Character Guide: The Gentleman Thief



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ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

redits

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A Party to Remember

By David Mesick

Rain comes down in a torrent, battering the ground. A single man calmly saunters down the lane, seemingly unaffected by it. He is dressed for quite the occasion; gloves, felt hat, cane, crimson vest and pressed slacks make for a dashing image.

He approaches a door, unobtrusive and simple in appearance; no sign hangs above, and it's undistinguishable save for a three grey dots adorning the door that form a crude triangle. The two misfits given the boring job of playing bouncer for tonight's festivities shoot him an annoyed look, as if his mere presence only increased their misery.

"Good evening sirs. I am here for tonight's event." The well-dressed man drawls amicably.

"Name?" one of the bouncers grunts at him.

"Lord Winthrop, if it pleases you."

The bouncer, a man who reeks of tobacco and cheap whiskey, takes a scroll out from his pocket without taking his eyes off of the newcomer. He unfurls it and gives it a brief glance.

"You're not on the list, bub. You don't get in."

The other bouncer, a mountain of a man with one eye, starts eagerly fingering his club in anticipation of the coming excitement.

Lord Winthrop remains unfazed, and flashes a quicksilver smile.

"Of course not. I'm new in town and I heard that Yarrick the Bold was a man I should endeavor to meet" drawing out a pouch that jingles as it moves.

The man with the scroll snatches the purse, opening it and greedily examining the coins inside. Yarrick didn't pay these guys top coin, and Winthrop knew it. The other bouncer steps back and opens the door.

Several hours later, when the illusion fades, all of those coins will turn to stone. It's useful knowing a mage.

Inside the door Winthrop finds a bespectacled man with his nose in a black, leather bound journal. He pauses from his work to acknowledge the newcomer.

"Name?"

"Lord Winthrop."

He writes the name down in the book.

"You've got the entrance fee ready?"

Silently, Winthrop extracts another bag, this one much heavier and larger, and presents it to him.

He opens the purse, and meticulously examines the contents, weighing, counting and scratching the coins. Fortunately, the illusion holds, and Winthrop is waved in.

Tables piled with rich fare line the walls of this large room. A long table adorned with a crimson cloth stretches across it, and some patrons have already gathered food and sat down, engaging each other in conversation. A desk sits in one corner, undoubtedly where Yarrick conducts business from. He was never known for his subtlety, and values his reputation; rumors allege he murdered someone on that desk. Winthrop smiles; Yarrick's pride had just made his job easier.

Winthrop scans the room, and quickly finds what he is looking for. As expected, Yarrick sits in a great, throne-like chair at the head of the table. He is dressed in purple robes, and sipping from a wine glass, as he engages in conversation with a man in a silver coat and blue vest.

Everything has gone according to plan. Winthrop serves himself some food, and a small glass of wine. He had long since decided he would enjoy himself a bit: a mix of necessity and pleasure was why he had gotten into this business in the first place.

Winthrop spends the next hour engaged in pleasant conversation with his neighbors. He is in a room with some of the most powerful crime lords, after all, and information of that caliber was always valuable.

A loud ringing suddenly cuts through the evening: nine loud peals signaling the time. Winthrop politely excuses himself, and heads to the wine table. On cue, the man in the silver coat stands and raps on the side of his glass, to call for a toast. His voice commands attention, and Yarrick is completely transfixed.

Winthrop reaches the desk and begins to work. His fingers begin to undo the locks and bypass the enchantments that cover the desk. All the while, his eyes never leave Yarrick. If he once looked over, Winthrop knows he'd immediately arouse suspicion. His luck holds though, and he manages to pop out the drawer he is after in under a minute. He opens it, grabs the black book inside, and replaces it with a brown leather one. He closes the drawer and returns to the wine table to pour himself a new glass. He manages to make it back to the table before the toast is complete.

After everyone sits down, Winthrop picks up his coat, politely excuses himself, and heads for the front door. Out of the corner of his eye, he sees the man in the silver coat doing the same thing. Neither of them wants to be here for the coming storm.

Winthrop only manages to make it a few hundred feet away before a dozen armed guardsmen made their way past him, going towards the party he had just left. Someone had tipped off Ferdinand, the head of the city's largest and most aggressive thieves' guild, that Yarrick was behind the heist of his vault last week, and that incident had cost the guild leader quite a bit of gold, as well as a brown leather journal that held all the records of the guild's transactions. Unfortunately for Yarrick, Ferdinand already hated him, so he didn't even look into where the tip came from. Even more unfortunately for Yarrick, Ferdinand controlled the local guardsmen. Fortunately for Winthrop and his client, however, Yarrick's slaving operation would never again prove to be a nuisance, and Yarrick's secret ledger could no doubt fetch a fair price from interest parties. Winthrop already had a few buyers in mind.

Two books for the price of none. Not bad for a day's work.

Introduction

This is a book for those of us who are rogues at heart, and wish to play a rogue with pen and paper, as well. Naturally, there are many kinds of rogues and rogue-like characters, and it would be foolish to try to discuss each of them in a single product of this size. This book instead provides a detailed guide to playing a single iconic roguish character: the gentleman thief.

That doesn't mean this is only a book for rogues, though. An iconic theme such as "gentleman thief" is too big an idea to limit itself to the mechanics of a single class: and no single class can truly encompass all that this idea encompasses (even if some are better-suited to it than others). Thus, this book doesn't seek to tie the grand image of the gentleman thief to any single mechanical element of the game. Instead, the book provides a comprehensive guide to playing a gentleman thief character, regardless of that character's actual class. This is accomplished in three sections.

In the first section, Defining Features, we examine the abstract details of the gentleman thief, focusing on the elements that distinguish gentleman thieves from other kinds of roguish characters, and on the things that set each of them apart from one another. The aim of this section is to provide prospective players and GMs with all the information they need to understand the gentleman thief and to make a decision about what kind of gentleman thief their character will be.

The second section, Building Your Gentleman Thief, is devoted to dispensing mechanical advice on how players can most effectively achieve their character concept. This section contains a rundown of classes, skills, feats, spells, and magical items, with the aim of demonstrating how to most successfully represent the various elements of the gentleman thief through the mechanics of the game. This section also includes a new prestige class, which is available to characters of a wide variety of classes, and which provides a series of abilities that represent the kinds of legendary skills attributed to gentleman thieves.

The third and final section, Running Games with Gentleman Thieves, is aimed at addressing the major issues GMs may come across when running a campaign including a gentleman thief. In particular, we focus on adventure construction, providing tips for creating archetypical adventures for the gentleman thief, and we examine the possibilities of organizations in which such characters can excel.

Defining Features

"I still remember the day I met my husband. I was in the garden, taking in some sun, when I noticed him gliding soundlessly across the roof of my father's estate. He slipped through a window on the top floor and disappeared. Later that day, my father raged about a missing jeweled necklace belonging to my late grandmother. I thought that would be the last I would ever see of the handsome thief. But later that same week, shortly after my father had discovered that he had simply sent the missing jewels to be cleaned, the handsome young man I had seen came calling, asking for the beautiful girl who spends her day in the garden. He told me that when he had seen me that day, he found that he didn't have the heart to steal from such a beautiful young woman. He was so sweet we were betrothed before the week's end."

~ Thesslia Monach, wife of Jean "the Ghost" Monach.

Gentleman thieves are perhaps the most beloved sort of stealthy and sneaky characters, and can be found throughout popular culture. Perhaps the most famous gentleman thief character is the French burglar Arsene Lupin, whose author may very well have coined the phrase with the book Arsene Lupin, gentleman cambrioleur, which loosely translates as Arsene Lupin, gentleman thief. Robin hood could also be considered to fall within this category, although he is more altruistic than many gentleman thieves, and less considered with luxury and decadence. More modern gentleman thieves include the stars of Ocean's 11, and the other movies from that series, Neal Caffrey, the con-artist, thief, and forger of the popular TV series White Collar. Several comic book characters fall into this vein, with cat woman being the most famous. For a real life example of a gentleman thief, you might consider looking into the life and career of Christophe Rocancourt. Many more characters fit into this role with varying degrees of accuracy, and the concept of gentleman thief is so broad and rich that there are few characters who can really be said to exemplify all of it, though there are countless who can be considered gentleman thieves in some part.

As a rule, gentleman thieves speak with a civilized tongue and cultured manner reminiscent of the highest breeding. In general, they disdain force, preferring to do things in a more elegant or guileful manner, and often claim such behavior is more befitting a man of distinction. Most gentleman thieves are driven by a love of challenge, or for the thrill of the experience, and enjoy the risks and dangers as much as the rewards. While many gentleman thieves rely heavily on stealth, nearly all of them draw heavily upon their wit and charm in order to outmaneuver or deceive their foes. Many choose not to conceal their identies, making their involvement in crimes an open secret, and relying on their charms and a lack of evidence to keep them out of trouble with the law.

Despite the term, gentleman thieves can be of any social class, and are as often women as they are men (though in the latter case, many prefer the term lady thief). Few of these characters steal to fulfill a need for food or coin, regardless of their social standing, and it isn't uncommon for gentleman thieves to work a second, legitimate, profession, or simply be independently wealthy. Of course, the majority of gentleman thieves do, in fact, derive their income from their larcenous habits, and take up theft in order to support a lazy and luxurious lifestyle. In particular, charmers and con-artists often prefer to live off rich patrons while getting their thrills moonlighting as a cat burglar.

Gentleman thieves are famous for acting without malicious intent, and generally go out of their way to avoid hurting anyone during the course of their actions. This is as often due to the elaborate codes of honor and self-imposed restrictions common to gentleman thieves as it is to a desire for a greater challenge. Others are simply too self-involved to realize that what they are doing could be harmful to others, or that their actions might have wider-reaching consequences. Despite popular conceptions, morality among these thieves varies widely, as do their precise motivations. Those who do go out of their way to avoid harming others, however, may find that it makes them more sympathetic in the eyes of the public, who sometimes fall in love with crafty but kind-hearted rogues of this sort (as the real-world popularity of tales of gentleman thief characters can attest to), although this will likely not make them any more popular with their victims.

One thing that isn't in doubt about the gentleman thief is his skills; truly viewed as elite among his fellows, the true gentleman thief prides himself on his ability to perform his thievery and stay one step ahead of the guards. Different gentleman thieves rely on different skills, some relying on stealth, others acrobatics, or charm, or even disguises, and most use several of these, but all of them are careful to keep those skills as honed as possible, and most gentleman thieves are supremely confident in their abilities. Some consider this attitude to be mere arrogance, but the propensity for gentleman thieves to prove themselves, particularly by causing things to vanish from their critics' possession, tends to lay this attitude to rest shortly thereafter.

A strong desire to prove their skills and assert their superiority tends to draw people to this line of work. In other cases, a sedentary life caused by an overabundance of wealth might allow a noble to pursue other avenues of excitement, such as the double-life of a gentleman thief, with great ease.

By the same token, an individual with a desire to make as much gold as he can, in the

easiest and fastest way possible, tends to spurn the gentlemanly aspect of these thieves, in favor of becoming a more base, cutthroat thief, who doesn't bother with social niceties, or unnecessary difficulties. Similarly, those with an interest in stealth, but no interest in stealing, can find more suitable work as a scout or spy, especially if they prefer to remain in the shadows, and not draw any attention to themselves.

Characteristics

Gentleman thieves can differ from one

another in many ways. They might prefer different methods, come from diverse backgrounds, covet different kinds of treasures, and choose to associate with a wide array of people. Despite all of this, there are certain general characteristics which nearly all gentleman thieves have in common, and which sets them apart from other roguish characters.

Arrogance: Gentleman thieves are commonly portrayed as being vain and arrogant, and all of the most popular gentleman thieves in fiction have a very high opinion of themselves.

They may refer to their thieving as "art," or simply elate at how much more brilliant they are than those that they prey upon, but whatever the case, few gentleman thieves are humble. While such narcissism is rarely considered a positive character trait, the best gentleman thieves are often charismatic enough that this attitude is infectious, and many people find themselves secretly sympathizing with the gentleman thief, and approving of his brazen attitude.

One way to demonstrate your gentleman thief character's arrogance (or, if you prefer "confidence") is to have him make great boasts, constantly telling tales of his own great exploits, whether they are true or false, or claiming he is capable of wild and superhuman feats. Another way is for him to mock the efforts of others, always belittling and taunting those he meets, especially potential rivals or enemies. Some particularly eccentric gentleman thieves always refer to themselves in the third person, and it is said that they do so because they love the sound of their own names so much.

Code of Conduct: Most gentleman thieves adhere to a code of conduct, sometimes formal, but often informal, or else they feel honor-bound to act in a certain way in their larcenous enterprises. These codes of conduct

> generally preclude the use of force during crimes, or restrictions on who their targets are (such as only stealing from the rich, or only stealing from people who deserve it) or how much can be stolen (such as not stealing more than a tenth of the target's wealth, or always ensuring they have enough left to support themselves). The motivations behind these codes of conduct range from a genuine sense of ethics or morals, to a carefully-managed public image, to a simple need to make stealing more enjoyable and difficult. In

some cases, they may even be enforced by a local guild of thieves. While it is by no means a universal rule, many gentleman thieves would rather be caught and punished for their crime than break whatever code of conduct he or she personally champions. However, since these codes are largely a personal matter, certain thieves are much more flexible than others about breaking them.

Not all gentleman thieves have a code of conduct, and those that do usually keep it fairly simple, with only one or two major rules. If you want your character to follow a code of conduct,

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choose one or two restrictions to place on his activities. Common restrictions include specific types of people that he will not target (such as women, or the poor, or "good people,"), or specific activities he won't engage in (such as killing while on the job, or stealing a personal item that can't be replaced, etc.).

Courteous: In some ways, this aspect of the gentleman thief can be considered to fall within their code of conduct, their air of culture, or even their mischievous bent and sense of ironic humor, but many gentleman thieves go out of their way to act courteous and polite, even—or, perhaps, especially—their victims, their rivals,

and their enemies. Depending on the style of gentleman thief, he may be entirely serious about all of this, or he may just be amusing himself, making courtesy a fun game. This goes beyond a simple ruse to lull them into a false sense of security or pass himself off as trustworthy man. Rather, it usually ties into the gentleman thief's self-image as being somehow better than a common thief.

As your mother may have told you when you were young, manners are free. Make your character particularly generous with his

"please" and "thank yous," have him doff his cap to women, and so on. When a nosy captain of the guard comes over to his manner to question him, have your character go out of his way to be a gracious host, offering a glass of his best wine, or similar.

Culture: Gentleman thieves are separated from common criminals by their appreciation for high society. The name of "gentleman" isn't applied solely because of their courteous manner, but also because of their ability to interact with the highest levels of society. Often, appreciation for art or culture is a strong driving factor for gentleman thieves, and serves as a guiding force when determining their actions. Few gentleman thieves will take something simply because it is valuable, and cultural or personal significance often plays a big role in their choice of target. Many gentleman thieves are well-known for specifically targeting works of art, and some even specialize, stealing only sculptures, or only the work of a specific painter, or items that belonged to famous historical individuals, and so on. That said, some gentleman thieves will take something for no other reason than that it is particularly well-guarded or difficult to steal, or because they have a grudge against the owner and want to

embarrass him, for example.

One way for your gentleman thief to show an appreciation for culture is to have him talk about it. Have him quote lines from classic literature or plays, or have him discuss the merits of one artist versus another. He might comment on the vintage of wine at the inn (whether for good or ill). If your campaign setting has enough background information to support this, by all means, use it, but for most campaigns, referring to real-life authors and wines will probably suit just fine, and your GM will appreciate

not having to provide that level of detail on the spot. You could also express your character's concern with seeming cultured through his appearance: he might be fastidious about trimming and waxing his facial hair, for example, or spend a fortune on the latest fashions.

Cunning: Among all types of thieves, gentleman thieves are the least likely to do things in a straightforward manner. It is incredibly rare to find a gentleman thief who uses raw force of arms or crude brute strength to resolve his issues. Instead, gentleman thieves are often tricksters, and many gentleman thieves go



out of their way to create situations where they are pitting their wits and guile directly against those of their target, turning the theft into a sort of personal competition. When possible, gentleman thieves almost always prefer to outwit or outmaneuver their opponent by doing something clever and unexpected, rather than simply overwhelm or intimidate them.

Unfortunately, there is no good substitute for real cunning, and we can't all be as clever and guileful as a gentleman thief is supposed to be. If you're having trouble pulling the wool over the eyes of NPCs, however, you can do what the not-particularly-clever have done for centuries: copy the clever people. Find some media about a gentleman thief you like—books, movies, TV, whatever your preference—and try to study his techniques. Pay attention to the clever things he or she does, and try to determine what lies at the heart of them, once you strip away the details of the situation, so that you can try to mimic them. Failing that, if your GM is amenable, you might be able to make Intelligence checks to get ideas or clues about cunning things you could do, or you may be able to rely on the collective input of the entire group when coming up with your character's schemes.

Love of a Challenge: One of the most defining aspects of the gentleman thief is his love of a challenge. While the motivations for this powerful craving are as varied as the gentleman thieves themselves, it frequently stems from a grand sense of narcissism, with the gentleman thief wanting to prove to the world how brilliant and talented he truly is. Many gentleman thieves go out of their way to select deliberately difficult targets, seeking out treasures that are said to be impossible to steal because they are so well guarded. Failing that, many gentleman thieves invent difficulties for themselves, such as by announcing in advance the item they intend to steal, and sometimes even when they intend to steal it. Because the gentleman thief is so influenced by this need to feel challenged, he is often prone to bouts of extreme boredom when not living on the edge.

There's only one way to show how much

your character loves a challenge, and that is to actively seek them out, whether this means never backing down from a challenge that presents itself, or deliberately going out of your way to make things more difficult. You might declare that you will go through a combat with one hand behind your back, or to pick a certain lock with your eyes closed, for example. Just be careful not to take on challenges that are too great, unless you're prepared to fail.

Mischief: Gentleman thieves often have an impish streak, and a strong sense of humor. They commonly employ irony or poetic justice in their craft—delighting in turning a miser's traps and security systems against him, or in manipulating the target into bringing about the very theft he was trying to prevent. Many gentleman thieves also go out of their way to leave clues or notes which mock their victims—such as by replacing a stolen portrait with a crudely-drawn one of himself, for example. Some gentleman thieves also take great pleasure in seducing their victims' loved ones before they leave, adding insult to the injury of the theft, although sometimes this has less to do with mischief than with other desires.

Most players interested in playing a gentleman thief will need no advice on how to get into mischief. Beyond simple theft and seduction, however, you can show your character's impish side through practical jokes and impudent remarks. It's one thing to steal the baron's jewels and run off with his daughter. It's another to leave a note thanking him for his hospitality.

Skill: Gentleman thieves view themselves as the masters of their craft, and this is one of the most profound ways that they are set apart from other sorts of criminals, because these highly-tuned skills allow them to perform the kinds of feats that other, lesser thieves can only dream of. While many gentleman thieves are capable of great and feats of physical prowess and subtle manipulation, others prefer to use a masterful grasp of planning to circumvent the need for raw physical or social talent. This mastery of their craft lends a different meaning to the phrase "gentleman thief," as these rogues are among the best of their kind, comparable to aristocrats of the world of larceny.

This aspect of a gentleman thief has a lot less to do with roleplaying than it does with the character's game statistics. An entire section of this book is devoted to making an effective gentleman thief using the game rules. However, this can also apply to the strategies and tactics employed by gentleman thieves—it will be hard to play a skilled con artist if you don't understand the basics of running a con, just as it will be difficult to pull off a good heist if you don't understand the best way to go about doing so. A little bit of research or background information can take you a long way in this regard.

Style: Perhaps the most important aspect of the gentleman thief, and the thing that sets them apart from other types of thieves the most, is their sense of style, panache, and daring. In many ways, this ties in to other aspects of the gentleman thief archetype, including the fact that they are cultured, skilled, and arrogant, but the fact of the matter is that the most famous gentleman thieves—and in many ways, amongst gentleman thieves, fame is a measure of success—don't do things halfway. They favor dramatic entrances, flashy exits, convoluted schemes, larger-than-life heists, and aim to do everything with an air of grace and style. For many gentleman thieves, succeeding at a job in a boring or clumsy way is worse than failing in a spectacular manner.

Style is one of those things you either have, or you don't, and it's hard to explain. In general, though, try to think of what sorts of things you think would make a gentleman thief cool—what do other gentleman thieves you like do that makes them cool? What can you do to make your gentleman thief stand out? To be different? With any luck, you'll soon have the rest of your group, as well as the GM, interested in seeing your character be cool and successful as well, and you may find the rules being bent ever-so-slightly in the name of the "rule of cool."

Alignments

Unlike many types of characters, gentleman thieves can be of any alignment. This makes them a diverse group, with many different core motivations. A person's alignment represents his most basic values and beliefs, and it is important to understand the influence of differing alignments on a gentleman thief.

Lawful Good: As is the case with all criminals, few gentleman thieves have enough appreciation for the law to maintain a lawful good alignment while practicing their trade. However, a number of former thieves find more lawful occupations later in their careers, typically working as consultants for lawful organizations or acting as private detectives, lawful good gentleman thieves are much more likely to use their skills and experience to help catch criminals, particularly thieves, rather than to commit crimes themselves. Many such gentleman thieves find great joy in matching wits with other criminals, and some claim that it's a more rewarding challenge to prevent crimes or apprehend criminals than to steal things. Of course, gentleman thieves with strong moral codes, and who steal for altruistic reasons, may still fall within this category.

Neutral Good: Since they aren't inhibited by a particularly strong adherence to the law, neutral good gentleman thieves are somewhat more common than their lawful good counterparts. While it's enough for many to simply follow a moral code which precludes doing anything they feel would be harmful, or taking things that people need, others take the process a step further. These gentleman thieves actively seek to use their talents for good, robbing from criminals or wicked individuals. Some others choose to steal only things which do not rightfully belong to its current possessor, either reasoning that you can't steal stolen goods, or with the goal of returning it to the rightful owner. In addition, most neutral good gentleman thieves refuse to steal from good individuals.

Chaotic Good: These thieves often rationalize that if they steal for what they feel are good

reasons, and do no other evil in the process, then what they are doing is good. Many chaotic good gentleman thieves tend to view what they do as "liberating" goods rather than stealing. As a result, chaotic good thieves are keen to take art or culturally significant items from wealthy people who don't appreciate them, in order to give those objects a more deserving home. Others steal only from those who "have it coming," reasoning that if the local warlord's treasury is suddenly emptied, he won't be able to keep paying his mercenaries, for example. Another common practice among gentleman thieves of this alignment is to steal gold from the greedy and wicked and redistribute it among the poor. While chaotic good gentleman thieves may not restrict themselves to only robbing a specific alignment of people, they typically only steal things from people they feel can afford to lose them.

Lawful Neutral: As with lawful good gentleman thieves, lawful neutral thieves tend to be more uncommon than their less-lawful counterparts, due to the nature of the profession. However, since they aren't necessarily saddled with the same morality as the lawful good gentleman thief, many find legitimate work. Typically this involves espionage or privateering at the direction of a government official, and spies and similar characters can certainly fall under the heading of gentleman thieves, even if they don't steal anything but information. For other gentleman thieves, it might mean working to apprehend criminals, reacquire what was stolen, or even act as a saboteur or agent. Gentleman thieves with confidence skills are particularly prized to serve as advisers to powerful lords, particularly those living in politically muddy areas, where the skills of a thief and con man can be invaluable.

True Neutral: Because a lack of strong morality and ethics lends itself well to life as a gentleman thief, many are true neutral. Since this is largely born out of moral apathy rather than a desire to maintain spiritual balance, few gentleman thieves of this alignment share many traits. Another common reason for gentleman thieves being of this alignment is that they have strong but conflicting moral and ethical views; for example, they believe in the rules and trappings of society, but have no problem taking things that don't belong to them; and they believe that no one should be unduly hurt, while considering only their personal desires when conducting a job. These gentleman thieves can typically find work doing anything, but often fall prey to taking unscrupulous jobs, only to end up wanting to back out when things aren't quite what they expect.

Chaotic Neutral: Gentleman thieves of this alignment enjoy being well-liked and the center of attention. Often, they particularly crave the challenge of thievery, and are the most likely alignment to try to take something simply because it looks like it would be fun to try. While most gentleman thieves of this alignment feel unbound by society's laws and often laugh in the face of convention, they may have surprisingly rigid and elaborate moral codes, purely because they make things more fun. Of course, these rules may change between jobs, or even be abandoned in the middle of a job, if they are particularly onerous, and they may not have anything to do with morals or ethics, instead consisting of terms like "only use your left hand." Chaotic neutral gentleman thieves are even more likely than most to work alone, but tend to be easy to convince to give up this rule when push comes to shove.

Lawful Evil: Unlike good and neutral characters, lawful evil characters tend not to believe that stealing is wrong. Similarly, their view of the law tends to leave them with the impression that until charges are levied against them, no crime has been committed, or at least, that is what they claim. Gentleman thieves of this alignment hail disproportionately from members of high society, and they hate to be associated with common criminals, and many members of this alignment refuse to see themselves as such; as a result, they typically refrain from taking things which are not significant in some way. Of the evil gentleman thieves, lawful evil gentleman thieves tend to be the most likely to follow a personal code of conduct that a good or neutral person might

consider acceptable.

Neutral Evil: Neutral evil gentleman thieves want to prove their skill at stealing. They want to indulge their desires and don't necessarily care what anyone else thinks. This combination makes these thieves dangerous: they often prove to be the most daring of all gentleman thieves, and the least restrained. For example, a neutral evil gentleman thief might choose to steal the archduke's crown, but he might also kill a few of the duke's guards or take a hostage in order to accomplish his goal. Some neutral evil thieves only view morality from their own perspective, and might have codes of conduct which include rules like "don't steal from my friends," or "don't murder pretty girls." That's not to say that they don't behave well in public or act with courtesy in their off-time—just because they lack morality doesn't mean they lack manners, and they often feel that good manners makes them better than others, something that tends to be very important to gentleman thieves of this alignment.

Chaotic Evil: Gentleman thieves of this alignment are extremely uncommon but tend to be sociopaths. While they might act genteel, these thieves only care about what they take. They might still be very selective in their doings, but their choices are only going to be motivated by their personal wants. They are the most likely to maliciously take goods and "Don't get caught" tends to be all the code of conduct they have. Glib and charming, these thieves are likeable but are far from kind, and almost exclusively use their charm to wriggle out of trouble. Particularly immoral chaotic evil gentleman thieves focus on stealing from the just and righteous. Others might move outside the realm of larceny and become kidnappers or torturers, leaving grim clues for careful investigators to find, confident that they're too smart to be caught.

Building Your Gentleman Thief

Now that we've discussed the type of personality and traits that make up a gentleman thief, the next step is to examine ways to make an effective gentleman thief character using the various mechanics of the *Pathfinder* roleplaying game. While gentleman thieves can belong to any class, and can take a variety of different forms, there are still certain feats, skills, and even classes that are better suited to the sorts of activities gentleman thieves generally undertake, and can make for effective and capable gentleman thieves.

Key Abilities

For the most part, the ability scores most important to the gentleman thief are going to be tied into either his role as a thief or as a gentleman, rather than enhance his abilities as a combatant. It will be extremely beneficial to know how the gentleman thief is going to accomplish his thefts when deciding which scores to give the most priority. To a skilled cat burglar, Dexterity, which governs his ability to remain unseen as well as to open locked doors and disarm traps, is of paramount importance. Alternatively, a gentleman thief who favored confidence tricks would get more value from Charisma, which is useful in constructing disguises and deceiving his marks.

Which ability score to invest in as a secondary priority will likely also be determined by his individual style. Using the above examples, a cat burglar might favor Strength as it helps him climb taller buildings, or he might chose Intelligence, as it would allow him to learn more useful skills or improve his ability to appraise objects of high value. Similarly, a con man might favor Wisdom, as it allows him to better read people, or he might also choose a high Intelligence so as to have a wide variety of knowledge to draw upon during conversation.

Someone who chooses to focus more on his role as a member of high society will always be well served by a high Charisma, as it is the ability score most heavily associated with being well liked and influences all skills used to increase the attitudes of others. As far as electing a secondary statistic to improve for this aspect of his character, he would be wise to elect something which gives him a noble feel in the society in which he operates. Thus, a society which valued a welleducated gentry might see gentleman thieves with a higher Intelligence, while a society which spurned such things in favor of physical prowess might see gentleman thieves who better embody those values. In general, a gentleman thief's abilities are going to be tied directly to the skills and abilities he uses most often, with a secondary emphasis given to abilities which generally enhance but aren't directly tied to those goals, and little to no emphasis placed on abilities which do not match the character's concept.

As an aside, gentleman thieves who are also dedicated spellcasters, such as wizards or clerics, should always place a greater amount of importance on the ability score which is tied closely to their casting. Thus, even a character who would not ordinarily emphasize Wisdom should do so if he is also a cleric. However, it also may be worth noting that the ability score associated with the gentleman thief's spellcasting may not need to be as high as if he were a more traditional spellcaster. If this is the case, be sure to focus on spells which are not saving-throw-dependant and spells, as this will help mitigate the difficulties of playing a spellcaster with a low spellcasting ability score (see Recommended Spells, below, for some more ideas on specific spells of value to gentleman thieves).

Recommended Classes

While gentleman thieves might belong to any class, some classes are more strongly suited to the gentleman thief's skill set and lifestyle.

Bard: The bard gets a fairly good list of class skills and a decent number of skill points. His natural inclination for a high Charisma score proves a useful synergy, as he gains even more benefit out of a high Charisma than most characters. While the bard's spellcasting isn't the best, he does have access to a number of spells, such as *invisibility*, which can be useful to the gentleman thief. Many of the bard's class skills are invaluable for gentleman thieves, and the versatile performance class feature allows him to substitute Perform in place of some of those skills, as well.

On the other hand, many of the bard's other abilities don't relate very well to being a gentleman thief, including many bardic music abilities, bardic knowledge, and so on. It's also worth noting that while the powerful illusory magic bards have access to, not to mention spells like *glibness* and *modify memory*, might be very helpful in his criminal endeavors, some gentleman thieves might find it unsporting, which would limit the class's usefulness by comparison to some others.

Fighter: Fighters don't get Bluff, Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Disable Device, or Perception as class skills, and, yes, they get very few skill points, but mechanically speaking, the fighter might just be one of the best classes for those who pursue a career as a gentleman thief. Even with few skill points, a human fighter with a (not unreasonable) Intelligence score of 12 who chooses skill points for his favored class bonus would have five skill points per level, enough to make a serious run at being a gentleman thief. He would need to choose a very tight focus, and may have to make do without ranks in certain skills, but if handled carefully, it could be easily managed. While it's true that the fighter's class features don't necessarily encourage going about things in a particularly nonviolent way, he could still adhere to oaths of nonviolence by being a grand master of the sap, or by wielding a merciful weapon. Further, many gentleman thieves in fiction are fencers or otherwise skilled at swordplay, and this is an excellent way to represent that.

Despite the disadvantages, however, the fighter definitely has some upsides. Firstly, the class emphasizes physical ability scores, meaning that while the fighter will likely have to rely on a *circlet of persuasion* for his personal charm, he will be in good physical shape, which is valuable for a rooftop man. Secondly, the armor training class feature means that the fighter can go about heavily armored without having to worry (as much) about the associated armor check penalty, and can even move at his full speed. Weapon training and a high attack bonus provide a backup plan when the time invariably comes that the gentleman thief is confronted by a situation his wit and charm cannot solve, such as when an angry dragon attacks him. Perhaps most importantly, however, the fighter receives a lot of bonus feats, which allow him to take all of his important combat feats, while still being able to take feats like Skill Focus that can help make up for any skill deficiency.

Monk: Monks don't get Bluff, Diplomacy, or Disable Device as class skills, and they only receive four skill points plus their Intelligence modifier each level, but particularly intelligent monks will only be a short ways behind particularly skillful classes, making this a weakness they can overcome. Looking past the lackluster class skill selection, however, the monk can make for a surprisingly good gentleman thief—at least once you reconcile some of the flavor concerns. The monk is probably the best athlete in the game, and most of his class features lend themselves very well to being a second-story man (and in the case of slow fall, a tenth-story man). Particularly highlevel monks can even use their abundant step class feature to get into vaults and other protected areas. And while they're a far cry from the best combatant, they can still bring some punch to a fight.

On the downside, monks will probably need to invest in a number of non-class skills to accomplish their aims as gentleman thieves; this is particularly painful because monks already need to spread their ability score points over a number of different ability scores. Furthermore, monks have no natural inclination to be particularly charismatic, and are already dependent on a variety of ability scores, making it difficult to muster a high Charisma without suffering in other arenas. Finally, different people have different views on alignment, and the fact that monks cannot be chaoticallyaligned may cause friction between you and other players or the GM if you intend to be a gentleman thief, as they may have a different opinion of what constitutes "chaotic."

Rogue: Perhaps the most natural choice for a gentleman thief is the rogue class. Featuring a list of class skills which nicely encompasses most anything an individual gentleman thief might want to do, as well as the most skill points offered by any class, the rogue is ideally positioned for any skill-reliant character. Throw in a mix of class features which allow the rogue to better find and cope with the kinds of traps which gentleman thieves commonly face, and the class begins to look very appealing. Add to that the ever-expanding list of rogue talents, which further offer the gentleman thief options he might be able to exploit, and you have a match made in heaven.

On the downside, some class features (such as sneak attack) do not necessarily lend themselves well to the overall theme. While rogue gentleman thieves can simply choose not to use their sneak attack ability except under certain circumstances, it might be worth looking for an archetype which replaces more offensive abilities with utility abilities, or at least abilities better suited for the concept of the gentleman thief.

Sorcerer: Spell casters of all kinds can succeed as gentleman thieves, even classes whose primary focus is spellcasting. Such characters simply need to rely more on their utility spells and careful planning than on their skills and other class features. Of the dedicated casting classes, sorcerers are probably the best suited for the task, due to their built in advantage for having a high Charisma score. While it's true that they can't learn as many spells as wizards and thus are less versatile, there is an alternate class feature for human sorcerers in the *Advanced Player's Guide* that largely negates this drawback.

On the other hand, there is something to recommend virtually every dedicated casting class: druids can shapeshift into animals, wizards have familiars, and clerics have access to the trickery domain. However, while gentleman thieves of such classes gain much from their spellcasting, they still have to make do with notably fewer skill points than other gentleman thieves.

Recommended Skills

Gentleman thieves rely on their skills in order to carry out both their nefarious and legitimate dealings. As such, skills are very important to gentleman thieves. While the most important skills to a gentleman thief will be defined by his individual character concept, and there are many different styles of gentleman thief, the skills we discuss here are of particular usefulness to a variety of characters fitting this theme.

Acrobatics: For the cat burglar and roofwalker, Acrobatics is key to successfully practicing their art. Whether it's balancing on ledges, leaping into and out of second-story windows, or tumbling to execute a daring escape, this skill is necessary for this type of thief's means of coming and going. Acrobatics also benefits the gentleman thief in combat, helping him to avoid attacks of opportunity and maneuver the battlefield, as well as improving the effectiveness of fighting defensively. For the most part, however, Acrobatics is only useful to gentleman thieves who choose to steal or escape through feats of athleticism, and is not necessary for those who prefer to rely exclusively on guile or magic to accomplish their ends. Still, it's always good to have a backup plan, and Acrobatics is always helpful when you need to make a quick escape.

Appraise: Knowing how much something is worth is very important to many gentleman thieves, sometimes for very different reasons. Some might be looking for items of particular value to steal, while others use this skill to ensure that they don't bankrupt anyone. While many gentleman thieves find it useful to appraise items quickly, others are happy enough to let someone else handle the process at a later date, or simply to ignore the material value of the things they take, preferring some other method of judging the item's worth. Consulting gentleman thieves are often called upon for these kinds of services by clients legitimate and nefarious alike. At your GM's discretion, Appraise might also be useful in spotting forged pieces of artwork, or knowing where specific,

valuable artworks can be found.

Bluff: While many gentleman thieves enjoy fostering a personal reputation for their skill, and take credit for their thefts, they often do so under assumed titles, and go to great lengths to avoid anyone connecting the thefts with their "public" personality. Further many a gentleman thief finds work as a con artist, deceiving his way into positions of privilege and influence, or just using the skill to get past guards. Some low-born gentleman thieves use lies to try to pass themselves off as nobility, and their ill-gotten wealth as family treasures. Additionally, many gentleman thieves enjoy disguises and assumed personalities, and often find need to use this skill when maintaining another identity.

Climb: Though not the most versatile of skills, if your gentleman thief needs to get up to that rooftop or second story window, the Climb skill is the most obvious way to do it. As with Acrobatics, Climb isn't equally important for every gentleman thief, and some would rather simply charm their way past obstacles, or use magic to get where he needs to go, but while certain items and spells circumvent the need for this skill, a rope and grappling hook free up those resources for other equally useful things, all for the low price of a handful of skill points and a pittance of gold.

Diplomacy: The gentleman thief likes to be admired, and to blend into society. As a result, Diplomacy, the skill used to charm others and sway them to your point of view, is an indispensable tool for gentleman thieves of nearly any sort. Some of the many ways that a gentleman thief could use Diplomacy include seducing the baron's daughter, convincing the prison guard to provide him with the seemingly-innocent item that is the key to his escape, cause the greedy miser to decide that he is the perfect man to hire as his new head of security, or simply impress a crowded ballroom with elegant banter and witty commentary. Even though most gentleman thieves work alone, they must rely on the help of others at some point, and the Diplomacy skill can help the gentleman thief find more people willing to help him, and

in exchange for less.

Disguise: Disguises and alter-egos are a major part of the careers of many gentleman thieves, and many find it both thrilling and useful to discard their real identity and assume a new one. Those gentleman thieves most practiced at this art rarely appear as the same person twice, and have whole new ways of disappearing, just by making a change of clothes and applying a few bits of makeup. Whether they use this skill to impersonate another person, such as a known party guest or humble manservant, in order to accomplish their goals, or merely to keep their real selves separate from the man committing the crimes, many gentleman thieves find this skill particularly useful. Note, however, that it is difficult to maintain a disguise for long without at least some ranks in Bluff.

Disable Device: This is another core skill for gentleman thieves, as even those who prefer to get into buildings with a charming smile and a clever disguise still have to get around locked doors, safes, and deadly traps to get at the objects of their attention. Disable Device gives gentleman thieves the ability to do all those things. While it is possible for a gentleman thief to make his way without this skill, he will likely need some other means of dealing with traps and locks, such as magic. In theory, a gentleman thief with enough charm and guile could get the keys for those locks or find the secret ways around the traps, but even then, most gentleman thieves find it helpful to have these skills in a pinch, for situations that are more difficult to charm one's way out of, such as picking the locks of his manacles, should he ever be caught.

Escape Artist: While not strictly critical, the Escape Artist skill is potentially useful in a number of situations throughout the average gentleman thief's career. In addition to allowing him to squeeze into particularly tight spaces without worry, and escape grapples he would probably have rather avoided in the first place, this skill can be used to escape bonds, should he ever be captured. And while many gentleman thieves are perfectly content to ride to prison in manacles, if by some miracle or clever ploy they fall into the hands of the law, sometimes they just don't have the time to waste on such triviality, and need to escape now, rather than later.

Linguistics: Fluency in multiple languages is useful to any character, but the gentleman thief gains a good deal more out of this skill than the average polyglot. Firstly, he might need to decipher shorthand and lazy scrawls on ledgers to ensure he knows what's available for taking (or find the password to disarm the traps to the vault). Secondly, fluency in a variety of exotic languages adds to the gentleman thief's persona of culture and social grace. Finally, and most importantly, linguistics is the skill used to create forgeries. A creative forgery can go a long way for any gentleman thief, and he might be able to accomplish in a few moments with a forged letter what would otherwise have taken all night and significantly greater risk.

Knowledge: An understanding of various subjects is always useful, and the more comprehensive your knowledge, the better. Which particular Knowledge skills are most useful to the gentleman thief depends largely on his tastes: a gentleman thief interested in history might find Knowledge (history) useful in identifying items of historical significance, and it will provide him with stories to tell at galas and balls. Meanwhile, a gentleman thief who is interested in items or events of local significance would benefit from Knowledge (local), especially if he stays in one place, as this skill may help him identify who are the important people in town, who would make good targets, and who would make good allies, the local punishments for various crimes, and so on. Knowledge (engineering) is useful in reading blueprints and finding weak points in buildings, or otherwise planning daring heists, while Knowledge (nobility) will tell the gentleman thief everything he needs to know in order to play the part of a nobleman, as well as information on the tastes and habits of his most likely targets.

Perception: Perception is a useful skill for just about any character, but it is especially so for

the gentleman thief. For one thing, it can be used to find all the various traps arrayed to protect valuables from individuals such as himself, especially if he has the rogue's trapfinding class feature. Second, Perception is used to notice incoming dangers, like hearing the sounds of approaching guards, returning home-owners, or spiteful criminals looking to move in on the score. Finally, Perception is necessary for finding important details like special engravings on an item, secret signatures on a painting, secret doors allowing easier access to the treasure vault, and so on.

Perform: Perform is especially important for gentleman thieves who are bards, as they can substitute Perform for a number of important skills, allowing them to spend their skill points in other areas (such as Disable Device and Climb). Even for non-bards, however, Perform is not an uncommon skill, as many find that it makes for a convenient excuse to be in the thick of things, and provides an excellent day job which allows them to observe the rich and famous, and go where they please without invoking suspicion. In some societies, it is a mark of status to be skilled at one or more kind of performance, typically acting or music, and in such places, the skill can add to the gentleman thief's air of culture and gentility.

Stealth: Another staple of thievery is the art of stealth. While many gentleman thieves don't mind if their victims know they were there, and often leave calling cards or similar identifying markers at the scene of their crimes, they reveal themselves at carefully planned times, after their work is already done, and to be discovered by accident is very embarrassing (not to mention the difficulty involved in having to escape with the loot). This skill is so important for most gentleman thieves that only those who can provide magical alternatives are likely to spurn it, and even then, they may regret doing so when they encounter anti-magic fields, or guards who can see invisibility.

Sense Motive: Another important social interaction skill, Sense Motive allows the gentleman thief insight into what those around him are thinking. This can be especially important to gentleman thieves who deal with less reputable individuals, allowing him to spot those who plan to betray him, but it can also be useful in other situations. The "get a hunch" use of Sense Motive can allow a gentleman thief to quickly size up a potential target, and identify the person in the room who will be easiest to con or trick. Further, if the gentleman thief prefers to charm and deceive as his primary means of operating, applying Sense Motive will allow him to tell when his victims might be catching on to him, and preparing to lead him into a trap, rather than a treasure.

Use Magic Device: In a fantasy world, even the most skilled of gentleman thieves needs a little magical help sometimes, and this skill allows him to get that help. Since most gentleman thieves already have a high Charisma score, this skill tends to be something they are predisposed to excel in, even if it is not a class skill. Those who can cast spells or use spell-like abilities will find this skill less useful than those who cannot, of course, but even they may find various uses for it. See the Recommended Items section, below, for some suggestions on what kinds of items Use Magic Device might be useful for.

Recommended Feats

A gentleman thief must be careful that he selects feats which help him to accomplish his motives. This section highlights a handful of feats which any gentleman thief might find particularly useful for his line of work.

Combat Expertise: Those gentleman thieves who do cross blades with foes generally are more interested in deflecting blows and keeping himself safe than on actually harming opponents, and usually the entire fight is just a matter of biding for time. Whatever the case, the ability to deftly parry an opponent's blows and fight intelligently is a hallmark of the gentleman fighter, and so of fighting gentleman thieves, as well. **Cosmopolitan:** A number of useful feats for the gentleman thief can be found in the *Advanced Player's Guide*, and among these is Cosmopolitan, a feat which confers additional languages to the gentleman thief, providing an excellent substitute for putting ranks into Linguistics, if the gentleman thief is short on skill points. In addition, though, the gentleman thief can gain two additional Intelligence-, Wisdom- or Charisma-based skills as class skills, making this feat tailored for non-roguish gentleman thieves looking to make the most out of relatively few skill points.

Extra Rogue Talent:

Rogue talents provide a wide variety of useful tricks and tools for gentleman thieves, and if your character happens to be a rogue, then this is an excellent way to get a few more. In a similar vein, bards can take Extra Performance, and sorcerers can take Extra Spells Known.

Fleet: While it might seem like a strange choice, Fleet can be one of the best feats for a gentleman thief with an athletic bent. Naturally, characters who do a lot of balancing, climbing, and moving silently spend a lot of time moving at half or even a quarter of their speed; thus, moving at higher speeds can allow a gentleman thief to accomplish those tasks before someone gets wise to the fact there's an intruder in the house. It's also worth mentioning that the increase in speed also results in a bonus to Acrobatics checks made to jump. Finally, if things go horribly wrong and the gentleman thief is discovered, he may need to make a quick getaway in order to avoid getting caught, and being able to move faster than those chasing him is a good way to ensure he makes his getaway.

Go Unnoticed: This feat from the Advanced Player's Guide is only available for Small or smaller characters, but it allows you to make a Stealth check on the first round of combat in order to hide from flat-footed characters, potentially making it a lot easier to slip away from what might otherwise have to become a combat situation.

Improved Disarm: While a number of combat maneuvers are suitable for a gentleman thief, including trip and feint, disarm seems the most appropriate one to specialize in, causing an opponent's weapon to fly out of his reach and leaving him dumbfounded as to what to do next while you make good your escape. Those who invest in Improved Disarm will want to take Greater Disarm, as well.

Improved Initiative: A

gentleman thief likes to get the drop on his opponents, not the other way around. This feat greatly increases his odds of getting to act first in any given combat. Whether he uses that advantage to get sneak attack or

to flee will vary from one gentleman thief to the next.

Knockout Artist: This feat from Ultimate Combat grants a hefty bonus to sneak attack damage, as long as you are using sneak attack to deal

nonlethal damage, allowing you to quickly dispatch foes without killing them, something many gentleman thieves will appreciate. It does require Improved Unarmed Strike, however, which either requires multi-classing into monk or waiting a very long time for a lackluster feat.

Lightning Reflexes: The best way to avoid traps is to see them in advance and disarm them, but when that isn't an option, this feat will help to ensure that the gentleman thief will be able to avoid the trap's effects, especially in conjunction with the evasion class feature, should he belong to one of the classes that grants it.

Mobility: When a gentleman thief finds himself on a battlefield, often his first priority is to get off of it, and even if he does want to stick around, he may want freedom to move across it without fear of attacks of opportunity, in order to set up sneak attacks or similar tricks. **Rhetorical Flourish:** This feat from Ultimate Combat is a helpful tool for anyone planning to make a lot of Diplomacy, especially if they're at all skilled with Bluff. With this feat, you can use Bluff to either get a slight edge on an important Diplomacy check, or else use it to mitigate a bad roll on one.

Run: In the same manner as Fleet, this feat allows the gentleman thief to make a hasty retreat. Unlike Fleet, however, it only applies when the gentleman thief uses the Run action. As a result, if you're only choosing one, it would probably be best to pick Fleet, which can apply to your movement at all times, but if you have enough feats for both, Run will allow you to get even more use out of Fleet when you do decide to really move quick.

Silent Spell: For spellcasting gentleman thieves, Silent Spell is a great way to cast spells without attracting attention, especially if those spells either lack somatic components, or are also subject to Still Spell. Further, in the dark, from a wellconcealed hiding spot, it doesn't matter if the gentleman thief waves his hands a bit, but speaking verbal components might catch someone's ear from a long ways away. In a pinch, Quicken Spell can also be used in this way, though that feat has additional benefits and drawbacks.

Skill Feats: Acrobatic, and similar feats, including Alertness, Athletic, Deceitful, Deft Hands, and Persuasive, which enhance two skills are potential game-changers for the gentleman thief. Particularly at lower levels, the combination of Acrobatic and Skill Focus (Acrobatics) can allow the gentleman thief to leap distances other characters of his level could only dream of. Note that while these feats do improve two skills, many of them improve at least one skill that the average gentleman thief won't get much use out of. For example, in addition to providing a bonus on Acrobatics checks, the Acrobatic feat also grants a bonus to the Fly skill, which most gentleman thieves will not find very useful. As a result, it is advised to focus on those feats where both of the bonuses will be of value to the character, especially Deceitful and Deft Hands.

Skill Focus: As skill-centered as the gentleman thief is, it should come as no surprise that Skill Focus would be of value to them.

The bonus from Skill Focus, particularly after the gentleman thief has 10 ranks in the skill and the feat's bonus doubles, can be the difference between taking a risk and practically guaranteeing success. As it is likely that a number of skill checks will be the deciding factor in many of the gentleman thief's heists, high

skill modifiers are important, and any chance to increase them should not be overlooked. While not all skills will be deserving of taking Skill Focus, any skill that the gentleman thief relies on heavily will likely be worth investing in.

Alternatively, the feat can be used to compensate for areas the gentleman thief is weak in: Skill Focus (Climb) can go a long way towards alleviating the difficulties of a low Strength score in scaling walls.

Weapon Finesse: While many gentleman thieves prefer to avoid combat, even those who do get into a lot of fights typically don't have an impressive Strength score. This feat allows them to put their high Dexterity to use in their attack rolls, as well as their skill checks, assuming they fight with an appropriate weapon.

Recommended Spells

While most gentleman thieves aren't spellcasters themselves, every gentleman thief can benefit from a spell or two. Whether it means simply quaffing a potion, or using Use Magic Device in conjunction with a scroll or wand, even gentleman thieves who choose not to associate with spellcasters have no excuse to avoid a little magical help. There are some who believe that magic "takes all the fun out it," or consider using magic to be cheating, and so choose not to take advantage of magical power, but many would argue that only the most foolhardy and inexperienced gentleman thieves choose to ignore the possibilities offered by a little well-timed magic. And of course, for those gentleman thieves whose primary work is found as a sorcerer, wizard, or other spellcaster, magic is essential to their success, and their primary means of accomplishing their goals. The following are just some of the most useful spells to gentleman thieves.

Dancing Lights: This simple cantrip can be a gentleman thief's best friend, providing a handy distraction at a moment's notice, which can ensure that guards are looking in the right place at the right time. It can also be used to send signals on dark nights, by using prearranged patterns of colors or flashes to communicate messages to the thief's allies.

Detect Thoughts: It's always good to know what the mark is thinking. For reading minds, the premier spell will probably always be *detect thoughts*, and while not every gentleman thief finds need to examine the thoughts of his victims, for many this spell can be exactly what they need in order manipulate their mark into doing just what they want. This spell can quickly and easily reveal the locations of traps and pitfalls, where the best treasures are kept, magical passwords and combinations to safes, and dozens of other important pieces of information, not to mention revealing whether someone intends to betray him, or if his target is getting suspicious.

Dimension Door: The perfect spell for getting out of jams, as well as into locked houses and bank vaults, *dimension door* (and the more powerful *teleport* and *greater teleport*) are useful spells for anyone who can cast them. For the gentleman thief, these spells tend to be about easy access, a quick escape route, and, in the case of *teleport* and *greater teleport*, about convenient world travel.

Disguise Self: For the gentleman thief who couldn't find the skill points to spend on the Disguise skill, this spell is a godsend. Not only does it largely alleviate the need for Disguise ranks, it means he doesn't need to keep around a disguise kit, meaning that when the constable shows up to search his rooms, there's one less piece of evidence he needs to conceal. Note that while this spell is excellent for disguising one's identity, it is less good for disguising oneself as a specific individual, granting only a +10 bonus, and meaning that Disguise ranks may still be necessary to pull of the ruse. It's also worth noting that the glamer is subject to a Will save if the thief is subject to very close scrutiny, or interacted with physically. On the other hand, the spell can be gained at will on a magic item very cheaply (see Recommended Items, below), and can still be very valuable to gentleman thieves who use it wisely.

Eagle's Splendor: When the gentleman thief is actually a crotchety old wizard, he needs a little help. Actually, most gentleman thieves can use a boost to Charisma from time to time, and this spell might just be the only option in town. Naturally, this doesn't stack with the *headband of alluring charisma*, so gentleman thieves should choose which of these Charisma boosters he wishes to employ.

Ethereal Jaunt: While the ethereal plane might be dangerous, *ethereal jaunt* lets the gentleman thief travel around potential obstacles and witnesses in the Material Plane—a benefit that most gentleman thieves will happily embrace, even if it means the risk of running afoul of some terrible extraplanar entity. In general, there are easier ways to bypass walls and guards, in the form of *dimension door*, and similar spells, but *ethereal jaunt* is an excellent way to scout ahead and learn the layout of a place to plan heists in advance, without any likelihood of being seen.

Fly: This spell effectively takes all the heavy lifting out of being a second-story man, granting easy access to rooftop entrances or unlocked windows, without relying on any Climb or Acrobatics checks, and, if the thief is clever, and begins his flight far enough away, he probably won't need to worry about anyone seeing him from the ground, either. It also allows for easy getaways from land-bound pursuers, though he may still need to contend with a few parting shots from any pursuers armed with ranged weapons. Of course, in conditions of adverse weather, or similar difficulties, Fly checks may be called for, and gentleman thieves untrained in the Fly skill may find themselves in danger.

Gaseous Form: This spell has a lot of different applications for gentleman thieves. It grants the ability to fly, meaning that it can be used to get to high places. It also makes the gentleman thief appear as formless smoke, which is also handy in slipping past guards (as well as, potentially, through cracks or other tiny openings he would not normally be able to pass through. Finally, it provides damage reduction in a pinch.

Ghost Sound: Similar to *dancing lights*, ghost sound is a simple and easy spell that can be used to distract or befuddle foes. The sound of footsteps or broken glass can get the attention of guards quickly, and cause them to run off to investigate false leads, while the gentleman thief commits a real crime. The spell can even mimic speech, meaning that you could realistically use it to impersonate the voice of a specific person.

Glibness: Even a fresh-faced youth straight out of a monastery could con a grizzled and veteran guard captain with no faith left in humanity—if he employs this spell. For accomplished gentleman thieves, the more important effect of this spell is that it allows them a chance to thwart even those using spells like *zone of truth*. It's worth noting that the spell is available as a potion, if one can find a bard willing to make it for him, though, because they come from bards, such potions will cost 1,050 gp, which is a bit more than one might be used to from a 3rd-level potion.

Invisibility: Even the stealthiest of gentleman thieves has trouble hiding in brightly lit hallways full of alert and well-trained guards. Invisible gentleman thieves, however, have a lot less to worry about. It is worth mentioning that invisibility isn't foolproof, and while it will be enough to get you past most mundane sentries, magically adept guardians might be able dispel or see through the glamer, and invisibility is not enough to escape the notice of creatures with the scent special quality, and even though a guard dog may have trouble pinpointing the gentleman thief's exact location, it will still be aware of his presence, and will likely begin barking, bringing all kinds of unwanted attention.

Jump: Why climb walls when you could simply leap to the second-story balcony? Jump grants the caster an incredible boost to Acrobatics checks made to jump, meaning that the clever acrobat can suddenly attempt stunts beyond the imagination of all but the most well-trained monks. How high that bonus is depends on the caster level of the spell, however, and that can make potions, wands, and scrolls of this spell quite expensive, if the gentleman thief needs the highest bonus he can muster.

Knock: If the gentleman thief is not trained in Disable Device, this spell may very well be his only means of getting past even a simple lock. Of course, if the thief's Disable Device modifier is greater than his caster level + 10, there isn't much point in the spell, and so those gentleman thieves who have put a lot into their Disable Device score will find little to recommend, here.

Misdirection: *Misdirection* is certainly not the flashiest of spells, and, in fact, it works best if no one even realizes that a spell has been cast at all, but many a gentleman thief finds himself in hot water when facing down a *discern lies* spell, or things like *detect evil* or even *detect magic*. *Misdirection* eliminates the need to worry, allowing the gentleman thief to act naturally without fear of being magically discovered. Even better, he can use the spell to effectively place incriminating auras on others: not only does he not appear to be lying when the court wizard tests him, but the king's counselor does, even though he's telling the truth!

Open/Close: Why open a door yourself? Anything could be on the other side, just waiting, and it often isn't worth leaving a good hiding spot if you can open a door with magic. Having this cantrip at the ready also serves to remind the gentleman thief that open doors in homes can draw unwanted attention, and that he should close them behind him unless he wishes someone to know he was there. Similarly, he might use this spell to open a series of doors in a hallway he never entered, casting suspicion away from his true goals while leaving behind no physical evidence. In a pinch, he could even use it to catch the attention of a patrolling guard long enough to slip past.

Passwall: Ideal for breaking into castles and bank vaults, this potent spell lets the gentleman thief forget about the front door or third-story window, and allows him to pick any wall he likes to gain entrance into a guarded building. The unfortunate consequence of this spell, however, is that it leaves a big, gaping hole in the wall, which may be noticed by other characters and draw suspicion. While the spell is dismissible, this means the caster must have a second *passwall* ready, or find another way out of the building (or else use some sort of illusion spell to make the wall seem whole while he is inside).

Phase Door: For the average gentleman thief, phase door is always a better option than passwall. Sure, it can't be used to bring an entire army into the keep, but a gentleman thief rarely wants to bring an army anywhere, anyway. Instead, he can use phase door more than once, and the passage created is invisible. Since only the gentleman thief can pass through a phase door he creates, he can easily outrace any guards, who now have to find another way to follow him. Finally, the phase door spell can be made permanent, allowing the gentleman thief to come and go as he pleases from a specific location, should he ever find a need to.

Sequester: There is no better way to hide a stolen item while you wait for the heat to die down than by using this abjuration spell. Not only is the affected item invisible, it's also protected from nearly any form of divination magic. Of course, unless the gentleman thief can actually cast the spell, the cost of scrolls quickly gets out of hand, meaning this spell is best reserved for a special occasion.

Shrink Item: Large paintings are hard to move—unless they're small. Even massive statuary or whole safes can be shrunk down to manageable sizes with this spell. In addition to allowing the gentleman thief to easily carry off spectacular robberies, such as the statue of the town's founder or the great tapestry that hangs in the temple, this spell allows the gentleman thief to travel light, meaning he can take additional goods with him from the scene of his crime.

Recommended Items

The gentleman thief can gain an extraordinary benefit from judicious use of magical items. As a general rule of thumb, any magic item which can accomplish the above spell effects or which grants an enhancement to his skills is smart choice. This section will examine a few of the most potent examples.

Belt of Incredible Dexterity: A sure-fire way to improve the gentleman thief's Dexteritybased skills, as well as increasing his armor class, this magic item is something every gentleman thief should consider. Those with the funds may want to look at a *belt of physical might* or *belt of physical perfection*, which can also increase their Strength (to better scale walls), and, to a lesser degree of importance, their Constitution (to provide more hit points, in the inevitable case that the gentleman thief does wind up in a fight).

Carpet of Flying: The ability to fly is useful for many characters. Some use a *carpet of flying* to stay out of the reach of their enemies, while others use it for easy and luxiorus travel. The gentleman thief, however, uses it to easily get into upper floor windows and chimneys. The carpet has the added advantage of being able to carry a gentleman thief in style wherever he goes. For those simply looking to get into buildings, and who cannot afford or don't want a carpet of flying, a number of good substitutes are available, notably the broom of flying, slippers of spider climbing, and winged boots.

Clamor Box: This little item from the Advanced Player's Guide is easy to skip over, but any gentleman thief in need of a good distraction, or some sound to back up fevered claims that a battle approaches and we need to secure those valuables right now, will find them invaluable, because they can be laid in place and then put on delay, meaning that the thief doesn't even need to be present in order to create the effect. In short, anyone who might want to use ghost sound for anything will find 2,000 gp a reasonable price for the added versatility—just remember to recover it when you're done.

Cloak of the Bat: This odd cloak can actually be quite a godsend for many gentleman thieves, and could, conceivably, be all that one needs in order to become an effective sneak thief. In addition to granting a +5 competence bonus on Stealth checks, the cloak can be used to fly for up to seven minutes at a time, albeit only in dark areas. The cloak can also let you transform yourself into a bat for the same period of time, which is a sure way to avoid notice. Both of these abilities can be used all day long, although the user does need to let the item "recharge" for seven minutes between uses. Finally, the cloak's description vaguely states that it lets the wearer "hang upside down from the ceiling like a bat," which may mean that, on ceilings at least, it functions as a pair of slippers of spider climbing, as well.

Celestial Armor: Gentleman thieves like to stay light on their feet, and, particularly those who have invested in the Fleet feat, tend to remain in light armor (or no armor at all). *Celestial* armor can be worn under normal clothing, provides good protection, and even counts as light armor. Beyond that, the armor grants the ability to fly for a limited duration, which tends to be more than enough for the needs of a gentleman thief.

Dust of Disappearance: Better than simply being invisible, this magic dust renders the user immune to *see invisibility*, meaning he has greater odds of evading even magically-inclined pursuers. The dust still doesn't offer any protection against creatures with scent, however, and it is only usable once per dose, making this far from the most economic item. As a final downside, the exact duration of the effect is random, meaning the gentleman thief needs to make his escape quickly or risk his magical concealment failing at an inopportune moment. Those with a little more cash on hand, and who prefer reliability over the protection from *see invisibility*, may wish to purchase the excellent *ring of invisibility* instead.

Elixir of Hiding: For a mere 250 gp, this potion can grant a +10 bonus to Stealth checks for a whole hour, which should be long enough for the gentleman thief to pull off most heists. Gentleman thieves who want to be certain they won't be seen, but who need the benefit to last longer than the 1 minute per caster level of an *invisibility* spell, will be hard-pressed to find a better resource. Similarly, the *elixir of tumbling* provides a like bonus to Acrobatics for the same cost.

Elixir of Love: While this love potion may only work on those who fail a DC 14 Will save, and will have little to offer to a particularly charming gentleman thief, those who aren't particularly good at making new friends will find this an indispensable way to win over low-level servants, door guards, and barons' daughters, if he can get them to drink it, and at only 150 gp each, they're quite affordable.

Hat of Disguise: For a relatively low price, even the most humble of gentleman thieves can assume a masterful disguise at will. The hat can even be used in conjunction with various headbands, as well, and is an absolute steal at a mere 1,800 gp. The simple anonymity and ability to indulge his vanity make this item a must-have for many gentleman thieves. Be aware that the same drawbacks apply to the *hat of disguise* as apply to any other use of the *disguise self* spell.

Headband of Alluring Charisma: Improving his Charisma, and thus his Charisma-based skills, should be a high priority for most gentleman thieves. The most obvious way to accomplish this is the *headband of alluring charisma*, which will grant the gentleman thief a permanent bonus of +2, +4, or +6. However, characters who don't use Charisma for anything besides skill and ability checks can make do with a *circlet of persuasion*, which grants the same bonus to Charisma-based skills as the headband of alluring charisma +6, but at a mere 4,500 gp. Alternatively, those with money to burn might invest in a *headband of mental prowess* or *mental superiority*, which encompasses multiple mental ability scores, and can provide the gentleman thief with extra skill points, or a bonus to his Will saves.

Manuals and Tomes: Gentleman thieves with excess wealth and a desire to achieve truly remarkable ability score bonuses can use these items to increase their ability scores directly, in a way that stacks with ability score enhancing headbands and belts. They are very expensive, however, and most gentleman thieves will be able to get by without them, so they are really only for those who can afford them, and are keen for the extra boost.

Marvelous Pigments: These magic paints can be used to create a variety of things, from useful tools that a gentleman thief might need in a pinch, to relatively convincing forgeries of the items he steals, to keep their owners from realizing anything is amiss until the gentleman thief has made good his escape. A set costs only 4,000 gp, and the thief can recoup up to half of that by crafting mundane gear worth up to 2,000 gp as part of the pigments' effects, while still having plenty of volume left over for other, more useful items (like the forgeries mentioned above).

Portable Hole: The ultimate in storage, these items allow a gentleman thief to easily carry an entire household worth of treasure in his pocket. Less affluent gentleman thieves can fall back on the handy haversack, but they have notably less storage space, and are somewhat less fashionable than a piece of cloth that can be folded up and tucked in a pocket. **Ring of Invisibility:** The ability to become invisible at will is very potent for just about any adventurer, but it's even more impressive in the hands of a gentleman thief. Besides the obvious ability to sneak past guards and enter places unseen, it also makes for an excellent dramatic exit, and can be used to stalk potential targets to learn their habits or find their secrets. Of course, at 20,000 gp, you would need to use the ring's ability at least 67 times before it becomes more cost-effective than stocking up on potions of the spell, but if you intend to be invisible a lot, it's indispensable.

Gentleman Thief Prestige Class

Ah yes, the museum heist, a terrible tragedy that hangs over the city like a storm cloud. To think the museum would be robbed of so many pieces of historical and cultural significance darkens my heart, and just before the auction which could have brought the lord curator much-needed funds for the planned expansion. Surely many collectors of rare and exotic artwork have been crushed by the news of this heist. I, myself, had been looking forward to purchasing some of the Nossio's and Carliel's which were due up on the block. A shame the guards have no leads on the whereabouts of that art, or on this "Shadow" the broad sheets are crediting with the crime.

~ James Gelfido, a.k.a. the Night Shadow, in an interview with constable Ricard Lucien following the robbery of the Noctalucan Museum of Art.

While gentleman thieves in Pathfinder can belong to just about any character class, and the information and advice in this book applies to gentleman thieves of any class, this prestige class is designed to provide special options that are uniquely tailored to provide the sorts of tools that a gentleman thief character needs in order to shine as a gentleman thief, and to help deliver an experience that matches some of the exciting misadventures of various gentleman thieves in literature and other popular media. In other sections of the book, the phrase "gentleman thief" applies to members of any class that fit the general themes and role of the gentleman thief archetype, but in this section, it refers specifically to members of this prestige class.

Gentleman thieves represent a more sophisticated class of criminals who spurn brutality and violence in favor of finesse and charm when pursuing their ambitions. The potent combination of honed skills and powerful personalities leaves few goals out of reach for the gentleman thief, and even without conceding to a thuggish and violent philosophy, gentleman thieves regularly accomplish high-profile thefts thought by many to be impossible. Because of this, they quickly rise to prominence as nearmythical figures capable of going anywhere and doing anything they choose.

Where many criminals might find notoriety to be a burden, gentleman thieves embrace their newfound prominence. Because of their great personal magnetism, the most successful of gentleman thieves come to be regarded more as folk heroes than as true criminals. Their emphasis on nonviolence and tendency to rob high-profile and wealthy targets who can "afford" to lose their money or who "deserve" to get robbed helps to further their image with the common man who rarely finds himself victimized by the gentleman thief.

Making a Gentleman Thief

All gentleman thieves are accomplished at acquiring things which don't belong to them. To that end, gentleman thieves employ a wide variety of skills, and thus many gentleman thieves come from classes that focus on skill use. Since the exact skills employed by a gentleman thief in pursuit of his goals can vary dramatically from individual to individual, gentleman thieves come from a wide variety of diverse backgrounds.

Ability Scores: There are multiple different styles of gentleman thief, and the way in which a gentleman thief operates will dictate which ability scores are most important to him. Gentleman thieves who favor charm and confidence games are best served by a high Charisma, while those who favor infiltration and stealth are best served by a high Dexterity. As characters who rely on skills, a high Intelligence is important to many gentleman thieves, as well. As characters that prefer to avoid violent conflicts of any kind, many gentleman thieves find that they are not well served by having a high Constitution, and find the extra hit points will often go to waste.

Alignment: Gentleman thieves can be of any alignment and have diverse motivations. As thieves, they tend towards non-lawful alignments, but there are notable exceptions. For a detailed discussion on alignment see the Alignments section, above.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To qualify to become a gentleman thief, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Skills: Must have 5 ranks in any two of the following skills: Acrobatics, Appraise, Bluff, Climb, Diplomacy, Disable Device, Disguise, Perception, Sleight of Hand, or Stealth

Feats: Skill Focus for at least one of the following skills: Acrobatics, Appraise, Bluff, Climb, Diplomacy, Disable Device, Disguise, Perception, Sleight of Hand, or Stealth

Special: Must have stolen a single item worth at least 5,000 gp, without getting caught and without harming any character in the process.

Class Skills

The gentleman thief's class skills are Acrobatics (Dex), Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Disable Device (Dex), Disguise (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Knowledge (all) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex), and Use Magic Device (Cha).

Skill points per level: 8 + Intelligence modifier.

Table 1-1: The Gentleman Thief

Level	Base Attack Bonus				Special
ıst	+0	+0	+1	+0	Reputation, skill expertise 1/day
2nd	+1	+1	+1	+1	Trademark trick
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+1	Fame +1, skill expertise 2/day
4th	+3	+1	+2	+1	Trademark trick
5th	+3	+2	+3	+2	Notoriety, skill expertise 3/day
6th	+4	+2	+3	+2	Trademark trick
7th	+5	+2	+4	+2	Fame +2, skill expertise 4/day
8th	+6	+3	+4	+3	Trademark trick
9th	+6	+3	+5	+3	Legend, skill expertise 5/day
10th	+7	+3	+5	+3	Greater skill expertise, trademark trick

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the gentleman thief.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A gentleman thief gains no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Reputation (Ex): A gentleman thief reaps the benefits of his notorious reputation. All gentlemen thieves develop a reputation at 1st level, which can grant them a variety of benefits. Upon entering the class, the gentleman thief must determine the name or alias by which he is known. Any character can recognize or learn about the gentleman thief's reputation, including his trademark techniques, notable jobs he has performed, and so on, by making a successful Knowledge (local) check (DC 20 - the gentleman thief's class level). This does not allow the character to identify the gentleman thief's real identity unless the gentleman thief chooses to have his reputation associated with his own name.

The gentleman thief gains a +2 bonus to his choice of Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate checks with any character that is familiar with his reputation. This choice is made when the gentleman thief first enters the class, and cannot later be changed. In order to gain this benefit, the gentleman thief must currently be claiming his reputation (ie. if he commits his crimes under his own name, he must currently be using his own name and not disguising himself, and if he commits his crimes under an alias or a nickname, such as "the Scarlet Shadow," then he must be using that name). This does not necessarily mean that the gentleman thief must be making the check in person: the bonus can be applied to Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate checks delivered via notes, magical spells, and so on, so long as the gentleman thief is currently claiming his identity.

Skill Expertise (Ex): A gentleman thief's mastery of skills allows him to execute skillrelated tasks with great reliability. When using the following skills, he may choose before making a skill check to take 10, rather than rolling, even if he would not normally be able to take 10 in that circumstance. The skills that can be used with this ability are: Acrobatics, Appraise, Bluff, Climb, Diplomacy, Disguise, Disable Device, Perception, Sleight of Hand, and Stealth. He may use this ability once per day at 1st level, and an additional time per day every 2 levels thereafter.

Trademark Trick: Beginning at 2nd level, and every even numbered level thereafter, a gentleman thief gains one of the following abilities. He must choose the ability to be gained whenever he gains the trademark trick class feature. He may not select the same ability twice, and once chosen, he cannot change the ability later. Distraction (Ex): A gentleman thief with this ability is good at using his words to distract his mark while he rifles through the victim's pockets for keys or other trinkets. Whenever a gentleman thief uses the Sleight of Hand skill to take an item from someone he is speaking to, if the target's Perception check exceeds the gentleman thief's Sleight of Hand check, he may immediately make a special Bluff check to attempt to distract the target away from his efforts. If the result of the Bluff check exceeds the target's Sense Motive check, the Sleight of Hand check is treated as though it were successful.

Evocative Writer (Ex): A gentleman thief with this ability is capable of delivering messages through writing as well as he can in person. The gentleman thief can make Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks in written form (in the form of notes or letters), and suffers no penalties on his roll for doing so.

Infiltrator (Ex): A gentleman thief with this ability is a master at dealing with locks and other impediments to his craft. He can attempt to disable a lock with Disable Device as a swift action which does not provoke attacks of opportunity. Additionally, he can disarm locks without the benefit of thieves' tools, without suffering a penalty for doing so.

Find Mark (Ex): A gentleman thief with this ability is exceptional at sizing people up, and any time he spends at least one full minute conversing with an individual, he may make a special Sense Motive skill check with a DC of 20. If successful, this check gives the gentleman thief a rough idea of the general affluence of that character. This is a measure of how much wealth the character owns, and takes into account his gear, magic items, gold, and other valuables, as well as any property, investments, and other, less tangible wealth. This assessment is reasonably accurate: between 82% and 120% of the target's actual wealth (2d20+80%).

Rooftop Bounder (Ex): A gentleman thief with this ability spends his nights gliding from rooftop to rooftop with effortless ease. When he uses the Acrobatics skill to balance, he can move at his full speed. Additionally, the horizontal movement of up to one Acrobatics check made to jump each round does not count against the gentleman thief's total movement for the round.

Second Story Escape (Ex): A gentleman thief with this ability reduces the damage taken from a fall of 60 feet or less as though he fell 20 feet less than he actually did. Additionally, whenever he jumps 10 feet or more straight down, he may move up to his movement speed as an immediate action upon landing.

Second Story Leaper (Ex): A gentleman thief with this ability can make vertical jumps that would astonish most mortal humans. He treats the DC for a vertical jump as twice the number of feet to be jumped, rather than four times.

Silver Tongue (Ex): The quick wit and charm of a gentleman thief with this ability makes other characters putty in his hands. Whenever he successfully raises the attitude of a creature to helpful with a Diplomacy check, he may immediately use Diplomacy to make a request of the target. The gentleman thief uses the result of the original Diplomacy check for this request.

Snake-Tongued (Ex): A gentleman thief with this ability can lie without effort. He is rendered immune to the effects of the spells discern lies, zone of truth, and similar spells...

Stealth Mastery (Ex): A gentleman thief with this ability is perfectly comfortable moving silently and can find places to hide even in brightly lit areas. He can move at his full speed and use the run action while using the Stealth skill without suffering any penalties to the roll. Additionally, he may use Stealth to conceal his position even in areas of bright light, although he must still have concealment or cover in order to use Stealth, as normal.

Traceless (Ex): A gentleman thief with this ability is a master at covering his tracks and

leaves behind little in the way of physical evidence—even concealing his scent is second nature to him. He leaves behind no trail and cannot be tracked by mundane means. The gentleman thief can suppress or resume this ability as a swift acion.

Fame (Ex): Beginning at 3rd level, a gentleman thief's reputation grows to such a level that he becomes generally well known. He adds a +2 bonus to his Leadership score for the purposes of attracting followers. Additionally, against any character familiar with his reputation, a gentleman thief gains a bonus on certain skill rolls. If the character is indifferent or unfriendly to the gentleman thief, he gains a +1 bonus on all Intimidate checks made against that character. If the target's attitude is friendly or helpful towards the gentleman thief, he gains a +1 bonus on all Diplomacy checks made to interact with the target. At 7th level, these bonuses improve to +2.

Notoriety (Ex): Beginning at 5th level, the gentleman thief's fame is great enough that any character who could conceivably have heard of his exploits is considered to be familiar with his reputation, even if they do not succeed on a Knowledge (local) check to do so.

Legend (Ex): Beginning at 9th level, a gentleman thief's reputation is strong enough to produce a remarkable effect. The bonus he gains from his reputation class feature increases to +4, and now applies to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate. Additionally, as long as the gentleman thief chooses to openly associate himself with his reputation (not hiding his identity as a gentleman thief), rumors circulate about his presence within 24 hours of his arrival in an area, alerting any who succeed on a DC 10 Knowledge (local) check or Diplomacy check made to gather information that he is in the area. The gentleman thief need not go to any special effort to prevent this from happening-he simply chooses whether or not he wants to associate himself with his reputation.

the gentleman thief's mastery of skills is complete, allowing him to take 20 whenever he uses his gentleman's skill class feature (instead of taking 10, as normal).

Playing a Gentleman Thief

As a gentleman thief, your goals will vary greatly depending on your personality. What really matters to you is how you accomplish those goals, and conducting yourself with style and a civilized grace that more common thieves could never hope to aspire to. Most of all, what you're interested in is yourself. Whether you became a gentleman thief in order to get more of a challenge and live a life of fun and dangerous adventure, or whether you pull daring and brazen stunts because you want the world to know how much more clever you are than everyone else, the fact of the matter is that, most likely, your crimes are fueled less by a crude need for raw gold, and more for a desire to test yourself and make your mark on the world in a crafty, guileful way.

Races: Because of the prevalence of human societies, most gentleman thieves are human. The race's tendency for adaption, penchant for adventure, and affinity for skills all contribute to making humans particularly well suited to the role. Apart from humans, half-elves are the next most common race to find themselves pursuing a career as a gentleman thief. In general, halfelves tend to be drawn to gentleman thievery for much the same reasons as humans, though the race's outcast outlook and comely elven features certainly lend to their success in these endeavors. Halflings are naturally disposed to thievery of all kinds, and those who prefer to hold themselves to a higher standard might become gentleman thieves. On the other hand, however, cultural differences often keep halflings from excelling in the role in human-dominated societies. Some dwarven and half-orc thieves make a point of holding themselves to the higher standards of the gentleman thief, in order to combat the stereotypes about their race's lack of grace and culture.

Greater Skill Expertise: At 10th level, the

Religion: While some gentleman thieves find themselves drawn to worship gods of thievery and cunning, many more prefer to divorce their activities from their religion. Some gentleman thieves are loathe to give the gods credit for their hard work, but many more prefer simply to worship more socially acceptable deities or deities which represent another facet of their personality. Such characters often worship gods devoted to beauty, artwork, cleverness, and romance.

Some gentleman thieves have no true religion at all, making sacrifices to the gods only when it is relevant to gaining someone's trust or when establishing an alias. Such characters frequently develop a strong understanding of many different religions, and some find faith later in life as a direct, somewhat ironic, consequence of their agnostic confidence games.

Other Classes: Gentleman thieves often prefer to work alone whenever possible. When interacting with other classes, gentleman thieves favor those who can perform roles in their schemes that they otherwise would be unable to perform. As a result, many favor arcane spellcasters as their closest allies, capable of creating useful magic items for them and providing magical solutions to otherwise difficult problems. Gentleman thieves who tend to travel a lot often enlist the aid of a fighter or similar character to serve as a bodyguard, boon companion, or even just as someone to carry heavy loot on-the-go. While, in general, gentleman thieves don't favor companions with skill sets comparable to their own, many will work with partners with similar skill sets, but different specialties, or take on apprentices. Typically, gentleman thieves don't work well with paladins, who don't abide thievery very well; however, there are exceptions even to this rule, and paladins who are either unaware of the gentleman thief's true profession, or who are working with a "reformed" gentleman thief can make for powerful and stalwart allies.

Gentleman Thieves in the World

I still can't believe it—the duke's vault emptied, his daughter missing, and none of his guards saw a damned thing! None of the locks were broken, none of the dogs barked, and there's no sign of a struggle. I wouldn't believe a burglary happened here, except that 50,000 gold crowns' worth of art and gemstones suddenly went missing. Whoever the Night Shadow is, he sure is good at what he does.

~ Constable Ricard Lucien

Daily Life: The average gentleman thief spends his days living the high life and rubbing shoulders with nobility, flitting from one ball or gala to the next, and hobnobbing with the elite, when they aren't lounging in luxury in private penthouses. Those who aren't independently wealthy typically con individuals who are into paying their way or investing in their future success. A few gentleman thieves abandon the finer things in life in order to live among those with whom they have more in common, either joining a guild of thieves or becoming adventurers. And then, those gentleman thieves who have run afoul of a particularly competent and persistent lawman might spend their dayto-day life in hiding or on the run.

Notables: Nearly every gentleman thief is well known locally, at least by their trade name or calling card. The most famous of gentleman thieves even enjoy some degree of fame in the wider world. These are rarely known by their real names, as that might endanger their freedom. The best known of these are Lady Red and Smiling Rodger.

Lady Red is a dazzling woman, only glimpsed a couple of times in the great city of Doscovale around the time of the Sampson Rebellion, which turned that city on its head. Her mastery of disguise was so complete that many of her contemporaries said any person, man or woman, that you spoke to in those days might have been Lady Red in disguise. She rose to fame by stealing the art and cultural treasures of Doscovale during the turmoil, perhaps saving those treasures from the burnings and lootings Though she hasn't been heard from in many years, much of the art she stole has slowly begun to reappear on the market, leading some to believe that she is a cultural custodian rather than a true thief, and others to doubt whether she really stole all the things she is credited with.

Smiling Rodger, plainly put, is thought to be the greatest thief of all time. That said, very little is known about the man, who has never been glimpsed or interviewed. His only identifier, from which he draws his name, is the tattered skull-and-crossbones pennants he leaves in place of his nefarious acquisitions. Because of this, some even doubt that Rodger exists at all, and that his alleged crimes are actually committed by a gang of thieves, or even that he is a myth perpetuated by bored nobility.

Organizations: Though gentleman thieves rarely form organizations, they do often join existing ones. For more information on gentleman thieves and organizations, see Organizations, in the section Running Games for Gentleman Thieves.

NPC Reactions: While lawmen the world over despise gentleman thieves for their frustrating tendency to get away with crimes, the rest of the populace tends to look upon the gentleman thief with favorable romance. The common people like to believe the gentleman thieves are generally benign, and often delight in seeing their social betters bested by the cunning ne'er-do-wells. Even the thieves' victims look upon them in a more favorable light than they would other criminals, appreciating the lack of violence and the social grace with which they conduct themselves.

Gentleman Thief Lore: Characters with ranks in Knowledge (local) can research a specific gentleman thief to learn more about him. This typically requires a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check. Since gentleman thieves operate using such a wide variety of methods, it becomes difficult to make further generalizations about them other than that they are characters with the skills of an expert thief, who behave in a manner deemed civilized in the society in which they operate, which should be considered common knowledge.

Games with Gentleman Thieves

In many ways, running a game with one or more gentleman thief PCs is a lot like running a game without any gentleman thief PCs, and it's entirely possible to run your campaign without any special attention to the fact that one of your characters fits this particular mold. That said, if you want to get the most out of the character, and to avoid some complications that often arise from including gentleman thief characters in games, the following section provides some tips, strategies, and general things to be aware of that may be useful to you if you are planning on running a game where one or more PCs are gentleman thieves.

Organizations

While gentleman thieves rarely band together in fraternal orders, or even simple gangs, there are definite advantages to working within an organization, and it may be helpful in your game to provide an organization for gentleman thief characters to belong to. In addition to being a potential source of plot hooks and resources for your gentleman thief character, and adding to the richness of your game world, such organizations also allow you, as a GM, to encourage gentleman thief characters in your game. If the PCs know that they might be able to join the prestigious Night Wings, or a similar gentleman thief organization, even fighters and barbarians may find themselves considering a life of crime.

Occasionally a gentleman thief founds an organization where he can foster his philosophy among one or more disciples; sometimes he finds himself frequently consulting with a particular group to the extent that they grow to welcome him as one of their own; and still other times he finds himself in the midst of a more traditional institute which isn't strictly at odds with his approach to doing things. Even beyond organizations which relate to their dubious professions, many gentleman thieves belong to social clubs and other legitimate groups. In any case, when you create an organization for a gentleman thief in your campaign, there are a few things that you may find helpful to keep in mind.

Firstly, these organizations need to provide some kind of incentive for the gentleman thief. That's not to say that they need to pay him to join or even to offer him anything in a direct fashion. Rather, the group needs to appeal to the gentleman thief in your game. Typically, this

means that the organization needs to offer the gentleman thief the opportunity to engage his core motivations. This might mean it provides a level of challenge to the gentleman thief he would have been unable to find on his own. either by offering him more difficult tasks or by imposing rules on how he accomplishes missions. The association might provide connections or a platform for the gentleman thief who feels driven to be the center of attention, giving him the chance to rise to a

position of promince and authority. It might simply mean providing a forum for the gentleman thief to show off, brag about his cleverness in front of an appreciative audience, or even just drink tea with peers. The exact nature of the organization's allure should be tailored to the specifics of the gentleman thief. To that end, it may be fruitful to coordinate with that player, either on the broad details of the organization itself, or at least on the details of his or her character, in order to provide the best possible experience.

Secondly, tailor your organization to your player's character, but do so subtly. While it is important that it appeal to the gentleman thief on several levels and that it is something he actually wants to belong to, at the same time you should not sacrifice the believability of the organization as an entity separate from the character. Ensuring a more realistic and organic feeling to the organization will make it more fun for the gentleman thief to interact with, and lead to a more dynamic experience. In order to accomplish this, there are a few easy things you can do. Ensure that your NPCs have interesting personalities with diverse motivations. Having some members of the association engaged in action which does not directly relate to the gentleman thief makes those NPCs feel less like a background for the gentleman thief and more realistic. This makes the organization itself feel

> more natural, and thus the gentleman thief will interact with it more naturally. When creating NPCs for this organization, include at least one individual who clashes with the gentleman thief. Whether this is going to be someone the gentleman thief can win over, enjoy a rivalry with, or become bitter enemies with should depend on what the player (and to a lesser extent, that character) is most going to enjoy. Another way to add life to this group is to make sure things

happen within it that the gentleman thief has to react to. This doesn't need to happen all the time, and in fact, most of the time things should feel like business as usual, but occasionally forcing the PC to deal with things beyond his expectations shows that the organization exists beyond his interest, and further serves to enhance the immersive feel of the organization. Finally, if your campaign world has an existing institution which might appeal to the gentleman thief, consider integrating that character into that prestablished organization, which need not act any differently than it would have otherwise, making it feel consistent and more immersive for all involved parties.

Another thing to keep in mind is that your organization should have room for the entire

group. Even though the organization is created with a gentleman thief in mind, your group of PCs likely contains characters that do not fall into that category. When dealing with a diverse group, it is highly preferable that the organization be able to easily engage the majority of the players. Some organizations include multiple branches that could

incorporate a wide variety of skill sets. Other groups might have need of a team of individuals in order to fill specific roles to accomplish complex and grandiose heists (these should still place the gentleman thief in a starring role). Still other organizations might care less about the specific skills of the thief; such institutions tend to be social in nature, and while a wide variety of characters should be able to easily participate, it is still important that those

organizations favor some skill or other aspect of the gentleman thief to show that it is created with that character in mind.

Sometimes an organization's presence can be greatly diminished without having an adverse impact on the game; in such cases, the gentleman thief may have less contact with the organization, but they could call on his services, as well as those of his allies, for a special occasion. Such occasions should only come up rarely, and never for more than one or two adventures, unless a larger interest in the organization is adopted. In the case of groups which contain many thieves, or groups where the emphasis is on individual character development, these kinds of broad appeal elements might be relaxed.

Parties

While, in literature and other media, gentleman thieves are often portrayed as being "lone wolves" who always work alone, this is not always the case, and it's not very conducive to table top gaming, in any event. As with many stealthy characters, a gentleman thief can cause a variety of difficulties within a group dynamic, but there are a few things that you can do to help resolve these issues.

Perhaps the most glaring issue with gentleman thieves and the average adventuring party is that there's not much point in having a

superb stealth score, if your companions are making as much noise as a dozen wild horses with the clinking and rattling of their armor. If the gentleman thief stays close to the party, he won't be able to make much use of his stealth, and probably not his acrobatics, or ability to climb, either, unless the rest of the party is equally capable in those arenas. Alternatively, if the gentleman thief strikes out on his own, the group is now

separated, and everyone else has to sit around while the gentleman thief gets to do things all on his own.

There are ways to solve this, of course. For one, you can build in specific encounters or challenges for the gentleman thief to overcome which are short but sweet, allowing the gentleman thief a moment or two to shine without making the rest of the group feel like they're getting less of a game than the gentleman thief is. For example, if the gentleman thief is a cat burglar with a lot of ranks in Acrobatics and Climb, you could place a switch or lever, or a necessary piece of treasure, on a small ledge 30 feet above the ground, which requires one or two Climb or Acrobatics checks to get to. Alternatively, the party could hear the sounds of talking up ahead, but not quite be able to make it out, giving the gentleman thief the opportunity to sneak a short ways down the hallway and try to listen in or see what lies ahead, but not need to ever get more than a stone's throw away from the rest of the party.

Of course, another approach to the

problem is to run a campaign where the entire party is comprised of gentleman thieves. Obviously, in such cases, there would be large amounts of redundancy, and so games may wind up involving a lot of splitting up in any case, but at least when the group was together, they wouldn't be preventing each other from functioning. In fact, embracing the idea of splitting the party up (whether the party is all gentleman thieves or not) can make for some very fun and memorable gameplay, as long as it is done in a way where each party member has a specific role to fill, for which they are well suited. This helps foster the sort of "grand heist" feel that one gets from movies like Ocean's 11, where intricate plans rely on numerous members in different places, none of whom can afford to fail their part.

Finally, if being a gentleman thief isn't a large part of the character's persona, or if your campaign is going to involve a lot of solo activity by your characters, you might just consider letting the gentleman thief do his thieving by himself. While a well-done heist can be long, rich, and complex, it can also be quite short and sweet, and it's entirely possible to resolve a fairly complete and rewarding heist adventure in only a few minutes and handful of dice rolls, by keeping things simple (see the Heists section, below, for more information on planning heists). As long as the gentleman thief's extracurricular activities don't take up too much of everyone else's time, there's nothing wrong with letting him do his own thing-provided the rest of the party has the opportunity to pursue their own interests, as well, and are similarly rewarded for them.

Heists

While gentleman thieves are reasonably well suited to a variety of adventures, their concept does lend itself especially well to two general kinds of adventures: fantastic and exotic burglaries, and confidence games.

When one thinks of a gentleman thief, chances are the first image that pops into your mind is that of the master art thief. Leaping from rooftop to rooftop, silently breaking into a secure holding, executing his plan perfectly, he acquires the goods and escapes without anyone getting hurt, and without getting caught. The exact details might differ, but the process is always fairly similar. When designing an adventure for the gentleman thief, this is most likely the archetype you're going to seek to replicate.

These adventures tend to fall into three basic stages. The first stage is the most straightforward: the gentleman thief discovers an object he desires. During this stage of the adventure you set the scene: you show the gentleman thief a target to seek after and allow him to glimpse the obstacles in his way. The second stage of the adventure is the burglary itself. During this stage, the thief makes his plans and attempts to make off with the target item. While it might seem the adventure would end there, instead we move on to the third stage of the adventure: the investigation. During this stage, the gentleman thief may or may not be heavily involved, but someone, preferably a memorable and formidable lawman, attempts to uncover the crime and gather sufficient evidence to arrest the culprit.

When designing these kinds of adventures, it is typically advantageous to start in the middle. Decide on some kind of target for the gentleman thief to go after, and then create the obstacles and challenges to protect that item. This is the part of the adventure where all the real action happens, and it needs to be the most well-developed and intricate part of the adventure. These kinds of adventures should allow the gentleman thief to dictate both the pace of the action as well as its direction. In designing this adventure, then, your chief goal is to provide an interesting and challenging set of circumstances which the gentleman thief can interact with and ultimately overcome. This may require a departure from your traditional style of adventure design, as you need not be concerned with driving the plot of the burglary; rather, you should focus solely on creating defenses, as well as creating subtle flaws in those defenses which the gentleman thief can manipulate through

cunning and skill. You may want to include challenges which can only be easily overcome through a specific action, or which can be more easily dealt with in a certain way, in order to encourage a specific tactic. You should not, however, actively attempt to foil creative solutions to your defenses, and may consider awarding additional experience to creative and clever players.

After you've established what the challenges to overcome are going to be, it is time to design the adventure's set-up. For this stage of the adventure, it is important to create a situation which entices the gentleman thief to go after your defended item. This might be as simple as showing the item to a greedy character, or having the boss of the thieves' guild tell him to steal it. Or it might require more detailed planning and staging; perhaps the gentleman thief sees a rare piece of art at a museum and overhears that this cultural treasure is to be sold at auction to the highest bidder. The gentleman thief might then decide that such a cultural treasure can't be allowed to rot in some unappreciative old count's mansion, and thus resolve to take it himself. The exact motivator should be determined for the gentleman thief in question and tailored to suit his motivations. In addition to making him want the item, this is your opportunity to set the terms of the upcoming adventure: perhaps the auction in the above example is taking place tomorrow and the gentleman thief has only one day to prepare for the heist. Finally, this gives you the opportunity to show the gentleman thief what kinds of challenges he is going to be up against, so that he might start to prepare for them.

For the final leg of the adventure, the investigation, only the personality and skills of the investigator need to be determined before the actual burglary takes place. The investigation itself should be largely based on the results of the burglary, and should serve as an opportunity to grade the gentleman thief on his performance.

A confidence game adventure, on the other hand, is generally going to focus less on the acquisition of an object, though indeed that may be the ultimate goal of the process, and more on the manipulation of another character. These kinds of adventures can stand alone or even serve as part of a larger adventure.

For this adventure process to work, you basically need to assemble three components: an objective, an interesting character, and a challenge. The ultimate objective of these kinds of adventures is very flexible: the gentleman thief might be after gold, personal secrets or other information, or even out to gain an ally. Whatever the goal of the adventure, it needs to appeal to the sensibilities or to the needs of the gentleman thief. Once established, the objective's only relevance to this adventure is that the adventure is concluded when the gentleman thief obtains it. In certain cases, the objective may be relevant to another adventure, or it may become relevant again at a later time if the gentleman thief must continually work to maintain the confidence game.

The next component is the most important: the interesting character. Even though the gentleman thief is ultimately going to pull the wool over this character's eyes, the NPC needs to have an engaging personality in order to make the adventure entertaining. Even in the case of relatively boring individuals, it becomes important to ensure that their personalities are both developed well enough to be believable and dynamic enough to deal with whatever the gentleman thief throws at them in a realistic way.

The final component is the challenge. Naturally, a confidence game might just come down to a single Bluff role, but that doesn't make for much of an adventure. There needs to be some kind of an obstacle which complicates the situation enough to require a larger action from the gentleman thief. Perhaps the target is being blackmailed, and a simple bluff isn't enough to get him to do what the gentleman thief wants. Perhaps the person the gentleman thief is talking to isn't who he thinks he is. Generally, these kinds of challenges need to be overcome either by finding out more information about the target and his circumstance, or by presenting him with something that makes those

circumstances irrelevant.

Finally, there is a third way to approach adventures specifically made for gentleman thieves, which requires a bit more intervention on the part of the GM. In this version, rather than simply allow the gentleman thief to pursue any random piece of jewelry or art which catches his eye, and steal it in whatever manner he likes, you help to mold the situation. Perhaps that particular necklace is normally kept in an unassailable vault on a different plane of existence all the time, except on certain special occasions, like the ball that will be occurring on the next full moon. The gentleman thief will have only a thin window of opportunity to take the item, and, due to various complications about the events and what is likely to be occurring at the time, it has to be done a certain way.

This way is most reminiscent of gentleman thieves found in recent movies and television, and tends to create a lot of drama. It also functions much more like a normal adventure. because the GM has a lot more control out of the way the heist's plan will go, and the order of the challenges, and so on. It also has the added benefit of ensuring that the plan for the heist has a place for every member of the group, so that no one feels left out. The largest difficulty is that it requires a believable way of providing this outline to the PCs, or else they will simply founder, and either miss key events, or give up without making a plan, etc. The easiest way to solve this is to have an NPC contact approach the gentleman thief with a potentially lucrative business proposition, which includes a mostly-formed heist plan. Allow the PCs to modify the plan as they see fit (explaining any difficulties that the NPC would be able to foresee with their modifications), and then let them go.



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So You Think You Can Sical?

Anvone with a few ranks in Sleight of Hand can be a pickpocket, and it only takes a cudgel to be a mapper, but there is another class of thief as well, the creme de-la-creme of crime, which has stalen hearts and captivated imaginations for hundreds of years: the gentleman thief. These primes of the night pessess great cumping and guile, and prefer to cutwit their exponents, instead of overpewer them. They are also gifted with great charm, which allows them to win over the hearts of even those they steal from. Despite their crimes, it's often all but impossible not to sympathize and secretly poet for these das taxdiv secundrels, and many are considered herces.

It's hard to be the best, though, and the role of pertinent thief is a hard one to play. That's where Character Guides: The Gentleman Thief comes in This book examines the archetype of the gentleman thief, providing perspective on what truly makes them what they are, and how you can go about making a memorable and effective gentleman thief character for the Pethfinder Boleplaying Game or the z to OGL, both from the perspective of voleplaying advice and information, and more mechanical angles, such as what feats, magic items, and so on will lend themselves hest to well-prepared cat burglar, and a prand new prestige class specifically for these who want to be a gentleman thief.

Additionally, the book provides GMs with a weakh of information about running games involving gentleman thieves, with a close look at some of the more common difficulties that these types of characters can cause in an adventuring party, and how to resolve them, as well as advice on how to best support gentleman thief characters by providing them with ways to put their persona to good use.

ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE