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**PULP VILLAINS**

# The Yellow King

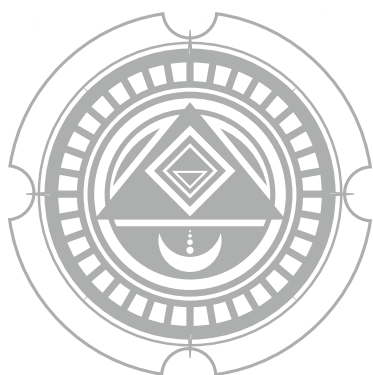
*No matter where you hide... HE will find you!*



A SUPPLEMENT FOR

**THRILLING  
TALES**





## PULP VILLAINS

# The Yellow King

by Gilbert Gallo  
& Jarrod Feliciano

### INTRODUCTION

**A**LSO KNOWN AS “The Heavenly Shepherd” or “The Repairer of Reputations,” this villain is the secret godfather behind the most important occult organizations of the world. Legends say the Yellow King is not human; some claim that he is a member of an alien race stranded on Earth centuries ago and through the years has amassed near-infinite knowledge and power.

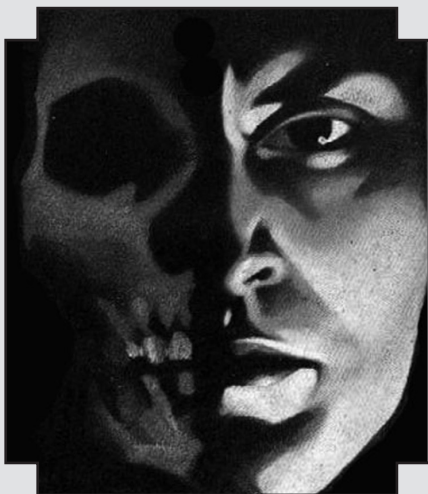
The Yellow King’s appearance is unknown, as only a very few chosen people are permitted to speak directly to him (though it is believed that he does not respond with normal speech, instead imparting instructions and information through some form of multilingual telepathy). In myth and legend, he is frequently portrayed as a tall man clad in a yellow robe, his features obscured by a cowl. He is typically depicted seated upon a shining throne that hovers above the ground.

The Yellow King is the head of a secret organization called the Yellow Shepherds. Its selected and trusted members have important roles in all of the most influential occult sects and secret organizations in the world. The Shepherds’ symbol is the “Eye in the Triangle,” symbolizing the all-seeing eye of the Yellow King providing knowledge directly to the “heads” of the three most influential secret organizations in the world: the German

Ariosophists, the Freemasons and the Aeropagus of the Illuminati.

The Shepherds provide arcane and secret knowledge and powerful artifacts to influential people, in exchange for vast monetary donations and complete obedience to the dictates of the Yellow Shepherds. In this way, the Yellow King indirectly controls most of the occult influenced political world—waging wars, signing treaties and affecting world politics behind the scenes. The sect is deeply compartmentalized, as only highly trusted members are granted important details of the group’s actions and operations, and only a small number of those trusted Shepherds are aware of the Yellow King’s location and appearance. Most of the other members are only given partial (and often false) info to increase the aura of mystery and reverence surrounding the King, and to keep the King insulated from his enemies.

## THE YELLOW KING



**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d12+4, Spirit d12+4, Strength d4, Vigor d4

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Healing d12, Intimidation d12, Investigation d12, Knowledge (Alien Science) d12, Knowledge (History) d12, Knowledge (Human Science) d12, Notice d10, Persuasion d10, Repair d12, Stealth d6, Shooting d8, Taunt d10, Weird Science d12+3

**Charisma:** +2 (without showing face) -6 (if shows his face); **Pace:** 6 (flying) 4 walking; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 8 (4)

**Hindrances:** Anemic, Elderly, Habit (transplantation—Major), Outsider, Ugly.

**Edges:** AB Weird Science, Brilliant Scientist\*, Connections (Yellow Shepherds), Deus Ex Machina\*, Failsafe\*, Font of Information\*, Gadgeteer, Halls of Power\*, Mr. Fix It, McGyver, Power Points, Rapid Recharge, Charismatic, Command, Command Presence, Filthy Rich, Followers, Strong-Willed.

**Alien (Weird Science) Artifacts:** Alien Thread Cape (Armor: +4 Toughness), Alien Antennae (Puppet), Laser Rod (Bolt), Alien Screen (Farsight), Alien Floating Throne (Fly), Alien Microphone (Speak languages), Robot Sentinel (Summon Ally)—50 Power Points

The Yellow King is an errant member of an alien society from which he long ago fled, taking with him forbidden technological secrets. Despite the millennia since his exodus, bounty hunters from his alien race still pursue him and the secrets he absconded with (one such pursuer is described in the “Deus Ex Machina” adventure hook on page 17).

The Yellow King’s secret headquarters is located in the town of Carcassonne in southern France, and can be accessed through a concealed door hidden within the local cathedral.

The King is a very powerful alien mastermind with an ancient, frail body that is composed of pieces harvested from living victims. In

order to survive indefinitely, the King orders a different Grand Master to bring him a young human (of any gender) every month as “a sacrifice to the Gods.” The truth is that the poor victim will end up as “spare parts” for the alien King. It is important to note that while the Yellow King uses parts of human victims to repair his own ailing corporeal form, his true

physiology is not necessarily a human one. Rather, the human body of his "sacrifice" is simply raw material from which he takes the organic components required to repair and modify his form. For example, he might take the length of a victim's nervous system and repurpose it entirely to repair one of his own failing limbs.

Given the practical limitations of these repairs—as well as the subjective nature of the King's own artistic whims—his form

has taken many different shapes through the centuries. As such, he is often depicted in varying forms, usually bipedal and humanlike, but occasionally more monstrous...and tentacled.

The Yellow King is not a fighter—he has pawns for that—he is a strategist and supreme manipulator. In the remote event of a direct confrontation he would let his trusted Robot Sentinel handle the opponents (see pages 6–7).



## ROBOT SENTINEL

One of The Yellow King's most diabolic technological achievements is his personal Robot Sentinel. In his native alien language he dubbed his creation "アサヒ ロボット テラーボット." As the words of that alien tongue do not translate directly into English, a (very) loose conversion of the concepts comprising the name translates to Arachnoid Terror Bot.

Constructed of a bronze-colored pseudo organic alien alloy similar to titanium, each of the monstrosity's eight legs end in a razor edged feeding tendril. The automaton's fangs secrete a paralytic poison used to incapacitate its opponents before encasing them in webbing for later feeding.

The Arachnoid Terror Bot is fueled by blood harvested from captives kept in the catacombs of the Yellow King's cathedral in Carcassonne. (A fate the heroes, should they become too large a thorn in the Yellow King's side, may well find awaits them.)

## ARACHNOID TERROR BOT

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12+4, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d10

**Pace: 8; Parry: 6; Toughness: 14 (4)**

### Special Abilities:

- **Arcane Bond:** The Arachnoid Terror Bot counts as having Arcane Resistance for anyone other than the Yellow King.
- **Armor +4:** Titanium alloy plating.
- **Poisonous Bite (-4):** Str+d10. Victims of The Arachnoid Terror Bot's bite must make an immediate Vigor roll at -4 or suffer Paralysis.
- **Construct:** As an automaton, The Arachnoid Terror Bot does not breathe and is immune to inhaled poisons and smell-based effects. In addition, it is +2 to recover from Shaken, and suffers no additional damage from called shots. Constructs are not affected by poison or disease.
- **Deflection:** Due to the resistive nature of the alien plating, ranged attacks against this creature suffer a -2 penalty.
- **Immunities:** The Arachnoid Terror Bot is immune to electricity, fear and Intimidation.
- **Improved Sweep:** The Arachnoid Terror Bot may attack everyone adjacent to them as a single action.
- **Multiple Legs:** The Arachnoid Terror Bot character is a master of using its legs to defend against multiple attackers. Opponents get no Gang Up bonus.

- **Size +3:** The Arachnoid Terror Bot stands approximately 9 feet tall and 12 feet wide.
- **Spider Walk:** The Arachnoid Terror Bot can walk on webs without penalty as well as vertical surfaces at Pace 8.
- **Webbing:** The Arachnoid Terror Bot can cast webs from its thorax that are the size of Medium Burst Templates. This is a shooting roll with a range of 3/6/12. Anything in the web must cut or break their way free (Toughness 7). Webbed characters can still fight, but all physical actions are at -4.





*Excerpt from L'histoire Jeune, one of many secret manuscripts kept by the Yellow Shepherds.*

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## THE YELLOW SHEPHERDS

While the Yellow King resides in his secret hideout, the Yellow Shepherds act as his emissaries to the rest of his organization and the outside world. Members are divided into Apprentices, Fellows and Masters depending on the level of power and knowledge they possess and how close to the innermost secrets of the organization they are.

Obtaining membership within the Yellow Shepherds is arduous and dangerous, and requires total dedication and obedience to the order. The main rule to become a Yellow Shepherd is: "Ask one to be one." When a potential Shepherd realizes that there is a deeper conspiracy beneath the cloak of secrecy inherent in such a group, he must find a way to contact a Yellow Shepherd and petition to become a member.

Important prerequisites to gain admittance are: the applicant must be a free individual (ideally one with property and holdings, the more extensive the better), discretion, obedience, a strong belief in the occult/supernatural, and considerable information pertaining to a secret society (either a member society of the Yellow Shepherds or a rival group).



*Sign of the Yellow Shepherds.*

Petitioning for inclusion in the Yellow Shepherds carries great risk. A Yellow Shepherd assesses how much important information the candidate has gathered. If the candidate offers little new information, he could deny any involvement and dissuade the questioner from proceeding. If the questioner has gathered a wealth of secret information, then it is at the Shepherd's discretion whether to kill the applicant on the spot to protect the secrecy of the organization. On the other hand, should the questioner be deemed worthy (often involving the candidate demonstrating the ability to create safeguards to protect against being slain) he will be introduced to the higher levels of the Yellow Shepherds and initiated into the organization.

### YELLOW SHEPHERD APPRENTICE

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Intimidation d4, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Alien Science) d4, Knowledge (occult) d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Repair d6, Stealth d6, Shooting d4, Weird Science d8

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Two of choice.

**Edges:** AB Weird Science, Connections (Yellow Shepherds).

**Alien (Weird Science) Artifacts:** Alien Pocket Watch (allows the wielder to communicate remotely with their Fellow Shepherd).

Apprentices are typically either infiltrated into smaller branches of larger organizations (for example, a village Ariosophists' covenant) or used to assist Fellows in larger ones. They are the hands and ears of the organization: if there is something that needs to be done, they are the ones who will take care of it (directly or indirectly by recruiting cat's paws).

## PULP VILLAINS: THE YELLOW KING

On the other hand, they have very little autonomous decision making power, always following a Fellow's orders. They act as workers and observers, never interacting directly with politicians or influential people. They are provided with sophisticated telecommunication devices that allow them to keep in touch with their Fellow member, whom they believe is the supreme leader of the organization.

### YELLOW SHEPHERD (FELLOW)

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**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Intimidation d8, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Alien Science) d6, Knowledge (Occult) d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Repair d8, Stealth d8, Shooting d6, Weird Science d10

**Charisma:** +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Two of choice.

**Edges:** AB Weird Science, Charismatic, Connections (Yellow Shepherds), Rich.

**Alien (Weird Science) Artifacts:**

Alien Pocket Watch (allows the wielder to communicate remotely with his Apprentices), Alien Mirror (allows the Fellow to communicate with his own Master Shepherd), Alien Crate (allows the teleportation of goods), Alien Signet Ring (Mind Control) – 20 Power Points.

Fellow members are the core of the Yellow Shepherds' organization because each one of them is believed to be the "most important member reporting directly to the Yellow King" by his own Apprentices. They are decentralized, controlling cells scattered around the globe, and are disguised as wealthy, eminent members of an occult organization (for example, a member of England's Masonic Lodge in London). They are typically clever, ruthless

masterminds, controlling the Apprentices' work and eventually training new members. They are also the ones who regularly exert the Shepherds' influence on region-scale politics, forming allegiances with (or applying sufficient pressure on) political and religious leaders in their territory.

They must report their action regularly to one of the Master Shepherds, whom they believe to be the supreme leader of the organization and from whom they receive the Alien items they use.

### YELLOW SHEPHERD (MASTER)

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**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d12, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Intimidation d10, Investigation d10, Knowledge (Alien Science) d8, Knowledge (Occult) d12, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Repair d10, Stealth d8, Shooting d6, Weird Science d12

**Charisma:** +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Two of choice.

**Edges:** AB Weird Science, Charismatic, Connections (Yellow Shepherds), Filthy Rich.

**Alien (Weird Science) Artifacts:**

Alien Mirror (allows the Master to communicate with his own Fellow Shepherds), Alien Round Table (allows the Master to hold "virtual meetings" with other Masters), Alien Crate (allows the teleportation of goods).

Master Shepherds are the highest human rank in the Yellow Shepherds organization (typically, they are of noble birth). Masters have the duty of guiding the human flock following the directions of the Yellow King (whom they refer to as "God" amongst themselves). Each Master oversees all the Fellows Shepherds

of a specific continent, influencing world-scale politics.

Each Master is revered as a "God made flesh" from the Fellows beneath him. There are nine Masters, one presiding over each continent and one for each greater Occult Organization (Ariosophists, Freemasons, Illuminati). These latter three are known as the Grand Masters and are held in higher esteem among Masters because they are rumored to be in direct contact with the Yellow King.

The Grand Masters are the only ones who know the Yellow King's

whereabouts and his true nature. All other Masters believe that the Great Masters are prophets who receive periodic enlightenment directly from the mouth of God. The Three Grand Masters are regarded as the living voice of God and hold a veto power on the other Masters' resolutions.

To outside observers, Masters are often known simply as secretive individuals in the upper strata of society, and as such, their wealth, influence and secrecy are simply a product of their social status.



## ADVENTURE HOOKS

### MACGUFFIN FOR SALE...CHEAP!

During the course of a prior adventure, while searching the abode or corpse of a particularly nasty nemesis, the heroes come across an elegant business card of embossed silver metal (see Handout 1, page 13). The card reads:

*Finieous Stubbs, Proprietor,*

*Cordially Invites You To*

*The 178<sup>th</sup> Grey Market*

*129:365/47.038918/-122.830720*

Along with the card is a black and white photo of a strange work of art: an egg-shaped statue of an indeterminate metal, four-feet tall, and etched with eldritch runes and spindly symbols (Handout 2, page 13). A catalog number and the word “Proto” is printed on the photo.

Characters with knowledge of the criminal underworld will recognize the Grey Market of Finieous Stubbs as a near mythical—invitation only—underworld auction. The silver card serves not only as invitation, but also provides the date and location of the event (the string of numbers indicate the day of the year and coordinates). Finally, the card itself doubles as the access key to the vault door of the host building.

Research into the work of “art” turns up little specific information about the sculpture or the artist. However, enough digging will unearth whispered rumors that the item is actually a weapon of devastating power. This should prove enough of a lure for the PCs to attempt to claim it for their own. If additional incentive is required, the Game Master can spread the word that a rare item (magical or tech) the PCs have long coveted will be for sale at the auction.

At the Grey Market, the heroes find themselves amongst the movers and shakers of the criminal underworld and secret societies of their city—and they should feel very much out of their element.

The heroes will, presumably, have a limited amount of money to spend on their desired item, so the Game Master should be sure to develop a list of interesting and enticing auction items to tempt them into spending that money prematurely. Regardless of their self-control, the singular object of their desire soon comes up for auction and the bidding begins.

Bidding at this vile auction is not just about money. While the criminal element offers services (murder, mayhem, destruction) and the secret societies offer rare luxuries (demons, slaves, congressmen), the heroes will need to think quick to outbid them and win their prize. Their primary opponents for the item are, of course, agents of the Yellow King.

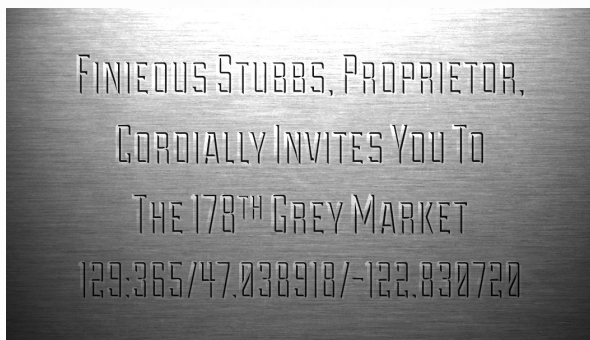
The egg-shaped statue of bronze is actually the dormant form of a prototype of the Yellow King’s Robot Sentinel (q.v.) built by the King himself. Long ago lost and only recently rediscovered, the prototype holds a nostalgic place in what passes for the Yellow King’s heart and he wants it back.

If the heroes manage to obtain the item, the King’s agents will soon attempt to take it by force. Should they manage to fend off the agents, the King will not be happy. Rather than send more lackeys to the slaughter, the King will remotely activate the Prototype and command it to attack the PCs. The Prototype is a half-strength version of the Arachnoid Terror Bot (see pages 6–7).

However, if the agents manage

to win the day and steal away the Prototype, the heroes will need to decide for themselves how badly they

want the item—and to what lengths they are willing to go to obtain it.



Handout 1



Item no. 82

PROTO

Handout 2

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## PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES IN YOUR OLD KIT BAG

While at a favorite haunt, the heroes take note of a breathless, panicked woman doing her best to blend into the crowd. She casts furtive glances over her shoulder and eyes the faces of the other patrons warily. Suddenly she makes eye contact with a random player character and feigns recognition. "Darling!" she calls out, hastily approaching with a forced smile. She slides a weathered valise under the table into the character's lap, whispering in their ear: "Take this. It's too late for me. Don't let them find you!"

Without giving the heroes a chance to respond, she bolts through the kitchen and out the rear door. Moments later, a blood curdling scream is heard from the alleyway. If the heroes investigate, they find the body of the panicked woman dead in the street. There is no sign of her attackers.

Inside the valise is an aged book bound in yellowed leather. Initial examination yields little, but hidden within the pages is a sample of writing torn from a different, and much older, volume.

The fragment is incomprehensible and alien, apparently some form of code (see Handout 3, page 15). Finding a way to decode it is no minor feat, sending the heroes on a hunt for an obscure and eccentric cryptologist. Along the way, agents of the Yellow King, intent on slaughter, hunt them.

When they finally attain the cryptologist's hidden retreat, convincing her to undertake the work is as simple as showing her the yellow book. She almost seems to recognize it. But as she secludes herself to set about her work, the King's agents attack. It's up to the heroes to defend the cryptologist's home from several waves of hired thugs and murderers. If the heroes are successful in staying

alive, the cryptologist finishes her examination of the fragment, emerging from her study completely unaware of the battle the heroes just fought, and surprised by the carnage in her home.

The excerpt can be any number of things that best suits the Game Master's campaign: a manifest of names revealing highly placed members of the Yellow King's secret societies in government, an inventory of Alien (Weird Science) Artifacts along with their current owners and location, scientific formulas for the creation of the King's personal Robot Sentinel and other alien devices, or even a private journal of the entity that is the Yellow King, revealing his own innermost—and absolutely terrifying—alien thoughts.

### NEESA NIBHANUPUDI, CRYPTOLOGIST

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**Rank:** Veteran

**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d12, Spirit d12, Strength d4, Vigor d4

**Skills:** Healing d6, Knowledge (Alien Science) d12, Knowledge (Cryptography) d12, Knowledge (History) d12, Knowledge (Occult) d12, Repair d4

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4

**Hindrances:** Bad Eyes, Curious, Hard of Hearing.

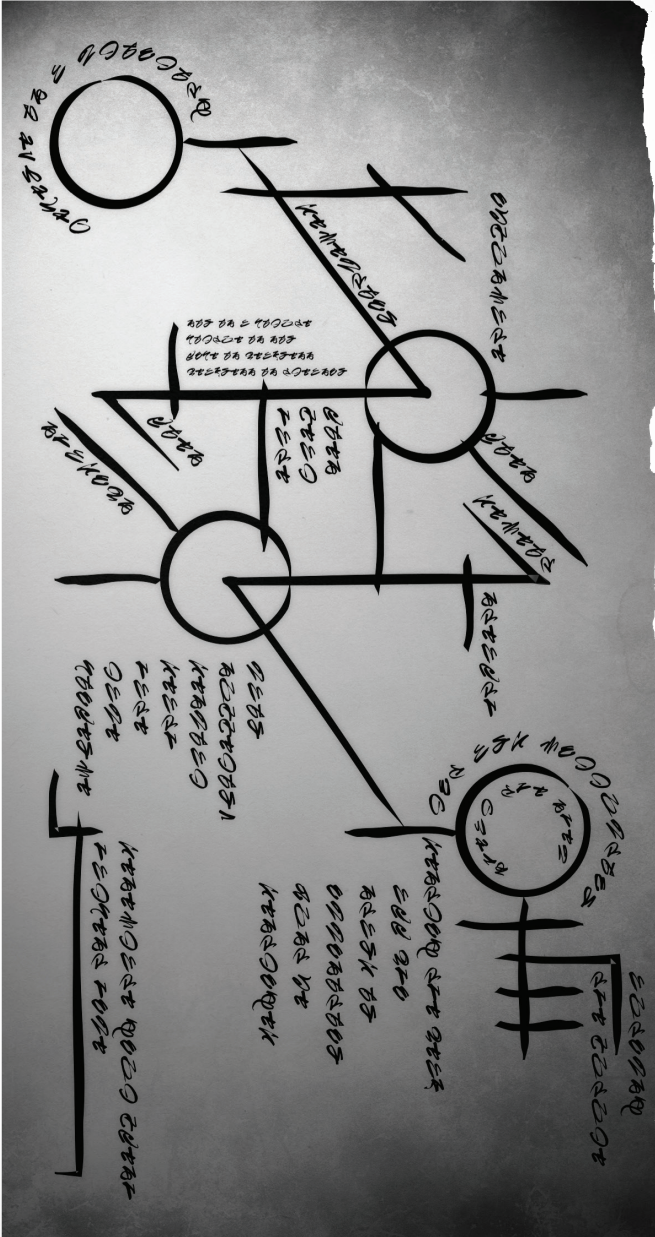
**Edges:** Elan, Jack-of-All-Trades, Linguist, Scholar.

**Gear:** Many, many reference books, notepads, pencils, and pairs of glasses.

A brusque Indian woman in her late 50s, Neesa doesn't think much of people—they're far too easy to figure out. Ciphers and languages, however, they hold her interest—at least until she unravels them. Her pursuit of new challenges to conquer has brought her into contact with several examples of alien writings

and weird technology, which she has become quite adept at deciphering. Given their rarity, she welcomes

any opportunity to examine them, viewing each individual item as a component of a much larger mystery.



Handout 3

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## THE WIND BENEATH MY WINGS

A loved one (a younger brother or sister, niece or nephew, or even a former flame) of one of the heroes has gone missing in an apparent kidnapping while abroad in Germany. A week has already passed by the time the player character learns of the abduction.

The heroes must immediately intervene to find and—hopefully—rescue their loved one.

The perpetrator behind this crime is an elderly Grand Master Yellow Shepherd (of the Ariosophists), ordered by the Yellow King to provide this month's "sacrifice to the Gods." The Grand Master is a longstanding loyal servant of the King who has provided many sacrifices over the years without any complications. But that changed the minute he set his eyes upon the victim.

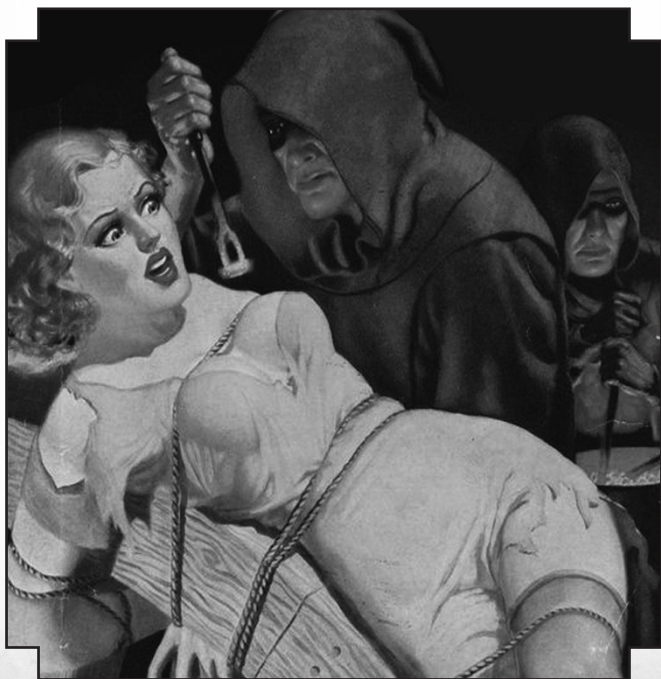
Although the loved one was originally taken for divine sacrifice, the Grand Master soon found himself infatuated with the victim.

After much consideration, the Grand Master made the bold—and potentially suicidal—decision to keep the object of his desire (*née* victim) for himself, and find the Yellow King a new sacrifice. One of the heroes should do nicely.

The Grand Master intends to capture another victim to sacrifice to the Yellow King and will use all of his power and connections to do so. Failing at that, he plans to flee the continent and take the object of his desire with him.

Should the heroes succeed in rescuing their loved one and killing the errant Grand Master, the Yellow King will have suffered a blow to his organization and, more personally, a severe physical (albeit temporary) set back as parts of his body fail. Finding another sacrifice becomes his top priority.

However, the Yellow King has now taken note of the heroes and, as soon as he is back at full physical capacity, will seek his revenge.



## DEUS EX MACHINA

This hook is best used after the heroes have already run afoul of the machinations of the Yellow King.

During the course of their adventures, just when they need it the most, the heroes receive a series of three timely and unexpected boons from a mysterious benefactor. The boons can be anything; whatever the Game Master feels will make the PCs the most grateful. Some examples might be a getaway car with armed guards just as a gunfight looks most grim, a cash influx into their bank accounts as they're about to be evicted from their headquarters, or medical aid as a hero lay dying from a snake bite in the middle of the Amazon Jungle. The important thing is that the boons be dramatic and arrive just in the nick of time. Any inquiries attempting to determine the identity of their benefactor result only in a title: The Eye of Horus.

Shortly after they receive their third boon, representatives of their benefactor contact them: The Eye wishes to meet them immediately. A private plane is waiting to take them to northern France.

The Eye of Horus is not what they expect: a young woman of ebony skin and hair, dressed in silk chiffons bejeweled in golden chains and alien gems. She appears almost carved of obsidian and her movements and words are nigh hypnotic. The PCs will not know this, but the Eye is a member of the same alien race to which the Yellow King belongs and she has a singular goal: to see the Yellow King, an outlaw member of their society, destroyed.

To this end, The Eye of Horus has closely watched the heroes, helping them in their times of greatest need. Now it is time for them to repay her kindness—she wants them to infiltrate a sect of the Yellow Cult with the express purpose of locating and killing the Yellow King. With

the assistance of a sympathetic (read blackmailed) Yellow Master, she has arranged for aliases and cover stories to allow the heroes access into the Yellow Shepherds as Fellows. From there it is up to them to glean the location of the Yellow King himself—she believes his hideout to be in south France—and, once done, to beard him in his lair. As this is no easy task, she may, at the Game Master's discretion, provide them with Alien (Weird Science) Artifacts to assist them in the undertaking.

The Eye of Horus is more concerned with the death of the Yellow King than the destruction of his operations. Clever and devious PCs might find a way to fill this power vacuum by assuming the mantle of the Yellow King themselves.

## THE EYE OF HORUS

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Persuasion d12, Shooting d8, Stealth d4, Weird Science d12

**Charisma:** +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6

**Hindrances:** Arrogant, Loyal, Vengeful

**Edges:** AB Weird Science, Attractive, Charismatic, Charmer\*, Followers, Halls of Power\*, Photographic Memory\*, Very Attractive

**Alien (Weird Science) Artifacts:** Bejeweled Alien Tiara (Mind Reading), Alien Pheromone Emitters (Puppet), Alien Phase Shifter (Intangibility), Alien Dissonance Aura (Damage Field)—20 Power Points.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Gilbert Gallo** spends his days as the proud, hard-working father of two children, and his nights in dogged pursuit of the ever-elusive Story. He writes novels, short stories, tabletop RPGs, comics, and videogames. His works are published in English, Italian and Polish. He has written for the Italian edition of *Cyberpunk V3*, *Mythos*, *Darkmoor*, and *Adventurers!* (notably the *Voodoo Pirates* and *Kung Fu Adventurers!* supplements).

**Jarrold Feliciano** is a writer and filmmaker based in New York. He claims to have been abducted by an ancient alien horror and "subjected to a series of horrible tests including *2000 B.C. 2000 B.C. 2000 B.C.* and the *2000 B.C. 2000 B.C. 2000 B.C.*" The Yellow King denies involvement.

## PRODUCTION CREDITS

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# THRILLING TALES

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ONE.



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YOU WILL NEVER AGAIN KNOW  
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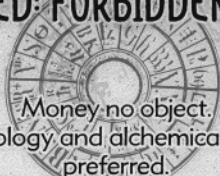
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FOR THE FATHERLAND.

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