many different types of tales as can be imagined. A bit later in this book we'll take a deeper look into some of the more major areas they covered. Before we get into details of each genre of the pulps, however, we should take a close look at the elements common to all of the pulps and how they will affect your games.

Each story had a hero or a heroine. Very often the job of the hero was to rescue the heroine from the clutches of the villain. In your games the hero, or heroes, will be the characters being played in your game. You must try to present them with challenges and situations that not only allow them to be heroic, but force them to be heroic and to succeed. Heroines need not be reduced to helpless victims. Often women played surprisingly liberated roles in the pulp stories.

The villain in pulp stories was evil. There's no need

to justify his evil, yet this doesn't mean that all villains need to be without personality. A man who plans to kill his victims is evil, but a villain who tortures his captives to death while composing a symphony for piano and victim is *truly* evil. These touches of personality will both make the villains more horrible and may provide the Gamemaster with a theme to follow in determining the actions of the villain. It may also provide a blind spot or a weakness to be exploited by the characters.

Most Pulp adventures featured an exotic setting of some sort. Often the stories would start in some familiar locale, be it New York City or Smalltown, U.S.A., and head off to a strange setting that most of the readers have never seen. This technique helps to keep the tales believable; after all, if the adventure starts downtown, how far from reality can it get?



The exotic setting knew no bounds. Islands where dinosaurs still roamed in volcanic craters, lost valleys where Crusaders had intermarried with Egyptians who have not realized that the Pharaohs are no more, or the secret chambers linked to the sewers in any city in America or Europe were favorite settings. If you want an oriental flavor for your tale you don't have to go to Hong Kong, you merely have to visit the local Chinatown. The change in setting adds suspense because characters often find themselves violating customs and laws they never knew existed. And the punishment for such errors always seemed to be death.

As a Gamemaster you should fully exploit the idea of strange settings, especially if some of the characters have knowledge that would make the setting seem familiar. A scientist who has made a study of the Aztec way of life should be encouraged to try and invoke some ancient law to prevent the sacrifice of his party. Secret signs or strange oaths linked to brotherhoods within the society can save the day, and often were incorporated into pulp stories.

The last common element in pulps involves conspiracies. There always seems to be a secret shared by people other than the heroes that is the key to their current situation. Whether the conspiracy is one to conquer Chicago or the world, its aims are often the motivation behind the action taking place. Conspiracies also allow for anyone to be an agent, and for hordes of fantastically loyal agents to sacrifice themselves in an attempt to prevent the characters from succeeding. More than once the heroes of a Pulp were attacked by agents to prevent them from becoming involved in a plot they knew nothing about.

No matter what genre of adventures you decide to use, these elements of Hero, Villain, Exotic settings and Conspiracies will help you build true Pulp adventures for your eager players.

SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL GAMEMASTERING

The dark room feels very hot and close. Your vision is obscured by the heavy velvet cowl you donned to gain entry here. To the left and right you can see and feel others in the room with you. Sweat rolls down your face as you imagine your terrible fate if you are discovered.

Suddenly a candle is lit directly in the middle of the room. Your cowl picks up hints of green from the light and the light fails to make it as far as the unseen walls of the room. In the center of the cowed circle is a figure clad in a white velvet robe. His cowl has two

scarlet slashes running diagonally across the left eye. That eye, icy blue, stares at you and stabs fear into your soul.

"You have been selected to learn the Secrets of Successful Gamemastering. Let the lessons begin!"

There is no strange fraternity you have to enter to become a good Gamemaster. In fact, the process of becoming a good Gamemaster is quite simple, provided you are willing to make some sacrifices. There are several ideas you should always keep in mind when running an adventure, and they are presented below for your edification. Remember them, and successful Gamemastering will be yours.

1) A Gamemaster is an Entertainer.

Too often Gamemasters have been described as "gods" in their own little worlds. This is absolutely wrong and has created some problems. All too often Gamemasters come to believe that being a god means that everything goes your way, but a casual glance at mythology will prove that idea silly. When things do not go the way a "god" Gamemaster wants he'll rant and rave, ruining the game and spoiling everyone's fun.

The job of a Gamemaster is to entertain the players. If things don't go the way a Gamemaster has planned it, what difference does it make when everyone is having fun? The thrill of discovery, the heart-pounding moments of suspense, and the laughs from humor beat the hell out of the drudgeries of constant warfare and treasure harvesting.

This idea of abandoning your goals for those of the players is often a hard one for a beginning Gamemaster to grasp. Every Gamemaster has the right to feel proud about the adventure he's designed. But if the characters solve it in a manner you didn't expect, that doesn't make your adventure poor. It means that your players are good, and that you're going to have to make sure that their plan wouldn't work a second time.

Entertaining players often takes various forms. Designing puzzles for your players who love to figure them out is an excellent way to entertain them. Providing the same puzzles for people who would rather play out a night at the opera, however, will not entertain them. In that case you must create and play at being characters they might meet and deal with at the opera. If your players prefer the dirty job of assaulting a Bavarian fortress, create the fortress for them.

Suit your game to your players. You will find much more satisfaction in the thanks they give you for an enjoyable evening of gaming than you will in killing off all of their characters.

2) Be fair.

This is often hard to handle, but is vital for a good Gamemaster to remember. Everyone runs into a situation where he has overlooked one detail in the design of the perfect trap. Suppose you station frogmen with radios at the ocean bottom around your

secret base. The players come in with scuba gear and you mention that the sentry has radioed back to headquarters that the characters are on their way in. Then one of the players tells you that radio waves do not transmit underwater (truth). What do you do?

A bad Gamemaster will answer, "Well, these are special radios. . ." The bad Gamemaster refuses to suffer from his own errors, certainly not something he would allow the characters to get away with. A good Gamemaster will sheepishly admit his error, and revise his plan accordingly. This will be good for his game, because his players will come to trust him and accept his judgements without argument. This will save many problems in the long run.

3) Be firm and consistent.

If a question does arise in a gaming situation, and you are certain you're being fair about its resolution, firmly stick to your guns. If a player can force you to back off a perfectly fair and logical solution to a problem simply by being loud and obnoxious, or by offering you some sort of a bribe, all of your players will argue about any call that goes against them.

Consistency will save you many headaches. If you decide that being hit by a baseball in the bleachers does 1D6 Stun in one session, then let it pass in another, you may get problems. The example above is trivial, but there will be important points agreed upon in a group. Changing accepted conventions will get you into trouble unless you have a very good case for the change.

4) Be flexible.

Players will do the most unorthodox things when you least expect them to, and you have to be prepared to deal with their actions. Every harebrained scheme deserves to be considered and concluded fairly. If the plan throws a monkeywrench into your plotting, accept it and roll with the punch.

A difficult situation for most GMs to deal with is one where the GM has planned for the bad guys to, say, hit a character's apartment while the character is at a movie. The character changes his mind and returns home, suspecting something is up, to lay a trap. While the GM knows the character is waiting, he cannot stop his bad guys because there is no way they could tell if the character was out or not. Everyone has run into this trap at one time or another, and the only solution is to play the scenario out, playing dumb for the bad guys.

5) Use dramatic license.

Any Gamemaster should not be afraid to avoid describing a situation for dramatic effect. If you want the characters to dive for cover, don't roll the dice for the bad guy with the tommygun. Just say that his spray of bullets passes over the characters' heads. If the dice roll could gum up an effect you want, and the effect isn't crucial and won't hurt anyone, don't roll the dice. Dramatic license is permissible, and even encouraged, if the GM is fair with his players. It can make the difference between a boring game and an entertaining adventure.

THE NOVEL APPROACH TO GAMEMASTERING

The title above doesn't refer to some new and innovative, hence "novel" approach to Gamemastering; rather it's the way to simulate a novel (as opposed to a short story) in a campaign.

Most role-playing campaigns operate in a form akin to short stories: Each gaming session represents a complete episode in the lives of its characters, a complete if abbreviated story, perhaps fitting into a larger and longer storyline. Comic books, which often hold individual stories which are frequently strung together into lengthy (if rambling) adventures, are good examples of this sort of thing.

The short-story approach is fine when it's short stories being simulated; detective and horror stories work well at that length. But many sorts of pulp fiction, especially the superheric exploits of the crimebusting adventurers which inspired this game, don't work as well under those limitations. Thus, the Novel Approach.

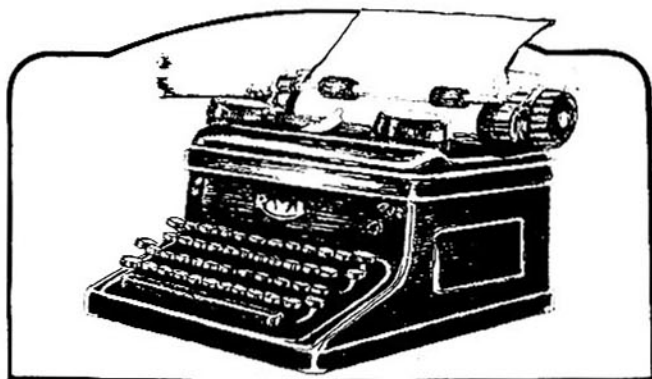
When a Gamemaster wants to run a lengthy storyline as a game, he should plot out in rough what he thinks he will happen in the course of the "novel".

Example:

The game master decides that he'll have the

characters investigate the disappearance of several upstate New York citizens at the hands of a shambling creature that seems to have a skin of granite. The actual circumstance, the GM decides, is that a piratical genius in that area of the state has developed an advanced diving suit, and his minions use the suits to sink and salvage Lake Ontario shipping traffic, protecting themselves by kidnapping witnesses to any of these incidents. Having found a reference to an old legend about a demon of stone which was supposed to terrorize the area, our self-serving genius has fixed all these diving suits to look like the granite man.

The GM decides that the "plot" of the adventure will probably go something like this: The player-characters find out a little about what's going on and head north to the afflicted area. There, they will talk to residents of the region and survivors of the victims, and otherwise research the situation. The GM hopes to split the player-characters into groups of two or three during the first part of the adventure, so that their individual talents can shine. He intends for one or two of them to have an encounter with the Granite Man. As the naughty genius discovers he's being investigated, he arranges for Our Heroes to have to dodge "accidents" and attempted murders in order to continue their investigation. Eventually, our GM thinks they will either find out about the genius' cavern base or be captured and taken there and infiltrate (or escape), rescue all the kidnapped folks, and punch the Granite Man's lights out. Mission accomplished, in traditional 1930s pulp style—unless they utterly screw up, which is always an option for player-characters.



A plot as relatively simple as this will take, in all likelihood, about three play-sessions (or less, for those terrifying durable gamers who can play in all-night stretches). The first part, he thinks, will consist of Characters Find Out About Menace. Characters Go North. Characters Do Research. One or Two Characters Encounter Granite Man. The second part, then, would be Investigations Annoy Genius. Characters Suffer Assassination Attempts. And, perhaps, Some Characters Captured. (That depends on how well and what the characters are doing at the end of the second session, and the GM shouldn't contrive to "make" it happen if the player-characters are

bright enough to elude the circumstances that would lead to their capture.) The third session, still rather hazy, would be either Characters Trace their Missing Members or Characters Find Genius HQ, then Characters Thwart Genius' Plans (or, perhaps, don't—that, too, is determined by how well the characters do).

So, the GM has his "novel" outline. Now he works toward bringing it into being.

Let's say that his campaign sports the usual collection of doughty pulp characters: A reporter, a scrawny but brilliant scholar, a fearsome bruiser of an adventurer, a *femme fatale*, and a superbly capable adventurer leader-type. (Incidentally, it's recommended that each player have two or more characters prepared for a campaign. That way, the GM can pick and choose the characters he thinks will make an adventure most interesting, and all the players will still be included.)

Unless that collection of player-characters is recognizably a "group", the GM will have to bring them together for the duration of the adventure. This isn't usually difficult; a very good means is the Empire Club, introduced in Book II of this game. The characters could all be relaxing at the club, swapping stories in the Cathay Room. The door to the room swings open, and in stumbles adventurer Harold Walden, supported by one of the club valets. Walden collapses. Underneath his trenchcoat, his chest is a mess—most of his ribs broken, his lungs collapsed and probably punctured. He gasps "Granite Man" and expires. In his pocket is a news story clipped from an upstate paper, describing the mysterious disappearance/abduction of Miss Lenora O'Halloran. And Our Heroes are on their way. (Admittedly, that's a monstrously-overused pulp beginning, but it still works, and works well.)

Once they get to the upstate village where the nastiness is occurring, the GM can contrive to split them up for their individual investigations. An easy method for doing this is introducing them to the Garrulous Chap Who Knows Something. The Garrulous Chap simply overloads them with leads but practically no information. He might tell them, for example, that the Chronicle has run individual stories on all the missing people, too bad he doesn't have back copies with him; he'd heard something about an old legend about a Granite Man, but doesn't have the time to research it himself at the library; yes, he met Harold Walden, who'd been doing some investigating at the camp of some pretty rough-and-tumble hunters; and so on. This throws out leads for (specifically) the reporter, the scholar, and the bruiser to follow; the leader and the *femme fatale* might accompany the others or go out on their own, perhaps to one of the disappearance sites and an encounter with the Granite Man.

That, in essence, is how to formulate and kick off a short novel-length adventure. For the traditional Doc Savage-type episode, this is probably the most effective game mastering method.

DIFFERENT ADVENTURE STYLES

What follows is a list and explanation of the various genres, or areas, covered in pulp adventures. For the most part any one pulp magazine would concern itself with one type of story. *Western Tales* would have westerns, *R.A.F. Aces* would have stories about WWII aces, and *The Shadow* would have stories about The Shadow. While tending towards running only their type of story, there was a certain amount of crossover in allowing elements from one genre to creep into a tale of another genre.

At various times this crossover would be obvious from the title of the magazine. *Spicy Westerns* would

have slightly racy Western tales. *Western Romance* would be a magazine with stories where the cowboy got the rancher's daughter, though not as intimately as in *Spicy Westerns*. *Doc Savage* adventures would often have supernatural or espionage elements in them.

Once you have decided upon a theme for your games, don't be afraid to allow other elements to creep into your stories. Not only does it make for good variety in the games, but it will allow your players to explore facets of their characters that they might not have realized existed.

CRIMEFIGHTING

Many of the hero oriented pulps spend a great deal of time going after criminals. *The Avenger* magazine—its first issue supplied the title for this game—began with Richard Benson's desire to punish the smugglers who had caused his family to die. The Shadow had a network of aides who kept him informed about criminal activities so he could step in and destroy them. Doc Savage found himself fighting criminals because they all decided to take him out to prevent his interloping!

Crimefighting and gangbusting does require certain items to set up. There must be some sort of a gang, usually headed by the Villain who tries to remain anonymous. Often the Villain, in his true identity, will end up running around with the hero in order to determine how his plot was proceeding. The gang itself should be made up of gangsters or ruffians or hopelessly devoted minions.

Example:

Suppose *The Green Spectre* has a device that is supposed to level half a city block with sonic waves. Our hero John Hawkstar and his able assistant Tom

Electric manage to short circuit the device. Though they warn *The Green Spectre* that to use his device will cause his own death, the Spectre laughs at them. He triggers the device from his soundproof chamber only to find that they have channeled the sound into the chamber alone. When John and Tom finally turn the machine off they open the chamber and discover an empty uniform with the remains of *The Green Spectre* oozing out of it.

Another thing a gang needs is a horde of mindless minions who are devoted to their leader. Anything from family ties to greed can bind the gang together. Often the gang members will have a religious or cult devotion to their leader. The Green Spectre has probably bound his gang together by promising them immortality. He would claim that he had lived through several incarnations and provide artifacts from past ages (which he has stolen) to prove his point.

The Green Spectre's gang can also have members who are not individuals willing to support him with money and information in return for immortality. Such characters can make a big difference in an



adventure, especially when the characters come to these secret members for advice and help. Having an NPC who has been a great help in previous adventures turn up to be a member of a gang can put people through all sorts of contortions.

Gangs can show up in many different places. In the pulps, gangs would take over towns and rule them

ruthlessly. They also ran through the underworld, continually attempting to unite the criminal element into a vast illegal empire. More sedate gangs are pirate bands who pillage rich yachts and island resorts. I'd love to see a gang made up of barnstormers who terrorize little villages throughout the rural areas of the world, bombing banks and flying off with loot.

The convenience of running crime fighting scenarios makes them ideal for beginning games. The conflict is clear cut: there is a gang of bad guys out to rob, maim and kill others. They must be stopped and the only way to stop them is to kill their leader. The leader is always evil and deserving of destruction, so the capture of his gang and his death is highly desired.

The successful elimination of a gang can result in many rewards and problems for the characters. Certainly the people who stop the Terrormaster from destroying the Statue of Liberty are going to be feted in New York and presented with many awards for public service and bravery. By the same token, if the Terrormaster escapes his just fate, or if The Green Spectre decides that the characters are the only ones who can stop his plot to blow up the Statue of Liberty, the characters are going to find adventures coming to them.

Of course, crime fighting can easily be placed into other adventures. Forming a posse and going after the stage robbers is clearly crimefighting. Preventing poachers from denuding the Elephants' Graveyard is crimefighting. Mysteries often involve solving a crime and heaven only knows what evil awaits the heroine in the gothic romances.

Crimefighting was one of the most common backgrounds for pulp adventures, and certainly one of the most popular. Almost as popular, and as easy to run, are espionage scenarios.

ESPIONAGE

The major difference between crime-fighting and spying is that in crime-fighting, the characters are obviously on the side of the law and have nothing to fear from the officials of the place where they're operating. This isn't true for the valiant adventurers who undertake globetrotting missions to strange places to prevent the forces of evil from their planned world domination.

On the surface, the set up for spy scenarios appears curiously like the set up for crimebusting adventure. In many ways spy adventures are easier to create,

especially when the Nazis, the Imperial Japanese, or the Russian Communist menace is used for the enemy. The villain of the piece is usually someone like Baron Erhardt von Hel, Lord Hiro Makazashi or Commissar Boris Nikelovovitch; a despicable character known to have plotted and carried out the murder of hundreds of innocent villagers in some repressive raid or other. In fact, the proof of his evil nature is in his membership with the enemy.

The enemy agents are, of course, fanatical members of whatever cause the villain is part of. The Gestapo is

a favorite group to be controlling the enemy, though the Communist International (Comintern) ranks right up beside it. The tactics of the group are bound to be savage and quite uncivilized, often centered upon physical and emotional torture. The lucky enemies of these groups are killed, the more unfortunate enemies are forced to labor for their oppressors, either as slave workers or the subjects for strange and often mind-dominating experiments.

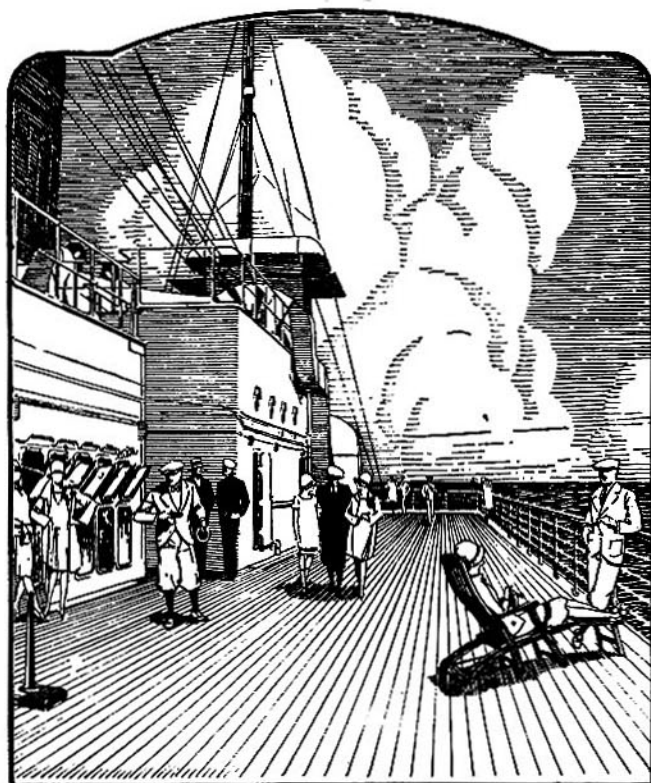
Sleeper agents can't be forgotten when dealing with political entities. This is similar to having a trusted person involved in a gang as mentioned previously. In espionage scenarios, however, the covert agent will often wield incredible power and try to smash the heroes to prevent them from exposing him. His attempt to smash them can be overt, as in having loyal troops hunt them because the agent reports they have gone over to the other side about their itinerary.

The real difficulty of running spy adventures is that the characters are often going to be running around at odds with the forces which control the place they're adventuring in; when the characters are tracking spies down in their own country, they're under restraint because they can't allow the citizens of their own country to know that spies are loose. (The United States government did not let out the news that the Japanese had bombed the forests of the Pacific Northwest until thirty years had passed. Two planes released from submarines started forest fires with fire bombs. Had this information been released during the war there would have been all sorts of trouble in the States, with millions of people running around in a total panic.)

The focus of spy games will revolve around the theft of information, the prevention of that theft. The characters might be asked to visit the Brazilian jungle to see if the rumors of a Ninja training camp being located there are true. They might be asked to travel to Berlin and steal the plans for the new German V3 rocket, or they might be hired to protect the Nomad Tank prototype from enemies. One of the most interesting and difficult missions can be the movement of a message through enemy territory without being seen, captured or surrendering the information. More missions that have plenty of action, but that require little thought and are low on suspense are the "Your mission is to blow up this bridge or kill this commander" missions.

Spy adventures need not involve grease paint and nocturnal raids. The glamour of international spy sagas, where wars can be won or lost on the gaming tables at Monte Carlo, are fun to play. Having to maintain a suave image while trying to think of a way to steal the Ambassador's attache case is a sure way to create tension in a mission. This is especially true when the mission is taking place in a hostile country where failure or escape can both be hard on an agent.

Tracking down a spy ring in the characters' home country can have both the problem of not undermining the confidence of the populace and the decision of whether or not to expose high officials who have been



discovered to be members of the other side. This latter twist is a moral dilemma that can force people to play in character, reacting in a way they may not act themselves. While many people could understand bribing an official to get something done, the character being played might be so exacting a law-and-order type that a bribe would never be seriously considered by him.

One last aspect of espionage adventures that make them very good for continuing campaigns is that the head spy rarely gets captured. If he does manage to get captured, you can be almost certain that he'll be traded for another captured spy. This means that the villain who has been thwarted by our heroes can plot revenge. And if he uses all of the information collected specifically about the characters, he should be able to devise a plot that will press the characters hard. If his plot is geared to their idiosyncracies, the characters will have to change their methods of action to escape.

As an example, suppose we know that one of the heroes has got an extreme fear of heights, and that he has exhibited this fear before, such that Baron von Hel would know about it. The Baron would set up a trap where the only avenue of escape was to climb up the dirigible mast on the building, during a raging thunderstorm for effect, to wait for an autogyro to arrive and lower a rope. The Baron might figure that the character will never dare to use this out, or the Baron might not even consider it an escape alley, given the fear of heights our hero has. The hero will have to tuck his fears away to escape, a hard thing to accomplish. But then, the ability to overcome obstacles that would daunt normal mortals is what sets heroes off from the rest of humanity.

ACTION

John Hawkstar wiped the sweat from his brow with the back of his hand. The insects were eating him alive, but he refused to notice them. The green jungle surrounding him had thinned ever so slightly, and he could feel the closeness of his goal. He knew they had brought Gloria and Tom Electric here, and he was afraid that even now he would be too late.

He tightened his aching right hand around the shaft of his machete and began slashing his way through the jungle again. The next hundred yards felt like miles, but upon their completion the first part of his mission ended. With the last slash of his machete the thick green growth of the jungle vanished and revealed it to him.

There, gleaming gloriously in the dying sunlight lay El Dorado, the City of Gold...

Action and adventure elements are very common in the pulps and are often responsible for the background of many of the pulp heroes. The Shadow gained his powers from natives in the Yucatan. Doc Savage was financed by Mayans in the republic of Hidalgo, and often led adventures of discovery to places where lost civilizations had lain dormant for centuries. Richard Benson owed part of his vast fortune to lost Incan gold; Robert E. Howard wrote many stories about heroes who discovered lost cities and Islamic strongholds in Afghanistan.

Action elements all seem to demand one aspect of the pulps in particular, that being an exotic setting. Very often the setting is unusual and spooky. It always seems to have some sort of incredibly valuable treasure that either is lost by the end of the story or goes on to finance some sort of good work.

The creation of such an exotic setting is actually not as difficult as it might seem. One technique, used by Edgar Rice Burroughs, Robert Howard, and other authors to great effect involves what I will refer to as "The Lost Valley Time Warp." The Lost Valley Time Warp traps a historical group of people in an inaccessible valley where they continue to live oblivious to the passage of the ages. Once modern technology becomes available, of course, the valley can be visited. Usually the first visitor is regarded as a god and therefore revered by the primitives.

Some examples probably will help make this idea clear. Imagine a valley in China where a thousand Mongol horsemen live and train waiting for their Khan to rise from the grave to lead them again. Imagine that the Assassins did not die out, but some fled to a valley on the Persian-Russian border and there they wait for a sign from Allah before they begin to work for him again. On an uncharted island in the

middle of the Atlantic a colony from Atlantis thrives waiting for the spaceship that is coming from the world on the other side of the sun from Earth.

Generally these lost valley people have one of two things useful to the person who has discovered them. Either they are loaded with treasure, the like of which has never been seen outside the valley, or they possess skills worth a great deal in the outside world. If they have treasure, the amount of it is staggering, and is often regarded as valueless by the natives. (For example, they use gold plates for every meal and jewels are used like poker chips in games of chance.)

If the treasure of the valley is in the people, their skills are awesome. Imagine the wealth inherent in a valley full of Ninjas or Assassins! The services of these people could be sold for millions to the right people. And this says nothing about the possibility of great scientific, medical, or magical discoveries made by the citizens of the valley.

The standard set up for getting adventurers into this type of scenario can come from two main directions. The Professor who has discovered this valley is corrupted by it and a family member/close friend tells the adventurers that they fear for the Professor's sanity. Of course the Professor will attempt to capture or kill anyone who knows about his discovery, including the characters.

The second way in is to have an assistant of the Professor become corrupted by the vast wealth and have him kidnap the Professor. Then the family member/close friend comes and asks the characters to find the Professor. From that point it proceeds as above. At times this assistant will actually be someone from the valley who has been tutored by the well meaning Professor, and who is out to use the wealth/skill of his people to further his plans of world domination or something equally as silly.

Things to look for in setting up these lost valley type adventures is the violation of taboos by the characters. Breaking unknown laws is a curve ball few characters can anticipate or hit. The breaking of some law often lands the characters in an arena where they must fight an animal or trained warrior to prove their innocence. Edgar Rice Burroughs used this little trick to great effect in most of his books, and it can provide excitement in the midst of a very sedate adventure.

...John Hawkstar stood before Queen Zenobia, entranced by her beauty. The Queen was perfect, her features delicately sculpted and unblemished. The gold of her coronet and breast cups set off the white of her skin and raven black of her long hair. The strips of leopard skin that formed her loincloth caressed her

long, tawny legs.

John looked up and locked eyes with her, and electric current passing through him as her icy green gaze touched his soul. John smiled and stepped up towards the throne. He took her hand and kissed it softly.

Vasco spun John about and backhanded him. "Dog, none may touch the Queen! For that you must undergo the Trial of the Feathered Serpent!"

The more sedate of the action adventure setting techniques involves using a setting that is exciting and not really well known. Uncharted islands where evil professors have set up experimental facilities are not uncommon. Chinatowns are touted as totally foreign and seem to be as good, for adventures, as traveling to China itself. Vast tracts of forests in the northwest can hide bases. An interesting site for adventures can be aboard a ship trapped in the ice near the North Pole, or even within the hollow Earth!

In these more mundane settings, the scenario can easily, and often does, revolve around the theft or recovery of an artifact of great value. This value, or course, is in the eye of the beholder, and often the person who holds it does not know its real worth. A Ming vase has obvious value in light of being an art object, and therefore will have a valued place in a London vase collection. However Wang Tse knows that the pattern painted on the vase is really a treasure map leading to the gravesite of a Chinese emperor who tried to prove that you can take it with you. To be sure, this is a mild reason for stealing the vase. Often the possession of an item will imbue the holder with incredible power, wisdom or arcane knowledge.

...Vasco grabbed the Mask of Quetzalcoatl and put it on. John Hawkstar pulled Queen Zenobia behind a pillar while Tom Electric and their new ally Set Stoner triggered a hail of bullets at the Spanish impostor. The ruby eyes of the Mask glowed, and a red curtain settled between Vasco and the gunfire. The bullets stopped when they hit the curtain, hanging in mid-air like darts stuck into a wall.

Vasco's form wavered as if he were underwater. His legs, spread shoulder-length apart, were drawn together. They twisted the fabric on them, shredding to reveal their transformation into a feathered serpent's body from the waist down. His shirt parted to reveal a more powerful torso, feathers sprouting colorfully to fletch his form.

"I am Quetzalcoatl. Oppose me and die!"

John rose. "You are evil, oppose you I must..."

The benefit of completing an action scenario where the vast wealth of the valley can be recovered comes when and if the owners of the treasure offer it to sponsor the heroes. While many groups of adventurers started out with such backing, the money was under the control, literally, of the author of the novels. Not many players could responsibly handle such vast

wealth, so the Gamemaster probably ought to appoint himself as the person charged with distribution of the money. It should be used for legitimate expenses, not extravagances. The purchase of new equipment should be authorized because it is really needed, not because it is "new" or something a character would like to own personally. Besides, any character who wants a new roadster can easily discover a way to make that roadster vital for a mission. Of course, it was also very classic to have the money covered with molten lava, disappear into a raging torrent, or other such plot device.

Another interesting way to use an action setting is to introduce new characters into the adventuring group. The Avenger picked up new aides throughout his first few adventures. Doc Savage's men obtained two pets and scads of equipment as spoils from adventures. A new player could become involved in an adventure as a victim or an official who is designated to work with the adventurers on their current case. Once that case is over the new character should be able to join the group through a process much more natural than "You see this guy down at the taxi stand and decide to take him adventuring with you."



HORROR AND OCCULT ADVENTURE

One of the most popular varieties of pulp fiction was the Horror story. In these tales of terror, one or more Innocents would stumble across some horrific mystery—sometimes supernatural, sometimes pretty pedestrian—and would be endangered by it. The good guys wouldn't necessarily always win, either. The tales of H.P. Lovecraft and his imitators are littered with dead or permanently insane narrator-protagonists.



Horror stories translate quite well into a Justice Inc. campaign. And there are all sorts of horror tales to keep the characters busy: tales with Lovecraftian oozing horrors with unpronounceable names and unviewable visages, or with a band of doughty heroes tirelessly working against an intelligent man-like horror (as in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*), or where a band of archaeologists blunder into the tomb of a still-moving mummy; the characters can investigate haunted

houses, discover that one of their friends has suffered the Curse of the Werewolf, work to corral the efforts of a mad slasher (who may or may not be entirely human), vacation on a Caribbean island where voodoo is the national pastime, encounter haunted ships and visit haunted castles, and otherwise meddle in the merry world of supernatural horror.

The Horror is Activated. The tomb is broken into, the stake is accidentally removed from the disinterred coffin, the meteor lands in the farmer's backyard, the long-closed house is reopened, the earthquake reopens the old mines, the crazed occult student reads *The Spell*, the maniac escapes. At this point in the adventure, the player-characters should probably not know that anything is really amiss. They might be the team that broke into the tomb—but so far as they know, it's only a tomb. A meteor lands—so what? Yes, there was an earthquake, thirty seconds or so of anxiety for the characters, but no real problem. Did you hear about the troubles over at Littleton Sanitarium?

Then, *The Horror Manifests Itself.* People—generally non-player characters with whom the player-characters have been interacting—tend to disappear, or die under really peculiar circumstances. The player-characters get a little suspicious. One of them is menaced, at least momentarily, by an unseen agent.

The Horror Gets Nastier. More heads roll. The player-characters probably are able to dig up details of its background: They decipher the Egyptian text, find the notes of the scientist who first found the meteor and later disappeared, get the telegram from the sole survivor of the last expedition into the Blackthorne Caverns, talk to the person who was the librarian in '02 when the Sharps-Castlebrook Murders occurred, etc.

The Pieces Come Together. The characters realize what it's all about. Generally, they're under some time pressure to thwart the Horror's overall plan. Here is where the real danger comes to the characters, as they must physically assault the werewolf, confront the oozing horror from the meteor's interior, set out a decoy for the mad slasher to attack, and otherwise bring the story to its conclusion. It's likely that some of the player-characters will be injured, perhaps even killed.

Obviously, then, the first thing you want to do when

creating a horror adventure is to decide what the Horror is. Since it's probably paranormal, you'll want to utilize the sections on Weird Talents, and Psychic Powers from this rulebook. If it's really odd or nasty—such as a giant (i.e., 50') tarantula, or a genuine wizard, or an ancient and powerful vampire—you may wish to use the Powers rules from *Champions* to more accurately reflect its abilities.

You must choose the setting for your horror episode. This is generally pretty easy. A mummy story usually starts in the tomb in Egypt and gravitates toward the U.S. or U.K. homes of the offending archaeologists. The meteor usually lands in a small town in Ohio, though it can vary throughout the Midwest, with occasional stops in New England, California, and the British Isles. A haunted house is the setting itself. You can be a trifle different, though. The horror film *Curse of the Undead* innovatively set a fairly normal vampire story in the Old West, and the juxtaposition somehow worked; sometimes setting a terror tale in an inappropriate setting will make it all the more interesting and effective.

And your choice of the cast of characters is simple: that's the player-characters. Generally, it's not a good idea to include a character who's totally wrong for a horror adventure, but few characters are really wrong. Detectives, reporters, scientists, psychic investigators, researchers, and archaeologists are slightly more at home, but practically anyone will be in trouble when the purple ooze starts slithering into the room.

Atmosphere is an important consideration in the horror story. First off, most of the really horrible stuff occurs in the dark, preferably at night. (Werewolves look nasty at night. They can look silly at high noon.) There are some other atmospheric tricks you can play to heighten mood: unnatural fogs, thunderstorms (especially good for haunted houses), cold spots in buildings, the half-seen shape viewed through the window, crickets suddenly stopping their chirping, the sound of a twig breaking just beyond the edge of the trees, candles blowing out, howling at night, animals and insects behaving unnaturally, eyes off in the darkness, windows being blown open at inopportune moments, etc. The characters must be generally pretty nervous throughout the adventure.

There are, unfortunately, some tricks performed in horror movies and stories that will avail you little. Soundtracks are a good example: You can't really heighten mood with ominous theme music as the critter is stalking the victim; you have to make the moment horrifying on your own. The movie and story convention of focusing on the first victim will not do you any good, for the player-characters won't be seeing this (only the "audience" would, and there is none beyond the players). Nor can you rely on ominous opening credits to set the mood—you have to do it all yourself. But if you're game mastering for a crew of players who are as interested in the horror genre as you are, then it won't be too difficult.



DETECTIVE AND MYSTERY ADVENTURE

John Hawkstar knitted his brows with concentration as he studied the newspaper clutched in the dead man's hands. It was open to the sports page. In the last moments of the life that had been ended violently with a knife in the back, the victim had laboriously circled four numbers from batting averages and had underlined the Pennsylvania designation on the byline of a sports report.

"I can't figure it, John. Why would he write on the sports page when he could have written the name of his attacker?" Tom Electric's expression was one of puzzlement.

"The killer was still in the room and could have checked what the man was doing. Still we have our clue." John wrote in his notebook. "All we have to do is find the place that belongs to the phone number Pennsylvania 5721..."

Creating a mystery is not as difficult as it might seem. Literally any adventure where the players don't know all of the facts is a mystery. The adventure must be played out with an eye towards discovering the clues that will shed light upon the mystery. Mystery adventures are often the most rewarding, because they provide something more than just mindless violence to sustain the game.

Each mystery should be set up with an eye towards the following questions: Who, What, Why, When, Where, and How. It's very important for the GM to know the answers to all of these questions ahead of time, so that clues are not hastily constructed or given out too freely. No one will have any fun in a game where the GM describes a great mystery, solves it in the description, then asks the characters to run out and grab the guy who did it.

Most mysteries revolve around some sort of a gimmick, a neat and nifty new device that can kill from long range, or something else easily as strange. In the pulps these devices take on pseudo-scientific principles and become a technological menace wielded freely by a madman like the Green Spectre. Discovering what the device really does, and a way to prevent it from destroying our heroes, is a mystery that can easily be included in every campaign.

If you decide to use a series of crimes to construct a mystery, be sure to put some sort of pattern into the crime spree. The killer hates the women he has kidnapped because they all have red hair and are named Gladys. If you want to be very nasty you could have a string of crimes that have no connection visible. In

this case the criminal is either using a mad spree to hide a reason for one of the crimes or the connection is very deep and hidden.

"But John, this string of killings is obviously the spree of some insane knife wielder." The Chief of Police, at wits' end with the Bowery murders, clung to this one conviction like a drowning man clutching at a piece of flotsam.

"So it would seem, Chief, so it would seem. Still we have two drunks being murdered, then Judge Erwin Boggs, who just happens to be tipsy from a snort in a ginmill, then two more drunks. The only connection is that they were all in the area and a bit drunk. But the murder of the Judge resulted in Judge Brown being put on the 'Bugs' Feeny trial, and the murders stop just when Feeny is let off. I think there is more here than meets the eye." John's eyes narrow as he wonders what sort of person could kill four harmless derelicts just to cover the murder of one honest judge...

Mysteries do need to have some sort of a final outcome where the characters know whether or not they were correct. In the above tale, Bugs could tell John Hawkstar a "mythical" tale about a murderer who covered his tracks by placing more tracks out to confuse things. This would confirm John's suspicions and force him to lay some sort of trap for the killer and his boss. Similar outcomes can be handled simply by having the killer confess when captured.

Oddly enough, studies of criminals comparing men and women have yielded two facts that might be worked into a mystery. First, women are more likely to be cold blooded and calculating about their killings. Secondly, when men are presented with overwhelming evidence of their guilt they confess. The same is not true of women.

Do remember that in the era of the pulps crimes like kidnapping, murder, and treason carried the death penalty. Also remember that while the FBI could not get enough evidence to send Al Capone to prison, the IRS put him away for tax evasion. In many cases the illegal records of ill-gotten profits are more valuable than the murder weapon.

Mysteries are likely to be the most difficult aspect to add to an adventure. Keep the first mysteries you try simple, difficult to mess up. As you learn how to handle them you will discover the ease with which you can weave them into all sorts of adventures.

SPICY STORIES

Spicy stories, as some might guess from the title, were stories that contained spicy, or sexual, material in them. Originally these pulps were sold under the counter and by today's standards they seem very tame. Literally, there is more sex in a modern romance than there is in these stories.

The usual plotline runs like this. Horrible scientist needs beautiful woman to mate with experimental man he has created. He captures girl, removes most of her clothing, usually sparing threads of flowered panties for modesty's sake. At this point he may decide she is not right for him or his creature, hence he seals her in wax and finds a new victim, and our virile male hero pops in, kills the monster and the doctor, and gets the girl for himself.

Again, pretty tame stuff to us nowadays. Still this does point up the fact that nice girls did not hop into the sack with every Tom, Dick, and Harry in those days. Women wore hats, gloves, and dresses that might show off a well-turned ankle or calf, but never a knee. Pictures of naked women could only be found in that packet of postcards Uncle Fred brought back from France during WWI or on the calendar hidden behind the door at the local filling station.

Use of sex and descriptions to excite players or to spur them into action is quite effective.

...While John talked with King Kolani about the other white men on the island, Tom Electric decided to go for a walk beneath the full moon. He did not pay attention to where he was going and he soon found himself near the lagoon at the base of Devil Falls. He heard the lilting laughter of female voices and crept through the brush to watch without disturbing them.

He recognized the young women of the village and knew, in good conscience, he should leave, but he could not. Clad only in the moonlight they were running along the beach and diving into the lagoon. Their deeply tanned flesh took on a silver hue from moonlight that caressed them softly like a lover's hands. Tom swallowed hard and got up to leave, hating himself for doing what he knew he was honor-bound to do.

As he turned one of the women screamed. From the middle of the lake rose up a humanoid beast with a single eye that took up its whole face. Tom's .455 Webley was in his hand and he triggered one shot straight into the face of the monster just as two more frogmen surfaced beside the first.

"To the village, I'll hold them off!" Tom knew the battle was lost as the speargun one held was triggered, and the spear flew at his chest...

Most male characters will be suckers for saving the naked sacrifice on the altar, especially if she has batted her eyes at one or more of them during the adventure. Kidnapped daughters and fiancées have begun many adventures.



SCIENCE FICTION

Most of the pulps either had strong elements of science fiction in them or were straight science fiction. Their brand of SF, however, is different from the stuff you will get running under that designation today. While SF now really concerns itself with the accuracy of the principles dealt with in the stories, the same cannot be said of the authors in the pulps.

As readers and children of the atomic age we must remember that we have grown up under the shadow of the weapon that can destroy the world. The writers of the pulps could only dream of such a weapon. We have seen the surface of Mars, Venus, and the moon; they could only guess at what was there. We know that there are no cabbage headed natives of Venus and no tall, green, four-armed natives of Mars, but the authors of that day were without such scientific reports.

This is a very important point because things that we take for granted were not around then. Radar, for example, was Top Secret during World War II. For an individual to know of it or own a set was unheard of, unless that person was a pulp hero like Doc Savage. Wireless radios were huge, heavy, and not easy to transport. Any WWII movie will show one man with a field telephone large enough to hide forty walkie-talkies dogging the steps of his commanding officer. This was well before the days of transistors and, heaven help us, microchips, boys and girls.

And television? Forget it, people would believe that the Dodgers would move to the West Coast before they'd believe in television.

This brings up the point that players are going to have to suspend their disbelief. While the player may know that there is no way for the Green Spectre to have a device that will propel him backwards in time by redirecting a lightbeam so it runs counterclockwise, the characters will not. We might realize that there can be no gun that shoots bullets of concentrated light or sound, but the characters would not. We may know that there is no way to make something invisible, but a pulp villain might still have such a device, and it would work.

This suspension of disbelief may be one of the hardest things to deal with in a pulp campaign. Granted the Green Spectre would need an organization the size of the US Army to cover every route from John Hawkstar's office to the airport, but in a pulp magazine he could do it. The device that uses soundwaves to take over the minds of bank presidents might not realistically function, but in a pulp setting it would function. This is simply the nature of scientific knowledge in the pulps, and an authentic pulp campaign will feature it.

There is an easy solution to the disbelief problem. If you have a device that controls minds through sound, our heroes should be able to detect it because fine crystal in the chandelier quakes and shatters in an office where the device is used. Once they determine how the device is operated, a GM should allow the characters to wear earplugs, or the device has to carefully be tuned to each person so it can only affect one of them at a time. There has to be some logical solution, some way out that works within the limits of the science that you're using and that the characters will understand.

In campaigns that have a broader science fiction theme much of the disbelief problem gets eclipsed by the fantastic nature of the adventure. Who would believe the story of two men tunneling to the Earth's Core and discovering a lost world with the splendor and danger of prehistoric earth? In such a mad world anything goes. The old "We've been kidnapped by aliens" scenario easily bats things into a cocked hat as our heroes quickly learn that all of their science is nonsense...

...The alien was taller than John and colored a revolting shade of purple-green. The livid red veins that danced beneath his thin skin clearly pumped life into the huge brain that was supported by an unbelievably skinny neck. His voice, cawing out broken English, sounded like fingernails being drawn across a chalkboard. "Hawkstar, we have learned that you, alone, can save our princess from her captors. Only you are pure enough of soul and quick enough of mind to master the Solar Blade that is to be entrusted to the one who will free her."

The Alien hit a button on the wall with one of his three taloned fingers and a panel slid skyward. Another alien was standing there bearing a wickedly barbed crystal sword. John instantly felt drawn to it, and it pulsed with life in rhythm to his heartbeat.

"If I am the one to save her, why did you kidnap Tom?" Hawkstar pointed to the body of his aide.

"I believe, Hawkstar, your word for it is insurance..."

Of course John will learn that his life force powers the sword, and that he can project his life force through it. He will use this projection ability to open a power door or to keep a space ship flying during the tale.

The nicest thing about playing with a pulp SF campaign is that you can forget science. Sure there's no sound in the vacuum of space, but all dogfighting spacefighters have to make some sort of a whine as

they go through a savage power turn. And what turbo-laser worth anything in a fight doesn't go SSSSSHHH-KOW! whenever it fires? Who cares if swords are dumb in spacefights, they're fun!

Any science fiction story that starts in the '20s or '30s is perfectly appropriate for a *Justice Inc.* campaign. The GM may have to write up a ray pistol or two (using the Gadget rules), and perhaps a spaceship (as in *Vehicle Combat*), but that shouldn't be too difficult. The classic adventures include *Flash Gordon*, *Buck Rogers*, *Rocket Man*, *Zombies of the Stratosphere*, and others. Alien invasion scenarios work quite well, as do the adventures where the hero

ends up on another world. Much of Edgar Rice Burrough's fiction deals with this concept, including the classic *John Carter of Mars* stories, the *Carson of Venus* series, and *Beyond the Farthest Star*.

Whatever science fiction you interject into your games, do keep one thing in mind. The SF tales from the pulps were meant to entertain, not educate. Don't fall into the trap of trying to prove how much more intelligent than your players you are by introducing them to a new concept of science. Present them with a problem to be solved, whether it is how to stop a madman with an ultraweapon or how to survive beneath the twin moons of Mars.

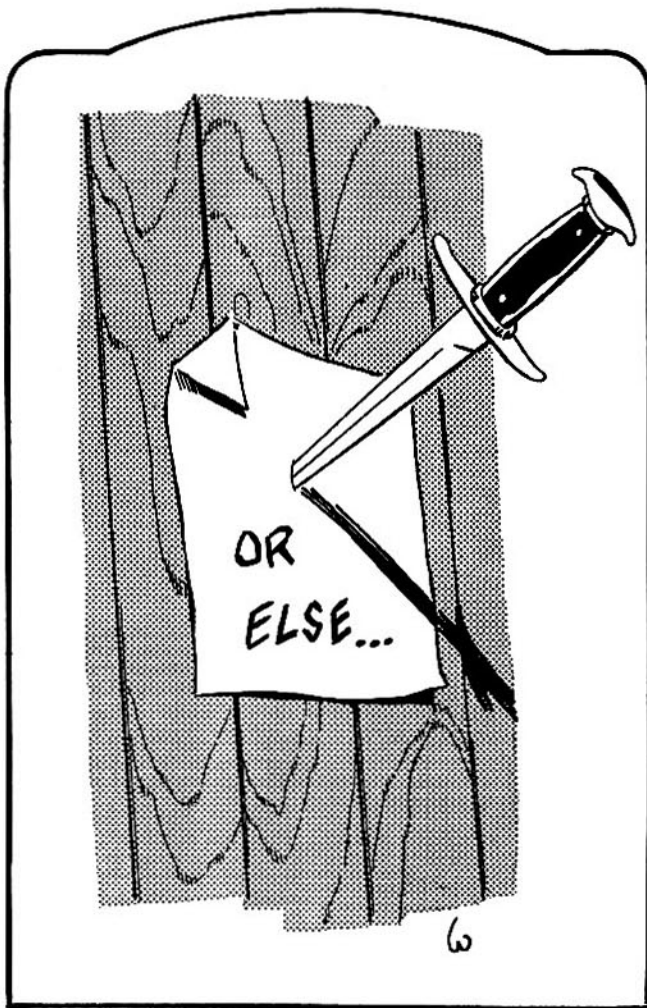
WESTERN ADVENTURES

Westerns have a painfully simple formula that has successfully been told time and again to the enjoyment of readers everywhere. The classic western deals with a good cowboy, a beautiful frontier girl who is going to fall for the cowboy, and some evil individual who gets between the two of them. Lightly spice this mixture with cattle rustling, a stage robbery, an Indian attack, and at least one gunfight for a very palatable dish. Stampedes, dust storms, and sheep are optional and can often provide an interesting side meal.

Westerns are often best if done as action pieces. A plot that has seen a great deal of action is that of a bandit group that often raids a certain village. One or more cowboys come in to safeguard the village. At least one cowboy falls in love with a beautiful girl and the leader of the bandits has marked her out as his own. Not only do you get a lot of action in the fight where the bandits will attempt to take the village, but there can be a great fight between the cowboy and the bandit leader over the woman.

Westerns are really a genre in and of themselves, but the loose society governed by a fast draw and a man high in the saddle is repeated in a number of areas around the world. Australia, the Middle East, and Mexico all have places during this era where a gun and the ability to shoot straight could carve a man a kingdom of his very own.

Westerns are also easy to infect with elements of fantasy and horror. The *Tombstone Epitaph* actually reports a Pterodactyl being shot down in Arizona along about 1890. Indian legends and lost cities of gold from the Aztecs should provide enough elements of the strange to suit anyone.



PLOTTING AND PREPARATION

The plotting and preparation of an adventure really does require the GM to take care to insure that all of the elements to be introduced in the adventure have been firmed up enough to be of use. The degree of documentation you will need for an adventure will depend upon your style of gaming. I tend towards keeping things fluid, a few notes on a piece of paper along with five or six prototype characters tend to be enough for me. If I need a battle map I hastily create it and place it before the players. This works fine as long as the details of the adventure do not overwhelm me.

The easiest way to create an adventure is to follow these steps:

Define and outline the plot of the adventure. This can be as simple as stating "The Nazi agent is going to steal the plans for the new bomb sight" to a more detailed description that would talk about all of his preparation, weapons and sources of information. This section of the plot description would be kept simple, yet the goal of the adventure should be made plain. The goal of the above adventure would be to stop the theft or to recover the bomb sight. If the GM was to say, at this point, that there was only one way to accomplish the goal, he would limit the adventure; he'd be constantly running into problems with what the characters are doing instead of what he thinks they are "supposed" to do.

In running an adventure you will discover that many of your clues go unnoticed and unpursued. This can become frustrating if the characters stumble on blindly without gathering up the information that can help them survive. The logical reward for such stupidity is disaster, yet killing characters just because they didn't think an empty dog dish was significant is a bit drastic. Instead, the better solution is to think of another way to supply them the information they should have gotten so they don't do something hideously stupid.

One way to prevent terminally dumb action is a technique that does step outside the bounds of the game, but it does the job. I often find myself repeating the order given in the form of this question: "Let me see, are you saying that you'll charge that machinegun nest stark naked while singing at the top of your lungs?" Given a chance to reconsider, most characters won't do something that stupid.

Once you've provided yourself with a general outline of what you want to have happen in the adventure, take time to write up a paragraph defining all of the non-player characters you're going to use. This doesn't mean you need to create doormen, hack drivers, and barkeepers—they're easy to play off the cuff—but you should note how each character fits into the scheme of things. Your definition will make the character easy to play and simple to interact with. Play within the personality of the character you're using at the moment, covering where he would cover and talking where he'd split his guts. That really is the key to role-playing and it makes the game more fun.

Write down the clues that are likely to be found. For example if your killer in a murder mystery always uses a .45 Colt Auto, note that he will not kill by any other means. I was running an adventure where I had set my killer up to use a .455 Webley Fosbury auto revolver for a specific purpose and that meant that I could not blow up one of the victims even though it would have been easy.

Lastly, try to provide something new and interesting in each adventure. Having the characters fight on a narrow bridge over a deep gorge or facing them with a robot that is bulletproof can supply some new thrills. Forcing characters to act in newer ways and manners than they are used to really helps role-playing. Suppose one person is playing a character who loves children and would never think of hurting one. Make the villain a child who is brilliant and evil. What can a hero do when he knows the only way to save his beloved is to wade through a river full of piranha? Such moral dilemmas can force definition and action from a character that will make the adventure exciting for everyone involved.

Pull no punches. Don't hand the adventure to the characters. Keep the pressure on them, without killing them, and you'll create an adventure that will feel like an adventure and will excite everyone.

Everyone knows that every Gamemaster can kill all of the characters in an adventure at will. Since that is given, the trick of a good adventure is to make the characters think that death is right around the corner. Only by rushing out and meeting it head on, or ambushing it by smarts and stealth, is there any chance of survival. Force the characters to act, and allow your villains to react logically and realistically.

No bad guy, except a man who has lost his mind, will rush into the enemy headquarters with a squirtgun to try and kill everyone. The idea that all thugs are mindless and want to rush into death is silly; allow your villains to exercise the instinct for survival if nothing else. Now if their master would treat them worse for failing than the heroes would treat them in an attack, well, that's another matter entirely. Allow your thugs to feign unconsciousness. Have them surrender only to try and escape or fight later. Have them break down and offer incorrect information—information fed to them because they are weak or information given by them to the heroes to lead them into a trap. (Everyone knows that the good guys are really lousy at torture anyway.)

Refusing to pull punches forces the characters to earn their victories. Certainly they should be allowed chances to have retained a lockpick, especially if their captors were sloppy in a search. Allow your guard to be talked into a stupid trap if the guard is stupid, and have him set the prisoners up if he is smart. Not only should the characters play it smart, so should the NPCs.

Characters are incredibly shoddy during an adventure. Assume there is a character who always goes to the Empire Club every Thursday at 4. If that character is to be captured, use his routine against him. If a character has a weakness for blondes, give him a bombshell he'll remember. If a character has a well known phobia, use that to trap him, or kidnap someone dear to him and keep him at bay with threats against the hostage.

Play evil villains as evil villains...

Be fair. This harkens back to previous discussions where the idea of acting within the persona of an NPC may force the GM to forget he knows everything. Just because the GM knows that the character did not come to this meeting unarmed, the NPC might not know that, and certainly wouldn't be able to react to information he doesn't have. Don't let the fact that a brilliant guess on the part of a player, a deduction that comes from incorrect information, may unravel your whole plot affect your play. It will always happen, and the only thing a good GM will do is to try and do better next time.

There is a tale about a GM who took five days to construct a missile silo/base. He had provided great NPCs, plots that could embroil the whole complex in a battle, and internal defenses that would challenge the characters on the adventure to their utmost.

The characters were to destroy the missile and the base. They found the elevator that ran up and down throughout the complex, placed a bomb on the top of it and sent it to the lowest level they could. Once the bomb was there they detonated it. It exploded, ignited the missile and it's fuel and destroyed the base in half an hour of play...

The point is that your game, your adventure, might fall just that quickly. It isn't fair to have a half dozen air cars come whipping out of the ruins and attack the characters. There will always be other chances.

In summing up, carefully list the facts and plot as you see it. Be prepared to be flexible and play within characters' personalities. Lastly, be fair.

And remember, revenge is a dish best served cold.

LONG TERM CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

One of the objects of any role playing game, besides having fun running through adventures, is to develop characters. In much the same way that some people are changed by, or able to grow through experiences, characters should be allowed to grow. This is often the most difficult part of a game for players to catch onto and enjoy.

Every player should have a concept for his character when he begins playing. Simple background items, favorite colors or foods, phobias, and peevs can define a character and make playing that character more fun. It helps provide motivation for the

characters and sometimes forces your hand before the player would act.

In a '30s campaign I was playing a very strong, very hardy, and not so bright boxer who was out searching for the kidnapped family of a Professor, including the Professor's 5-year-old daughter. Robin, the boxer, loves children and when the child was found he saw that she had been beaten. Despite the fact Robin knew the villain was armed with a pistol, nothing was going to stop him from hurting the man. As Robin broke through the door of the room where the villain was, the villain shot him. Another adventurer shot

and almost killed the villain, but this still did not stop Robin. He woke the villain up and deliberately broke the man's trigger finger.

Of course this incident has affected Robin. It has not lessened or increased his love for children, but his hatred and desire to further hurt the villain has been honed to a razor edge. Since the villain is a member of the underworld in our campaign the chances that Robin might meet him are good. Robin's reactions, as the result of such a meeting, might not be the best for the current adventure, but certainly will be within character.

Playing "in character" can create further problems. I was playing in a campaign where the character I was using ran up against a horrible monster. Karban had never been beaten in a fight in his whole entire life—nothing had been tougher than he was. The monster, alas, was tougher and would kill him two combat rounds before he would be able to kill it. I was placed in quite a quandary. While I knew Karban would never retreat, I wanted him out of there. He was going to die! In this case Karban's personality won out, and through a strange series of machinations managed to survive. He still has not met something tougher than himself.

But what if I had retreated him against his will? If that had happened I would have been obliged to make a change in Karban. No longer would he be his cocksure self. A little of the fearless glint in his eyes would be gone, some of the swagger would be gone from his step. He might become terrified of any

creature that looked like the one that had driven him off. And, almost without a doubt, he would refuse all missions similar to that one.

A great deal of this might seem like adding doses of soap opera to role-playing games, but this is the stuff that can literally bring a character to life and keep him from becoming just another piece of paper with scribbles on it. You'll know that you are headed in the right direction when you find yourself thinking or saying, "Well, I wouldn't do this, but John Hawkstar would..." Getting used to thinking in the same terms as your character can make a big difference, and can be great fun.

Here's some of the factors to keep in mind for working in changes in characters. Has the character badly beaten up or been badly beaten up by a particular type of foe? Is the character healing up from a wound that makes him doubt abilities he once had? Has the character had a recent bad experience or brush with death that might make him afraid of riding in/on a horse, plane, blimp, etc.? Has the character been feted as a hero, something that might make him proud or cocky? Has the character got a mortal enemy, a friend in jeopardy, or a pet gripe that the scenario centers around? These, and other things far too numerous to catalog here can help provide long term or even scenario adjustments in the character of a character. The beating of the child changed Robin from his normal gentle nature into something just this side of human. Since that time Robin has been fine, though if the villain ever appears again, look out...

PLAYER NOTES

We've written a lot of advice to the GM so that he can run a better game. This section is a collection of advice to *Justice Inc.* players. Role-playing may be a new concept to many players, especially in this time period, and some advice may be helpful. These are some of the things we've found that players can do to make *Justice Inc.* an exciting and different game.

Justice Inc. is constructed so that it's quite easy to severely wound and kill someone that you're holding at gunpoint. While it may be easy to kill someone when you've got the drop on him, it's often not the wisest course. *Think* before you pull the trigger.

Don't shoot; he may be worth more alive than he is dead. A captured enemy is worth volumes in enemy plans, recognition of enemy figures, details of enemy operations, enemy contacts, etc. A dead body is worth nothing, except as fertilizer.

Besides, murder is a crime. There'll be police in-

vestigations, official inquiries, press coverage, maybe some jail time; you might even get sent up for a long stretch. What a mess.

On the other hand, if you'd just knocked the guy on the head and tied him up, he would have been out of your hair for at least a few hours. Or you could turn him over to the cops, in damaged but usable condition. If he really is a bad guy, he's not going to press charges on you. The police will be happy to put him away.

Ask questions first; shoot later. If you've pulled out a gun, that means you've run out of options. Any idiot can shoot somebody. It takes real skill and brains to resolve a situation without gunplay.

When somebody's holding you at gunpoint, don't do something foolish like trying to punch him. *Justice Inc.* is designed so that you'll get badly hurt if you try a dumb trick like that. Wait. Find out what the guy

wants. He may just want to talk. Maybe he's capturing you. That's great! He'll take you straight to where the bad guy is, and you won't even have to be a great detective to find the bad guy.

Well, okay, maybe the guy does want to kill you. Try to distract him before you jump him. If you can get him to look away, he loses his DCV, and he loses the advantage of having his eyes on you. If he's looking at you, your higher DEX won't help; the bad guy will shoot first. But if you can distract him, you have the chance to act before he does, and possibly disarm him with a swift kick.

When people are shooting at you, take cover! Let the other guy stand out in the open and get shot. Keep cool and stay behind a rock; you'll live longer.

Work as a team. Use your Skills and the Skills of your companions as much as you can. Ask lots of questions; *Justice Inc.* is a game of information. Plan ahead; don't wait for things to happen to you, take action! Think about suckering the enemy into a trap, instead of falling into his. Have contingencies ready. A diversion, a secret signal to a friend, an alternate meeting place, can all save your life. Be indirect; use the back door. Be sneaky, creative, devious, and subtle; this will make things more fun for you and the other players.

Promote the atmosphere of *Justice Inc.* by using the slang associated with the time period; that's why we provided the dictionary. Act out your roles. Pass notes when you want to leave messages for someone. Put some theme music on the stereo. Make the game come alive.

When you don't know where to start, find someone who does. Ask lots of questions. Go the library and look through old newspapers. If you're being followed by somebody, get the drop on him and find out who he is. Better still, trail him back to his boss.

Find things out. If no one knows what's going on, find someone on the spot who does. Use Streetwise, Bribery, Culture, Conversation, Perception, Interrogation and any other Skill you can think of to get information. If everyone is close mouthed, take the offensive. Put yourself in the middle of a situation, and act like you know what you're doing. It may put you in danger, but it will almost always get you information.

And finally, play it cool. Don't panic, look for a way out. There will be a way out right up till the last moment. If you can keep your head on, and look for the weak points of the other guy's plan, while covering the weak spots in your own, you will survive. If you survive, you've won.

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RECOMMENDED READING

Everything in the Bibliography list, plus:

The Adventure of the Peerless Peer, by Philip Jose Farmer, Dell Publishing Company, 1976. Sherlock Holmes and Tarzan romp through a poorly-executed adventure which nevertheless has an enormous number of pulp in-jokes and cameos.

At The Earth's Core, and other adventures in the Pelucidar series, by Edgar Rice Burroughs, Nelson Doubleday Inc. Ace books editions also available. Hero David Innes explores through a Hollow Earth populated by cavemen and creatures from the Mesozoic eras.

At the Mountains of Madness, by H.P. Lovecraft, Del Rey, 1982. These and other tales by Lovecraft set the standard for horror stories in the 1930s.

Hell House, by Richard Matheson, Bantam Books, 1972. Though published long after the demise of the pulps, this stands as one of the best haunted-house novels ever written.

The Incredible Adventures of Dennis Dorgan, by Robert E. Howard, Zebra Books, 1975. Best known for fantasy heroes such as Conan the Cimmerian and

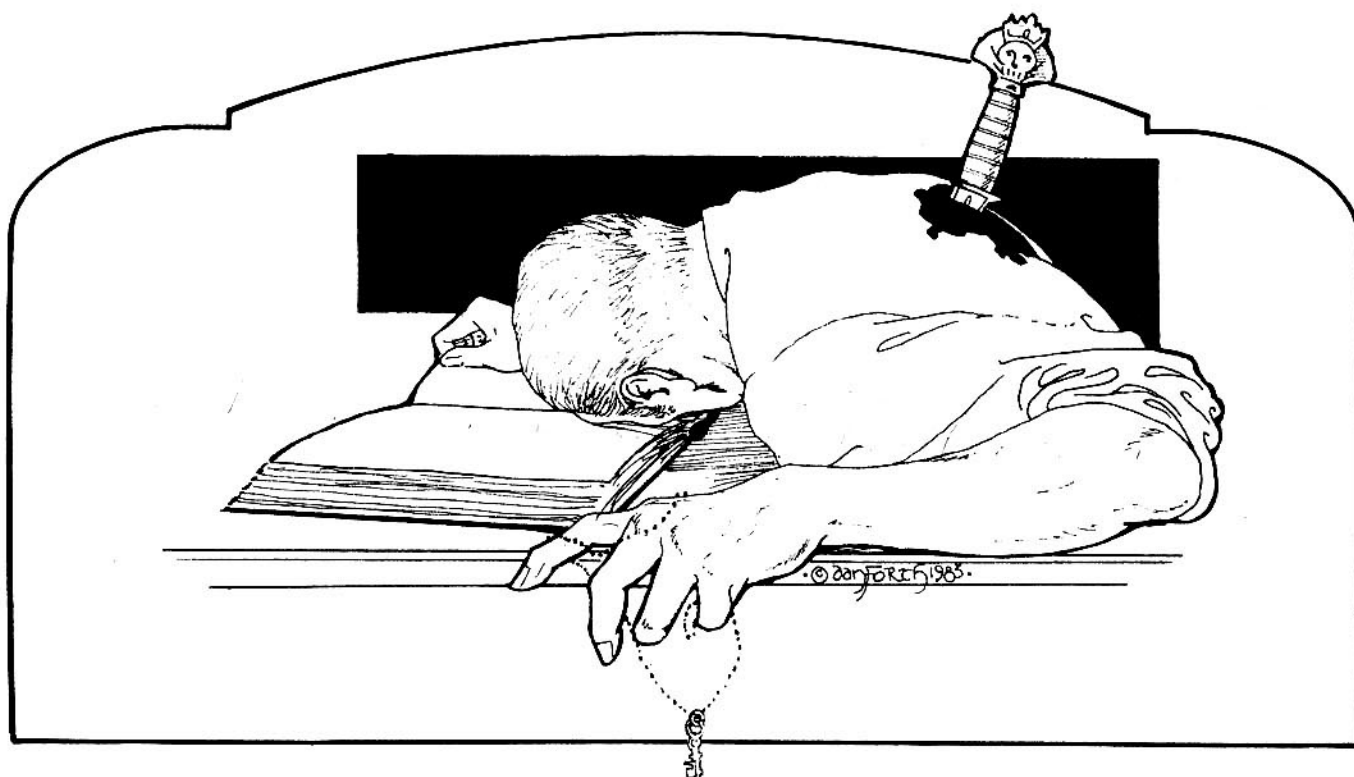
King Kull of Valusia, Howard still turned out a goodly number of more contemporary tales; the Dennis Dorgan stories recount the amusing adventures of a seaman/boxer in the Orient of the 1930s.

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The Lost World, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Looking Glass Library, 1959. Professor George Challenger and companions discover and explore Maple White Land, a South American plateau where dinosaurs still live.

The Nemesis of Evil, by Lin Carter, Popular Library, 1978. This and other novels in the Prince Zarkon series, written in the 1970s, are affectionate tributes to the pulp-hero tales.

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SOURCEBOOK



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section of *Justice Inc.* is to give you some background on the period from 1919 to 1939. After all, most of you probably weren't alive then; even those of you that were probably have only fuzzy memories of the time. Giving *Justice Inc.* the right "feel" requires some knowledge of the times. The more the GM and the players know about the time period, the more interesting and exciting the game will be.

Before we go on to the compendium of facts and figures, you should know that we've done an incomplete job. There were so many things happening in that turbulent twenty year period that it would take a book far larger than this to do it justice. This sourcebook can only serve as an introduction to the time period. Doing some reading on your own will help your feeling for the Twenties and Thirties enormously. The fiction of the time, especially (of course) the pulp stories, is a good way to really *understand* how people felt and acted then. The Bibliography given contains many stories and novels as well as history texts; read some of them.

No collection of facts alone can provide you with the "feel" for this era. None of the designers of this game were born during the era, and certainly none of us grew up in it. The world most of us have lived in has had television, a strong press, and a government that usually takes on an adversary role in the minds of many. We see different parts of the world every night

on the news, and have methods for gathering information that were not even dreamed of during the era we are covering. It was a different world that functioned on different laws.

It would be a mistake to say that life was simpler then, because life is never simple. Still, there were value systems that made choices easier in some cases. Men, if they were well mannered, would open doors for women, they would walk down the street with their body between the woman and the street, and they would seat a woman at the table. In this day and age of equality these customs are now considered in bad taste by some, but then it was the order of the day for the "right" folks.

On the other hand, "good" women dressed modestly with skirts that sank below the knee. Hats were in fashion for both men and women. Church often was a weekly function that demanded the best in dress and full attendance. Bad boys disobeyed their parents, swore, and played pool. No one spoke about the man down the street that often took more drink than was good for him.

All of these customs, that have faded from popularity with equal rights and the adjustments of morality, are part and parcel of the feel of this era. It was an era that we could categorize as one of innocence, yet this would not be wholly accurate. To call a generation of Americans innocent would not do them justice, and in this day and age would make them seem stupid. They did not grow up in an era of cynicism as we did.

Their lack of disbelief, their trust and openness is not a sign of weakness as some might take it. They were much like folks who never have had a disease. As long as the disease doesn't show up, they aren't concerned about it. They hadn't been given reason to assume that the hobo at the back door wanted to break into their house, to slay them in some ritual manner. They hadn't yet come to distrust someone who wanted to sell them a bridge in New York, and they were willing to believe that they might be able to buy part of the fabulous Drake treasure because the man who told them about it hadn't lied to them before. Hitchhikers didn't kidnap folks and murder them. The drifter who offered to chop wood for a meal did chop the wood. The man who borrowed money did repay it when he said he would.

This is not to say that there weren't bad men and women in the world at that time, because there were. Al Capone, Babyface Nelson, Pretty Boy Floyd and John Dillinger are four familiar names that have passed into American folklore, and they were bad men. Everyone knew they were bad, and the distinction



Charles A. Lindbergh

between good and evil, right and wrong, legal and illegal had not yet begun to blur. It would be foolish to assert that the blurring occurred during the 1960s alone, but deciding if a draft evader is evil while doing something illegal is a fine example of the trouble we face today. A trouble they did not face then.

The Pulp era had its heroes as well as its villains. Charles Lindbergh was famous for his flight from the US to France all alone. The papers were so fascinated they even noted that he only ate one and a half of his five sandwiches during the flight. Robert Byrd flying over the North and South Poles was another hero. He and Lindbergh, along with the President, were called upon to comment about a Frenchman making a flight from Paris to New York. Imagine it, two aviators being asked to comment along with the President.

The era also had injustice. In Lindbergh's name Bruno Hauptmann was tried and convicted of a crime he probably did not commit. Bruno was unlucky enough to be chosen as the person guilty of the Lindbergh baby murder/kidnapping. He was not alone; this was the era that imprisoned Japanese Americans on the West coast after Pearl Harbor. And as for civil rights in the South, well, the Klan rode high in those days.

Today we'd be horrified at such treatment of individuals, and with good cause. Back then they were not horrified, and also with good cause. They hadn't yet had reason to doubt that they, and America, might be wrong. We cannot forget that the idea that America was destined to lead the world was not held in ridicule as it is today.

America was, and often still is, the land of opportunity to many in and outside her. The people of this era knew they could succeed, that son could be better than father, and that being a millionaire was not that absurd. And while something might make America stumble, nothing could make her fall. One of those stumbling blocks was the Great Depression.

The stock market crash of 1929 was caused by poor money management and enthusiastic investment. The economy was going along like a car whose owner forsook oil in the engine to save the money for gas. Many people bought stock on margin, or a percentage of its true value, hoping to sell it later and recover the money to buy the stock and make a profit. Everyone was getting into the act, and much stock was sold, at high prices, without any real money to prop the price up. And like the engine above, when it ran out of oil, the stock market ground to a halt.

Suddenly, very rich people found themselves penniless. Banks that had loaned money themselves, or which had assets tied up in artificially high stocks, closed. Every saver who had money in the bank lost his savings. The FDIC and FSLIC were set up just to prevent this from happening again. Businesses failed, jobs were lost, and everyone was broke.

So much for the American dream, eh?

Not by a long shot. Americans pulled together, helping each other out in a manner that we have not, regrettably, seen since. The Government provided

Greta Garbo



jobs for people and the first steps on the road to recovery were taken. It was a long road, and only a war ten years in the future would pave the final miles to recovery, but it was a way out none the less.

On that long road pulps helped to provide hope and escape. For a dime or fifteen cents anyone could read of faraway places, terrible horrors lurking around the corner, or heroes sent out to battle the forces of evil. Compared to the monsters in the pulps a little hunger wasn't so much. And with Doc Savage or the Shadow out there destroying the evil-doers who want to make things worse, could prosperity be far away? We'll just have to buy the next issue to find out.

One last factor that started this era off, and has gained a strong link with it, was Prohibition. Prohibition was described as the nastiest trick America could play on the boys returning from France after The Great War. Oddly, it wasn't illegal to drink liquor, or to own it during this period. It was only illegal to sell it, and that's where a lot of money and trouble was generated. Prohibition was repealed in December of 1933; famous journalist H.L. Mencken was reported to drink the first legal beer and pronounce it "good."

So there you have the pulp era in a nutshell. It was a time when men were gentlemen who loved their country, worked hard, and dreamed of becoming rich so their wife and children could grow up with the American Dream. Women dreamed of a knight in shining armor, or dreamed of donning the armor themselves to enter careers from secretaries to airline pilots. And the world itself longed for the days of the glorious past, clinging tightly to the fabric of the Imperial age, a fabric that was tearing as the ink dried on the treaty ending The Great War.

The world in which you will adventure will be a younger world where attaining wealth and fame will be easier. Those you meet will be a tad more gullible, more trusting, and more loyal to friend and nation. The villains will be men or monsters sculpted from the darker side of human emotions: hatred, envy, jealousy, and fear. Opposing them is not violating their human rights, it is asserting your own rights. It is a world where the good guys wear white and the bad guys wear black, and only you stand between evil and those too weak to deal with it.

One hell of a responsibility, but it was one hell of an era.

Using the Sourcebook

The timeline given covers the period from 1919 to 1939. Many of the incidents listed don't have exact dates, just the year of occurrence. If you have to, make up a date (it's underhanded, but the players will never know the truth). Other information is provided, which you may find useful. If you really need to know about some event that isn't here, consult your local library.

The GM should read through the timeline to get a feeling for the time period. Once you've done that, choose the year where you want to set your campaign. Even better is tying the campaign to the current year, by saying that it's 50 years ago, for instance. That way you also know about what date it is in the campaign; though, in the course of some adventures, many months for the characters may pass in one night of play. Once you've got the year, you can use the historical information to make the game more interesting. At the start of each play session, read to the players some of the events that are in the news. Better still, involve them in adventures that affect the news—put them in the *Hindenburg* in 1936, to find out the real reason why it crashed. Have them witness the assassination of a public figure, and then find out the secret plot behind the event (one that you, the GM, have concocted).

Weaving real facts in with the fictional plotlines you create will give a greater sense of reality to the game. Besides, the players will never know exactly what actually happened and didn't happen if you do that. Keep 'em guessing.

MONEY

Money is an important part of the *Justice Inc.* campaign. After all, cash is often a strong motivating factor, especially in the Depression years of the Thirties. Rather than present you with an extensive list of prices, we've included some advertising from the era to give you some idea what the prices were like.

One simple rule will give you a pretty good idea of the prices in the Twenties and Thirties. Just divide current prices by 10, and you're very close. For instance, classy hotel rooms now cost from \$40 to \$100

and up. Back then, \$4 or \$5 got you a nice room for the night; cheap motels and flophouses went for \$1 or less. Automobiles now start at \$5000 and go up from there; back then, car prices began at about \$500, and a top-of-the-line Cadillac went for \$7000 (well, luxury cars have gotten cheaper in comparison).

Of course, prices will vary more than 10 times for some things. Movies, for instance, were only a dime. Food tended to be quite cheap, with bread sold in nickel loaves. Salaries follow the rule pretty closely; our buying power now is similar to what it was then. Prices in the late Twenties, just before the Crash, were somewhat higher; with Black Tuesday, prices fell sharply. By 1938 they were back to what they had been in 1928.

Character salaries can be determined fairly easily. Most jobs will result from a character's Professional Skill or Science Skill; other Skills may get the character a job, but that's up to the GM. The character's yearly salary is approximately \$1000 for each Character Point the character has in the specific Professional Skill. For instance, a character with 5 Character Points in Pro Skill: Lawyer would earn \$5000 a year. The GM should modify this according to circumstances. If the character's off adventuring half the time, his salary should be halved, if he doesn't lose his job entirely for not showing up. The higher salary levels are much more difficult to attain; the GM might require the character to make a Skill Roll in order to get a job with the appropriate salary level. Also, the higher the salary, generally the more responsibility and the less flexibility in the job. A flexible job is handy for characters that adventure a lot.

LAW

In general, the law was much less concerned with protecting people's civil liberties in the Twenties and Thirties. Police had enormous discretionary power; you could be thrown in jail on a whim, and left to rot there if the cops felt like it. No search warrants were required, and the term "police brutality" was unknown. Not because police weren't brutal, but because that wasn't a crime. The rubber hose in the back room was used to extract confessions, and if the crook was smart he just said he'd run into a door.

Counterbalancing these police powers were the forces of public opinion and corruption. Graft in the police force was almost a certainty in any city; crooks paid protection money to the cops to be left alone. That is, until public outcry got so loud that the police had to act. The newspapers were a powerful force in controlling the excesses of the criminal justice system.

The private detective in this time often worked closely with the police; the detective usually had much better contacts on the street than the cops. Of course, there was often a great deal of hatred and rivalry, but the clever private eye made sure that he had friends on the force, or at least guys who owed him favors.

TIMELINE

The following is a series of timelines for use with *Justice Inc.*; they've been organized for ease of reference. Occasionally there will be editorial remarks given near entries. These remarks are made in an attempt to identify some of the more important events, or the roots of such.

BEFORE 1920

There are really two major events that will have an impact on the *Justice Inc.* era that happened before 1920. The major event was, of course, World War One. With American help, the French, British and Russians managed to defeat Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey. Russia left the fight in 1917 after two revolutions: the first that deposed the Tsar, the second that brought Lenin and the Communists to power. Germany surrendered when the politicians assumed the war could not be won. This angered the German army because they had not been defeated, yet they lost the war.

The Russian Civil War was waged between 1917 and 1923. Of significance is the fact that French, British and American troops waged war in Russia in an attempt to destroy the Bolsheviks. The sum total of their effort was a communist Russia, and a Communist republic in Mongolia.

The other major item that took place was the passing of a constitutional amendment that brought Prohibition to America. Prohibition, quite simply, said that it was illegal to sell liquor in any form. This was carefully worded so the supplies of liquor, like wine cellars, would not be destroyed, yet new liquor would be illegal. Of course, much money was made through the sale of illegal hooch.

1919

Death of Theodore Roosevelt.
Prohibition Amendment ratified.
Peace Treaty and League of Nations rejected by Senate November 19.
First trans-atlantic flight, first non-stop trans-atlantic flight, and the first lighter-than-air transatlantic flight all accomplished this year.
First scheduled airplane passenger service, London to Paris, inaugurated August 25.
Concentric shell theory of atomic structure presented by Langmuir.

1920

League of Nations formed January 10.
National Prohibition goes into effect January 20.
Woman's Suffrage amendment ratified August 26.
First regular transcontinental mail service (New York to San Francisco) inaugurated Sept. 8.
First radio broadcast station KDKA operated at Pittsburgh by the Westinghouse Company.
WWI peace treaty signed in Paris January 1. It allowed for the establishment of the League of Nations. The League would never get passed in the U.S. because the Republican Senate did not want Wilson and his Democratic party to make hay while the sun was shining. The treaty also stated that Germany would have to pay reparations to Britain and France, the amount of which was to be decided later.
On November 3 the Republicans blast the Democrats out of the White House with the election of Warren G. Harding and Calvin Coolidge.

1921

On April 4 Germany is directed to pay 132,000,000,000 gold marks in reparations and they are not allowed to have an army.
A peace is established July 7 in Ireland between Irish and British forces.
The Irish Free State is established December 7. This event is important because it really heralds the eventual dissolution of the British Empire, and foreshadows the troubles in British colonies like Palestine, Cyprus, and India.
Warren G. Harding, president; Calvin Coolidge, vice president.
Resolution declaring peace with Austria and Germany signed by Harding July 2. Conference for the limitation of armaments meets in Washington, D.C. November 12.

1922

Fascist coup in Italy; Mussolini forms cabinet October 31.
Four-Power Pacific Treaty ratified by the United States.
Supreme Court declares Federal child labor law unconstitutional.
Lincoln Memorial Temple at Washington dedicated.
Atoms of other elements are shown by Rowley to consist of multiples of hydrogen atoms.
Gandhi is arrested March 11 in Bombay and charged with sedition. Again the British are presented with resistance they will not be able to deny in the long run.

1923

A tomb is discovered February 17 in Egypt. It belonged to a Pharaoh; it has a curse on it, and it has not been plundered, until now. The tomb is that of the boy-king Tutankhamen. A stroke claims President Harding August 3 in San Francisco. Calvin Coolidge becomes the 30th president of the United States. His father administers the oath of office in Vermont.

Foreshadowing disaster movies to be made fifty years later, a huge earthquake rocks Japan September 6. First treaty between Canada and U.S. signed.



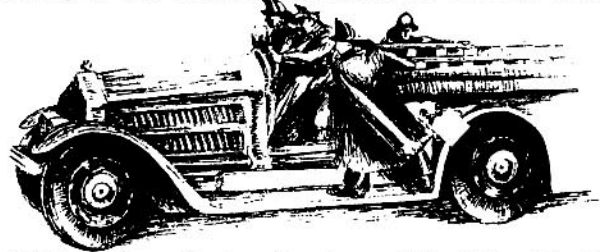
Adolf Hitler 1936

Last American troops withdrawn from the Rhine.
First nonstop airplane flight across continent, from New York to San Diego on May 2-3.
Juan de la Cierva makes the first successful autogyro flight June 9.
Munich beer-hall putsch led by Adolf Hitler is put down November 9.

1924

Teapot Dome oil scandals.
Vladimir Ilyich Lenin dies January 21.
Japanese immigrants excluded from the U.S.
United States Navy fliers encircle globe.
George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* premieres February 24 to great acclaim.
The dirigible *Los Angeles* flies from Friedrichshaven, Germany, to Lakehurst, New Jersey.

Lenin's death is reported to the West on January 23. Lenin is entombed in Red Square in a glass coffin. Pilgrims will line up to view the body and even today continue to do so.



J. Edgar Hoover is placed in charge of the FBI and begins to clean up its act.

Woodrow Wilson dies February 4. Wilson suffered bad health ever since he made a cross-country train journey to rally support for the League of Nations. His trip failed as badly as his health.

1925

Von Hindenburg is elected President of Germany April 22. The Scopes "Monkey" trial ends on July 22. William Jennings Bryan is humiliated and Scopes is convicted of teaching evolution in school. This trial settles the question of teaching evolution in schools for the next 50 or so years. Calvin Coolidge, president; Charles G. Dawes, vice president.

Postal rates increased.

Dry ice first manufactured commercially.

1926

Richard Byrd flies over the North Pole May 10. A 1947 trip over the same area will convince Byrd that the earth is hollow, with a prehistoric jungle contained in the center of the earth.

Bullets fired from American and European makes of guns can be used to identify the weapon that fired them, hence helping in the location of murder weapons.

Senate votes adherence to World Court but with unacceptable reservations.

North pole reached by U.S. Navy airplane from Spitzbergen.

Sesquicentennial Exposition, Philadelphia

1927

Disastrous floods in Mississippi valley and in northern New England states from April to May.

Lindbergh flies alone from New York to Paris on May 20-21.

Federal Radio Commission appointed.

Execution of Sacco and Vanzetti August 23 arouses protests.

Transatlantic radio-telephone service is inaugurated.

Foreigners are attacked in China March 25. Consular offices in Nanking are looted and burned while U.S. and British warships shell the city. It is reported to be a Bolshevik plot.

Charles Lindbergh flies solo from New York to Paris in 33½ hours on May 22.

1928

Kellogg Peace Pact signed August 27; 15 nations outlaw war.
 President-elect Hoover makes tour of South America.
 Notable expansion in air transportation.
 First Academy Awards—Best Picture: *Wings*.
 The dirigible *Graf Zeppelin* carries 20 passengers and 40 crew from Germany to the U.S.
 Amelia Earhart is the first woman to cross the Atlantic by air on June 19.
 Herbert Hoover is elected the 31st president of the United States November 7.

Up to this point in our survey of the era we really only see positive accomplishments for Americans. We are the fliers breaking records and becoming famous. We went over and won the First World War and President Wilson negotiated most of the peace. With Prohibition we were the moral leaders of the world, and we could not see our own clay feet. And clay bank accounts.

1929

October 29, 1929: Black Tuesday. The Stock Market collapses because of margin buying. Said one very rich man who got out of the market before the crash, "When my chauffeur knows as much about the market as I do, it's time to get out." Many folks did not have chauffeurs, and got caught. Banks collapsed and the economy went with it. This was the beginning of the Great Depression; it would continue until WWII pulled us out of it.
 Richard E. Byrd flies over the South Pole on November 30.
 The dirigible *Graf Zeppelin* circumnavigates the globe.
 Herbert Hoover, president; Charles Curtis, vice president.
 Stock market collapses October 29 causing wide-spread panic.
 Ballistic science progresses to the point where bullet comparison between murder bullet or shell and test bullet and shell is acceptable in a court of law as evidence.
 Canadian rum runner *I'm Alone* sunk by U.S. coast guard under circumstances resulting in diplomatic protests.

1930

Franklin Roosevelt wins the election for Governor of New York in a Democratic landslide on November 5.
 Admiral Byrd returns from Antarctic.
 London conference provides for Anglo-American naval parity.
 Hawley-Smoot tariff bill enacted.
 Detroit fields 200 police cars with one-way private police radios (receivers only).
 Renewed civil war in China.
 International bank begins operations.

1931

April 1931 is the first issue of *The Shadow* magazine.
 Britain goes off the gold standard September 21. This means that each bill of paper money, each coin was not backed by gold equal to its value. This makes the money worthless. Oddly, this action was used by conmen in the United States as proof that Britain was actually going to pay off the mythical Drake estate, an estate that many Americans had bought a piece of.
 Depression and bank failures.
 Moratorium on war debts for one year.
 Empire State building opens May 1; 102 stories, 1250 feet tall.
 Al Capone gets 11 years and a \$50,000 fine for tax evasion.
 Thomas Edison dies at the age of 84 on Oct. 18.
 Welland ship canal opened.

1932

Charles Lindbergh Jr. is kidnapped March 2; by May 13 his body is discovered. This horror inspires both the law making kidnapping a crime punishable by death, and the travesty trial of Richard Bruno Hauptmann in which the German immigrant was railroaded into the gas chamber. Even now, the trial is being reviewed and the evidence is being reexamined by court order in a wrongful death suit by Hauptmann's widow.
 St. Lawrence waterway treaty with Canada negotiated.
 Amelia Earhart becomes first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic on May 20.
 Japanese invade Shanghai Jan. 29.
 Japanese Premier Tsuyoshi Inukai assassinated by Japanese Fascists May 15.
 Franklin Roosevelt is nominated as the Democratic candidate for president July 2.
 The Bonus Expeditionary force is driven from Washington

Telephone 1936





D.C. July 29. The BEF is made up of Vets from WWI who want to cash in a service bonus that is supposed to come due in 1945 because of financial hardship. Troops drive them from Washington.

On November 9, Franklin D. Roosevelt is elected the 32nd President of the U.S.

International exchange of fingerprint information begins. Info exchanged between U.S., Scotland Yard, Paris, and Rome.

Zuider Zee reclamation dike in Holland completed.

Pontine marshes in Italy reclaimed.

Lausanne conference puts virtual end to German reparation payments.

1933

Hitler made Chancellor of Germany by the Reichstag, January 30.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, president; John N. Garner, vice president.

All banks closed for 10 days March 5; deposit insurance established.

New Deal — NRA, AAA, TVA established.

"Lame duck" and prohibition repeal amendments ratified; Prohibition ends December 5.

Airship *Akron* falls into the sea off New Jersey; Rear Adm.

Wm. A. Moffett and 72 crewmen lost, April 4.

Gold standard suspended April 19.

Dr. Albert Einstein, refugee from Germany, arrives in the U.S. October 17.

Assassins stab to death Armenian Archbishop in New York church December 24.

Premier Ion Duca of Rumania is assassinated in Bucharest December 30.

Blood typing, first discovered in 1900, is used to identify blood found on murderer's clothing and leads to conviction.

An assassin takes shots at FDR on February 16. Blamed on an Anarchist plot.

FDR takes the U.S. off the gold standard on March 6, allowing more paper money to be minted to finance social programs. Also on this date an election in Germany is won by the National Socialist party, led by an Iron Cross winner named Adolf Hitler.

Germany pulls out of the League of Nations October 15.

Prohibition is repealed December 5. The United States ends a long thirsty spell.

World Economic Conference at London meets; disbands without results.

Century of Progress Exposition, Chicago.

Lindberghs fly 30,000 miles visiting 21 countries.

1934

Dollar revalued, cut to 59 cents (gold value) January 31.

Securities exchange regulation begun.

First reciprocal trade agreement with Cuba.

Severe drought and dust storms in the Midwest May 10; heat and drought cover the midwest "dustbowl" July 24, at least 700 dead.

The film *It Happened One Night* sweeps the Academy Awards, taking Best Picture, Best Actor (Clark Gable), and Best Actress (Claudette Colbert).

Engelbert Dolfuss, Austrian Chancellor, slain July 25 by Nazi assassins.

Dionne quintuplets born.

June 30 is The Night of Long Knives—Hitler purges the Brown Shirts who brought him to power.

John Dillinger is believed slain July 23. There were a number of questionable items involved with his death; some people today believe that Dillinger, like Butch Cassidy before him, survived his "death".

Von Hindenburg dies August 2 at the age of 86; Hitler becomes President of Germany.

1935

Trans-Pacific air service begun San Francisco to Manila.

Richard Bruno Hauptmann is found guilty of the kidnapping-murder of Charles Lindbergh Jr. February 13.

England, France, and Italy meet in conference at Stresa to discuss peace problems.

Supreme court holds NRA codes unconstitutional May 27.

Social Security Act passed on June 19.

Bruno Richard Hauptmann goes on trial Jan. 2 for the kidnapping of the Lindbergh baby, found guilty Feb. 13.

Huey Long assassinated in Louisiana Sept. 8.

Ethiopia invaded October 2 by Italy.

Dutch Shultz shot by gangsters in Newark, N.J. cafe; dies the next day, Oct. 23.

First air mail flight across the Pacific to Manila on November 22.

1936

AAA declared unconstitutional Jan. 6.
 Labor movement splits, C.I.O. unions being suspended from A.F. of L.
 President Roosevelt re-elected in sweeping victory November 3.
 Hitler sends German troops into the Rhineland March 7.
 Bruno Richard Hauptmann executed April 3.
 Italian army occupies Addis Ababa; war is over May 5.
 Germany and Italy agree to a Fascist front against Europe October 24.
 Edward VIII abdicates Dec. 11; George VI proclaimed King Dec. 12.
 On January 20 the bonus bill is passed for soldiers; they get their money nine years early.
 King George V dies January 21, Edward VIII becomes king, for a while.
 Germany reoccupies the demilitarized Rhineland March 7.
 Hitler's bluff is not called.
 FDR is re-elected November 3.
 King Edward VIII renounces his throne December 11 for the love of a divorced woman, Mrs. Wallis Simpson. George VI becomes king.
 Hoover dam completed.
 Launching of the Queen Mary.
 Zeppelin inaugurates trans-Atlantic service.
 Great Lakes Exposition, Cleveland, Ohio.

1937

Franklin D. Roosevelt, president;
 Ohio-Mississippi floods, more than a million homeless.
 President seeks enlargement of Supreme Court Feb. 5; plan defeated.
 Supreme court upholds Social Security Act and Wagner labor law.
 Dirigible *Hindenburg* explodes at Lakehurst, N.J., killing 36 on May 6.
 Joe Louis becomes heavyweight champion, knocking out James J. Braddock June 22.
 Amelia Earhart Putnam, age 38, missing in Pacific in round-the world flight, July 2; search effort mounted by U.S. Navy.
 First successful helicopter (FW-61 designed by Heinrich Focke) flown by Hanna Reitsch at Bremen July 4.
 Britain and France agree to give Hitler colonies in exchange for peace Nov. 29.
 U.S. gunboat *Panay* sunk by Japanese planes Dec. 12; Tokyo apologizes, ousts air chief two days later.
 Automatic landing device for airplanes introduced.
 Paris Exposition.
 Construction of solar heat collector for power.
 Two longest span bridges in the world opened at San Francisco.

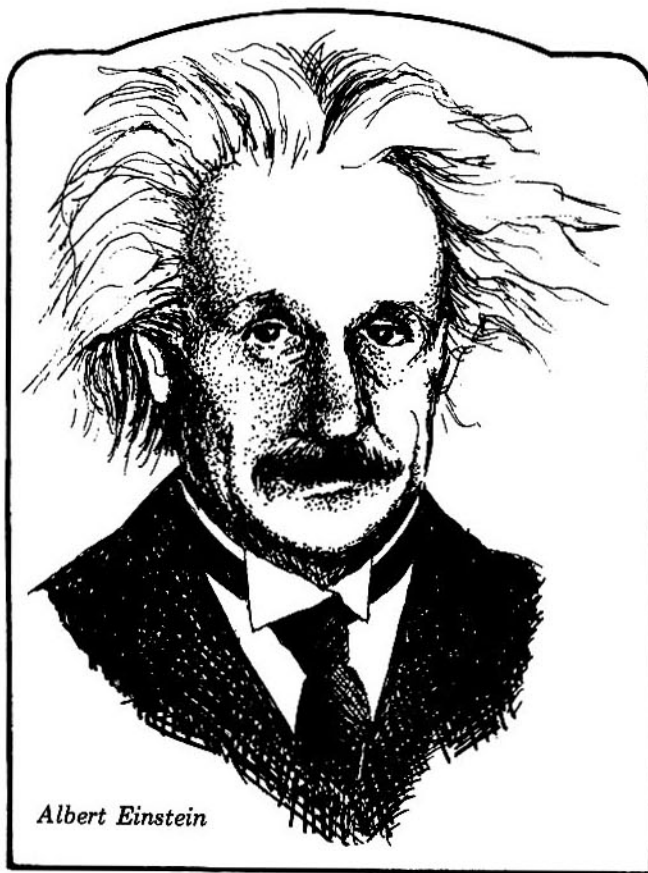
1938

Hitler strikes in Austria, Nazis seize government March 12.
 50,000 people jailed in Austria by July 4.

Howard Hughes completes flight around the world in 3 days, 19 hr., 14 min., and 10 sec.—a new record.
 "Attack from Mars" in radio sketch by Orson Welles causes widespread panic October 30.

Czechoslovakia seized by Germany, October 3.

Assassination of German envoy in Paris Nov. 10 results in retaliation against Jews in Germany; Jews herded into camps, fined \$400,000,000 three days later.



Albert Einstein

1939

Golden Gate International Exposition opens in San Francisco Feb. 18.
 Hitler and troops enter Prague March 15.
 New York World's Fair opens April 30, attended by over half a million people.
 German-Russian 10 year non-aggression pact signed Aug. 21.
 Germany invades Poland September 1.
 Britain, France declare war on Germany September 3.
 U.S. proclaims neutrality September 5.
 Russia invades Poland September 17.
 Warsaw surrenders September 27.
 The Soviet Union attacks Finland on November 30. Oddly, the Finns were treated as losers in WWII at the peace conferences because they continued their fight against the Russians, with good reason, after the Russians switched sides.

Strangely, the same war that forced interesting items like the discovery of Tut's tomb from the front pages spelled the downfall of the pulps. With paper shortages, the pulps dropped from full 8" x 11" size to digest size. And with the end of the war the pulps passed, no longer needed to inspire

hope in the dark hours of the Depression.

Ever useful for ferreting out Nazi spies throughout the world, especially when they are trying to pass themselves off as "true Americans" is the question "Who won the 1927 World Series?" Here are the answers for 1920-39.

WORLD SERIES RESULTS

	National League	American League	Games
1920	Brooklyn Dodgers lose to the	Cleveland Indians	5-2
1921	New York Giants beat the	New York Yankees	5-3
1922	The Giants shutout	The Yankees	4-0
1923	The Giants lose to	The Yankees	4-2
1924	The Giants are edged by the	Washington Senators	4-3
1925	The Pittsburgh Pirates beat	The Senators	4-3
1926	The St. Louis Cardinals beat	The Yankees	4-3
1927	The Pirates are shutout by	The Yankees	4-0
1928	The Cardinals are shutout by	The Yankees	4-0
1929	The Chicago Cubs lose to the	Philadelphia Athletics	4-1
1930	The Cardinals lose to the	Athletics	4-3
1931	The Cards revenge themselves	beating the A's	4-3
1932	The Cubs are clobbered by	The Yankees	4-0
1933	The Giants beat the	Senators	4-1
1934	The Cards beat the	Detroit Tigers	4-3
1935	The Cubs lose to the	Tigers	4-2
1936	The Giants lose to	The Yankees	4-2
1937	The Giants lose to	The Yankees	4-1
1938	The Cubs lose to	The Yankees	4-0
1939	The Cincinnati Reds lose to	The Yankees	4-0

COMMUNICATION:

		1920	1930	1940
Post Offices	(No.)	52,638	49,063	44,095
Post Routes	(in miles)	435,342	503,918	541,514
Air Mail Routes	(in miles)	3,094	14,907	37,943
Telegraphs	(miles of line)	246,214	256,809	250,880
Telephones	(No. stations)	13,329,379	20,201,576	20,830,950

COMMERCE:

Imports, merchandise,

total	(in \$)	5,238,352,114	3,060,908,000	2,625,445,000
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Exports, domestic,

total	(in \$)	8,080,480,821	3,843,181,000	4,021,564,000
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FINANCE:

Disbursements, war	(in \$)	1,094,834,202	453,524,973	667,100,000
Disbursements, navy	(in \$)	629,893,116	374,165,639	891,600,000

SLANG

The slang of the pulp era was nothing if not colorful. Many of the terms come from underworld usage. Those that need definition have them; the others are just figures of speech that were common and are either still in use today or self-explanatory.

10/9/34

Hey Steve,

I figure you and me are yaks, so I'll give ya the inside dope. If word through the wire got to you from The Rock, you know I was doing a telephone number for redlighting some zuch in Chitown. Well, someone fogged the hard John who nabbed me, and my mouthpiece gave the judge a Mother Machree about an old aunt I ain't eyeballed in a fist-full of years. So they moved me from Uncle Sam's seaside resort to some slammer outside Philly. There was a rhubarb where I rubbed a roller and was forced to rabbitfoot it out of there. You know me, I can't count on any lifeboat no matter how good my shyster might be. While I might be able to beat the rap for the squealer, I'd get railroaded for erasing the yard bull.

Anyway, I got me a heap and a tomato with great gams. We've worked the badger game on a couple of lambs, earning up a fair amount of bacon. Despite being white-hot I'm hitting on all six, but working the flim-flam gives me the heebie-jeebies. I'm a blaster, and the berries at it, but my old boss caught a back room parole so I'm like a B-girl with no rib joint.

So listen, pal, I gotta put the bite on you. I need to work with my biscuit hooks, all this think box work is getting me. The raggle is a real lolapalooza, and she still loves her papa, but I ain't no wolf. I need some long green to keep her happy.

Do you know of any kingpin that will pay good kale to have some enemies put on ice? You know I ain't a nose, that I've got moxie and I ain't afraid of John Law rousting me. And you gotta remember the time in Detroit when those two sausages were trying to massage you. It was murder but I pulled you out with only a mouse for your trouble, and both of those larrikins ended up in Chicago overcoats. I'll level with you, if I don't get some clams soon I'm gonna to slipper off and talk to some sin hound about my life.

Write soon, and don't let no snipers unslough you.

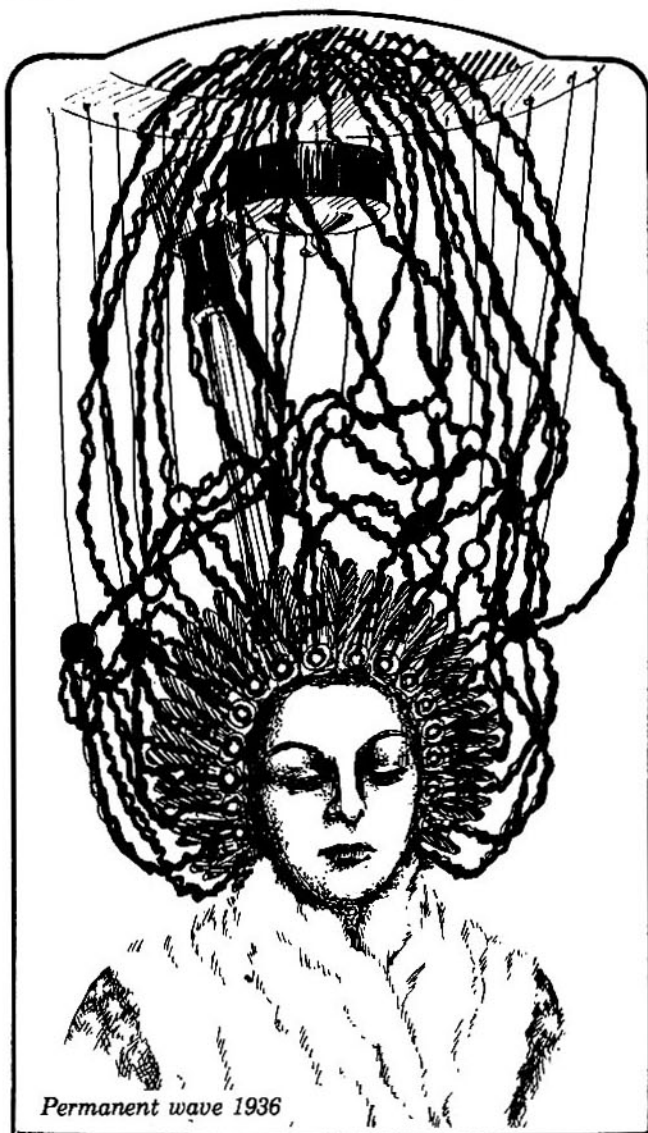
Mike

A

Abe's Cabe—a \$5 bill
Ace—\$1 bill
Hitting on all six—in good shape
Ambulance Chaser—lawyer
Ammo
Ammonia—soda water
"And how" "You said it."—affirmative expressions
Applesause—nonsense
"Take it on the 'Arthur Duffy'"—on the lam.
Artillery—gun or hypodermic needle

B

"Babe Ruth"—home run
Baby—girl
Back room parole—natural death in prison
Bacon—\$\$ or plunder
Badge—cop
"The badger game"—A swindle where a woman entices a man and then her "husband" catches them *en flagrante delicto*. For a fee, all is forgotten.
Bar—fly
"In the barrel"—broke
Bean—\$1 bill
Bean shooter—small gun (2.7mm Kolibri)
Beat the rap—escaped conviction
"Beef"—complaint
Beerbelly
Beezer—nose
Belly brass—Phi Beta Kappa key (or similar) on watch chain
Belly gun—small gun for close shots
Belt—slug of liquor or thrill
(He is) "the berries"—great thing or person
Betsy—gun
B-girl—prostitute
"Bill"—\$100 bill
Bim—girl
Bimbo—thug
Birdcage—jail cell
Biscuit hooks—hands
Bit—prison term
"The bite"—borrow something
Black betsy—baseball bat
Bladder—underworld newspaper
Blaster—gun or gunman
Blind—drunk
Blip off—kill
Go blooey—explode
Bloomer—nearly empty safe
Blot out—kill
Blotter—police rap sheet



Blotto—drunk
Blowen—girl/B-girl (underworld use)
Boff—strike/hit
Boffo—\$1 bill
Bogie—cop
Bolus—underworld doctor
Bone—\$1 bill
Boonstick—gun
Boost—steal(er), thief
Bop—hit/kill
"Both hands"—underworld term for a 10 year prison term
Box—to be killed
Boxman—safe cracker
Bozo—man
Bread—\$\$
Bronx cheer—raspberry
Buck—\$1
Bucket—car
Buffalo head—5 cents
Bugle—nose
Bull—cop
Bullet—\$1
Bullpen—prison
Bumpman—killer

Bump off—kill
Burrole—stool pigeon
Bush parole—escape from prison

C

C or C note—\$100 bill
Can opener—safe cracking tools
"Carry the difference"—carry a gun
Case note—\$1 bill
Cash in (his) chips—die
Casper Milquetoast—wimp
Century—\$100
"The" chair—the electric chair
Chatter box—machine gun
Chib—knife
Chicago overcoat—coffin
Chicago pineapple—grenade
Chill—kill
Chromo—ugly person/thing
Clam—\$1
Claw—cop
Clean—unarmed
Coconut—\$1
Cook—die in the chair
Cop a heel or cop a mope—bush parole
Creeper—sneak thief
Croak—kill
Crush-out—escape prison

D

Dead presidents—general reference to US \$\$
Dime note—\$10 bill
Dip—pickpocket
Dish—girl, especially good looking
Dock rat—wharf bum
Do in—kill
Doll—dame
Double sawbuck—\$20 bill
Drill—shoot/kill
Dropper—killer
Dry gulch—ambush/kill
Duke—fist

E

Eagle-eye—detective
Egghead—intelligentsia
Erase—kill
Eye—private detective

F

Fem or Femme—female
Fence—dealer in stolen goods
File—pickpocket
Filly—girl
Fin or Finnif—\$5 bill
Fink—detective

Fish—\$1 bill, or a convict, or a dummy
Fishbowl—jail
Fishtail—5 cents
Fist—five year sentence.
Five—\$5 bill
Five case note—\$5 bill
Five fingers—thief or 5 year sentence
Fivespot—\$5 bill
Flim-flam—trick someone
Flogger—overcoat
Floozie—girl
Fluff—girl or little girl
Fog—shoot/kill
Folding money/folding green—bills
Foolish powder—heroin
Forty five (.45)—gun
Four bit—50 cents
Frogskin—\$1 bill
Fry—die in the electric chair
Fuzz—cop (since 1931)

G

G—\$1000 bill
Gams—legs
Gat—handgun
Gelt—cash
Goniff—crook
Goon, Gorill, Gorilla—hood
"Let go with"—shoot
Grand—\$1000
Grease—bribe money
Greasegun—M3 sub-machinegun
Gum heel or Gum shoe—detective
Gum foot—plain clothes cop
Gun—shoot
Gun-moll—female gangster
Gunny, gunpoke, gungel, gun slinger—shooters
Guzzle shop—saloon

H

Hack—cab
Handful—five year sentence
Hard John—FBI field agent
Hardware—weapons
Hatchet man—killer
"Let (him) have it"—kill
Heap—car
Heat—gun, gunfire, trouble, cops
Heat packer—gungel
Heavy—thug
Heebie-jeebies—nervousness, "the creeps"
Heel—petty crook
Heistman—thief
"The hole"—solitary confinement
Hooch—alcohol

Hood—thug
Hooligan—hood
Hoop—finger ring
Hoosegow—jail
Hoosier—new prisoner
Hop—opium/narcotic
Hop fiend—druggie
Hop joint—opium den
"Hot dog"—common exclamation
Hot seat—electric chair
Hot shot—tough guy
Hot spot/hot squat—electric chair

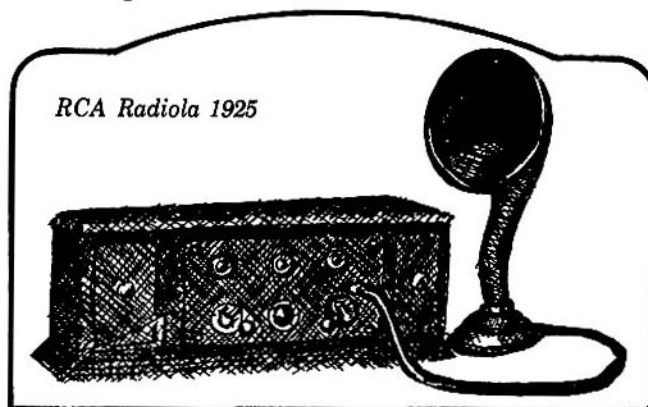
I

Ice—diamonds or bribe money
"Put on ice"—kill
Icebox—jail
Iceman—jewel thief
Index—face
Indian hop/hemp—pot
Irish confetti—thrown bricks
Iron—motorcycle or gun
Iron house—jail
Iron man—\$1 coin
Iron pony—motorcycle
Iso—solitary cell
Ivory dome—egghead

J

Jack—money
Jack out—pull a gun
Jiggerman—lookout
"The jitters"—nerves
John Law—the police
John Roscoe—gun
Jolly-o—hell
Jug—jail, bank, or safe
Juice chair—electric chair
Jump—attack or rob
Junk—drugs

RCA Radiola 1925



K

Kajody—thingamagig
Kale—money
Kayducer—train conductor who allows illegal actions/cargo
Keptie—kept woman
Kicher—revolver
Kick off—die
Kick over—rob
Kingpin—leader
Knock off—kill
Knock over—rob
Knuck—pickpocket or thief
Knucks—brass knuckles



Harry Houdini

L

Lag—convict
Lam—on the run
Lamb—mark to be fleeced
Larrikin—hood
The law—police

Lay—robbery
Lay one on—hit
Lead poisoning—having shot someone (as in given it)
Leather—wallet
Leery—wary
Legger—bootlegger
Lettuce—\$\$
Level—honest, as in “on the level”
Life boat—given pardon from death sentence
Lifer—life sentence inmate
Light piece—silver coin
Lights out—dead or death
“Make little ones out of big ones”—hard labor
Little school—women’s detention center
Lizard—\$1
Lob—dullard
Lobo—thug
Lobster—dupe
Locust—nightstick
Lolapalooza—a real knock out (great)
Long green—paper money
Long rod—rifle
Loogan—dummy
Looker—beautiful girl
Lug—fighter
Lummox—big dummy
Lunkhead—lummox

M

M—morphine
Madam—female brothel manager
Magazine—6 month jail sentence
Maggie—automatic pistol
Main line—high society, rich folks.
Maison joie—brothel
Man—\$1
The man—the cops
Mark—victim
Massage—beat up
Mazuma—money
Meat hooks—hands
Meat wagon—ambulance
Mechanic—card sharper
Michigan roll—“wad” of fake cash with a real bill on the outside
Mickey finn—knockout drop
Mill—prizefight or prison
Milwaukee goiter—beer belly
Mitt—hand
Mix it up—prizefight
Mix up—fight
Mob—gang
Moll—sweetheart or prostitute
Moll buzzer—thief who preys on women
Monkey—man
Monniker—name
Moola—cash
Mort—underworld term for woman
Mother Machree—sob story/alibi
Mouse—bruise near eye, or girlfriend
Mouthpiece—lawyer
Moxie—courage or guts
Mucker—thug
Mug—face, or police picture or hood/thug

Mulligan—Irishman or cop
Murder—great or difficult
Muscle—thug
Muscle in—take over an operation with force
Muttonhead—dummy
Muzzler—minor crook

N

Nab—arrest
Nail—nab or kill
Nance—sissy
Nark—stool pigeon
Natural—7 or 11 in craps, 7 year prison term
Necktie—hangman's noose
Newsie—newspaper boy
Nick—rob
Nightingale—squealer
Nod-guy—yesman
Noggin—head
Noise—explosives or a gun
Noise tool—gun
Noodle—head
Nose—paid cop informer
Nut—madman or tough guy
Nuthouse—asylum

O

Oakus/Oakum—wallet in underworld words
Oil—beat or bribe someone
Oliver—underworld for the moon
One-two—potent set of punches
Op—police detective
Open up—start punching or shooting
Operator—conman, thief or pickpocket
Oscar—cash or a gun
Oyster-berry—pearl

P

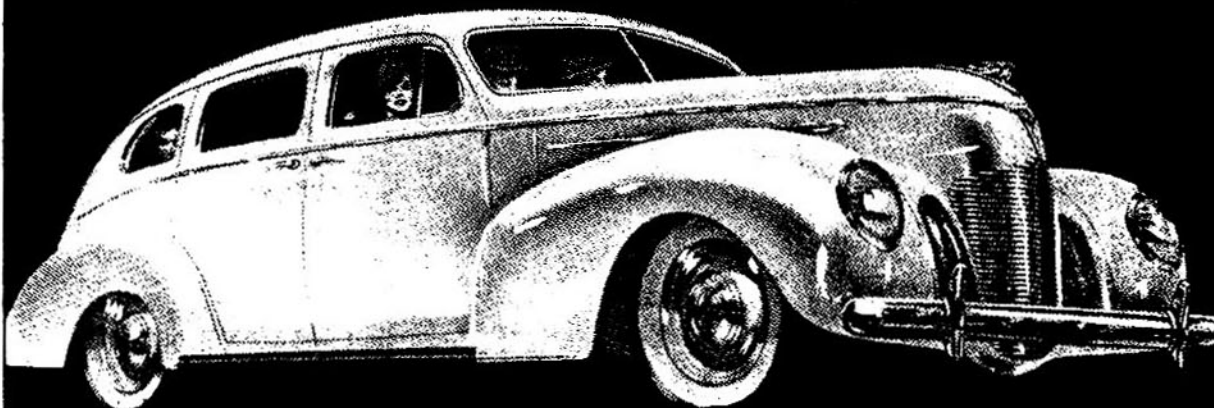
Pack heat—carry a gun
Paddywagon—police van
Pageboy—woman's hairstyle
Paint cards—face cards
Palooka—inferior fighter
Pancake—hardboiled woman (tough dame)
Pancake turner—disc jockey
Panther sweat—poor whiskey
Pants—man
Pantywaist—sissy
Pap—cash
Papa—male lover



"Here are two features I think are wonderful!
 I shift gears right at the wheel; and I can lock
 my hood with a little lever inside the car!"

A new world lies ahead of you
 THE DAY YOU CHANGE TO
Hudson

Car shown is new Hudson Six Touring Sedan, \$854



Paper—\$1 bill
Peddle paper (verb)—pass fake cash
Paperhanger—check forger or counterfeiter
Parlor house—brothel
Parlor snake—lady's man
Paste (verb)—to hit someone
Patsy—person blamed for a crime
Pay off—bribe
Payola—graft
Peach—cute dame
Peanut—smalltime person
Pea-shooter—rifle
Peepers—eyes
Peeties—loaded dice
Peeved off—angry
Peg—ID something
Peg out—die
Pelican—whore
Pen—prison
Pencil—revolver
Penny—policeman
Pennyweight—jewelery
Pennyweighter—jewel thief
Pen yen—opium
Percy boy—sissy
Persuader—weapon
Peso—\$1
Pete—a safe
Peteman—safecracker
Phedinkus—nonsense
Pickle—kill
Pick up—arrest
Picture gallery—police mug shot book
Piece up—split loot
Pie wagon—paddywagon
Pig—cop, since 1848
Pill—bullet, cigarette, bomb
Pillow—boxing glove
Pill peddler—doctor

Benito Mussolini 1936



Pimple—human head in prizefight parlance
Pinch—steal or arrest
Pineapple—grenade
Pin ears back—defeat
Pins—human legs
Pinto—coffin
Pip—extraordinary person or thing
Plant—bury, or a hiding place
Plaster—cash
Pluck—rob or cheat
Plug—silver dollar, prizefighter or, to shoot
Plunk—shoot
Point—jaw
Point-head—thug
Poke—wallet
Pokey—rural jail
Polish off—kill
Pony up—pay
Pop off—kill or die
Portside—lefty
Potato—head
Potato masher—German WWI grenade
Potsy—cop's badge
"Take a powder"—leave
Powder-puff—cautious boxer
Pretty ear—cauliflower ear on a boxer
Prig—steal or thief
Print—fingerprint
Promote—steal or obtain through con game
Protection—bribe money
Prowl—frisk
Psycho—nutcase
Pug—boxer
Punch-out—fistfight
Punk—hoodlum or lousy fighter
Puppy dog feet—Clubs, as in suit of cards
Push across—kill
Puss—face

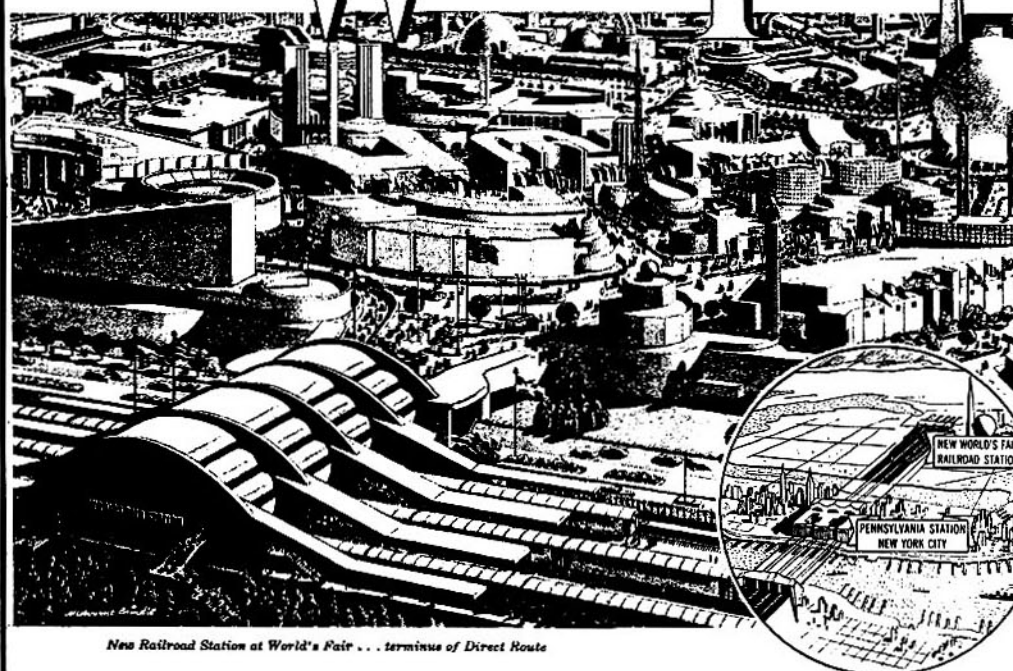
Q

Quail—woman
Queer—counterfeit
Quetor—25 cents

R

Rabbitfoot—escape prison on the run
Raft—many, as in "a whole raft of men"
Raggle—pretty girl
Railroad—send to jail without a proper trial
Rap—jail sentence
Raspberry—derogatory cheer
Rat—police informer
Ratface—sly person, untrustworthy
Raw—nude
Redeye—bad booze
Red-light—kill by throwing from train
Remington—machinegun
Repeaters—loaded dice
Rhino—money
Rhubarb—quarrel
Rib—woman
Rib joint—brothel
Richard—private dick, or deformed man

.....How are you planning to go to the NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR?



New Railroad Station at World's Fair... terminus of Direct Route

Pennsylvania Railroad is the Direct Route
...STATION ON FAIR GROUNDS!

That news ought to settle one question—*quick*. How to go. For who'd dream now of driving the family car through New York's dense traffic—and hunting for a place to park among its skyscrapers?

Particularly when it costs so little to go by *The Direct Route*. So abandon all thought of the car. Be free of responsibility. Go direct...right to the Grounds!

THE DIRECT ROUTE...Trains enter Pennsylvania Station, N.Y., where you board waiting train to World's Fair on Long Island... 10 minutes, 10 cents.



DIG ENGINE—most powerful steam passenger locomotive—see it at the World's Fair. And see trains of other nations and Pastmaster of Transportation.

LOOK HOW LOW FARES WILL BE!

Example of 30-Day Round Trip Coach Fare to New York for the Fair:

From	Round Trip	From	Round Trip
Chicago	\$28.20	St. Louis	\$31.75
Cleveland	\$21.75	Pittsburgh	\$18.00

1-Day and 3-Day Expressions from Philadelphia, Wash. D.C., Detroit, Dayton, Cincinnati and intermediate points at even intervals. Tickets are subject to change without notice.

Tickets are subject to change without notice.

rest from points west of the Pittsburgh area.

SPECIAL FARES IN PULLMANS, TOO!

SEE "TWO FAIRS FOR ONE FARE"

Grand Circle Tours. From any point in the United States you can go to both New York World's Fair and Golden Gate International Exposition, San Francisco, for \$90 coach fare, \$135 rail fare in Pullmans. Special Pullman fare, too; for example: lower berth (for 1 or 2) only \$45 for the round trip. Stop-overs permitted.

Pennsylvania Railroad

"Take for a ride"—kill
 Right—underworld for OK
 Ringer—look-alike
 Rip—disreputable person
 Rivets—\$\$
 Roach—cop
 Rock—\$1
 The Rock—Alcatraz
 Rock candy—diamonds
 Rod—pistol
 Roll—rob a sleeping person
 Roller—prison guard
 Rook—cheat
 Roscoe—small pistol
 Roughneck—hoodlum
 Rough stuff—violence
 Rough up—beat up
 Roundheel—poor fighter
 Roust—arrest
 Rub—kill
 Rubber—professional killer
 Rub out—kill
 Rug—toupee
 Rumble—danger or to inform
 "Run a sandy on"—trick
 Run in—meeting or arrest
 Rutabaga—ugly dame or \$1

S

Salted down—dead
 Sap—blackjack or to hit with a blackjack
 Sausage—inferior boxer
 Saw, sawbuck—\$10 bill
 Sawyer—sawed off shotgun
 Scalp doily—toupee
 Scatter, scatter gun—shotgun, machinegun or SMG
 Scissorbill—mark or fool
 Score—mark or act of making \$ or share of loot
 Scrag—kill
 Scram—depart hastily
 Scratch—\$\$ or a wound
 The Screaming Meemies—the DTs
 Screw—prison guard
 Screwball—worthless person
 Scrip—\$1
 Scumster—a vile person
 Sea food—whiskey
 Seat-man—a professional gambler
 Sent up—gone to prison
 Settle—imprison
 Settle hash—kill

Seventeen—a corpse
Shade—"fence"
Shadow—detective
Shake, shakedown—blackmail
Sham—cop
Shamrock—Irisher
Shamus—detective
Shark—cheater
Sharp—shark
Sheba—attractive woman
Sheet—a criminal's record
Sheik—male hearthrob
Shell—safe (noun)
Shellacking—beating
Shiever—doublecrosser
Shill—a decoy for a con game
Shiv—knife
Short—a con close to release date, or a taxi
Shoulder-hitter—thug
Shove—kill
Shyster—lawyer
Sidewinder—bodyguard
Simolen—\$1
Simple simon—diamond
Single—\$1 bill
Sin hound—a chaplain
Sinker—silver dollar
Sizzle—die in the electric chair
Skee—whiskey
Skiboo—hitman

"The skids"—on the way down
Skin—\$1 bill
Skirt—dame
Slammer—door or jail
Slam off—die
Slap happy—punch drunk
Slapman—plainclothes cop
Sleep—1 year jail term or a night
Sleeper—night watchman
Put the sleeve on—finger to cops
Slewfoot—detective
Slim—police informer
Slipper—to reform as a crook
Slough—lock up or hit
Slough up—arrest
Slug—bullet
Smear—murder
Smoke-eater—fireman
Smoke wagon—pistol
Snack—easy victim
Sneaker—prohibition motorboat
Sneeze—kidnap
Sniper—pickpocket
Snitch—steal or inform
Snooker—swindle
Snoop—detective
Snowdrop—military police
Snowshoe—cop
Snug—small revolver
"The soft"—money
Soft touch—easy target
Sol—solitary confinement
Solitaire—suicide
Solo—confessing a crime
Song—confession
Songbird—confessor
Sore—angry
Soup—nitro or TNT
Sourdough—counterfeit money
"Go south with (something)"—steal something
Sparrow cop—disfavored cop
Speakeasy—tavern, or silencer on a gun
Spike—poison
"Spot"—kill
Put on the spot—kill
Spring—release someone from jail
Spruce—a sucker
Squadron—a group of cops
Square John—easily victimized man
Squat hot—die in electric chair
Squeal—inform
Squealer's mark—scar given to squealers
Squib off—kill
Stall—pickpocket's assistant
Steal—a theft
Step off—die
Stick—cop
Sticker—knife
Sting—money from a crime
The Stir—jail
Stool—plainclothes cop
Stool pigeon—informer
Stop—a "fence"
Stretch—time in jail
Strike bedrock—die
Strong-arm man—hood
Stumble—get arrested



First stewardesses 1930

Sunday punch—very strong blow
Swipe—steal
Switch—inform

T

Telephone number—sentence greater than 20 years, but less than life.
Tenner—\$10 bill
Ten-spot—tenner
Think box/thinker—brain
Thou—\$1000
Tin star—private investigator
Tip over—rob
Tip-over—raid on a speakeasy
Tomato—woman
Tommygun—Thompson 1928A1 SMG
Tommy man—machinegunner
Tool—pickpocket
Toots—woman
Top—hang or kill
Torch—pistol
Torpedo—thug
Trigger—hitman
Troops—mob or gang
Troupe—gang of pickpockets
Turn off—rob
Twist—woman
Twister—raid by the cops
Two spot—\$2 bill
Typewriter—Tommygun

U

Uncle Sam—federal agent
Unslough—for a pickpocket to steal a watch
Up the river—in prison

V

Vacation—prison term
Vic—convict

W

Wagon—pistol
Wagon wheel—silver dollar
"Go over the wall"—escape prison
Weasel—informer
Weed—take cash from wallet, then drop wallet
Whang—shoot
Wheelman—driver of getaway car
Whiff—kill
Whistle bait—woman
Whistler—cop car or informer
White hot—very wanted by the cops
The willies—nervousness
Winchester—a rifle
Wing—wound
Wipe off or out—kill
Wiper—killer
Wire—trick or pickpocket or communication between a prisoner and the outside

1,000,000 MILES...



STOUT AIR LINES!

On scheduled service Ford planes frequently fly in two or more sections to meet the demand for swift, comfortable transportation

ALMOST incredible is the achievement of Stout Air Lines, operating the Detroit-Chicago-Cleveland routes. Up to the end of 1929, well over a hundred thousand passengers had been carried eight hundred and forty thousand miles without the slightest injury to a passenger, and with an extraordinary record both for reliability and the percentage of scheduled trips completed! Ford all-metal, tri-motored transports only are used on these lines.

The first operating route of Stout Air Lines was between Detroit and Grand Rapids, beginning in August, 1926, using Ford Liberty motored ships. Since then new lines have been opened... schedules extended... rates cut almost in half!

Four round trips a day are flown between Detroit, Toledo and Cleveland. One way fare is \$10. Two round trips daily are flown between Chicago and Detroit, one way fare being \$18. On this route stops are made at Battle Creek, Kalamazoo and South Bend. The demand for passage on these lines is so great that on one occasion, at least, it was necessary to run eleven sections of Ford tri-motored, all-metal transport planes.

Ford planes are used on these lines with the steady dependability of trains and busses. They are recognized by every one as a permanent form of swift transportation between the great cities which they serve.

FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Visitors are always welcome at the Ford Airport at Detroit

Wolf—lady killer
Workout—beating
World beater—champion
Wrong—contrary to criminal code

X

XX—doublecross

Y

Yak—pal
Yard—\$100
Yardbird—convict
Yard bull—prison guard
Year—\$1
Yellowback—\$1
Yodeler—informer

Z

Zap—kill
Zuch—informer

ADVENTURES



THE EMPIRE CLUB

Now we're going to attempt to accomplish all of the things recommended to you in the previous book—the pesky authors get to try and show you how to create adventures in an age that was dead and gone by the time all of us were born. This might seem simple; after all, who would know if we failed in our attempt? We would, and there are others who know what evil lurks...

This section will supply you with a background for an adventure campaign. It will be set up with the same rules and morals that governed the era of the pulps. This may seem stilted and awkward to some, but that's the way it was back then. To others the age will seem simple, when things we have come to take for granted amazed the intelligent and mystified the ignorant.

To best use this section the Gamemaster, the person who will oversee and organize the adventures for your group of players, should read it over carefully. The Gamemaster should be certain he understands everything presented, and if he has questions he should do his best to create an answer according to the rules or feel of the scenario. For example, the rules might not state what is to happen if a woman comes to a men's club and demands to see a member because of some emergency. While unescorted women are not allowed, would an exception be made in her case, would the member be summoned, or would another member offer to escort her to the person she wishes to see? All are perfectly valid answers to the situation, and all might be correct. Such choices of action, especially for all of the Non-Player Characters, are up to the Gamemaster to organize.

The success of a scenario is not loaded onto the shoulders of the Gamemaster alone. Each of the players is charged with the duty to play as his character might. A gallant member of a club might well offer to escort the lady in the previous example, or a feisty female character might barge in regardless of the consequences. Much of the success of a game is tied to the cooperation between the Gamemaster and players in helping to create and reinforce the fantasy world they are weaving.

Without further ado, we bring you The Empire Club.

BACKGROUND

The Empire Club is an organization headed and founded by Darius Stoner, son of Professor Odysseus

and Vivian Stoner. The club admits individuals who have undertaken some long and adventurous trek or people recommended for membership because of other signs of an adventurous spirit. The Club currently has four offices, in New York, London, Hong Kong, and San Francisco.

Each of the Clubs are very similar in layout and policies. Each Club is located in the fashionable downtown district, convenient to theatres and businesses. The Club complex generally occupies the second, third, and fourth floor of a large building, with Darius' personal apartment on the fourth floor. Access to the Club is through a private elevator that may only be used by members. (The operator of the elevator only moves the cage for a member with a valid card, a desperate person holding a gun on him, or a visitor who has been cleared by the office upstairs.) The GM may also place the Club in a small brownstone building, in which case the "elevator doors" are really the front doors.

Joining the Club

Characters who want to join the Club should be sponsored by a current member (usually an NPC). The Club members then vote on membership applications during their monthly meetings, using a secret ballot. Applicants must gather a two-thirds majority of the votes to be admitted. Members who commit improprieties in the Club, or are involved in a scandal of some sort, may be kicked out by a simple majority vote, or their privileges could be suspended.

The GM should only really let player-characters become a member of the Club after they've gone on a successful adventure or two (adventures that get good publicity, that is). Of course, the Club is fairly easy about guests; members frequently invite people to dine with them at the Club.

Membership dues are steep: \$100.00 per year. Members are given credit by the Club and are presented with a monthly bill. Members are kept in good standing despite unpaid bills or lapsed dues if they are currently involved in an expedition which is likely to make the Club a bit more well known. The Club has supported several expeditions, but Darius is not in the habit of staking every member.

The third floor is given over to a set of apartments for the use of visiting members who need temporary accommodation. Members will generally stay in nearby hotels, which will offer more posh accommodations. However, it's not uncommon for Club members to be

temporarily "down on their luck", and take advantage of the Club's hospitality. The rooms are small apartments where members may be housed if it is inconvenient for them to obtain rooms elsewhere (i.e., if General Sidney Forthright-Smythe is visiting, the old bird being unable to amble about like he did in the Zulu wars, he could be housed at the Club.)

Campaign Use of The Empire Club

The Empire Club is a very useful tool for the GM, allowing him to put very different player-characters in one spot without resorting to incredible coincidence. That is really the major reason for the Club in game terms; it's a great place to start for expeditions of many types. Notices might well be posted at the Club looking for adventurous souls for various duties, including exploratory journeys, rescue missions, scientific expeditions, or even mystery solving.

Of course, if the player-characters have formed their own group of adventurers, it won't be necessary to use the Club to get them together. However, the Club can still be used as a setting for adventure, as in the *Killer Candy* scenario presented later in this book. Or perhaps one of the members stole an idol from a temple in some far-off land, storing it at the Club; the cultists have finally tracked it down, and they're trying to steal it back. Such adventures would be a lot of fun, and you wouldn't even have to draw any new maps for your players.

The Empire Club is a plot device waiting to be used. Go right ahead and write up the NPCs at the Club, modify the rules, the location, the history—do what you feel necessary to best fit the Club into your campaign.

The Club

First Floor

- (1) The elevator opens into a lobby decorated with oak paneling and beautiful carpeting. Directly across from the elevator is a wide marble stairway leading to the second floor. Only members are permitted to visit the second floor, a signed pass from Mr. Stoner being the only way a non-member can be allowed up there. Two valets stand at the edges of the stairs. They both prevent passage of non-members up the stairs, and place members' coats and hats in the cloak room located beneath the stairs. There is also a pair of telephones for use by the members (1a), charges rung up on them being billed to the member using the phone. To the left is a pair of bathrooms, the men's (1b) and the women's (1c).
- (2) To the left of the lobby is the lounge where non-members and tradesmen are made to wait for an

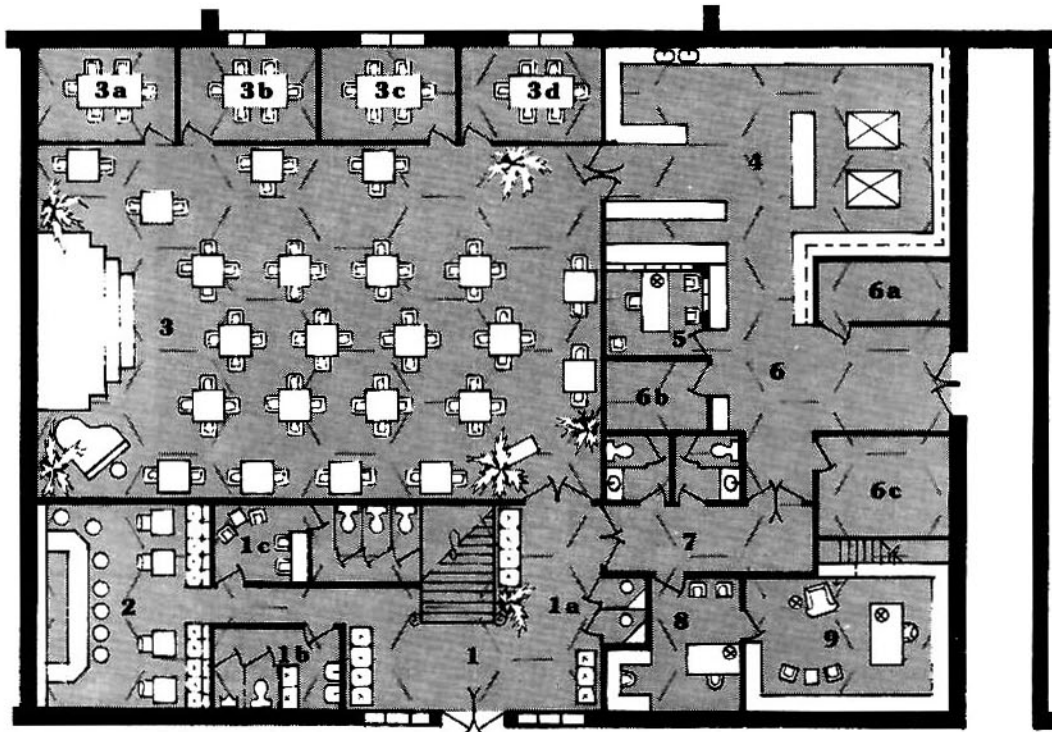
escort. The non-member lounge is supplied with a bar where visitors may drink (during Prohibition, liquor wasn't served to non-members—though members who asked would be provided with liquor). It's open to the second floor, and members there can, and often do, look down upon the visitors.

- (3) The bulk of the main floor is taken up by a massive kitchen and dining area. Here, and in the smaller dining rooms, non-members are allowed to visit friends. The cuisine is excellent, the house special dish shifting from continent to continent on a daily basis. The wall on the left side of the dining area contains a huge world map where each member has had initialed pins placed to represent his or her journeys throughout the world. Rooms 3a, 3b, 3c, and 3d are private dining rooms, for people with important plans to discuss. The stage area is used for occasional lectures, presentations by members of their journeys, and occasionally entertainment is arranged. There's usually a piano player during dinner hours, and sometimes a sultry torch singer.
- (4) This is the large, very professional kitchen. Several chefs and their helpers are present during the day, preparing the elaborate and exquisite meals that are a trademark of the Empire Club. The dumbwaiter goes to the South Pacific Room on the second floor, and to the breakfast room on the third floor.
- (5) This is the head chef's office; the business records for the kitchen are kept here.
- (6) This is the service area. To the right are the service doors opening out to the alleyway (if it's a first story club; otherwise, it opens to a second floor service area). 6a is cold storage, 6b is the wine cellar, and 6c is the pantry.
- (7) A short corridor between the kitchen area and the lobby, with two bathrooms (7a, 7b) for the help.
- (8) To the right side of the elevator lobby is the club office. There Mr. Stoner's secretary deals with most day-to-day business. The switchboard is located in the left corner of the room.
- (9) Darius Stoner's office. He tries not to conduct much business, leaving as much as he can to the individual club managers, who use the office when Darius isn't there (which is quite often). Darius is the only one who knows of the secret stairway which leads up to the strongroom on the second floor and his private apartment on the third floor. The entrance to the stairway is hidden by the oak paneling of the office, and there's a secret press latch that opens the door; it takes a Concealment Roll -5 to find it.

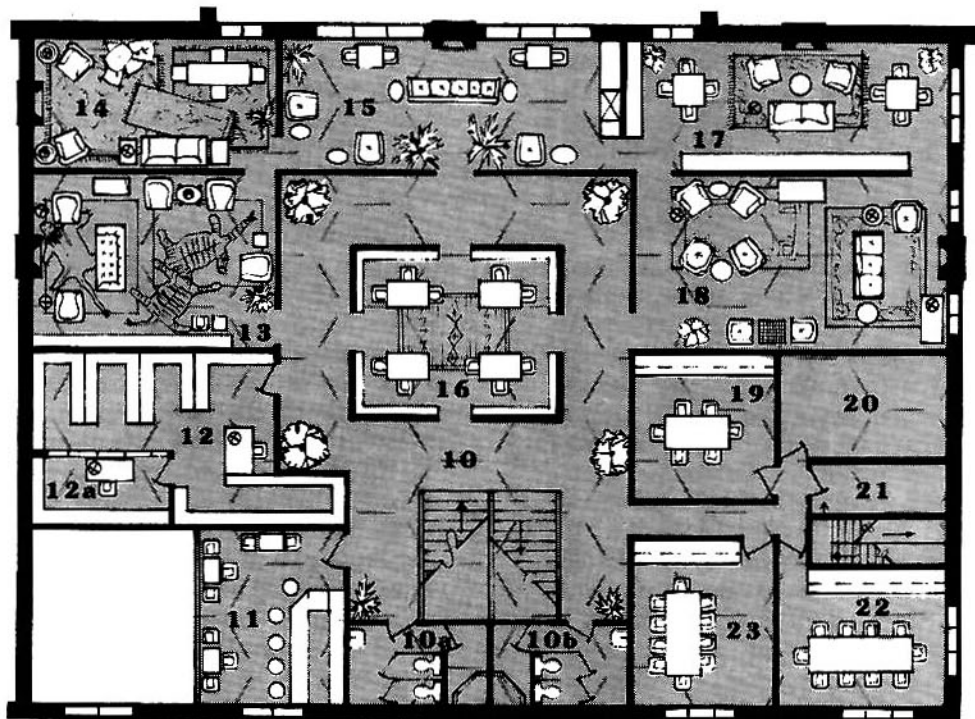
Second Floor

- (10) The second floor of the Club is limited to members only, with rare exceptions. To the right, the stairs lead up to the third floor. Bathrooms

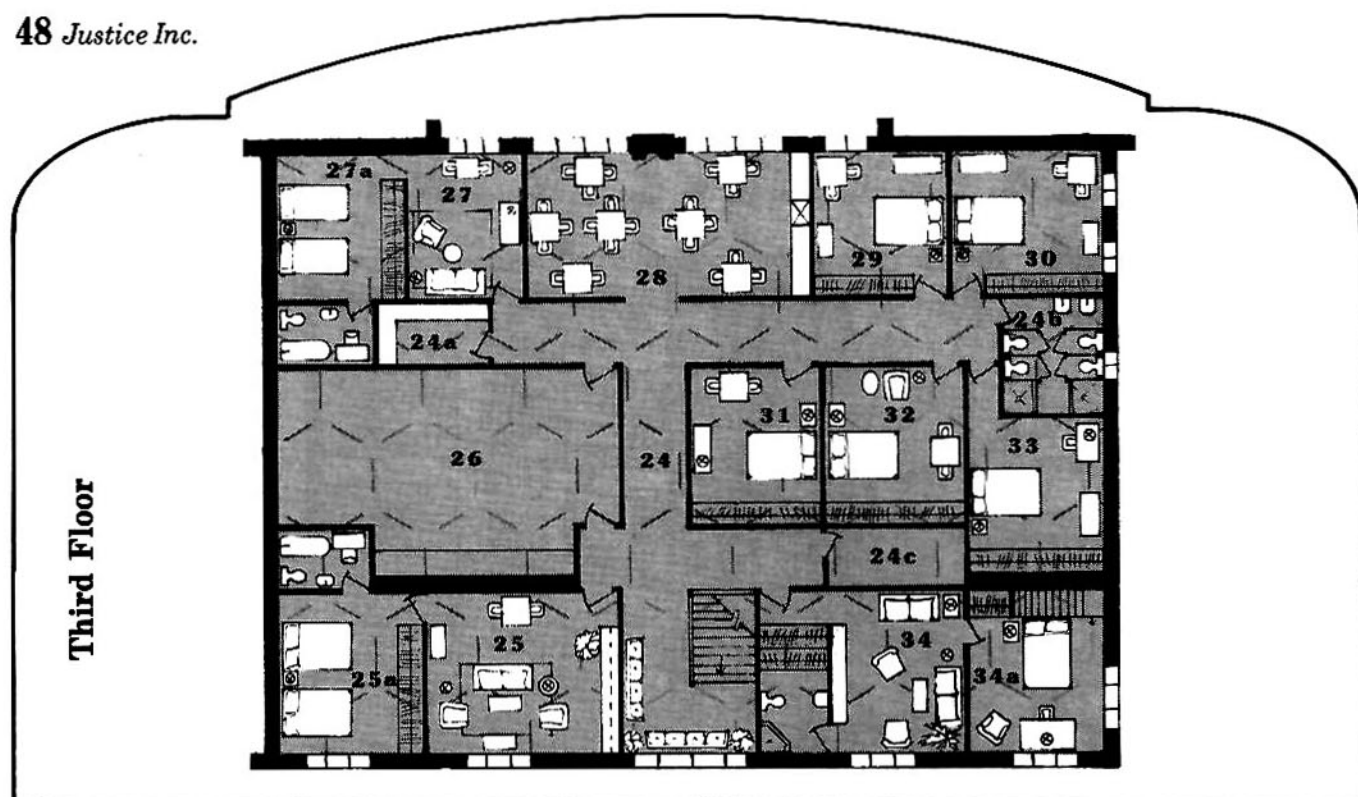
THE EMPIRE CLUB



First Floor



Second Floor



Third Floor

- (10a, 10b) are located behind the stairs.
- (11) Each Club has a members' lounge and bar to the left of the stairs. Often members meet here before retiring to another room to discuss important matters. This lounge overlooks the one on the first floor.
- (12) This is a library specializing in books and manuscripts on travel, far places, and adventure. Many members have placed their memoirs here, as well as donating unusual tomes in many languages, often souvenirs of their journeys. The GM is encouraged to put into the library unusual books that would give clues about adventures. 12a is the rare book room, where those volumes that are particularly valuable, fragile, or both are stored.
- (13) The Africa Room has many animal heads mounted on the left wall. There are a couple of carved statues in the corners from sub-Saharan Africa, but the dominant flavor of the room is Islamic, from the carpeting to the designs painted on the furnishings. (The African art was deemed too primitive by certain members of the Club and therefore removed.) Of course, many samples of African weapons are included in the wall hangings.
- (14) The Middle East Room is suitably decorated, looking strongly like the Africa Room. A star with the likeness of Sir Richard Francis Burton is placed at Mecca on the Saudi Arabian map, Burton having been awarded posthumous membership when the Club was formed. Near the map of Greece and Italy there stand two busts of Emperors, culled from digs by enterprising members of the Club. Fine samples of Damascus steel are displayed on the walls.
- (15) The South Pacific Room contains artifacts from Polynesia, New Zealand, and Australia. Plants from the area adorn the room, along with boomerangs, spears, and war clubs. The dumbwaiter from the first floor stops at this room, as well as going up to the third floor.
- (16) The Americas Room is probably the least entertainingly decorated. Most striking is the carpet, a hand woven affair with an Aztec circle calendar woven into it. Each Americas Room also boasts a stuffed animal of some sort, donated by the estate of Teddy Roosevelt. Numerous examples of American gunsmithing, as well as traditional native weapons, are displayed in this room.
- (17) The India Room is frequented by the British members of the Club, displaying as it does the relics of empire. Indian artwork, weaponry, and handicrafts are featured in this room.
- (18) The Cathay Room, like all of the rooms on this level, is dominated by huge maps of various sections of the world on the walls. It is on these maps, much like the map in the dining area below, that members have initialed pins placed in the map to note their adventures. While a member is exploring an area of the world, the Club will update his adventure (whenever they get reports) and link the pins placed during that adventure with a piece of yarn or ribbon. Of note in the Cathay Room is a large black pin located in China where Darius' parents were killed in a landslide as they searched for the tomb of Genghis Khan. The furnishings of the Cathay Room are taken or styled after the furnishings to be found in that section of the world. Certainly there is nothing so garish as a stuffed elephant lamp, but the details on the map frames, tables,

chairs and such will speak of the area of the world designated by the name of the room. A complete set of *samurai* armor reposes in the corner of the Cathay Room, and a glass display table in the center of the room contains some beautiful rice paper paintings of ancient China. A fine selection of oriental weaponry adorns the walls between the maps.

- (19) A conference room.
- (20) A storage room for luggage, extra chairs, extra exhibits, and other random pieces.
- (21) The strongroom, provided as a service for guests to store their valuables. Such things as expensive hunting rifles, walking sticks, jewelry, and other personal possessions are kept here. The walls are reinforced with steel plates, so only a determined effort with fire axes or explosives could break in. Darius' secret stairway has an entrance into the strongroom, however; it's concealed similarly to the one in his office, and requires a -5 Concealment Roll to find.
- (22), (23) Conference rooms.

Third Floor

- (24) This is the main corridor for the third floor; this is the floor containing accommodations for the convenience of the members, as well as Darius Stoner's personal apartment. 24a is a linen closet, 24b is the common bathroom for the floor (with showers), and 24c is a storage closet.
- (25) One of the two apartments with its own living room and separate bedroom (25a) with attached bath.
- (26) A small gymnasium.
- (27) The other one of the two apartments with its own living room and separate bedroom (27a) with attached bath.
- (28) A breakfast room provided for the members.
- (29)-(33) Apartments.
- (34) This is Darius Stoner's private apartment; he has one in each Club. 34a is his bedroom, with the secret panel leading to the stairway. The panel requires a -5 Concealment Roll to detect.

JOIN THE CLUB

This is a solo adventure for the *Justice Inc.* rules system. This solo adventure is meant to help teach the *Justice Inc.* rules by providing situations and the logical game mechanics to resolve those situations. Because of the format of a solo adventure, your options will be more limited than they would be in actual group play. This is because the solo can't handle the unlimited choices that you could choose to exercise in this adventure. Playing the solo is easy; just read the paragraph, and pick what you feel is the most reasonable choice among the options offered. Your choice will tell you which paragraph to turn to; if there's some dice rolling involved, you'll be told what numbers to roll and are referred to the section in the rules that covers such situations.

For those of you using this solo as an introduction to the game, the descriptions refer to the sample character created in the Introduction: Derek Harrison III, millionaire adventurer. Refer to his character sheet while you're going through the solo.

The solo can be played more than once by using different characters, taken from the samples we provide in the adventures (Lionel Gideon, for instance). Or, if you're already familiar with the rules, you can play the solo with your own character. In any case, please

go to paragraph 1 to start your solo adventure.

1 (from intro)

"Well, Derek Harrison III, this was not the welcome you expected to San Francisco!" You look down to see the mud spattered on you by the 1928 roadster dripping down onto your brightly polished oxford shoes. The driver of the car reminds you of the Orangutangs in the jungles of Micronesia, from whence you have just returned. "I should have stayed in my bush togs; they were better made for this type of stuff than my new Hong Kong tailored suit," you mutter darkly to yourself.

The street where you're standing is dark. The night is more open than the jungle, but a good deal more threatening to you. You're already late for your dinner invitation at the Empire Club. Your suitcases are heavy and you haven't yet gotten a place to stay. And the section of town you're standing in is known for being rather rough.

Across the street you see a hack driver climbing into his cab. If you want to hail him and get a ride to the Empire Club go to paragraph 2. If you decide to walk the short distance to the Empire Club, go to paragraph 3.

2 (from 1)

The cabby smells worse than you did after the Thylacine hunt. And he barely seems to be speaking English as he answers your request for a ride. "I ain't no bozo, so let's see Abe's cab before I start driving. If you're thinking of gettin' any oscar from me, you'll find I ain't no nance. I'll bash your noodle with a Black Betsy." To emphasize his point he tugs a baseball bat from beneath his seat.

You assure him that you are not going to rob him. You flash a five dollar bill in his direction, and he's mollified. The cabby begins chattering away in whatever language it is that he's speaking, and you decide that he is talking about the city. It all seems so foreign to you, to have recently come from a place where the night sky was alight with stars, not lit with so many artificial lights that you cannot see the stars.

The cab cruises through the heart of San Francisco on its way to the Empire Club. Make a visual Perception Roll at -3. (For Derek, this means he has to roll a 9 or less on 3D6. See Perception Rolls on page 73 for an explanation of how Perception works.) If you make it go to 4. If you miss it go to 5.

3 (from 1)

Your walk begins uneventfully, but it's destined not to end that way. From an alley on your right, an alley that runs between a grocery store and a rather nice apartment complex, you hear a shrill, frightened female scream. You notice a police call box about twenty yards up the street. If you would like to run to the call box to summon help, go to 6. If you'd like to drop your suitcases and rush to see what's happening, go to 7.

4 (from 2)

From the left side of the street you see a fashionably dressed couple leaving a swank restaurant. The man's face seems familiar, and the two apes flanking him would seem to place him as a gangster. On the right side of the road you see a gunman rising from behind a parked car, a Tommygun held tightly in his hands.

Your cab has slowed for traffic. You jack your door open and roll onto the roadway. "Get down! A killer!" Your shout starts the man and his woman diving just as a hail of bullets shred his guards.

You rise and vault your own cab. The gunman is swinging towards you, trying to bring his gun to bear on you. His OCV will be -1 because of his surprise. Being clever, you use the cover afforded by the cars as you race towards him.

This action starts on segment 12, as do all combats. The gunman is DEX 10, SPD 2. Derek is DEX 14, SPD 3. Since this is segment 12, both get to act (see the Speed Chart on page 77). Derek's action was to get up and run toward the gunman. He didn't get all the way there; he's still 3" away. (If this was a game-mastered adventure, the GM would have sketched out on a piece of paper the distance from you to the gunman. Since this is a solo, you have less options—

we tell you where you are, and often limit your choices of action. In game-mastered adventures, the player has more freedom since the GM can react to many different choices.)

The gunman, on DEX 10, now gets to act. He chooses to fire a burst from his Tommygun at Derek. The gunman's OCV is 3 (DEX 10/3 = 3). Now, let's figure out all the modifiers. First, the gunman's OCV is 3 - 1 (For surprise. Normally, this is a judgement that the GM would make; here, we make it for you.) = OCV 2. Next, Derek has some cover from the cars; this means a -4 to the gunman's OCV (another judgement call). The gunman's OCV is now 2 - 4 = OCV -2 (yes, OCV and DCV can be negative). The gunman is, however, firing a burst, which gives him a +2 OCV bonus (see page 63). So his OCV is now -2 + 2 = OCV 0. Burst fire means that the weapon's Range Modifier (page 00) is halved (-1/4" goes to -1/2"). Thus, any target within 2" is no minus, and Derek at 3" away is -1 OCV for the gunman. The gunman's OCV is 0 - 1 = OCV -1. But there's one last modifier; looking at the Gun Chart, a Tommygun is +1 OCV when it's burst firing, because it's a heavy gun and therefore more stable. So the gunman's final OCV is -1 + 1 = OCV 0.

Now, for the gunman to hit Derek he needs to roll 11 (the base Attack Roll) + 0 (the gunman's OCV) - 5 (Derek's DCV, from his character sheet) = 6 or less on 3D6 (that's the total of three dice). This is a difficult task. However, since this is burst fire, Derek is hit by one bullet for every 2 points the roll is made by. Thus, if the gunman rolls a 6, Derek is hit by one bullet; if the gunman rolls a 4, Derek is hit by 2 bullets.

Roll the dice. If you roll a total of 7 or greater, Derek was missed. If you rolled 6 or less, Derek was hit by a bullet. Roll 1D6+1 for the number of Body Pips done; that is, roll one die and add one. The total is the number of Body Pips subtracted from Derek's total (in other words, the number of Body Pips done to him). Now, roll 1D6 and multiply the number you get by the number of Body Pips done to Derek. The result is the number of Stun Pips done to Derek; that is, the number of Body Pips he subtracts from his total. If the number of Body Pips done was more than Derek's total Body Pips, then Derek is bleeding to death (though he may still be conscious and functioning). If the number of Stun Pips done was more than Derek's Constitution, then Derek is Stunned, and may not act on his next action phase. If the number of Stun Pips done was more than Derek's total Stun Pips, then Derek is unconscious. Now, at the end of segment 12, Derek gets a Recovery; that is, he gets back 6 (his REC) Stun Pips and 6 Endurance Pips, if he's used any. Now, back to our story.

If you survive the attack, you may hit the gunman.

This takes place on segment 4 of the next turn, when Derek gets to act again if he wasn't Stunned. Derek will try to punch out the gunman. The gunman's relevant Characteristics are that he's STR 9, DEX 10, BODY 8, CON 8, SPD 2, PD 2, and STUN 17. Derek is OCV 5 (from his character sheet), and the gunman is DCV 3 (DEX 10/3 = 3). Derek needs to roll

an $11 + 5 - 3 = 13$ or less to hit the gunman. If he hits, Derek will do 4D6 damage—1D6 for every 5 points of STR (STR 15/5 = 3D6) + 1D6 for Derek's Brawling Skill. Now, this damage is a normal attack, unlike the killing attack the bullet did. So if Derek succeeds in hitting, he rolls the 4D6 and finds the total, which is the number of Stun Pips done to the gunman. The gunman then subtracts his 2 PD from the total (because this is a normal attack), and applies the remainder against his total Stun Pips. The Body Pips done by the attack are found by counting the number of dice, adding 1 for every 6 you roll, and subtracting 1 for every 1 you roll on the dice (see *Determining Damage* on page 58 in the Rule Book).

If you Stun or knock him out go to 8. If you are stunned or knocked out, or killed, go to 9.

5 (from 2)

A stream of machine gun bullets spiderweb's the windscreen of your cab. The garrulous cabbie catches a slug in the head and his body collapses on the front seat. On the left side of the street you catch a vision of a gangster, his moll and two thugs being thrown against the wall of the fashionable restaurant they have just left, crimson jets spurting from their bodies.

You dive for cover in the cab as a second wave of bullets sprays glass and bits of upholstery through the cab. On the floor you discover a .45 automatic jammed under the back seat. It comes into your hands coolly, and the action clicks sweetly as a bullet is loaded into position. The last hail of bullets blasted the lock from the door of your cab and the passenger side door swings open enough to reveal a grinning machinegunner who seems quite satisfied with his handiwork. "Surprise, sucker!" you say as you blast him.

His DCV is 0, his CON is 8, and his STUN is 17. His BODY is 8. If you render him *hors de combat* (that is, Stun him, knock him unconscious, or kill him), go to 10. If you fail to do this, go to 26.

Derek's chance to hit him is $11 + 5 - 0 = 16$ or less on 3D6. The .45 auto does 1D6+1 BODY; multiply it by 1D6 to find the STUN. See paragraph 4 for an explanation of how to hit him and determine damage.

6 (from 3)

Halfway to the call box the scream sounds again, and closer. You spin to see two thugs dragging a woman from the alley into the street. Her dress has been torn, revealing her creamy white throat. Tears are streaming from her violet eyes, her black hair flows out behind her. Her eyes lock with yours. "Help me!"

One of the goons shoves her fully into his partner's arms and turns to face you. His nose has been broken more times than most international peace treaties, his mouth is small and cruel. "Beat it, or I massage your kisser." You, of course, leap to the attack.

The combat starts, as do all combats, on segment 12 (see page 54 for more info). The thug is STR 20, DEX 11, CON 8, BODY 10, PD 3, SPD 2, REC 6, and

STUN 24. Derek gets the first shot; his chance to hit is 11 (the base chance) + 5 (Derek's OCV, from his character sheet) - 4 (the thug's DCV, from DEX 11/3 = 4) = 12 or less on 3D6. If you make the roll, you hit him and do 4D6 normal damage (3D6 for your STR 15, +1D6 for your Brawling Skill). Add up the total of the dice, subtract the thug's PD (3), and subtract the remainder from the thug's total STUN. If the amount you did (after subtracting the thug's PD) was more than 8 (the thug's CON), you've Stunned the thug, and he doesn't get to act this phase, as he normally would. If Derek missed him, he gets to swing back on DEX 11. His chance to hit Derek is $11 + 4 - 5 = 10$ or less, and he does 4D6 damage (1D6 for every 5 pts. of STR). Use the Speed Chart from page 77 to keep track of the combat; note that Derek acts on segments 4, 8, and 12, and the thug acts on segments 6 and 12.

Continue the process you've just seen until one character or another falls unconscious (i.e., all his Stun Pips are gone). Note that a Stunned character is DCV 0 until his next action phase, when he recovers being Stunned, and doesn't get to act that phase while he recovers. Also remember that every segment 12, all characters get a free Recovery; that is, they get back their REC score in STUN and END that they have lost during the turn. Both Derek and the thug have REC 6, so they'd get back 6 lost Stun, if they'd lost any. Now, back to our story.

If you defeat him, his partner flees, leaving the woman in your charge. In this case go to 11. If you are rendered unconscious go to 12.

7 (from 3)

You burst in on a scene that horrifies you. A big bruiser of a man is holding a beautiful young girl while his partner has torn her dress. Both men are laughing gruffly and neither notices you. A heavy piece of wood, much like a native warclub, comes into your hand. And you descend upon them like the wrath of God!

You will get a free phase in which they will not act due to the surprise of your attack. The first man you hit will be surprised out of combat, hence will take double Stun. The second will put up more resistance if given a chance.

It's combat time! The combat starts, as do all combats, on segment 12 (see page 54 for more info). The thugs are surprised, so they will not get to act this segment. The thugs are STR 20, DEX 11, CON 8, BODY 10, PD 3, SPD 2, REC 6, and STUN 24. Derek gets the first shot; his chance to hit is 11 (the base chance) + 5 (Derek's OCV, from his character sheet) - 0 (the thug's DCV, since he's surprised and he wasn't in combat) = 16 or less on 3D6. If you make the roll, you hit him and do 6D6 normal damage (3D6 for your STR 15, +3D6 for your club). Add up the total of the dice, double the total because the thug was surprised out of combat, subtract the thug's PD (3), and subtract the remainder from the thug's total STUN. If the amount you did (after subtracting the thug's PD) was more

than 8 (the thug's CON), you've Stunned the thug, and he doesn't get to act this phase, as he normally would. If, more likely, you've done more STUN than the thug's total, he is unconscious. If you missed him, he doesn't get to swing at you until segment 6 of the next turn, since he was totally surprised. His chance to hit you is $11 + 4 - 5 = 10$ or less, and he does 4D6 damage (1D6 for every 5 pts. of STR). Use the Speed Chart from page 77 to keep track of the combat; note that you act on segments 4, 8, and 12, and the thugs act on segments 6 and 12.

Continue the process you've just seen until either both thugs or you are unconscious (i.e., all Stun Pips are gone). Note that a Stunned character is DCV 0 until his next action phase, when he recovers being Stunned, and doesn't get to act that phase while he recovers. Also remember that every segment 12, all characters get a free Recovery; that is, they get back their REC score in STUN and END that they have lost during the turn. Both you and the thugs have REC 6, so they'd get back 6 lost Stun, if they'd lost any. Now, back to our story.

If you beat both of the men and rescue the girl, you guide her to the street and paragraph 11. If they knock you out, go to 12. If you're killed, your body will be discovered in about 12 hours, and your dinner will be cold.

8 (from 4)

You scoop the tommygun up and detach the clip. Before you can look around for a cop, the man you saved crosses the street and slaps you on the shoulder.

"That took moxie. I'm Fast Louie, the Big Man in San Francisco, and I want to extend my personal thanks. By the way, the babe's name is Georgette." The gangster appears impressed with his own importance, and seems to be implying that you have done something very special in saving him. His moll is gorgeous, though her eyes do seem to be a bit vacuous.

The gangster fishes a money clip from his pocket. He peels five bills from the wad it barely holds and deposits them in your breast pocket. "There, kid, there's five C notes. If you ever run into trouble with any of my people, you just ask for me. I remember what you done, and it'll make a difference."

The sound of police sirens drive the gangster and his woman off. You reenter your cab, the driver babbling incoherently about something called a "gat". You ignore him and bid him continue to the Empire Club. Go to 13.

9 (from 4)

If you have died in this attempt at heroics you may rejoice in the fact that you earn yourself a headline in the papers and politicians will make great mileage out of your untimely death.

If you are stunned or rendered senseless you recover to find the mobster standing over you. "Thanks for the help. He was a shooter from the Windy City; old

Al Scarface is upset with me." The mobster helps you up. "I'm Fast Louie, I run San Francisco. You need anything, you come to me."

Louie shoves you into the cab and speeds you on your way by stuffing a twenty into the pocket of the driver. He also hands you two one hundred dollar bills "for yer troubles..." You speed off to the Empire Club: go to 13.

10 (from 5)

The automatic roars in your fist, the first bullet catching the thug dead center. He's knocked back into the building behind him. He staggers as your next bullet catches him and then he falls forward. You step from the cab and realize that he's not going to be shooting anything or anyone for a very long time.

You'll notice that you didn't have to roll dice for your second shot. In a game-mastered adventure, you would have. In a solo, your range of action is necessarily restricted so that the solo doesn't take up volumes trying to cover every possible action. Besides, what are you complaining about? You got him, didn't you?

The police arrive and you are hailed as a hero. You miss your dinner at the Empire Club, but are honored there at a banquet when the Mayor of San Francisco gives you a medal to commend your bravery. Your first adventure is done, earning you one Experience Point and something of a reputation in the Bay Area.

11 (from 6 and 7)

Being the gentleman you are, you doff your jacket and let her cover herself with it. Gently you calm her fears and dry her tears. "Thank you very much," she sniffs. "I'm so frightened. They are members of a gang who think I have information. I don't have any, not on them, but they won't believe me. I will never be safe. Could I impose upon you to take me home?"

Of course you nod and agree. The walk to her apartment is not far and she invites you up. There she offers you some coffee and it is clear she is attracted to you. If you'd like to skip your dinner at the Empire Club and perhaps have a romantic evening with the woman you have saved, go to 14. If you would like to suggest she accompany you to the Empire Club, go to 15.

12 (from 6 and 7)

The shock of hitting the water instantly brings you to your senses. The Pacific embraces you, salt water stinging your eyes and filling your mouth. Instantly you prevent what precious little air you have in your lungs from leaving and you try to swim to the surface. You then discover that you have been bound hand and foot.

To release yourself, you'll have to escape the ropes that bind you.

If you had Contortionist Skill, it would be easy.

Since you don't, you'll have to try to use your Strength to break the ropes. Make a STR Roll (9 + STR/5); in your case, it's 12 or less (see Characteristic Rolls on page 73). If you fail the roll, you can try to make an EGO Roll (9 + EGO/5), 11 or less in your case, to be able to "push" your Strength. If you make your EGO Roll, you can add 5 to your STR, +1 for every point you made the roll by; so if you roll a 9, you add 7 to your STR for the purpose of making the STR Roll, which will give you a STR Roll of 13 or less. But there's a price to pay. Using your STR costs Endurance Pips, 1 pip for every 5 pts. of STR you use. When you push your STR, you pay your normal END for your STR (3 END), plus 1 pip for 1 point of STR you pushed (if you rolled a 9, that would be 7 + 3 = 10 END total). When you're underwater, you don't get any Recoveries, so no END comes back (see Recovery on page 71). In your case, you're spending a minimum of 1 END per phase; even though you've slowed voluntarily to SPD 2 to last longer (see page 77), you still won't last long, especially if you keep pushing your STR. If you blow the EGO Roll, you can try again each phase until you make it, then try to make your STR Roll. Back to our story.

If you escape your bonds go to 16. If you die, well, you die.

13 (from 8 and 9)

You arrive at the Empire Club a bit late, and consequently are exiled to the non-members' lounge. No one else is in there, and the man behind the bar isn't very talkative; his ear's glued to the radio and a Yankees game. Then a tall man walks through the door from the foyer and extends a hand to you. "I am Darius Stoner, Mr. Reynolds." Behind him you catch a fleeting glimpse of your cabby leaving.

You shake his hand and apologize for being late. He smiles. "Do not be concerned, Michael, I have been informed as to the reason for your delay." From his pocket he takes a small box and hands it to you. You open it and discover map pins with your initials on them.

"Welcome to the Club..." The other members, gathered around the upper balcony applaud. You have finished your first adventure and have earned one Experience Point.

14 (from 11)

You see a devilish glint in her eyes as she walks towards her bedroom and offers to slip into something a bit more comfortable. She points out where she has secreted a bottle of wine and you gather it up along with two glasses and a corkscrew. By the time you have the wine open she returns in a negligee that leaves little to the imagination.

You pour two glasses of wine and settle back on the couch with her. She raises a toast to you, saying, "To my knight in shining armor, and whatever he has beneath that armor." You drink and as soon as your

glass leaves your lips, her lips take its place. You crush her to your chest and return the passion of her kiss.

Just then the door explodes into the room. She jerks her head away from yours and covers herself with her hands. "My husband!"

The man in the doorway fills it, entirely, without an ounce of fat on his body. "OK, dandy, you're done."

If you would like to try and talk your way out of this, perhaps offering money in return for keeping your teeth, go to 17. If you want to fight go to 18.

15 (from 11)

She gets dressed to the nines and you hop a cab to the Club. Because neither of you are members, you're relegated to the lounge even though you mean to have dinner there. You barely have time for one drink when a man walks in and introduces himself as Darius Stoner. He looks rather disapprovingly at you. "Mr. Reynolds, you are late and a guest was not included in your invitation. Such traits are not what we look for in a member."

If you would like to tell him the reason for your tardiness and the presence of the woman, go to 19. If you would like to tell him where to put his Club, go to 20.

16 (from 12)

You strike to the surface and suck sweet, fresh air into your aching lungs. Instantly you get your bearings, swimming to a dock and ladder nearby. You silently climb the ladder and discover yourself in the waterfront district. Directly before you is an open warehouse. Make a hearing Perception Roll at -2.

In your case, this roll is a 10 or less.

If you make it go to 21. If you miss it go to 22.

17 (from 14)

Your offer of money for the honor of his wife first fills him with rage, then greed springs into his eyes. "I want all the money you have on you to forget this." You fork it over, retaining only enough for cab fare to the Club, and then you leave. Once you reach the Club, people there tell you that you were taken in "The Badger Game."

Your adventure is over; you are poorer but wiser for your experience. You have earned one Experience Point.

18 (from 14)

This guy is tough. He wades into you, fists flashing like lightning. Balling your fists you meet him head on.

The man you're facing is STR 15, DEX 11, CON 10, BODY 10, PD 4, SPD 3, REC 5, and STUN 23. You enter battle on segment 12; you've got the first shot, since you have the higher DEX. You both are SPD 3, so you always act in the same segments. Good luck.

You'll need it; this guy's tough.

If you knock him out go to 23. If you are defeated go to 24.

19 (from 15)

Darius listens to your tale, smiling at the woman as she confirms it. "You will forgive my harshness. It appears you do have what it takes."

With that statement he looks up at the assembled club members standing around the second floor balcony. He fishes a box of map pins with your initials on them out and presents them to you. "Welcome to the Club." The other members applaud you and you are led, with the woman, to dinner.

Your first adventure is successfully finished; you've earned one Experience Point and a sumptuous meal on the Club.

20 (from 15)

Even as harsh words are forming on your lips, the woman you saved braces Stoner. "Derek here is late because of me. He save me from two men who were attacking me. Perhaps your club is not worthy of him!"

Stoner is stunned for a moment, then he nods and smiles. Looking at you he says, "One trait we treasure more than the courage to act is the forbearance to avoid blowing one's own horn. Please forgive my pre-judgement of you. And welcome to the Club." Stoner, to the accompanying applause of the members assembled on the upper floor balcony, gives you a box of map pins with your initials on them. "Furthermore, I would be honored to buy you a drink."

This hushes the crowd for a second, then their applause renews and amplifies itself. You have been truly honored in your first adventure, and you have earned one Experience Point.

21 (from 16)

The water drains from your ears and you hear the whimpering cry of the woman you tried to rescue. The fiends are torturing her, from the sounds of it. You creep forward and see one of them applying a cigarette to her arm. A red haze passes over your eyes and you attack. Both of them will be surprised, out of combat.

These are the same thugs from paragraph 7. Once again, you've got the drop on them. By the way, enough time has passed out of combat that you can have all your lost STUN and END back; however, any BODY you've taken will take some days to heal. There are no clubs available this time, so you'll have to use your fist for 4D6 damage. Once again, you get to act on segment 12 and they get no response that segment. Go for it!

If you defeat them go to 25. If you are defeated, they will be on the verge of beating your brains out when the cops arrive. You wake up in a hospital, nursing a good collection of lumps. The cops take a statement and then tell you to scram. You've managed to survive and earn one Experience Point, though you've had

better days.

22 (from 16)

The lump on the back of your head is pounding painfully, your lungs hurt and your new suit is ruined. You stumble into the streets and a police car stops to help you. They take you to a hotel and you sleep for the next two days solid.

Your adventure is done, though you do get satisfaction in the end. Your description of the characters allowed the police to capture them and return the woman who they were attempting to kidnap to her home. You are a hero of sorts, and you get one Experience Point for your trouble.

23 (from 18)

The big guy crashes to the floor and the woman, Christine by name, hugs and kisses you. "He's my ex-husband and very jealous. I'm so glad you weren't hurt." You drag her ex out of the building and return to her apartment for a romantic evening. You miss your dinner at the Club, but you don't really care.

Your adventure is over and you've earned one Experience Point.

24 (from 18)

"Multiple fractures of the arms and left leg," is what you hear the doctor telling his students as you regain your senses. "Fractures are secondary to fooling around with a married woman." The class laughs at that, and you would join in but your broken jaw and ribs protest.

Your adventure is over, but you've earned one Experience Point despite your relative lack of success.

25 (from 21)

You release her and carry her to the street. There a passing police car picks you both up and takes you to a hospital. It turns out that she is Christine Van Ordine, heiress to the Van Ordine fortune. She is very grateful for all you have done, and she offers to bankroll any new expeditions you wish to undertake in the future.

You have succeeded and have earned one Experience Point.

26 (from 5)

You know that you haven't got him. You see his evil grin as his finger tightens on the trigger, just before the lead hoses into you. You brace for the impact and close your eyes to avoid the sight of your death. You hear the sound of gunfire...but you're not dead! You open your eyes to see a beat cop standing over the body of the gunman, peering at you with a worried frown. "Faith, laddie, are ye all right?" He hauls you out and sets you on your feet. You thank him, and proceed somewhat shakily to the Club. Your adventure is over, and you have earned one Experience Point.

The Coates Shambler

The Coates Shambler is a *Justice Inc.* adventure for three to five talented-normal or hero characters. It can help to have a heavily psychic-oriented character, but it's not necessary. Persons intending to play in this scenario should read no farther.

GM's Introduction

The GM should read through the adventure before telling the players anything. Next, he should decide how he wants to run the adventure; *The Coates Shambler* is set up to be run three different ways.

- (1) The Coates Shambler is a real entity, and the characters must deal with a terrifyingly powerful ghost who seeks to destroy a young woman.
- (2) The Coates Shambler is just an old story, but someone is using that old legend to frighten Alicia into death or insanity; thus, the Shambler doesn't exist (except as a fake).
- (3) *Both* (1) and (2) are true; someone is trying to drive Alicia insane with the legend of the Shambler, but unknown to him a *real* Shambler exists (talk about confusion)!

The GM should choose one of these variations before he starts the adventure. The best way to choose is to give the players the intro (about Alicia's call for help, and the story she tells as given below; then listen to the players discuss the matter. The GM's choice should be based on what the characters expect. If they expect a real ghost, choose (2). If the players don't believe in ghosts, try (1), to shake them up a little. If you want to really make things difficult, use (3).

Next, decide if you want to personalize the adventure at all, by changing the locale, the NPCs, or the ghost. A few small changes might tie this adventure in to elements already in your campaign, and thus make it more interesting for the players. For instance, if you've already introduced an NPC private detective in your campaign, put him into the scenario instead of Lionel Gideon.

Now's the time to get the characters involved in the scenario. Alicia can approach them through the Empire Club; she knows that helpful people hang out there, and her father Marcus is a member. She may show up in person to plead for assistance, or perhaps make a dramatic entrance in true pulp style (fainting into the arms of a character, or being robbed in front of the Club

where the characters can rescue her). Some characters may have other reasons to get involved: reporters for the story, ghost-hunters because of the legend; perhaps the character's father was an old friend of the family. Anyway, the characters get together, and Alicia tells the following tale:

A ghost has walked the site of the Coates Estate for generations, for more years in fact than the current mansion (built in 1840) has stood on the land. The Coates family, which founded Coates Village in this same lowland Massachusetts valley in 1702, has owned the land for its entire known history, and suffers from a peculiar reputation.

According to popular area mythlore, whoever is the current heir to the Coates fortune goes mad before he's forty. According to the nearby village's newspaper morgue, the family really does have something of a history of eccentricity; of the last five family leaders, spanning the last 102 years, one has committed suicide, one was slain by his son in a much covered-up scandal, one disappeared, and two were institutionalized. Among the institutionalized was Marcus Coates, the last master of the estate. His daughter, Alicia Coates, has recently returned from college to take over the leadership of the family and estate.

Also according to area legend, the Coates Ghost shows up every six or seven years, appearing to be a huge, limping man dressed in rough clothing appropriate to the late 1700s. This ghost is supposed to wander the grounds and buildings of the estate, making noises, breaking tables, straining nerves, and occasionally scaring a family member or estate guest toward an accidental death. These disturbances go on for only a few months, but whether the ghost is around or not, the leader of the family inevitably goes mad.

That's the legend. Unfortunately for the Coates family, it happens to be the truth, depending on which variation you're using. After Marcus Coates was institutionalized after a bizarre incident with a steamer trunk and a mailman, Alicia returned to take up the family reins (her mother had died seven years ago); within a couple of weeks, the Coates Shambler had begun to make its regular appearances, and the very practical Alicia Coates began to get scared.

She began to send out invitations—to noted detectives, psychics, reporters, and independent observers. All these notables were invited to the estate to reveal or discover the truth behind the Shambler and the curse of insanity. The player-characters, of course, were among those invited, as

were noted British detective Lionel Gideon, famous medium Elisabeth Shields, girl reporter Joan Corrigan, and Barrow Gray and Candace Stokes, an engaged couple who are friends of Alicia's. With all these people assembled, Alicia hopes to break the curse which has apparently gripped her family for more than 230 years.

That's the general theme, anyway. On to specifics:

The Characters

Alicia Coates, an English major just graduated, is 22, blond, attractive, and talented. She is quiet and reserved, perhaps as a result of having spent her first 15 years at the estate. The referee should play her a little strange, too. She tends to become fascinated and distracted while watching fires, sleeps long hours, seems to evidence difficulty focusing on conversations, and eats a great deal for her size. On the other hand, she is charming, cultured, a fine musician, and a very entertaining hostess.

Lionel Gideon, a famous detective of the "Call all the suspects into the drawing room and I will show you who's the killer" school of self-promotion, is a tall, distinguished, haughty man. He wears an eyepatch over his left eye, which was damaged by shrapnel in the Great War. He's a bit of a self-aggrandizing heel, actually, and contemptuous of the idea of psychic powers, but still an effective detective.

Joan Corrigan is the girl reporter who broke the *Shrunken Heads* mystery in New York a year ago. She is the archetype of female New York reporters—tough, capable of sharp repartee, a Brooklyn twang to her voice, making a great deal of her inability to be startled. She is an effective reporter and photographer, and has brought her darkroom equipment and set it up in her rooms on the estate. She is short, about 5', brunette, and irritable.

Elisabeth Shields, the psychic whose book *Twelve Hauntings* is a classic among parapsychologic researchers, is an elderly and wheelchair-bound woman, cool and imperturbable. She's so imperturbable, in fact, that she seldom concedes that she's in danger, even in the most violent of haunting situations. She's as convinced of her own invulnerability as of her leadership, though neither is particularly impressive. She is, though, a recognized authority in the field of psychic phenomena. She and Lionel Gideon do not get along.

Barrow Gray and Candace Stokes are a horrifyingly typical couple—the children of two wealthy New England families, born with the proverbial silver spoons in their mouths, a trifle condescending to individuals below their specific social statuses but generally nice people, they've been unofficially

engaged for four years and officially for two, and intend to be married in a few months. A fact which is not made immediately obvious, but which Alicia, Barrow, Candace, or any of the servants could answer, is that Barrow is Alicia's cousin. Some questions in the village, asked of the librarian, would reveal that Barrow is the last of the Coates line aside from Marcus and Alicia, and would naturally inherit the estate if anything happened to Marcus and Alicia.

If you've chosen one of the scenarios where Barrow is out to get Alicia, then the following facts apply. Barrow is Alicia's cousin, and heir to the Coates fortune (rumored to be in the millions). He's decided to get hold of all this wealth by killing or driving insane the only two people in his way: Marcus and Alicia Coates. Barrow is aided in this endeavour by Candace Stokes, who's always been jealous of Alicia (who is far wealthier, prettier, and more talented than Candace), and Samuel Clay, the groundskeeper for the Coates Estate. Samuel has hated the Coates family since Marcus beat him for stealing some silverware.

Barrow's plan centers around the fact that the Coates family has a history of insanity. Of course, the silly legend has been around for years; Barrow's extensive research into the family history has shown that this legend was used as a face-saving excuse for family members going crazy. But many people still believe in the legend. So Barrow has decided to use the ghost legend as a tool to drive Marcus and Alicia over the edge, or as a cover story if it's necessary to kill them. When the player-characters arrive, Barrow's plot is already well along; he's succeeded in driving Marcus Coates over the edge into insanity. Now that Alicia's returned from college, Barrow has started to work on her.

Barrow didn't anticipate that Alicia would call for help in the way she did, but he'll go along with it so as not to make her suspicious. In fact, he can use all these people to help confirm the legend, and if they really believe in ghosts they'll help make Alicia believe. Of course, Barrow will have to be somewhat more careful now, but if anybody gets in his way, he's got his trusty .45 pistol. As for the "supernatural" incidents, Barrow's years as a stage magician in New York (a fact unknown to Alicia; this can only be discovered by a phone call or two to New York) give him the skill to construct interesting effects.

Then there are the player-characters. Not all of them have to be famous detectives or psychics; some could have known Alicia from college, some could be associates of people who did receive invitations, or even friends or associates of the non-player characters described in the paragraphs above.

Also on the estate are numerous servants and other employees of the Coates family. They are all normals; each has a 2 pt. Professional Skill in the occupation for which he's employed.

Mary Milledge, an elderly woman, is Miss Shields' nurse and personal companion. Jason Green is the Coates butler and has been with the family for 30

years; he has seen several manifestations of the Shambler over the years, and has seen two of his employers put behind padded walls (any encounter where player-characters pump him for information should be role-played to the hilt, with the imperturbable English gentleman's gentleman attempting to describe horrific incidents and gruesome deaths in a cultured and matter-of-fact manner). Nora Green, his wife, is the estate's recordkeeper and business manager. Samuel Clay is the elderly groundskeeper; Jonathan Clark is his callow assistant. Elmira Cross is the cook. Marion and Diana are the maids; Carlo, who is generally soiled and surly, is the stablekeeper. The referee is encouraged to flesh out and develop these people as needed.

The Estate

The Coates Estate is located in a valley in eastern Massachusetts. This valley was originally settled in the early 1700s; the settlers were led by Oliver Coates. The Coates Estate is tucked away in a corner of the valley, with a good view of Coates Village at the center of the valley. The road to the Estate is rather primitive, and the forest in the area quite dense; if the road were to wash out (which happens during the spring floods), the Estate would be effectively isolated. Characters can get to the Estate from New York by train to Springfield, where Alicia's chauffeur will pick them up. If the characters are based in the area, they can drive to the Estate.

The Coates Estate proper is several acres of land enclosed by 1" (two meter) walls; the enclosed area is rather overgrown with trees and shrubs. The area right around the mansion is beautifully landscaped, with wide lawns and large old trees. Further away, there are more trees and shrubs, forming a fairly thick forest. Other buildings on the site include the stables, the gardener's cottage, and a storage shed.

The mansion itself is a two-story affair with a high-sloped roof denoting a spacious attic. Built nearly a hundred years ago, it is constructed from oak inside and out, beautifully woodcrafted and aging well.

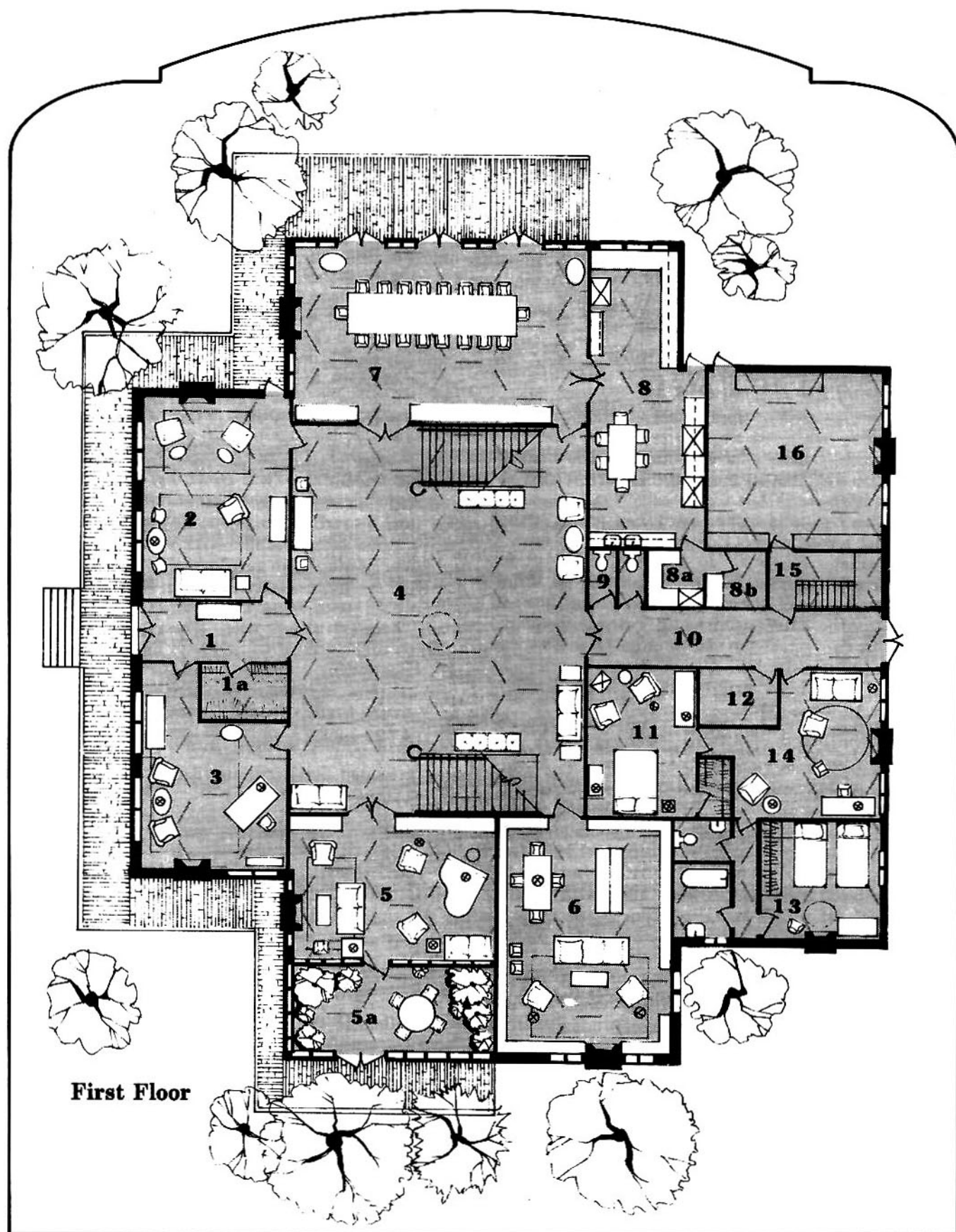
Individual rooms and areas on the maps representing the mansion are numbered, keyed to descriptions below.

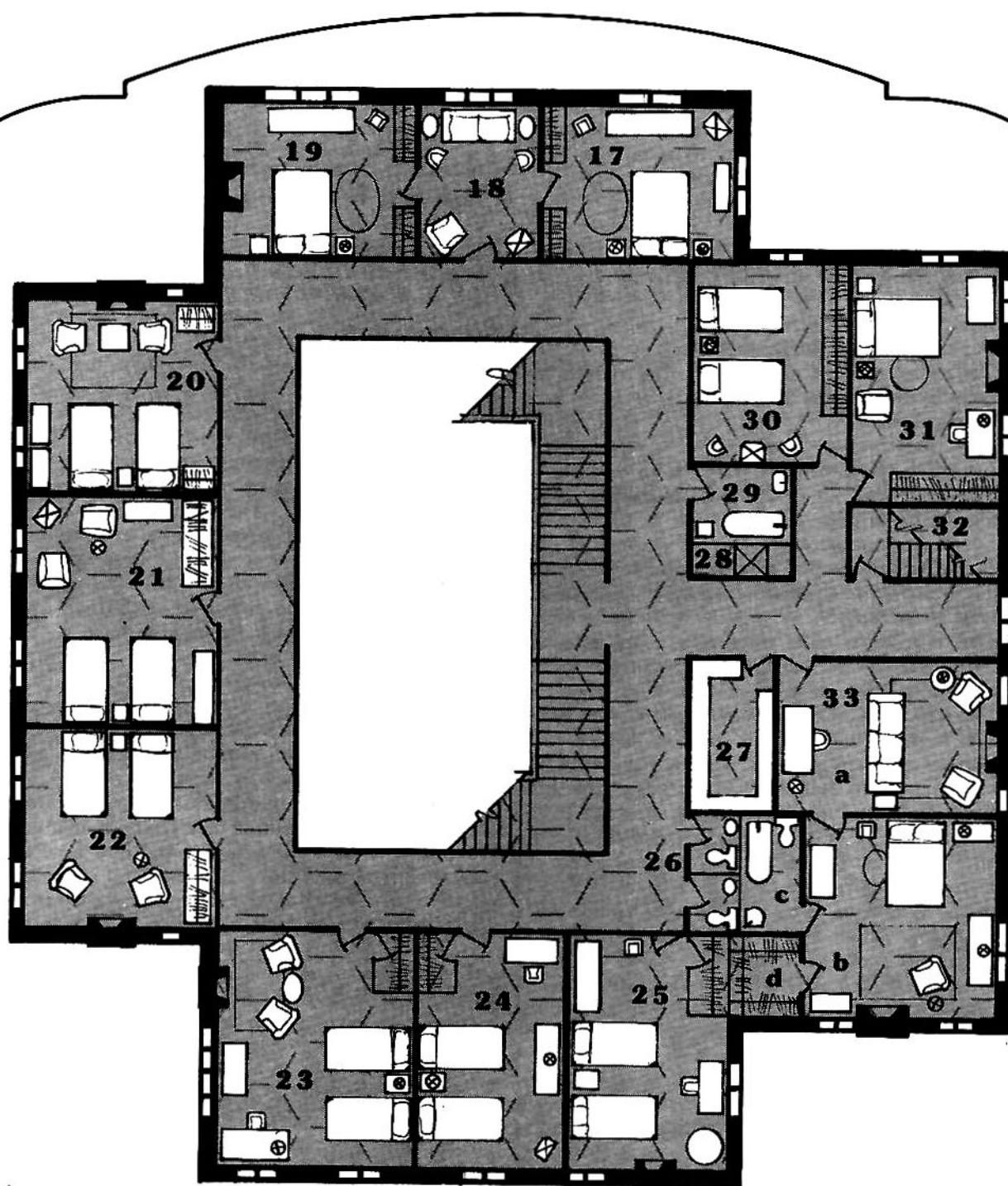
First Floor

- (1) The entrance to the manor proper. It's very impressive: a beautiful, polished hardwood floor, expensive rug, walnut furniture, rich wood paneling. 1a is the coat closet.
- (2) Left of the antechamber is a den with a well-stocked bar, a sofa, and some chairs; it's a very comfortable sitting room.
- (3) Right of the antechamber is Marcus Coates'

private office. The office is locked. At the moment it is stripped bare, containing only one lamp, a bare and emptied roll-top desk, and one chair.

- (4) This is the main gallery/ballroom. In happier years, dances were occasionally held here. The huge chandelier in the middle of the ceiling is held up by a chain connected to the second floor bannister on the north wall. Before the days of electricity, the chandelier was lowered so that the wicks could be trimmed. At the north end to the east and west sides are grand staircases leading to the upper floor.
- (5) The drawing room, with an attached solarium (5a). A pleasant sitting area with a grand piano, a couch, and a fair selection of music on the walls. A Victrola is located in one corner. The solarium has some shrubs, flowers, and a few herbs growing in planters; some chairs and a table make it a nice place to sit and talk.
- (6) The library. This is a standard library; if there is a murder, here is where Lionel Gideon will call in all the suspects. It contains a wide selection of literary classics in English, French, and Latin, with a number of scientific journals on biology (Alicia's grandfather was interested in the topic), and so forth. Old family papers may be found stuffed in various old books; some very old family diaries are also in here, but in no particular order. (More on these later.) Finding something specific would take some hours of diligent searching. There are no extremely rare and valuable tracts on arcane terror to be found here.
- (7) The dining room. A beautiful oak table is the centerpiece of the room, surrounded by heavy oak chairs. French doors open onto the porch outside, giving a good view of the landscaping. Most dinners occur here, unless an affair is so heavily-attended that it requires use of the main gallery.
- (8) The kitchen. Like any other well-stocked estate kitchen, with stoves, stocked cupboards, and so forth. 8a is the pantry, where canned goods, dry goods, and vegetables are stored, with the dumbwaiter opening into here; 8b is cold storage, where hanging meat and other perishables are stored. The cold storage room has a very strong door, that can be bolted from the outside.
- (9) Bathrooms.
- (10) This is another antechamber, leading from the gallery to the northern wing.
- (11) Jason and Nora's bedroom.
- (12) Storeroom; a large quantity of tables and chairs is kept here for social occasions.
- (13) Marion and Diana's room.
- (14) The servants' dining and socializing room.
- (15) Servant's stairway to upstairs (in older houses, the servants didn't use the main stairway).
- (16) Marcus Coate's small gymnasium. This room contains a fencing piste and some racquetball equipment.





Second Floor



—Dumbwaiter



—Fireplace



—Franklin stove



—Light

Second Floor

- (17, 18, 19) Most of the second floor is taken up with bedrooms. Bedrooms 17 and 19 are connected by 18, which is a sitting room. Barrow Gray is in 17, and Candace Stokes is in 19. These rooms (and all the others, for that matter) are lavishly furnished with fine wood furniture, expensive carpets, paintings of old family members, and a franklin stove to provide warmth.
- (20) Joan Corrigan is given this room.
- (21) For player-characters.
- (22) For player-characters.
- (23) Elisabeth Shields and Mary Milledge are given this room.
- (24) For player-characters.
- (25) For player-characters.
- (26) Toilets for the upstairs; in this time period, you have to wait in the halls.
- (27) Linen closet.
- (28) The dumbwaiter, that opens in the kitchen below.
- (29) The bathroom; the characters will have to line up for their morning ablutions.
- (30) For player-characters.
- (31) Lionel Gideon is put in this room.
- (32) The stairway to the attic; leading down is the servant's stairway.
- (33) This is Alicia's suite: the largest room (a) is the living room, (b) is the bedroom, (c) is the bathroom, and (d) is the closet.
- (34) The attic. It's locked. Jason says it's been locked ever since he and his wife returned from a vacation seven years ago. All the other servants had been dismissed in a whim of Marcus at the same time, so Jason has no idea what the state of the attic currently is; formerly, it held old furniture and large numbers of travelling trunks and old memorabilia. Marcus never let him into the attic in the last three years. In the weeks since she's returned, Alicia has not had time to hire a locksmith to change the lock and open the attic.

In reality, the attic is completely bare—all the furniture, trunks, memorabilia, etc. have been removed. An even coat of dust covers the floor, and all the lighting fixtures have been stripped out and disconnected. (This is where the two scenarios diverge: In (1) and (3) there's a large, very old stain on the floor; investigation reveals it to be a bloodstain. In (2), there's no such stain.)

The Course of the Adventure

This is a difficult sort of adventure to referee, because it starts out slowly. It's also a heavily role-playing adventure, so more violently-inclined players

may be a bit bored at the start. However, horror aficionados should get along with it pretty well. The trick for the GM is to build the mood. Start the pace a little slow, and as the scenario builds, begin to throw in more and more hints of the mood. The unexpected hand on the shoulder. The thing you *thought* you saw out of the corner of your eye. Was that the sound of footsteps on the stairs? What was that figure you saw running into the trees? Perhaps you should check it out, even though it is the middle of the night...You get the idea.

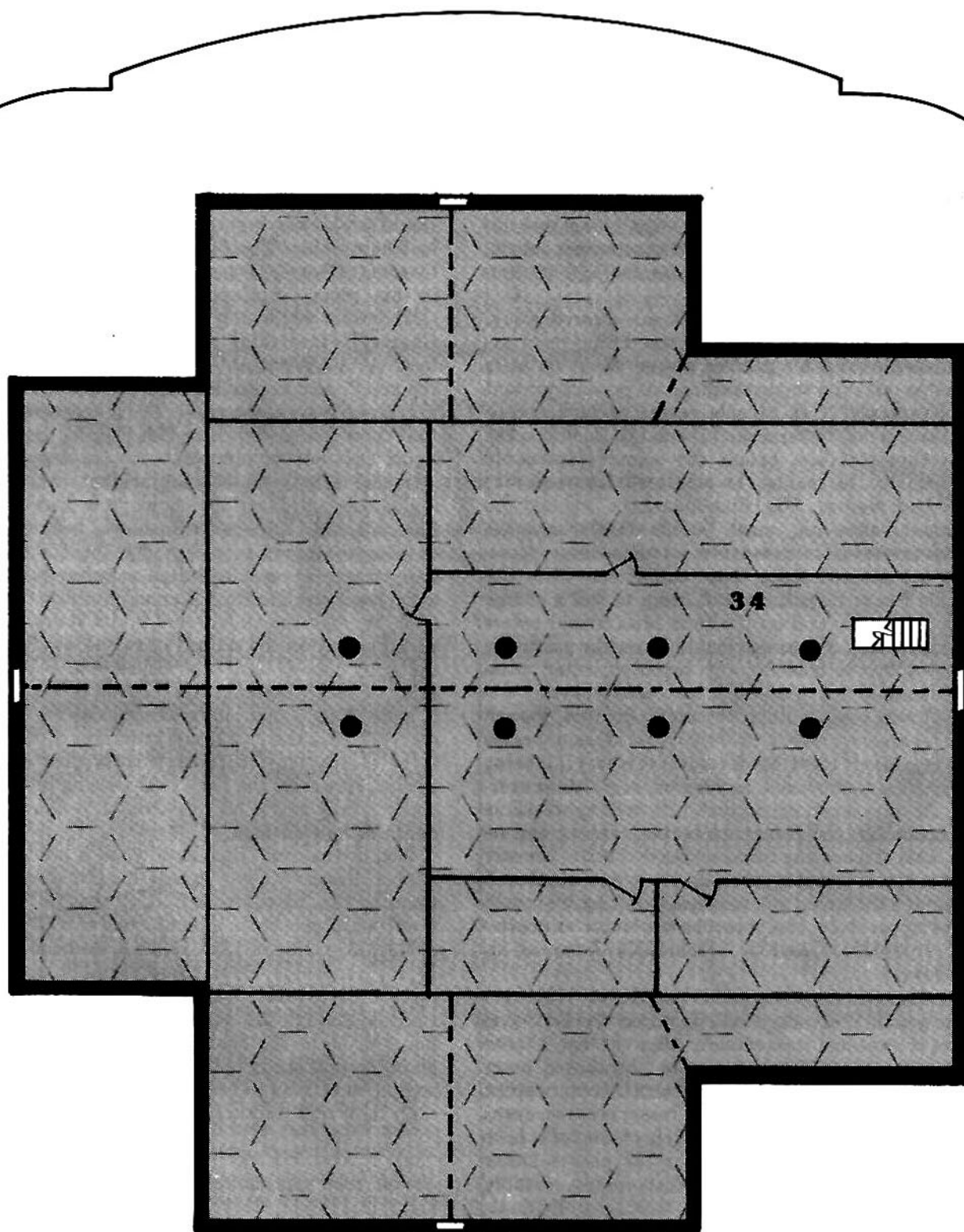
The events that are described could be a manifestation of the Shambler, or a clever trick by Barrow Gray, depending on which scenario you've chosen. In either case, Alicia's reactions will be very similar.

Alicia will welcome each arriving guest and have the maids see to it that they are comfortably quartered. Most of the player-characters should arrive the same evening; Barrow and Candace should already be in, as should Joan. Miss Shield and nurse and Lionel Gideon should arrive later on in the evening, at about the same time, arguing as they enter the mansion together. Alicia will answer no questions about the ghost as people arrive, but promises to discuss the situation over dinner. Characters can wander the house, interact with one another, talk to the servants, wander the grounds, etc., until about 8:30, when the rather late dinner commences.

There, over an excellent meal of shrimp scampi, Alicia tells her story—hopefully with the player-characters supplying the questions. She returned two weeks ago, immediately after the incarceration of her father; she has seen him only once since, and he was behaving in a wildly erratic fashion, tired and depleted-looking one minute, bouncy, active and crazed the next, talking mostly about chandeliers and chills and dark, cold waters and how he could never light his pipe when he first woke up in the mornings, and so forth and so on. Nor could he keep to a specific conversation for more than two or three sentences.

Since Alicia's returned to the mansion, she's had two or three occurrences of the Coates Shambler; one morning the servants found every book in the library on the floor of that room, neatly stacked in proper order, though Jason and Nora (whose rooms are adjacent to the library) swear that it couldn't have been accomplished without their hearing it; Samuel the groundskeeper swears he saw the Shambler crossing the lands from a copse of pines toward the mansion one dusk; water standing on an unlit stove froze solid in three minutes two nights ago, between the time Elmira took a roast out to the dining room and the time she returned. Alicia has also had several nightmares about the Shambler, in which she's rooted to the place she's standing and the Shambler limps ever closer and closer; when she's close enough, she sees that the Shambler is her father, and turns away screaming, and when she looks back she sees herself, and she is the Shambler.

If variation (2) is being used, then those incidents (except for the nightmares, the product of Alicia's



high-strung nature and vivid imagination) were set up by Barrow Gray. He snuck into the library and quietly moved the books, switched pans on the stove, and bribed Samuel to tell the story. Barrow and Candace have been staying at the mansion for some weeks now; questioning the servants will reveal this fact.

Miss Shields wants to conduct a seance immediately after dinner. Lionel Gideon is openly contemptuous of the idea, theorizing that some criminal with an eye toward the area legends is attempting to drive Alicia mad, but agrees to sit in on the seance. Lionel is so obnoxious that most people will tend to reject his beliefs, so his opinions are a good way for the GM to drop clues.

After dinner, when the dishes are cleared away, Miss Shields orders all lights in the dining room extinguished except for candles placed about by Miss Milledge, and the seance begins; all persons present join hands and Miss Shields begins to work herself into her trance. (In variation (2) and (3), Barrow spent some time upstairs before the seance, ostensibly washing up. In reality, he prepared his rooms as described below. His disappearance evoked no comment—after all, most of the NPCs and the characters would have washed up after dinner.)

Almost immediately, any characters with the Psychic Power Sensitivity will begin to feel a charge build in the air, and by the time Miss Shield enters her trance such characters should be feeling positively jittery. (This is true for any variation; after, Miss Shields really is a Medium.)

(Soft rain begins falling outside about now, though most characters won't notice.) Miss Shield begins chanting about great power, but not where it's being sought. She seems to be undergoing some great exertion. Anyone announcing that he's looking at Alicia will notice that she's looking a bit paler than everyone else. This is when the booming begins—from directly overhead, which would be in Barrow's and Candace's rooms. It's the sound of a very heavy but human tread on the upper floor, and it rattles the house. (In variation (2), that's caused by Samuel Clay jumping up and down.)

Psychic Precognitives and people with Danger Sense get their standard rolls to detect the following before it happens: Immediately after the heavy tread starts, one of the French doors to the dining room swings open, there's a brilliant flash and a thunderous explosion, and the door to the ballroom is blown open. The flash is OCV 8 (roll vs. each character's base DCV), and those hit are blinded for 1D6 phases. Other doors in the mansion can be heard slamming, possibly because of the strong wind from outside. Individuals who made Danger Sense or Precog Rolls and announced that they were diving for cover are not blinded. Naturally, the candles are blown out, and the seance ends.

Anyone who was in the ballroom would have seen a fiery trail flare up along the floor, and then go out. Investigation shows that this trail (now a burnt mark on the floor and rugs) leads from the dining room

(starting just inside the dining room) to the office, where the top of the desk is burnt.

In variation (1), all these events were caused by the Shambler, using his powers as described in his write-up; he tossed a lightning bolt into the seance, which Marcus managed to direct to his office (how Marcus did this is described later). In variation (2), Barrow had Samuel upstairs jump up and down, then quickly leave by the servant's stairway. A character who was upstairs would have seen Samuel. If caught, Samuel would say he was frightened by the events, that's why he was running. The flash and fiery trail was caused by some of Barrow's chemicals (he keeps them hidden in his room, -5 Concealment Roll), as was the thunderous explosion (a blast set off outside). Characters may think it was a lightning bolt; the effects certainly resemble one. Anyone who asks about the smell, and makes a Perception Roll, can be told that there is no ozone smell. The obvious deduction is that there was no lightning bolt (but let the character figure that out for himself).

In the aftermath of the incident, Miss Shields remembers nothing of the seance; it is discovered that Barrow's and Candace's rooms have been turned utterly topsy-turvy, furniture and belongings blown everywhere; a thin trail of scorchmarks, one foot wide, leads straight from Marcus' study on the ground floor, through the gallery and up its stairs, down the wide hallway on the second story and up the stairs to the attic, passing under the locked door leading to the attic. (This is different from the trail in variation (2)). If none of the other characters choose to, Lionel Gideon will pick the lock to the attic. The attic turns out to be utterly bare, with the coat of dust mentioned earlier. However, the fiery trail leading into Marcus' study totally covers his desk, which is charred to the depth of half an inch.

Within the desk, incidentally, in a hidden drawer (Concealment -3), is a mostly-burned diary. This is there for the characters to find. (If they fail to look for it or find it, give them a hand, such as a Psychometry or Retrocognition or Luck Roll.) It seems to have once been a handsome volume, now crumbly, almost completely destroyed in the fire. At strategic opportunities through the next couple of days, every three hours or so to the characters' perceptions, someone giving serious study to the diary will find a few legible sentences to read. These quotes are designed to cast both light and darkness over the proceedings.

#1: "...Gottlieb that he was completely wrong, but the old man was adamant, claiming that my father's death was in some way linked to the destruction of the gatehouse and Anna's accident...to show me what it all meant in some last, desperate measure of..."

Alicia cannot identify the handwriting. Jason, if shown the diary, will (with some surprise) identify it as belonging to Horace Coates, Marcus' father. Looking at the handwriting, he estimates that it was written more than ten years before Jason came to work at

the estate; about ten years before Jason's arrival, Horace had a hunting accident which cost him some dexterity in his right hand. Any psychic historian (including Miss Shields) making an Occult Knowledge or similar roll will get the idea that Horace's "Gottlieb" may have been Abram Gottlieb, pioneer medium of the 1890s. Gottlieb died in 1894; anyone who'd made his parapsychology roll at -2 or better will realize that popular rumor has it that Gottlieb died in a fiery accident in Massachusetts. (A logical inference is that Alicia's grandfather may have tried exactly what Alicia is trying, gathering psychics about her to discover the nature of the Shambler... and obviously they failed. Alicia's grandfather Horace died in a hospital of natural causes in 1911.)

#2: "...day was comparatively calm. I did find poor Lenora standing in our living-room, staring into the fire totally unconscious of my presence until I had spoken to her three times...nothing. But then the footsteps started up over..."

#3: "...ster! Miss Hackeray is dead, hanged, found swinging from her own chandelier. She left no note, and at dinner last night seemed affable and collected, quite ready for the efforts scheduled for tonight. This morning, though, little Adrienne could not enter her locked door, and repeated pounding upon the door did not serve to awaken her...forced the door, we found her thus...not know what will come of tonight. Without..."

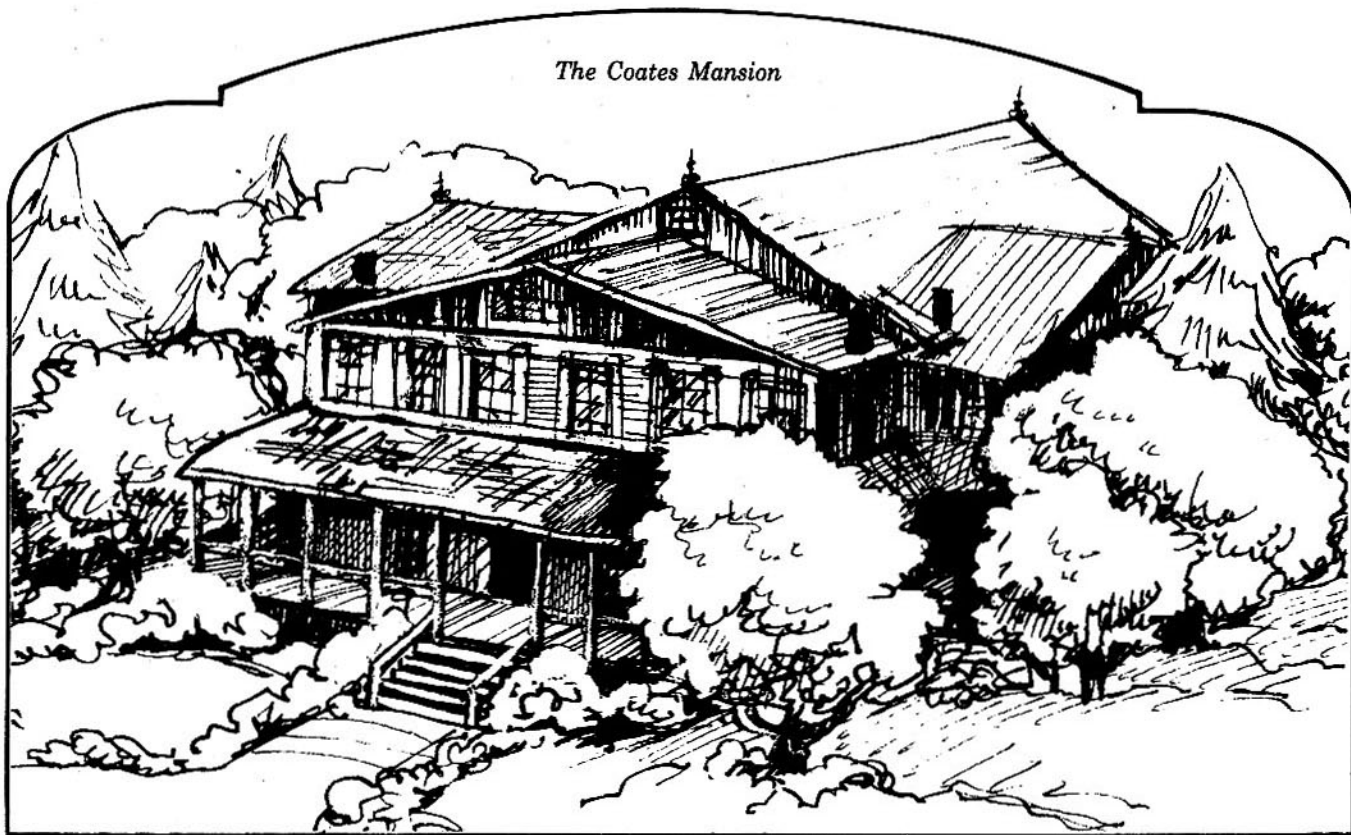
#5: "Abram seems to think that the incidents have ceased, at least until the next occurrence of the High Wind. While this comes as a relief, I feel somehow that he was hiding some fact or truth on the matter, some weighty truth which pressed upon him. We will give the matter another week, and if no..."

#6: "...widow seems to be in perfect control, despite the peculiar circumstance of his death. And yet only I know the truth of it—and who is to tell? All the rest are dead or fled, and I must wonder if I will have the wit to appreciate the horror of my circumstance when next the High Wind comes. Yet I am somehow bound to this place, for I sicken when I am too long gone from here..."

Of course, this diary is thoroughly misleading if variation (2) is being used. That's exactly why Barrow put the trail down to lead characters to the diary. You see, he's forged it; characters with Forgery Skill will detect this with a -3 Forgery Roll, if they suspect the diary of being a forgery. Otherwise, the only way to discover this diary is a fake is to extensively question people in town who would remember if a group of people came to the Coates Estate in 1894; of course, no one will remember such an incident.

In any variation, by the time that last entry is found, it will be early evening of the next day. Let's regress a little in time before dealing with that.

The Coates Mansion



On the morning of the next day people will assemble in somewhat improved condition. Alicia doesn't rise until noon, and Elisabeth Shields doesn't come down at all, having taken ill, perhaps because of the events of the previous night.

During the course of the day, whoever is poring over the diary will come across the listed entries in the order given. The characters can investigate as they see fit. For variations (1) and (3), people with the following Psychic Powers searching the appropriate places and making their Power Rolls may find out the following things:

Psychometry

On the Diary: A shocking, sudden scene of the Shambler throwing the diary into a fireplace. This is the predominant sensation each time the power is performed on the diary.

In Alicia's room: Some sort of draw to the fireplace, and to the chandelier in her bedroom.

In Barrow's and Candace's rooms: A brief glimpse of Alicia in the rooms, nothing more. It's a little startling, as there seemed to be some sort of emotion connected with the scene, some great glee. Alicia will not know why the emotion is caught up in the scene.

In the attic: Nothing.

In the dining room: Nothing.

Along the path where Samuel saw the Shambler a few nights before: Nothing.

In the library: A scene in the library, with a focus on the fire. (The GM should make a roll. On a 16-, the retrocognitive lapses into what appears to be a hypnotic trance, awakening only when he is shaken or disturbed by another character. An EGO Roll on the part of the character acts as a Skill vs. Skill Roll against the hypnosis. If the roll was 17+, nothing happens and the vision of the fireplace cuts off.)

Sensitive

In the gym: A cold spot just in front of the doorway.

In Marcus' study: A bad feeling in general.

In the attic: A sudden and crippling backache which lasts for several agonizing minutes.

In Barrow's and Candace's rooms: A sharp feeling of being watched.

Danger Sense—nothing anywhere.

Clairvoyance/Clairaudience—ditto.

Medium—If anyone tries a seance before the night, go to the events in the paragraphs starting *That Night*, below.

Also that day, the rain continues and grows heavier. Also, at about 1 p.m., shortly after Alicia awakens, comes a call that Marcus has died in his sanitarium cell. This occurred last night sometime—no one saw the incident, and his body was found only this morning. It seems to have been of natural causes, for there were no marks on the body, but he seemed to be skinnier than they'd noticed earlier, more shrunken. (In variation (2), this wasn't part of Barrow's plan, but it's welcome news to him. Now he can concentrate on

Alicia.)

Alicia, of course, is greatly saddened by this news, but not totally astonished. It was, after all, his turn.

That night, the rain gets worse and grows into a storm. Sometime during the course of the night, or during a seance if there happens to be one, there is a brilliant flash of lightning, the house rocks, and the power fails—and again, doors blow open downstairs and winds race through the house.

In the inevitable instances of checking up on everybody, it will be discovered that a pine tree has driven itself into Miss Shields' window at an angle like an arrow. Shields is dead; Miss Milledge is injured (about 4 BODY down) and unconscious. A power-line connection has been shaken loose and can be replaced by any electrician or by Samuel Clay to restore power to the house. However, the phones are dead—perhaps another line down—and the roads are undoubtedly impassable due to mud.

If you're using variation (2), this all is Barrow's doing, except for the storm. Barrow had, the day before the characters arrived, had Samuel Clay cut the roots of the pine tree outside Miss Shields' room. The stage is now set for his nefarious deed. Barrow goes upstairs to the attic, and to the front where there is a small window. There, Barrow sets up the block and tackle that Samuel Clay hid there that afternoon. Barrow loops the rope around the top of the pine tree, and gives a mighty heave, in time with the explosive charge he's planted outside (another "lightning bolt"); the flash is Samuel Clay's signal to release the power line (he's outside, waiting to do this). Barrow had suggested to Jason Green that Miss Shields be given that room, "because of the nice view". Her death is a surprise to Barrow; he just wanted to scare her and get her away from the house—he doesn't want a real psychic around to discover that the Coates Shambler is a fake.

Player-characters who were suspicious, and happened to be in the right place at the right time would certainly observe some of these goings on. Thus, it's important for the GM to have a good idea of where the player-characters are and what they're doing at all times. Note that Barrow would have to make some excuse to go upstairs if a character was talking to him. By the way, once Barrow has pulled down the tree, he'll stuff the rope, block, and tackle into a dark corner of the attic. Anyone who searches the attic would find it, but a casual glance into the attic wouldn't see it. Also, when Barrow comes out of the attic to see what's happening, an astute character who happened to be right next to the attic stairs would see Barrow come out (the character would have to be right there, since all the lights are out). Barrow will be slightly damp with rain from leaning out the window; a Perception Roll at -5 will spot this fact during the next few minutes.

What's Really Going On

We're now to the point in the adventure where so many random circumstances have come in, that a further timeline is impractical. We'll just present the truth of what is going on and has been going on, and let the creative referee continue from this point.

The story for variations (1) and (3): A little more than 230 years ago, a self-professed wizard named Benjamin Hague arrived in Coates Village. A huge, broodingly charismatic and amoral man, Hague tried to wrest leadership of the village away from Oliver Coates, ancestor to the clan. In the face of a deliberate insult on Hague's part, Coates challenged the intruder, and subsequently crippled the man in a pistol duel. But later that night, the essentially good Coates, fearful for his life and his family's safety at the hands of a man he felt to be a genuine wizard, struck Hague over the head with a shovel, boldly carried him out of his own home, and dumped him into a small pond on the Coates property to kill him and hide the body. This was in winter of 1703.

Unfortunately for Coates and his heirs, Hague really was a sorcerer, and the man laid a curse on the Coates clan from beyond the grave. For Hague "survived"—existing in an unliving state, visiting his vengeance on the head of every leader of the Coates clan from that time until present. Hague "bonds" with each successive clan leader, drawing from that person the life-energy needed to power the magical spells he uses to terrorize the family. With a minimal ability to manipulate flickering fires and chandelier lights, Hague can hypnotize people; he has a 16- basic roll, but is at +5 with members of the Coates clan, as he's generally primed them since they were very young. He can only hypnotize twice per day; he generally puts Alicia under once per day, to draw energy from her (hence her excessive sleep and eating habits), and has one extra instance per day left over. This would be very useful in creating really bad situations for the player-characters.

Over a long period of time, Hague's domination tends to drive the wits from his victims. This starts with an observable lack of concentration ability and decisiveness in the victims (hence Alicia's reduced EGO), and, over a period of years, turns into progressive insanity. However, in the case of Marcus Coates, this individual used his last few minutes of life and the link he shared with Hague's powers to try to warn his daughter to what was going on—directing the characters to his father's diary.

Hague wants to destroy this party of investigators as he did the party in 1894. His first victim, obviously enough, was Elisabeth Shields. He felt her to be the greatest threat among the people now in the mansion—whether he was correct or not depends on the exact nature of the people left in the mansion.

Now, he wants to kill everyone left in the mansion except Alicia. He'll go for the weakest characters (in terms of physical and mental stamina) first from now on—in other words, the normals. He'll try to hypnotize one of the tougher characters and plant post-hypnotic suggestions of murder and mayhem; Lionel Gideon is a logical choice. Once every two or three days, he can try a stunt like the pine-tree attack; such attacks are detailed in the Shambler's write-up. Luckily, those characters have three days until the next such attack, since the Shambler's out of END for now. Naturally, the rains will not abate until after Hague is disposed of—or the player-characters are.

On the other hand, the Shambler/Hague would be quite easy to destroy, if the characters can figure out how. His body is preserved, almost frozen, at the bottom of an unused and covered well on the Coates property. To find the well could require a combination of circumstances: A call Joan Corrigan made to the librarian of the Coates Village library, once the phone lines came up again, might elicit the information that old Oliver Coates was believed to have slain Benjamin Hague, though no one followed up on any investigation, for Hague naturally was a tool of the Devil...while a retrocognitive could flash on the scene of Coates dumping the body in the well, and recognize the site of the well as being the stand of trees where Samuel Clay saw the Shambler these days past...or some character with the Tracking skill and a hypersensitive nose could realize that the sites of the Shambler's appearance give off a characteristic ozone odor, and trace it back to the well...or a clairvoyant or aura-reader could twig on the fact that Alicia and the Shambler "read" as the same, and have a hypnotist "follow" Alicia while the Shambler makes his rounds; or a retrocognitive could flash on a scene from the attic, where the Shambler slew all of Coates' servants and houseguests in the week when Jason and his wife were away, then forced Marcus to dump all their bodies in the well. (Marcus later had all the room's furnishings stripped and the room locked so that he could purge the incident from his mind.)

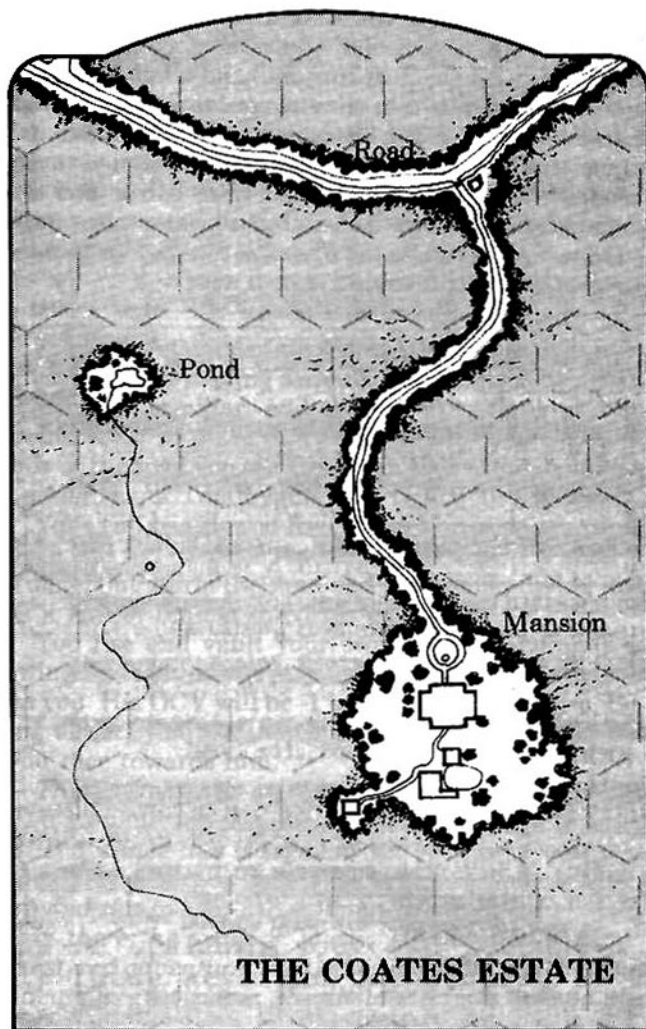
Among the old family papers in the library is a diary written by Oliver Coates. This should be discovered if the player-characters haven't managed to figure out where the Shambler's body is located. In it, Oliver Coates tells the story of the murder of Benjamin Hague, and the fact that the body's in the well. If Alicia is told this (or hears the player-character reading the diary), the Shambler will throw his last resources into a massive attack on the diary and the reader. The GM should try, during any manifestation of the Shambler, to make the powers as eerie as possible. Don't just throw a chair at a character with Telekinesis; throw kitchen knives at him (an Autofire Killing Attack). Don't just use a lightning bolt—have the character catch on fire!

At any rate, to destroy the Shambler simply means destroying the body of Benjamin Hague. That's theoretically easy enough—simply dragging it from the well and exposing it to air should do that

(although the player-characters won't know it). Unfortunately, while the characters are trying to dredge the well, the rain will be pouring and the lightning will be flashing and the Shambler will attack—and, although he's just an ectoplasmic manifestation of Hague's former body, the Shambler is pretty deadly, as his character sheet indicates.

Also on Hague's side is the fact that Alicia is under his mental control. Anytime she's left alone in a room with a fire, chandelier, or any other source of random-light patterns, he can attempt to hypnotize her and command her to interfere with her would-be rescuers.

In any case, the resolution of this adventure is up to the referee and the characters in the adventure. Under normal circumstances, the mystery should resolve itself just after the last NPC victim-type (or perhaps, the first of the player-characters) has been slain by some machination of the Shambler's; the player-characters would rush out to the well, and the hardiest among them would go down into the well to try to destroy the body or bring it back up; and the player-characters above are attacked by the Shambler and perhaps by any other character he's thoroughly hypnotized. It can provide for a wonderfully tense finish.



Now, as to variation (2). By this point in the adventure, the players should suspect that the Shambler is actually a fraud. If any skeptical characters have looked for evidence of fakery, they would have found it—the scratches on the lock of the French door where Barrow attached the wire, chemical traces of the substance he used to fake the lightning bolts, cut roots on the pine tree, the power line having been cut, etc. If the players don't suspect Barrow by this time, it's time for the GM to drop less subtle hints. After all, Barrow's getting worried—the drugs Candace has been putting into Alicia's food haven't driven Alicia around the bend yet. (By the way, there's another clue—Candace has been carrying Alicia's food to her.)

So now, Barrow's going to get Samuel Clay to be more aggressive in scaring Alicia. Samuel will don a costume and makeup that Barrow will provide, and pose as the Shambler. He'll enter Alicia's bedroom at night and attempt to frighten her into a heart attack, or jumping out the window. When the alarm is given, the "Shambler" will race down the servant's stairway and into the night. Of course, the player-character s will have a chance to catch him. If they haven't figured out what's happening by now, the GM should let them catch Samuel Clay. When they rip off his mask, there's a moment of amazement as the characters recognize him. Of course, they'll probably want to ask him What's Going On. Well, Samuel Clay has had enough. He gasps out, "I'll talk, I'll talk! I didn't plan it! It was (a gunshot rings out!) Ack-aaarrgggh!" Samuel Clay slumps back, dead of a .45 shot to the chest. Alert characters will try to trace the source of the shot, but in the rain and darkness it's hard to find Barrow Gray as he races back to the mansion.

At this point, the players will probably get back to the mansion and try to figure out Who Done It. The GM should help them figure out the clues, and if they have trouble, the servants or the NPCs can provide the missing facts. Try as hard as possible to let a player-character make the final deduction and accusation of Barrow Gray. When accused, Barrow will smile sadly, say "I guess you've caught me", and use his Sleight of Hand to whip out his .45 auto. Barrow will attempt to make a getaway, taking a hostage if he has to, with the assistance of Candace Stokes. If the players don't manage to stop him, they didn't try very hard; but just in case, have him crash and burn around the bend in the road (he forgot the road was closed).

Now, if the GM is running variation (3), where both the Shambler and Barrow Gray are doing their best to do in Alicia, good luck to you. It's going to be very difficult to handle the confusion of the two plotlines; but if you can pull it off, you'll have a terrific adventure.

Aftermath

If the heroes lose, the aftermath is obvious: They join the numerous other corpses on the estate, and the Shambler wipes these incidents from Alicia's mind. Or, if Barrow Gray is the villain, he'll be satisfied merely to have Alicia killed or driven insane.

If they win, even with losses, the curse upon the Coates clan is broken, the player-characters have gained a wealthy ally in Alicia Coates, and they can return to the Empire Club with one whale of a story.

Alicia Coates

VAL	CHA	Cost	Cost Skills	Roll
10	STR	0	3 Knowledge: English Lit	12-
12	DEX	6	4 Pro Skill: Piano	13-
10	CON	0	5 Pro Skill: Singing	14-
10	BODY	0	4 French	
15	INT	.5	3 Culture	
8	EGO	-4	5 Luck	
14	PRE	4	3 Riding	12-
18	COM	4		
3	PD	1		
3	ED	1		
3	SPD	8		
4	REC	0		
20	END	0		
20	STUN	0		

CV = 4

PHASES:

4, 8, 12

27 Skills + 25

CHA = 52

Lionel Gideon

VAL	CHA	Cost	Cost Skills	Roll
10	STR	0		
12	DEX	6	9 Detective Work	15-
10	CON	0	3 Fam.: firearms	
10	BODY	0	3 Bureaucratics	12-
13	INT	3	3 Criminology	12-
10	EGO	0	3 Culture	12-
13	PRE	3	10 +2 with pistols	
12	COM	1	5 Gambling	12-
4	PD	2	5 Lip Reading	12-
3	SPD	8	5 Lock picking	13-
4	REC	0		
20	END	0		
20	STUN	0		
CHA Cost = 23				
CV = 4				
PHASES:				
4, 8, 12				
46 Skills + 23				
CHA = 69				
Total Cost				
50+ Disadvantages:				
3 Age +40				
3 Distinctive Looks:				
tall, salt and pepper				
beard, eye patch over				
left eye				
3 Physical Limitation: one eye				
(infrequent, slightly)				
3 Psychological Limitation:				
arrogance (common x 1/2)				
6 Psychological Limitation:				
Believes ghosts and				
medium to be fake				
(common, irrational)				
5 Unluck				
73 Total Points				

Elisabeth Shields

VAL	CHA	Cost	Cost Skills	Roll
8	STR	-2		
10	DEX	0	16 Medium	17-
8	CON	-4	4 Theology	13-
8	BODY	-4	4 Demonology	13-
18	INT	8	3 Latin	
30	EGO	40	3 Old Norse	
18	PRE	8	5 Parapsychology	14-
10	COM	0	3 City Knowledge:	
2	PD	0	Salem, Mass.	12-
2	ED	0		
2	SPD	0	50+ Disadvantages:	
16	END	0	5 Age: +60	
16	STUN	0	11 Physical Limitation:	
CHA Cost = 46				
CV = 3				
PHASES:				
6, 12				
38 Skills + 46				
CHA = 84 Total Cost				
10 Unlucky				

Joan Corrigan

VAL	CHA	Cost	Cost Skills	Roll
8	STR	-2	1 Press Pass	
13	DEX	9	1 Fam.: Driving	8-
10	CON	0	2 City Knowledge: New York	11-
10	BODY	0	3 Criminology	13-
18	INT	8	3 Deduction	13-
10	EGO	0	3 Interrogation	13-
18	PRE	8	4 Pro Skill: Journalism	13-
16	COM	3	4 Shadowing	13-
5	PD	3	3 Streetwise	13-
5	ED	3	2 Fam.: Pistols	
3	SPD	7	3 Pro Skill: Photography	11-
4	REC	0		
20	END	0		
20	STUN	0		
CV = 5				
PHASES:				
4, 8, 12				
CHA = 39				
29 Skills + 39				
CHA = 68				
11 Psychological Limitation:				
Insatiably curious				
(very common, irrational)				
5 Unlucky				
1 Distinctive Looks				
reporter				
5 Monitored by				
people afraid of press				
1 Reporter Package Bonus				

The Coates Shambler

VAL	CHA	Cost	Cost	Skills	Roll
0	STR	0	40	Telekinesis—STR 40	8
5	DEX	15	15	Power Transfer—	
0	CON	0		END to END, 2D6	3
0	BODY	0	25	Hypnosis 18 or less	
13	INT	13	40	Energy Blast—	
18	EGO	36	8	D6 lightning bolt	8
45	PRE	0	20	Light Illusions	4
0	COM	0			
0	PD	0		50+ Disadvantages	
0	ED	0		Hatred of	
2	SPD	5		Coates family	
2	REC	4			
30	END	15			
0	STUN	0			
CHA Cost = 88					
CV = 2					
PHASES:					
6, 12					
140 Skills + 88				CHA = 228	Total Cost

Barrow Gray

VAL	CHA	Cost	Cost	Skills	Roll
13	STR	3	3	Concealment	12-
14	DEX	12	3	Disguise	12-
10	CON	0	3	Sleight of Hand	12-
10	BODY	0	1	Fam.: .45 Auto	
13	INT	3	3	Ventriloquism	11-
10	EGO	0	2	Pro Skill: Stage	
15	PRE	5		Magic	14-
12	COM	1	5	Stealth	12-
5	PD	2	3	Culture	12-
2	ED	0	3	Demolitions	11-
3	SPD	6	3	Forgery	12-
5	REC	0	5	Inventor	12-
20	END	0		50+ Disadvantages:	
22	STUN	0		5 Unluck 1D6	
CV = 5				11 Dependent NPC: Candace	
PHASES:				(normal, 14-)	
4, 8, 12				6 Fear of Ghosts	
CHA Cost = 34				72 Total Points	
40 Skills + 32				CHA = 74	

The Gray Scarecrow

by Aaron Allston

The Gray Scarecrow is a *Justice Inc.* adventure episode for two to six 50 or 75 point characters. Since this adventure has some strong mystery elements, only those readers intending to game-master this adventure should read further.

Starting the Adventure

Characters participating in this adventure should either have some reputation for crime-fighting or, before this adventure begins, the GM should designate one of the participating characters as an old friend of Reese White (one of the protagonist NPCs). (Yes, this is one of those stories where an old friend of one of the heroes is in some sort of trouble...) The player-character chosen should have either participated in the Great War (WWI) or have been in northern Texas in the years following the war. If no character fits either of those qualifications, then the characters are being contacted because they have a reputation for fighting crime and solving mysteries (a

reputation within the Empire Club, at least).

One night at the Empire Club, a porter announces to Our Hero that there are a couple of individuals to see him—one Zebediah Spalding and one Rebecca White. (The latter name sounds vaguely familiar to our hero, but he won't be able to remember its importance.)

Zeb Spalding turns out to be a sixtyish but healthy-looking man in Western dress. Rebecca White is the archetypal young woman for this variety of pulp adventure—beautiful, cool, collected, and endangered; she will, circumstances permitting, be dressed in one of the current season's evening gowns. (For those characters who start adding up clues before their visitors open their mouths, both Rebecca and Zebediah are tanned, showing exposure to a lot of sun; Zeb's gnarled and calloused hands indicate long familiarity with rope-handling and (probably) firearms, and his legs display the bow caused by long association with horseback riding; Rebecca is physically fit, and in her purse there are the characteristic bulges of some sort of revolver.)

Rebecca will announce that she, Zeb, her father Reese White (our hero's old friend), and her stepbrothers Bill and Oram Soames are in danger. The twins' grandfather Jeeter Soames is already dead. (Our hero will recall, if he's a personal friend of Reese

White, that Reese retired to Texas after the War, married an attractive young widow and settled down to manage a ranch. Apparently the ranch fell on hard times in '29, with most of the lands and cattle sold, and now operates as a dude ranch. Otherwise, Rebecca will tell them this as part of the story.)

Rebecca and Zeb's story goes something like this: Forty years ago (about 1895), the aging outlaw Jasper "Coyote" White and his gang participated in their last raid, slaughtering the immediate family of farmer Ezekiel Spalding. ("My uncle," Zeb will confirm if asked.) Ezekiel was killed—struck down by White with a machete—in one of his fields, beside the field's scarecrow. The scene the county sheriff rode in on the next morning—with Ezekiel Spalding's dead eyes staring up at his scarecrow's painted ones, as the scarecrow's head nodded randomly in the wind—has gone down in Randall County mythlore.

It wasn't a myth, though, when one of Coyote White's right-hand men was found at that same spot two days later, propped up on the scarecrow's wooden cross, his chest perforated by pitchfork holes. Over the next several months, every member of Coyote White's gang was hunted down and gruesomely killed; several witnesses to one of the killings reported that the gray-coated scarecrow from Spalding's farm, moving with a loose-limbed and inhuman gait, attacked an outlaw and killed him in a pitchfork-vs.-sabre duel. Finally, Coyote White himself was found hanging from a churchhouse bell—the ringing bell had brought the preacher running to discover the corpse—and the curse of the Gray Scarecrow seemed to be over. Everyone expected White's infant son Reese to be the next victim, but Reese was never attacked; he grew up decent, went to Europe in 1914 to fight with the British against the Hun, and returned wounded the next year, a war hero. And that was the end of the curse.

But now, forty years after the original killings, the Gray Scarecrow appears to have returned to exact revenge on Reese White and all his friends and family. Two nights ago at White's ranch (the Circle-W), at dusk, Zeb Spalding, Jeeter Soames and the ranch's cook, Mrs. Johnston, were at their usual spot sitting on the main house's porch. Suddenly, the Gray Scarecrow popped up from behind a bush and ran old Jeeter through with a pitchfork. He turned on Zeb to run him through too, but the old man picked up his chair and broke the pitchfork with it, and the scarecrow ran off—with a limber, peculiar, and completely inhuman gait.

The Whites couldn't identify the broken pitchfork, but one of the hands later discovered that one of the Whites' pitchforks had also been stolen—perhaps to replace the broken one?

Reese White has contacted the county sheriff, who's doing what he can, but Zeb and Rebecca thought that more help was called for—specifically, the characters (Reese's old wartime friend, if applicable). If Our Hero would visit the Circle-W Ranch on the guise of visiting his old friend—and maybe bring a couple of

friends to pretend to be paying guests of the dude ranch—they'd greatly appreciate it...

Zebediah and Rebecca are due to leave New York tonight. Our Heroes can manage best by leaving on the following day. Zebediah and Rebecca had pretended to go to a relative's in Dallas to cover up for this trip, and will now return to the Circle-W, pretending that Rebecca's stubbornness has won over Zeb's dogged protectiveness.

At the Circle-W

The Circle-W Ranch, now a reasonably successful dude ranch, lies in Randall County near Palo Duro Canyon. The old Spalding farm, where Ezekiel was killed by Coyote White, is thirty miles away. The terrain, by and large, is rolling and rocky; the grassland expanses which fed livestock in more prosperous times has all been sold off. What's left, while not fit to keep many heads of cattle alive, is still beautiful, craggy territory—perfect for giving season after season of East Coast guests a decent primer in horseback riding, camping, and other aspects of the ranch's Old West curriculum.

The map provided depicts the ranchhouse and surrounding buildings of the Circle-W. The ranchhouse itself houses Reese, Rebecca, Bill and Oram, Mrs. Johnston (the cook), and the ranch's current guests—at least, those who found the grisly work of the Gray Scarecrow fascinating enough to sit out the possible danger to themselves. The bunkhouse quarters the ranch's three hands; the stables maintain a dozen horses with the ranch's pickup truck in a separate shed.

The characters will probably arrive via rail in Amarillo and be brought by rented car or the ranch's truck (if they wired or telephoned ahead) to the ranch.

Reese White will greet his old friend warmly, perhaps evidencing a little suspicion at the rather coincidental timing of Rebecca and Zeb's trip and his friend's arrival, and will grimly tell his old friend that he has a problem right up his friend's alley. Reese will try to dissuade anyone who approaches him as a potential guest; insistent folks will get the story of the Gray Scarecrow and his probable continuing attacks on the Whites and Soames; and anyone not yet discouraged will be permitted to come on as a guest. (Reese admires guts and needs the money, so anyone willing to stay out such a potentially dangerous situation will earn his admiration. He will ask any player-character pretending to be a guest if he is armed, and will even go so far as to supply a guest with arms if the guest evidences any familiarity with the weapon.)

The Cast, and Casual Questioning

Following are descriptions of all the people inhabiting and frequenting the Circle-W at this time. Also presented are the kind of facts the player-characters can pick up about these characters through simple observation and conversation; heavier research and detective clues occur in the next section. It's best to role-play out as much of this as possible, to keep the player-characters right in the thick of their story. Interesting relationships can also develop between these characters and the player-characters.

Reese White

Reese is fortyish and hearty, stockily-built and apparently in fighting trim. He evidently inherited all of his notorious father's courage and adventurous nature without his criminal tendencies. Whichever character is his old friend will know his wartime history—Reese acted as a scout behind enemy lines in France, and was nearly killed in 1915 delivering important reconnaissance data to the British command. Reese returned to Texas that year, settled down with Marie Soames, an attractive young widow with two young sons (Bill and Oram). Their daughter Rebecca was born the following year; Marie died in 1929 of pneumonia. Jeeter Soames was Marie's father-in-law. Reese was (naturally) shocked and frightened by Jeeter's death, but has not evidenced any morbid paranoia about the curse being active again; he's cleaned and loaded his Webley service revolver and his father's old Colt Peacemaker .45s and seems anxious to use them on anything wearing floppy gray clothes and straw. He wears one Colt holstered (except when the sheriff is around) and keeps the Webley in the headboard of his bed. Personally, he is quiet, strong-willed, and tough-minded.

Bill and Oram Soames

The twins are only a couple of years older than Rebecca but seem much more weathered. They seem to be confident, independent sorts; they don't talk much to visitors and keep to themselves most of the time. They are identical twins, but easily distinguishable, because Bill has recently shaved what must have been a thick moustache (the rest of his face is tanned), while Oram still has his moustache. Casual questioning will reveal no animosity between the twins and their grandfather. Both twins spent four years in college in Oklahoma and returned last year. Bill studied cartography, geology, minerology, and so forth; Oram squeaked by studying animal husbandry and spent most of his effort improving his poker game—don't gamble with him. Bill and Oram both

keep revolvers in their room, but are wearing them now.

Jeeter Soames

Marie's father-in-law was no blood relation to Reese, but the old man was on good terms with everybody. The old man had been a bounty hunter in the 1880s and, though basically senile at the time of his death, was accorded respect by his family. He knew a lot about managing a ranch. He startled his family a few months ago by announcing out of the blue at dinner that Coyote White's gang hid out on lands now belonging to the Circle-W.

Rebecca White

Out of the big city, she quickly switches back into western dress. The gun she was packing in her purse in New York turns out to be another of Coyote White's Colts. She carries it holstered—again, when the sheriff is not in evidence—and seems to know how to handle it quite well. She's due to return to the East Coast next year to attend college and study theatre. She plays the old piano in the ranchhouse main room (Zebediah taught her years ago), has a passing interest and ability in dance, and is a capable actress. She will tend to be overly-impressed with any player-characters involved in theatre or movies, but otherwise will only be impressed by people exhibiting courage and ability to match that of her highly capable family.

Leo Wall, Percy Kuhns, Lefty Cray

These are the ranch's hands. Leo is a large and imposing black man—very quiet, is the best man on the premises with horses, and tends to wear sombreros and ponchos. Percy is a wiry and nervous white man; he chews tobacco and usually carries a gin flask (a character with Professional Skill: Medicine may diagnose him as alcoholic), and he seems very much spooked by the current happenings (he was a little boy when the original murders occurred, and has never gotten over the bogeyman-fear the locals instilled in their young 'uns about the Gray Scarecrow). Lefty Cray is a young man, a local boy, clean-shaven and affable. He is very obviously right-handed, and when asked about his nickname will visibly redden and refuse to discuss it. He is as obstinate about revealing his real name. Their bunkhouse, built to house upwards of twenty hands, has been renovated into three individual rooms.

Zebediah Spalding

The story goes (as told by Reese or Rebecca) that Zeb returned from college in the East soon after his aunt and uncle's family was slain, a few days after the murder of the second of Coyote White's henchmen. Zeb had been a theatre major and aspiring actor—it was he who guided Rebecca in that direction—but took up the reins of the Spalding farm and gave up his plans for a career on the stage. He sold the farm in 1926 and retired on the proceedings, then bought an interest in the Circle-W after the crash of '29, after Reese's attempts to save the ranch proved ineffective.

Zeb's money kept the Circle-W afloat and his salesmanship made it into a fairly successful dude ranch. Zeb's friendship with the family started with Marie Soames, and Rebecca considers him her uncle. Zeb carries a Colt 1911-A1 automatic pistol and knows how to use it; he and Reese spent several years teaching Rebecca to shoot as an excuse to see which of the two of them was the better shot.

Mrs. Johnston

Elmira Johnston was the Soames' cook before Marie's husband died. She is middle-aged and cheerful, has not decided yet whether or not to visit her sister in Kansas City until all this trouble has blown over, and cooks a monster of an apple pie.

Dr. Sam Greene

Sam isn't a resident at the Circle-W, but is a frequent visitor. He was a good friend of the twins' father and of county sheriff Dave McRae. He's a dour and not very likeable man, but he's a cracking good general physician and one of the few people the twins socialize with. He's tall, with sharp and craggy features. Everybody knows that he's avaricious, unsentimental, and overly fond of the bottle, but he's never harmed anyone and always upheld his Hippocratic oath.

David McRae

The Randall County sheriff is rail-lean, with a sunny grin and an easy manner; he is fiftyish and balding. He would look perfectly at home on the back of a big chestnut, with a carbine in a saddle-holster and a Colt on his belt, but he unfortunately dresses like city-folk and drives around in the 1932 Ford the county has supplied his office with. He's an old friend of Reese and Zebediah, but can't supply a man to keep 24-hour watch on the ranch. When Jeeter was killed, McRae summoned Dr. Greene to fill out the death certificate and transport the body to the county seat (40 miles away), and would likely do the same with any future deaths.

Geoffrey and Noreen Callahan, Allan Manfred, Anna Wynn

These are real guests staying at the Circle-W. The Callahans are a fortyish couple from San Francisco, fairly wealthy and fascinated by this whole situation (though Geoffrey, out of common sense, is carrying a .38 Police Special). Allan Manfred is a reasonably successful writer of pulp fiction—under a variety of recognizable aliases—who was staying at the Circle-W so that he could be more sure of his information when writing western stories. Anna Wynn is an attractive redhead, a bit hard around the edges—prone to snappishness and aloofness—who is apparently at the Circle-W to kill two birds with one stone: learning to ride to improve her chances of landing a role in an upcoming Hollywood western, and learning to shoot simply to protect herself. She has stayed, she says, because now she has something real

to ride from and something real to shoot at: The Gray Scarecrow.

Real Investigations

Things will start happening as the player characters begin to dig deeper into the mystery, the GM will have to coordinate the information they learn from this section with the events that begin to occur in the next section. Be sure to role-play the acquisition of all the information the player-characters pick up; it'll serve to make the adventure more interesting and to keep the timed events in line.

Following, by the name of each person or organization listed, will be the information that appropriate questioning can elicit from or about that person. Do not volunteer information except where indicated. Finding out these facts will take some effort; Conversation or Persuasion Skills are probably necessary in most cases. If the player-characters aren't figuring things out too well, the GM should help them out by asking for Deduction Rolls, then giving them some hints. It's also not a bad idea for the GM to suggest that they write down what they know, and keep track of dates and times. Organizing such information allows you to eliminate suspects and focus on the important facts.

Zebediah Spalding: Zeb, forty years ago, was the original Gray Scarecrow. He returned from college not days later, but on the day that his uncle's family was butchered—and saw, in fact, his uncle cut down by Coyote White. He went a little crazy and hid out in the Spalding basement, planning revenge. The next day, as he lay behind sacks of grain in the basement, he heard the sheriff shakily discussing the scene he'd observed with Ezekiel Spalding and the scarecrow, and an idea was hatched. Zeb was an aspiring magician, actor, and dancer, but was no weakling: His father had been an infantryman in the Civil War and taught him how to shoot, how to fight with knife and bayonet, and more. Zeb took down the scarecrow from the farm and made himself a tatterdemalion outfit from it, took his uncle's pitchfork and rehearsed his bayonet drills, and developed an eerily loose-limbed walk and run—a combination his theatrical mind told him would terrify his victims. He was right; the graves of the members of White's gang attest to his ability and ingenuity. Zeb bore no ill-will against Coyote's son, and, as we have seen, struck up a firm friendship with the White and Soames families.

Naturally, Zeb will not admit to the 1895 killings unless confronted and overwhelmed with evidence (though circumstantial evidence can do it). Evidence for this can be gathered from local court records of the inquest (this will show that Zeb arrived on the day his

uncle's family was killed). Talking to anyone who was living in the area at the time will also bring out the information about when Zeb arrived, but people will tend to be closemouthed (requires Conversation Skill Rolls); they're on Zeb's side, after all. Zeb will not admit to being the Scarecrow now—in fact, he was on the scene when the Scarecrow killed his friend Jeeter, as Mrs. Johnston will attest.

Rebecca White: If Rebecca ever sees the Scarecrow in action, she will become somewhat thoughtful. The next day sometime, in the presence of one or two of the player-characters, she will angrily announce, "I'm sure I could!" She will then confound the characters by adopting a bow-legged stance and walk about twenty feet in a horrifyingly correct imitation of the Gray Scarecrow's gait. When asked how she could manage that, she'll reply that it took some knowledge of dance and acrobatics, but the basic tumbling and acrobatics Zeb had taught her plus the dance she'd studied when staying with her brothers in Oklahoma were adequate to duplicate the gait. (This clue could lead the characters to investigate both Zeb and Rebecca's brothers. Note that Zebediah will know that the new Scarecrow's gait is not the same as the one he had managed, but was based on the same principles and produced the same results.)

Rebecca, incidentally, was not in anyone's presence during the killing of Jeeter; she claims that she was taking a walk, about one hundred yards off, when she heard Mrs. Johnston's screams, and was delayed from arriving on the scene when she twisted her ankle on the run back to the house.

Reese White: Reese was interested in Jeeter's comment about this area being his father's old stomping-ground, and was angry that he couldn't get the old man to talk further. Very angry, as a matter of fact. Why? Well, legend has it that Coyote White hid quite a cache of stolen gold at his last hide-away before he was killed, and that money could come in very handy now... Jeeter's mind was ranging back in time these last few years, and some friction had arisen between Reese and the old man about Jeeter's continual harping on what a really wretched specimen of humanity Coyote White had been.

Bill and Oram Soames: They just won't talk much. Ask either twin who they think the Scarecrow is, and he'll say, "Same one as before, and I'm going to fill him full of holes." Why so long between murders? "Maybe he was resting. I'm going to fill him full of holes." Neither brother was present for the murder of Jeeter Soames. Oram was in Amarillo gathering supplies and Bill was visiting Dr. Greene. Both have fairly solid alibies thereby.

Leo Wall: He was in Amarillo on the same trip as Oram, though he wasn't with him at the time of the

murder. However, Leo and Oram effectively alibi each other; the time to travel the distance was simply too great.

Percy Kuhns and Lefty Cray: The other two stablehands were out with the four guests on a camping foray and did not return to the ranchhouse until the morning after the murder.

If the characters think to communicate with the twins' former college, they'll find that the brothers' curriculum was somewhat more diverse than they've let on. Both twins spent a season on the school's gymnastic team but were washed out in a scandal involving the hospitalization of the school's top athlete and arrogant cretin. Both twins were known for very rough humor, Bill more so than Oram; had Oram been as aggressive and brutal as Bill, he probably would not have graduated. A more startling revelation is that Anna Wynn is a classmate of both twins.

Anna Wynn: If confronted with the fact that she knew the twins at school, Anna will break down, her manner thawing noticeably, and admit the fact. She's Bill's fiancée—unofficially; the murder kind of got in the way of the announcement. (If Bill is already dead at this point, she'll basically be a hysterical wreck when she's confronted with her past, and collapse on whichever player-character shows any sympathy.) She is at the Circle-W, she says, to help Bill: By pretending to be a guest instead of a family friend, she should be protected from the assaults of the Scarecrow (if he is indeed only slaying the Whites and their relatives), but she'd be around to help or put pieces together to trap the Gray Scarecrow.

The Timeline

The day the player-characters arrive, nothing much will occur—at least in daylight hours. Reese and Rebecca and Zebediah will give our heroes the nickel tour of the ranch, begin teaching them to ride; our heroes will undoubtedly begin investigating the situation, meeting all the principles, etc. Around 3 p.m., Sheriff McRae will arrive to report nothing new on sightings of the Scarecrow and to check over the Circle-W's new crop of guests. Around 4 p.m., Bill and Oram will ride out to visit Dr. Greene, and are due to return by dinnertime. Effectively, though, all the action today depends on what the player-characters want to do.

At dinnertime, everyone but the twins is seated to dinner. A few minutes into the meal, the sound of horses will be heard out at the stables; a couple of minutes later, Bill will stroll in, mentioning that Oram is outside settling the horses and will be in in a minute.

However, a minute later there is a scream—definitely a male scream—from the direction of the stables. Inevitably, all those seated to dinner will charge outside to find Oram lying in a pool of his own blood—in the stable—with a row of pitchfork holes along his chest. A successful Tracking Roll will enable a character to trail padded footprints; the trail leads to the road, where whoever it was mounted a horse and rode off (a trail of padded hoof-prints). However, the Gray Scarecrow will have had time to build too much of a lead to be caught this night.

Oram is quite dead. Everybody has his moment of grief. Reese will call the sheriff. Bill disappears into the ranchhouse. Zebediah stays very quiet. Anna seems disproportionately moved. Allan Manfred takes notes.

When Sheriff McRae arrives, he'll take statements, call Dr. Greene to drive over and fill out the death certificate, and ask where Bill is. A quick check will reveal that Bill left via the window in his room, taking his guns. (If a player-character trails him, Bill will pull his gun, disarm the character, knock him out, and *then* leave.) He evidently left on foot; all the horses were accounted for in the stables, which were occupied from the time of the discovery of Oram's body. McRae notes that Bill is the chief suspect; if no other motive surfaces, killing off one's relatives to gain ownership of the ranch is still a viable reason, and, after all, he was the last one to see Oram alive. The suggestion is indignantly rejected by most of those present.

Dr. Greene will arrive, fill out the death certificate—he is evidently very shocked—and appropriate the body for transportation to the county seat.

Throughout the next day, naturally enough, all the family members and guests will be on edge. The Callahans want to leave, but Reese assures them that McRae will have something to say on that. The player-characters may participate in further investigation and deduction. Allan Manfred will attach himself to Zebediah and Mrs. Johnston, trying to get stories and a sense of how it must have been to grow up under the Scarecrow's shadow, so Rebecca may gravitate to the company of the player-characters.

The following morning, Bill Soames will be found—nailed by a pitchfork to the wooden cross where hung that nodding scarecrow, forty years ago, on the old Spalding farm. McRae will drive Reese and whomever Reese wants to have along (such as his old friend) out to the site for identification of the body. Bill will be dressed as he was the night he disappeared, the Scarecrow's pitchfork driven with considerable force through his chest and into the wood of the old scarecrow's cross. Dr. Greene, after a suitable examination, will pronounce that he must have been killed the same night as Oram, and any character with Professional Skill: Medicine will agree.

The Truth

The rest of the adventure will be played out according to the character's actions. The Callahans will leave, their ghoulish fascinations more than compensated for by the possibility of danger. McRae will be disgruntled—though not vocally so—because Bill's death eliminated his prime suspect (even though Bill had been alibied during Jeeter's death). Allan Manfred will persistently and annoyingly associate himself with the player characters in their investigations (unless the PCs take very strong action).

Rebecca is the next intended victim; after her, Zebediah, then Reese. They don't know in which order they're marked, but they're all spooked; Oram and Bill were strapping, capable, and (honestly) dangerous men. So what's going on, asks the GM?

The Scarecrow is:

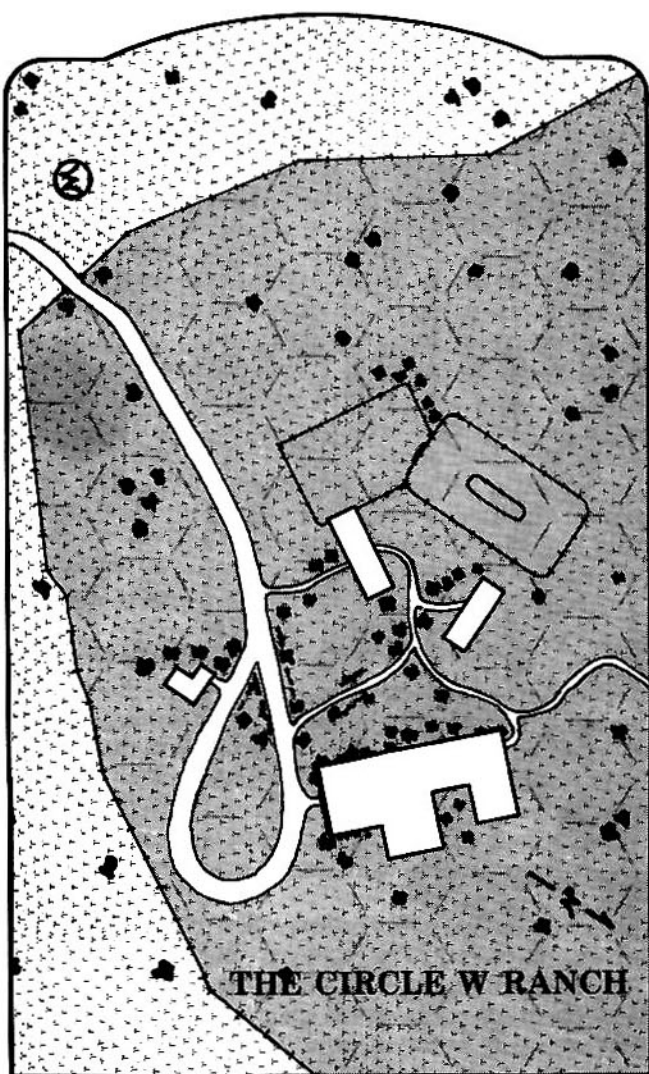
Bill Soames. ("Huh?")

Here's the story: Bill and Oram both were extremely avaricious sorts; Oram displayed it openly, as his notorious gambling indicates, while Bill kept his greed under wraps. Why? Well, Bill had something cooking. Once upon a time, senile Jeeter told him the story of when he'd seen the Scarecrow; back in '95, Jeeter stumbled across one of White's gang, lying in a ditch with a belly full of pitchfork holes. The dying bandit, mistaking Jeeter for Coyote in his delirium, told him that all the gold was buried in the basement of an abandoned house near the hideaway. Jeeter was too practical to waste his life on some mad search for a hideaway treasure, but filed the information away for future use, and many years later told Bill about it.

Bill spent years learning the lay of the land in the region, learning mapmaking, researching Coyote White's exploits, all in an effort to trace the missing gold fortune. In his last year in college, he finally put all the pieces together and discovered that Coyote White's gang had operated out of a hidden arroyo near the current ranchhouse—and the only ranchhouse in the vicinity in 1895 was the current Circle-W! His proximity to his goal had kept him blind to the facts these many years. The news was good, for the treasure was within his grasp—and bad, because there was no way for him to excavate it without Reese and the rest of the family knowing, and if he dredged it up with everyone knowing, it would belong to the family and be spent (idiotically) on the ranch. Therefore, the rest of his family, the other claimants to the treasure, had to go. No great loss, really. Zeb was no kin, Reese wasn't his father, he had no use for Rebecca, Jeeter was useless now, and Oram—well, he was too much like Oram to care much for him. But how to kill all these folk without bringing suspicion upon himself?

He had been a long time studying Coyote White, and the idea of the curse of the Gray Scarecrow occurred to him almost immediately. But he'd have to have some help...

It wasn't difficult to persuade dancer Anna Wynn, the girl he'd intended to marry until it became clear she wasn't going to get much of her father's estate (though he hadn't yet told her that their engagement was over), to help him develop the Scarecrow's walk and costume. Unfortunately in love with Bill, she quelled any compunctions she had against participating in murder for the chance to stay with Bill—a rich Bill, at that. It was no more difficult to enlist Dr. Sam Greene for a percentage of the recovered money.



A complication arose upon Bill's return from college, when Jeeter stumbled across one of the maps Bill had drawn of the Circle-W lands with a clear key to the Coyote White hideaway arroyo. Bill didn't know about that discovery until Jeeter announced at dinner that these were Coyote's lands—and Bill's black look

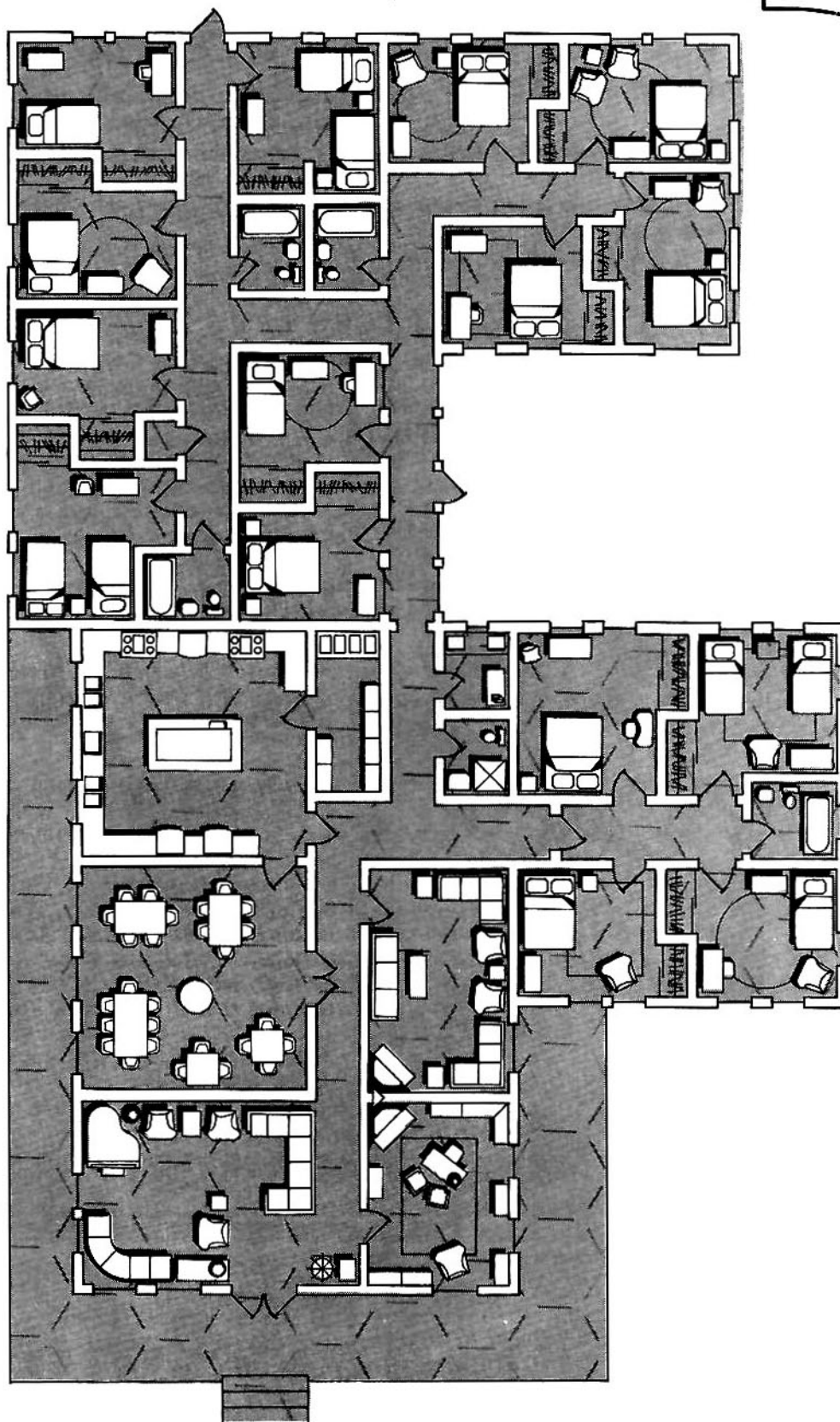
was enough to keep Jeeter quiet on the matter until the old man forgot about it.

A few nights ago, while Oram and Leo were in Amarillo and the other hands out on a camping run with the guests, Bill rode out of Sam Greene's place cross-country; he changed into the Gray Scarecrow garb and muffled his horse's hooves when he approached the ranchhouse, dismounted a short distance from the house, and approached on foot. He attacked and killed Jeeter (actually, Rebecca was to have been the original target, but the old man's knowledge was too dangerous) and would have killed Zeb (who was Reese's business partner and thereby entitled to some of the recovered gold) had not the old man disarmed him. Bill ran off and then rode post-haste back to Sam's house, where he hid all evidence of the Scarecrow—and then drove back to the Circle-W with Dr. Greene when Sheriff McRae called the doctor to fill out the death certificate.

Rebecca again was due for murder the next day, but unexpectedly left with Zebediah on the pretext of being moved to safety. That day and the next day (at this point, Zeb and Rebecca are in New York) and the next did not present any opportunities to kill Oram or Reese. The day after, when the player-characters arrived, he was able to suggest to Oram a trip to Sam Greene's. At Dr. Greene's, Oram was drugged into insensibility. (A full autopsy of the body would show that he was drugged. However, this would take several hours and some lab tests. Dr. Greene would certainly not allow this to happen if he knew of it.) At dusk, Sam and Bill brought Oram back to the Circle-W; Sam left his horse tethered a good distance away and rode in on Oram's. (If anyone searches more than just the immediate area of the ranch, they'll find these tracks if they make a Tracking Roll or a Perception Roll -3. These tracks should make them wonder.)

In the stables, Sam and Bill ran Oram through; Bill wandered into the ranchhouse to tell everybody that Oram was settling the horses; Sam waited a minute, screamed, and ran back to his horse, galloping back to his house to await the inevitable summons from the sheriff. When the sheriff called, Sam drove back to the Circle-W (trying to conceal his exertions and nervousness), wrote out the death certificate, took possession of the body, drove back to the main road—picking Bill up secretly in the process—and drove back home. At home, the two of them changed Oram into Bill's clothes and shaved him to resemble Bill. They then rode out to the old Spalding farm, propped Oram up on the scarecrow's cross, and ran him through—the same pitchfork holes, only deeper—to pin him to it. A medical examination of the body would show that the pitchfork had been driven in *after* the body had already been stabbed. Anybody who asks would notice that the pitchfork holes on "Bill" are in the exact same place as they were on Oram. If the players are having difficulty figuring out what's happening, let anyone spot that with a Deduction Roll (though this fact might give away the whole

THE RANCH HOUSE





thing, it's better to let a player-character figure it out from there).

Bill's plan now is to kill Rebecca and then Zebediah and then Reese—however, he's planning on having Sam dress up as the Scarecrow and having Sam kill Reese. Bill tells Sam that he's doing this so he can keep in the bushes with a rifle in case the sheriff or any of these blasted guests are too close, but the reality is this: Bill is going to let Sam kill Reese in plain sight of everyone else, and then will come charging over the hill (or whatever) and shoot Sam dead. Thus, Sam is thought to be the Scarecrow and Bill inherits the ranch—and its treasure.

(And Bill's supposed "death"? He will claim that he suspected Sam from the beginning; that he was asleep and drunk during most of the time he spent with Sam the day Jeeter was killed; that he sneaked over to Sam's house and stole his brother's body, changing the clothes with it to make all his friends think he was dead while letting the Gray Scarecrow know he was alive and waiting for him; and that he just hid out when he could, killing Sam when the murderer attacked his stepfather.)

As you can see, there are lots of ways for this adventure to end. If the player-characters have any sense, they'll stick to Reese and Rebecca and Zebediah like glue and make it very hard for the Scarecrow to get at them. If Rebecca is too well guarded, Bill will concentrate on Zebediah and Reese, performing his little charade with Sam and wrapping things up tidily—and when Rebecca goes off to college, he'll dredge up the gold then. He'd prefer not to wait, though.

Another variable is Anna Wynn. If Bill is somehow exposed, she will probably help him—if she stands a good chance of getting them both to safety. If Bill is killed and her part in the situation is unrevealed, she'll play innocent. However, it might be interesting to play her as though Bill's brutal murders have finally gotten to her and now she's looking out only for herself. If the players haven't figured out what's happening, Anna Wynn could always reveal the secret, claiming that it "wasn't her fault, Bill forced her to help him!"

Other thoughts: Another dramatic scene would be to have the new Scarecrow confronted by the old, as Zebediah straps back into harness to fight the murderer on his own terms. There is indeed an accumulation of gold, coin, and silver artifacts buried in the basement, to the tune of a staggering \$100,000 (ca. 1935). Our Heroes may get some much-needed (or much-disliked) notoriety when Allan Manfred's book *The Case of the Gray Scarecrow* is released a few months later.

In any case, the adventure should prove an interesting diversion for mystery-oriented player-characters, provide ample opportunities for the spending of experience points on such things as Riding and Familiarity: Pistols, and in general keep a load of characters on their (booted) toes.

Rebecca White

VAL	CHA	Cost	Cost	Skills	Roll
10	STR	0			
15	DEX	15			
10	CON	0	3	Familiarity: firearms	
10	BODY	0	2	Pro Skill: Dance	11-
18	INT	8	2	Pro Skill: Acting	11-
10	EGO	0	3	Riding	12-
13	PRE	3	1	Fam.: Pro Skill	
18	COM	4		Acrobatics	8-
4	PD	2	1	Fam.: Pro Skill	
4	ED	2		Ranching	8-
3	SPD	5	1	Fam.: Pro Skill Piano	8-
4	REC	0			
20	END	0			
20	STUN	0			
CV = 5					
PHASES:					
4, 8, 12					
CHA Cost = 39					
13 = Skills + 39					
CHA = 52					

Zebediah Spalding

VAL	CHA	Cost	Cost	Skills	Roll
10	STR	0			
14	DEX	12			
10	CON	0	6	Familiarity: firearms	
10	BODY	0		and melee weapons	
14	INT	4	3	Riding	12-
12	EGO	4	2	Pro Skill: Acting	11-
13	PRE	3	2	Pro Skill: Dance	11-
14	COM	2	2	Pro Skill: Ranching	11-
3	PD	1	3	Persuasion	12-
3	ED	1	3	Sleight of hand	12-
3	SPD	6	5	Stealth	12-
4	REC	0	2	Pro Skill: Acrobatics	12-
20	END	0			
20	STUN	0			
CV = 5					
PHASES:					
4, 8, 12					
CHA Cost = 33					
28 Skills + 33					
CHA = 61					
49+Disadvantages:					
5 Age: 60+					
3 Distinctive Looks:					
Age, features					
5 Unluck					
63 Total Points					

The rest of the characters may be considered normals possessing the following skills:

Leo Wall: Riding and Animal Friend: Horse.

Percy Kuhns: Riding and Professional Skill: Ranching.

Lefty Cray: Riding Professional Skill: Instruction and Professional Skill: Ranching.

Bill and Oram Soames

VAL	CHA	Cost	Cost	Skills	Roll
13	STR	3		Both brothers:	
14	DEX	12	3	Fam.: Firearms	
13	CON	6	2	Pro Skill: Acrobatics	12-
11	BODY	2	3	Riding	12-
13	INT	3		Talents: Bill only:	
10	EGO	0	5	Stealth	12-
10	PRE	0	3	Fam.: Melee weapons	
12	COM	1	2	Science: Minerology	11-
5	PD	2	2	Science: Geology	11-
5	ED	2	2	Science: Cartography	11-
3	SPD	6		Talents: Oram only:	
6	REC	0	9	Gambling	14-
26	END	0	2	Animal Husbandry	11-
25	STUN	0	3	Gunsmith	11-
CV = 5					
PHASES:					
4, 8, 12					
CHA Cost = 37					
22 Skills + 37					
CHA = 59					
+50Disadvantages					
5 Greed and amorality					
(common)					
5 Unluck					
60 Total Points					

Reese White

VAL	CHA	Cost	Cost	Skills	Roll
11	STR	1			
11	DEX	3			
13	CON	6	4	Pro Skill: Ranching	13-
10	BODY	0	4	Fam.: Firearms,	
14	INT	4		lariat	
11	EGO	2	2	Pro Skill: Recon-	
10	PRE	0		naissance espionage	11-
12	COM	1	5	Stealth	11-
4	PD	2	2	French	
5	ED	2	4	German	
3	SPD	9	2	Spanish	
5	REC	0	10	+2 Skill Levels	
26	END	0		with firearms	
23	STUN	0			
CV = 4					
PHASES:					
4, 8, 12					
CHA Cost = 30					
33 Skills + 30					
CHA = 63					
50+Disadvantages:					
3 Age: 40+					
5 Dependent NPC: Rebecca					
(competent, 11-)					
5 Unluck					
63 Total Points					

Elmira Johnston: Professional Skill: Cooking.

Dr. Sam Greene: First Aid, Professional Skill: Medicine, and Riding.

David McRae: Professional Skill: Law Enforcement, Riding, and Familiarity: Law Enforcement Weapons.

Allan Manfred: Professional Skill: Writing.

Anna Wynn: Professional Skill: Dance and Familiarity: Pistols.

KILLER CANDY

This *Justice Inc.* scenario is appropriate for one or more characters of any point level, since it's more of a thinking situation than a doing situation. Players intending to play in this scenario should read no further.

This mystery scenario, simple though it seems, is capable of providing some nasty twists. It takes place in the Cathay Room of the Empire Club and involves a cast of several well known adventurers of varied backgrounds. All of them have completed a number of notable adventures together, but they have not always gotten along. Depending upon who is the victim of the plot, the motives will vary. This should give the players a number of leads to follow in an investigation, and perhaps to GMs out there a number of adventures to lead into this one.

The Setting

The foul deed takes place in the Cathay Room of the Empire Club. The four men present are only a month returned from an unsuccessful assault upon K2, a mountain close to Everest and believed by some to be a far more dangerous climb. The expedition was tragic in that a fifth member of the loosely associated "Knights of the Round World" (their group) was killed in an accident on the mountain. The four remaining members are present to commemorate their fallen comrade.

The Cast

Sir Richard Humbarton

Sir Richard was knighted for his extensive exploration of the Amazon basin and the discovery of Pre-Columbian ruins. A tall, willowy man, he is known for his wiry strength and vanity. Despite his youth (he's only thirty) his hair has thinned embarrassingly, and the toupee he sports does not match his natural hair at all. He is quite good at exploration, his idol having been Richard Burton; like his idol, he has a voracious appetite for information, languages, and women.

Frederick Bost

Freddie is the older, chubby, white haired man standing next to Sir Richard. Freddie is an industrialist who looks upon exploring as a hobby, a hobby he works at. In the world of business Freddie is considered a piranha, having stripped many Depression-riddled companies to the bone. He is incredibly wealthy; critics have accused him of "buying" discoveries by hiring a number of students

to work for him, then claiming the credit. This is not accurate, though it can be said of Freddie that he gets what he wants one way or another.

Antonio da Gama

Antonio is the wasp-waisted Latin fellow sipping the champagne cocktail. Born to a family with a name that means exploration, Antonio's lot in life was described before he was born. In fact he was born in a cave north of his native Spain, his mother and father being trapped at the time by a group of hostile Basques. The baby did not cry during a particularly ticklish situation, saving the family the risk of discovery, and his father therefore assumed Antonio was well born to that family. His father might have been right about Antonio's genetic make-up, but his nerve has a lot lacking. What he is afraid to do, he's too proud not to do, and that has gotten him into trouble on more than one occasion.

Thomas Brand

Thomas is one of the few individuals everyone seems to like. Tall, strong, handsome, yet modest, Tom is the sort of person everyone would like to have for a friend, and he's willing to see the best in everyone. Tom comes from a humble background. He got started adventuring when one of his jobs working his way through college was to assist a professor in an expedition into the Khmer jungles. He proved a smart, resourceful, and hard worker, making him in demand on other outings. He discovered that rich men were willing to pay well for his strong back, and that enabled him to enjoy his work while earning enough to keep the bankers away from his family's farm in Oklahoma. Tom's only real problem is that he doesn't relate to women that well. He was born into a family made up of 12 children, he was number five, and all the rest were women. He basically did not have anyone to teach him the ropes about dating, though his sisters did coach him on proper conduct for a gentlemen, and he is very well mannered. Therefore he is attractive, but does not know what to do with the attention he attracts.

The Crime

A messenger bearing a heart-shaped box of candies comes to the Cathay Room looking for Sir Richard. He delivers the candy to Sir Richard and then leaves. Sir Richard opens the note on the box, blushes, and shoots a glance at Thomas. Thomas does not notice.

The box is opened and comes with one of the guides that reveals the contents of each piece of candy. Freddie immediately demands a chocolate covered cherry, Tom opts for a pink colored strawberry candy, Antonio takes a piece of dark chocolate and Sir Richard chooses a piece of chocolate covered caramel.

If Freddie dies, the murderer is Freddie himself. Freddie hates Sir Richard for making a play for Freddie's daughter and heir Susan. Freddie is dying of cancer and wants to frame Sir Richard, a move that will either land Humbarton in jail or at least bring his womanizing out into the open. Freddie also hopes Thomas will console his daughter over the tragedy, thereby giving her a chance to land him as a husband, something she would like. In this case tracking down who bought the candy would be difficult, as the messenger boy was an actor hired by a "talent scout" over the phone. He picked the candy up at a place he was told over the phone.

Clues to get Richard off the hook:

- 1) The secret detective's file in Bost's office detailing Richard's affairs including an aborted fling with Susan Bost in Nice.
- 2) The autopsy report detailing the cancer.
- 3) The poison injected into the candy: one under development at a Bost Industries plant, yet is virtually unknown because it is under a government contract.

If you have Sir Richard die, the murderer will be either Thomas or Antonio. Thomas will be killing him to repay Richard for the suicide death of one of Thomas' sisters. Out in the wild world all by herself, she met Richard, became pregnant, and killed herself when he would not do the honorable thing.

Antonio might kill Richard because of the incident on the K2 expedition. While climbing across a nasty ice field a crevasse opened up beneath the feet of Thomas Brand and George Spears. Thomas was rendered senseless from the fall, as was George. Richard plucked Thomas from danger, but Antonio was too petrified with fear to save George before his ropesnappped. George was then lost, and Richard is the only man alive who knows Antonio is a coward at heart (Freddie was involved above anchoring both Antonio and Richard). To preserve his image Antonio must kill Richard.

If Antonio dies, the murderer is George Spears. George did not die in the accident. He was discovered by some Sherpa climbers and nursed back to health in secret. George knows of Antonio's vice for dark chocolate and therefore poisoned the dark chocolate. He blames Antonio for his brush with death, an accident that has left him crippled from the waist down.

If Thomas Brand is murdered it must be because one of the other three cannot stand his being as good as he is. Richard and Antonio might both resent the fact that Thomas is the darling of the papers, a thing that would bother Freddie as well.

Variations of these plots can involve George poisoning all of them or Thomas and George working

together because the others denied Thomas' plea to go back for George's body. Or Thomas could be killing the other three because they recovered George's body and discovered he was alive, yet they did not try to get him out alive because they wanted to make the climb. George dies and Thomas wants revenge.

Here's your chance to use the principles we've talked about to create an adventure for your players. *Killer Candy* gives you the most basic information: just sketches of the main characters, a simple plot, and a setting. In order to make this a playable scenario, the GM must provide the details. Let's start at the beginning.

How do the players become involved in the scenario? Well, since it takes place at the Empire Club, characters who are members could be at the Club when the murder occurs. The characters could even be in the Cathay Room when the murder happens—however, does this cause problems? What if a character tries to eat some of the candy? Here's where the GM makes a decision. If the characters are in the Cathay Room, it's best if they aren't given a chance to eat any of the candy; instead, the GM tells the characters that they were busy talking to someone else, or reading, or *something* when the candy was being eaten. This prevents the characters from ruining your scenario at the start.

At this point, the adventure gets more difficult. The GM has decided who was killed and why. OK, but the method used has to be described. How did the killer know that the right man would get the poisoned candy? Perhaps it was all poisoned, and only one man ate a piece. This plot device could revolve around the victim's particular taste in candy, or perhaps the delivery boy's specific instructions. In any case, the GM has to decide what the killer's exact plan was. Knowing the exact plan will make it easy for the GM to answer the players' questions as they search for clues. An easy way for the GM to generate clues is to let the players ask lots of questions, and then decide the answer to the question in accordance with the killer's plan. For instance, a player asks "Were there any fingerprints on the candy box?" and the GM tells him that, after checking, none are found (because the killer had wiped off the box). Then the player asks "Are there any fingerprints on any of the chocolates?", which is a good question. The GM then decides that the players could use a clue right now; therefore, the killer, in handling the chocolates to inject the poison, left a fingerprint. Of course, this might lead to a very quick solution to the mystery.

The players will probably need help in solving the mystery. Careful analysis of the facts is very important; suggest to the players that they write down a list of the pertinent facts about the case, and try to construct a timeline of the events around the time of the murder. This will help keep their attention focused on the important facts of the case, and prevent them from running off to follow totally useless clues.

This scenario is your chance to exercise your creativity—make the most of it!

CHARACTER NAME

Disadvantages

Pts

Roll

Base OCV and DCV
DEX/3=

Phases

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

END:___STUN:___BODY:___

Experience_____

COMBAT MANEUVERS CHART

Combat Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Effect
Punch	+0	+0	x1 STR damage
Killing Blow	-2	-2	(STR/15) D6 Killing
Block	+0	+0	—
Dodge	—	+3	—
Hold	-2	-2	—
Disarm	-3	-1	Disarms opponent
Grab	-1	2	—
Flying Tackle	-2	2	x1 + knockdown

¹ OCV minus based on target size

² Character is prone (see Combat Modifiers)

HIT LOCATION CHART

3D6 Roll	Location	STUN\times	BODY\times	N STUN	To Hit
3-5	Head	x5	x2	x2	-8 OCV
6	Hands	x1	x $\frac{1}{2}$	x $\frac{1}{2}$	-6 OCV
7-8	Arms	x2	x $\frac{1}{2}$	x $\frac{1}{2}$	-5 OCV
9	Shoulders	x3	x1	x1	-5 OCV
10-11	Chest	x3	x1	x1	-3 OCV
12	Stomach	x4	x1	x $\frac{1}{2}$	-7 OCV
13	Vitals	x4	x2	x $\frac{1}{2}$	-8 OCV
14	Thighs	x2	x1	x1	-4 OCV
15-16	Legs	x2	x $\frac{1}{2}$	x $\frac{1}{2}$	-6 OCV
17-18	Feet	x1	x $\frac{1}{2}$	x $\frac{1}{2}$	-8 OCV

Run: _____

Jump: _____

INT Roll

9+(INT/5):_____

DEX Roll

9+(DEX/5): _____

EGO Roll

9+ (EGO/5): _____

PER Roll

9+(INT/5): _____

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