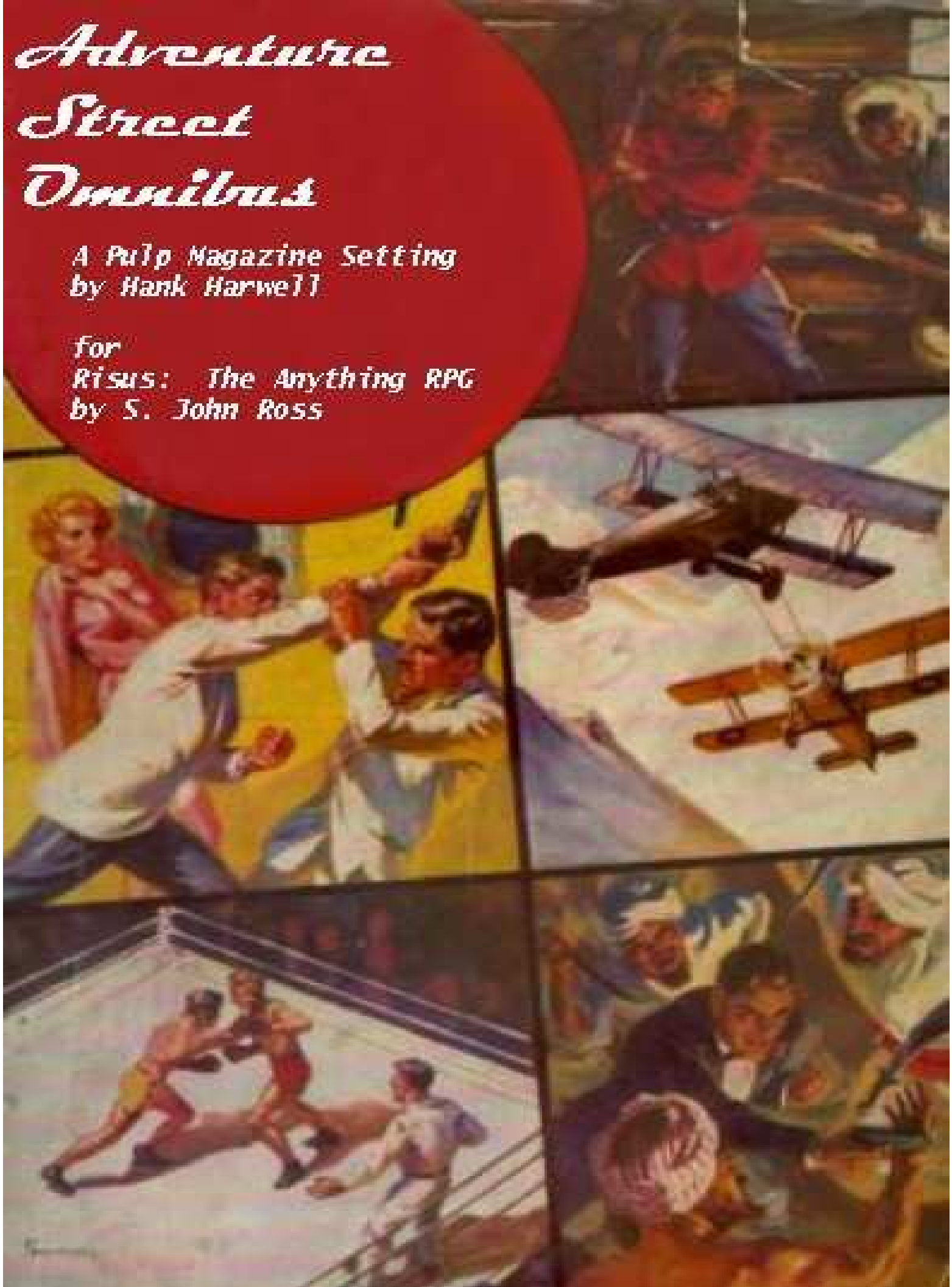


Adventure Street Omnibus

*A Pulp Magazine Setting
by Hank Harwell*

*for
Risus: The Anything RPG
by S. John Ross*



Adventure Street Omnibus

Introduction

Pulp is the literary equivalent of “junk food.” It is not high art, but it is a lot of fun nonetheless.

❖ What Are Pulp Adventures?

Pulp adventures take their name from the publishing method of choice for the popular press from, say the turn of the century to the 1950’s. Cheap paper made of pressed wood pulp was used to print magazines affordable to the working class. These magazines covered a wide range of genres: science fiction and fantasy, horror, detective mystery, globe-trotting adventure, sports, wild west, and even romance.

No matter what genre was featured, there were some near-universal conventions: clear-cut heroes and villains, an insidious plot, a mystery, “deathtraps” and the triumph of the Right over the Wrong.

Pulp magazines were published regularly from the 1920’s through the 1950’s, peaking during the 30’s and 40’s. Eventually, paper quality improved, but because the stories were all written along a certain style, the name “pulp” became associated with the adventures themselves rather than the medium.

Pulp authors wrote stories featuring simple, almost visceral themes such as good vs. evil, order vs. anarchy and the like. As gritty as the stories could become, they almost always offered an escape from the grim realities of the day. Although they were simple stories in terms of theme, often they featured rather complicated characters. The “heroes” of hard-boiled detective pulps were hard-drinking, chain-smoking, skirt-chasing, acid-tongued insomniacs. The protagonists of gangster pulps were, well, *gangsters*. But no matter how rough such anti-heroes were, there was always something redeemable about them, which again fits in with the underlying black-and-white themes.

Pulp Heroes

Pulp heroes in general are “All-American-Boy (or Girl)-Next-Door” types. They are not motivated by a desire for personal glory, but by an almost overdeveloped sense of right and wrong, justice, and fair play.

As an example, take a look at the personal code of Doc Savage, one of the greatest pulp heroes:

Let me strive every moment of my life, to make myself better and better, to the best of my ability, that all may profit by it.

Let me think of the right and lend all my assistance to those who need it, with no regard for anything but justice.

Let me take what comes with a smile, without loss of courage.

Let me be considerate of my country, of my fellow citizens and my associates in everything I say and do.

Let me do right to all, and wrong no man.

Pulp heroes stand as paragons of clean living, education, and morality. Although they appear on the surface to be the “hometown boy or girl done good,” there is a presence about them, a charisma that causes them to stand out from the crowd.

They are not superheroes. That is, they are not “endowed with powers and abilities far beyond those of mortal man.” Rather, they are highly trained, educated and motivated. They succeed not because they have super-powers, but because they are determined, clever, and possess a strong moral character.

To roleplay these heroes, the player must “buy in” to the concept that the PC is deeply committed to preserving the ideals of Western (specifically American) civilization. These ideals of justice, fair play, humility, “stick-to-it-iveness,” ingenuity, humor, and, when necessary, self-sacrifice.

Players should not expect to be showered with wealth at the end of a successful adventure or campaign. Rather, their reward is the satisfaction that they have helped humanity.

❖ What is Risus?

Risus is a FREE rules-lite role-playing game (rpg) that focuses on clichés to describe characters, rather than stats, skills, and attributes. Its features are extreme fast play, flexibility, and humor. In fact, it is billed as a “comedy rpg”, but the author, S. John. Ross allows that it can be used to play serious games “if you insist.” For more information, and to download your own FREE copy, go to the Risus site at <http://www222.pair.com/sjohn/risus.htm> .

• Master Pulp Cliché List

While exhausting, this list is by no means exhaustive. If you think up a cliché you would like to play, write out a clear, clever description (“what it’s good for”) and ask your GM to consider it. If it’s well-done and does not unfairly tip the balance of the game, he just might go for it!

This list was cobbled together from a number of sources, including members of the Risus Talk List <http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/risustalk/> (especially Guy Hoyle <http://www.guyhoyle.net/risus/>) and members of the Pulp Games List http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/Pulp_Games/, (especially Joe Coleman’s list of Pulp-Style Archetypes <http://fearlessrpg.tripod.com/PulpArch.pdf>). Any similarity between this list and the others is purely intentional (after all, why should I reinvent the wheel, right?)

Academics

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It’s Good For</i>
<i>Absent-minded professor</i>	Forget head if it wasn't attached, invent miraculous but troublesome device or substance, leave isolation chamber doors ajar, accidentally shrink the kids
<i>Anthropologist</i>	Know aboriginal folktales, know tribal customs, eat disgusting things, speak obscure languages
<i>Antiquarian</i>	Quote from obscure authors, know obscure facts, cite reference
<i>Archeologist</i>	Discover/explore ancient ruins/burial chambers/temples, read hieroglyphics
<i>College student</i>	Party, chase girls, cram for test, go to class, write home for money
<i>Ghost Chaser</i>	Know all about ghosts, set up cameras to catch ghosts on film, disprove fake ghosts, get rid of real ghosts

<i>Librarian</i>	Sort books, find newspaper articles, “shh!”, find obscure information, repair books
<i>Linguist</i>	Know obscure languages, translate ancient inscriptions, pronounce the unpronounceable
<i>Occult Scholar</i>	Know weird phenomena, remember strange names, find ancient incantation
<i>Professor's Aide</i>	Pull books for Professor, do research for Professor, teach classes for Professor, give credit to Professor
<i>Psychic Investigator</i>	Study psychic phenomena, test subjects for ESP and Telekinesis

Adventure

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Aviator/Aviatrix</i>	Fly plane, tinker with engine, storm barns, make an emergency landing
<i>Big Game Hunter</i>	Shoot wild animals, interpret native drums, speak native languages, survive in the wild
<i>Explorer</i>	Drive dogsled teams, climb mountains, push back the frontiers of the known world, map uncharted areas, get antsy when you're home too long, go somewhere nobody else has ever heard of, meet people you can't talk to, stumble on lost civilizations, collect exotic memorabilia, tell stories about how you got that scar, learn scandalous phrases in foreign languages
<i>Human Fly</i>	Climb skyscraper without gear, walk across tightrope, tip off photographers
<i>Jungle King/Queen</i>	Raised by animals, keen sight and smell, great strength and agility, communicate with animals, survive in the wild, swing from vine, wrestle alligator
<i>Mountain Climber</i>	Rappel down sheer cliff faces, wear spikes on your shoes, have lots of rope
<i>Noble Savage</i>	Be confused by technology, spout ancestral wisdom, not be corrupted by modern values
<i>Treasure Hunter</i>	Follow treasure maps, explore sunken wrecks,

Athletics

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>All-American Athlete</i>	Run, swim, jump, throw, wrestle, be a good sport
<i>Baseball Hero</i>	Pitch, field, throw, bat, slide, chew
<i>Boxer</i>	Punch, jab, jump rope, work on footwork
<i>Football Hero</i>	Tackle, kick, throw, catch, block
<i>Golf Pro</i>	Drive, chip, putt, wear gaudy pants
<i>Swimmer</i>	Dive, hold breath, cross English Channel
<i>Tennis Pro</i>	Serve, volley, wear white
<i>Track and Field</i>	Run, jump, put shot, throw javelin/discus
<i>Wrestler</i>	Grapple, pin, throw opponent

Business

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Accountant</i>	Cook the books, add columns, calculate interest rates

<i>Antique Dealer</i>	Know value of antiques, discuss characteristics of old craftsmanship, haggle with sellers, outbid competitors at auctions
<i>Bookshop owner</i>	Obtain obscure titles, dust shelves, know where any book in the shop is, know what's in all the books
<i>Financier/Banker</i>	Wear suits, calculate interest/mortgage rates, invest in companies, make loans
<i>Industrialist</i>	Build factories, mass produce goods, buy smaller companies
<i>Salesman</i>	Convince people to buy, travel, smile reassuringly, apply pressure
<i>Stockbroker</i>	Wear suits, read ticker-tape information

Crime

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Bankrobber</i>	Wear masks, "Stick 'em up!",
<i>Bootlegger</i>	Make 'shine, drive fast on rural, mountain roads
<i>Burglar</i>	Break into houses, find hidden safes, walk quietly
<i>Con Artist</i>	Convincing other people to give you money, evading cops.
<i>Counterfeiter</i>	Make phony money that looks real
<i>Criminal Mastermind</i>	Conquer the world, devise fiendish tortures, utilize exotic devices, create elaborate plots, explain plan to enemy before you kill him, hire henchman without explaining what happened to the dozens of other henchmen you hired, secret escape route, destroy secret base
<i>Femme Fatale</i>	Trade money for love, seduce the rich and elderly, disguise true nature, fall in love for real with hero.
<i>Fugitive From Justice</i>	Disguise oneself, hide in shadows, protest innocence,
<i>Gangster</i>	Dark suit with black shirt & white tie, execute squealers, carry out the orders of Mr. Big
<i>Gun Moll</i>	Heavy makeup, sexy in a cheap and tawdry way, cynical
<i>Henchman</i>	Follow orders without wondering what happened to other henchmen
<i>Hit Man</i>	Not talking much, wearing a cheap suit, looking intimidating, stalking targets, telling people to go out in the alley but still not talking much.
<i>Oriental Mystic</i>	Hypnotize do-gooders, be inscrutable, create illusion, quote Confucius and Lao Tsu
<i>Reformed Gangster</i>	Old contacts, streetwise, keep nose clean, frequently suspected by police, not trusted by other crooks
<i>Thug</i>	Pistol-whip victims, brutalize victims, take it on the lam, never squeal, plan heist, steal things, have no personality

Engineering

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Crackpot Inventor/Mad Scientist</i>	Come up with amazing device/plan to revolutionize the world, have weird/crazy/menacing laugh

Inventor/Gadgeteer

Fix almost anything but it looks weird, invent half-baked contraptions, put together intricate gadgets out of common objects, stammer and sweat around women

Espionage

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Gentleman Spy</i>	Master of disguise, ladies' man, marksman, sophisticate
<i>Spy</i>	Cross enemy lines, infiltrate enemy territory, collect vital information, attend swanky parties, sit in smoky taverns, collect latest rumors and gossip, use cover identities, plan escape route, sneak around, decode secret messages, eavesdrop, stay out of the way, disguise, know foreign languages, get back with information

Fine Arts

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Painter</i>	Wear beret & smocks, stretch canvases, mix paints, live in a loft
<i>Sculptor</i>	Work with clay, use chisels, make busts/statutes

Government

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Ambassador</i>	Negotiate treaties, enjoy immunity from petty crimes, throw formal balls,
<i>Bored Civil Servant</i>	Insist on filling out paperwork <i>in triplicate</i> , refuse to rush
<i>Diplomat</i>	Carry important messages, be an emissary, pal around with foreign courtiers, indulge in intrigue, keep your eyes and ears open, know what to kiss and when, know about what's in vogue
<i>Politician</i>	Kiss babies, shake hands, make promises, negotiate compromises,

Journalism

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Ace Reporter</i>	Sniff out a scoop, drink like fish, smoke like chimney, bang out a story, protect sources, transcribe conversation
<i>Crusading Journalist</i>	Have a cause, write about cause, make up facts in support of cause, get other people to join cause
<i>Foreign Correspondent</i>	Live in exotic locales, know best restaurants and bars, send reports to home office, have contacts in local government
<i>News Photographer</i>	Have a big camera, flash bulbs in people's faces, make dark jokes at murder scenes
<i>Tabloid Hack</i>	Be nosy, be pushy, crank out sensationalized stories to sell more copy, be insensitive

Law Enforcement

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Agency Detective</i>	Tail suspects, gather information/evidence, intimidate, pick locks
<i>Amateur Detective</i>	Trouble magnet, find clues professionals overlook
<i>Beat Cop</i>	Walk beat, direct traffic, find donuts, drink stale coffee, chase fugitive
<i>Costumed Vigilante</i>	Wear strange costume, foil dastardly crime, track criminal to lair, duke it out, escape from certain death, protect secret identity, drive flashy vehicle, send clueless assistants on senseless tasks, rescue clueless assistants
<i>G-Man</i>	Agent of FBI/Treasury Dept/Federal Bureau of Narcotics, smoke like a chimney, snappy black suit, trenchcoat,
<i>Hard-Boiled Private Detective</i>	Broke all the time, never give up on a case, drink gallons of bad coffee, incorruptible, doggedly pursue clues
<i>Police Detective</i>	Interrogate suspect, deduce, flash badge, drink gallons of stale coffee
<i>Policeman</i>	Arrest criminals, interrogate criminals, drink gallons of bad coffee, smoke like a chimney, find donut shop
<i>Private Investigator</i>	Weakness for attractive women, dark sense of humor, cynical worldview
<i>Scientific Detective</i>	Observant of smallest detail, condescending
<i>Vigilante</i>	Seek to bring justice and law and order by whatever means necessary
<i>Western Lawman</i>	Wear cowboy hat, ride horses in city, promote the Code of the West

Legal

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Judge</i>	Wear robes, pound gavel, know the law, sentence crooks, be distinguished member of community
<i>Lawyer</i>	Make deal, interrogate, know the law, twist the law, find loophole, "Objection!"

Medicine

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Dedicated Physician</i>	Work long hours in hospital, work miracles at the 11 th hour, treasure Hippocratic oath
<i>Dentist</i>	Brushing, cleaning, drilling, causing pain
<i>Family Doctor</i>	Diagnose illness, make house call, treat disease, stitch up wound, prescribe remedy
<i>Forensic Specialist</i>	Know poisons, know telltale signs of causes of death,
<i>Jungle Doctor</i>	Concoct medicines out of exotic plants, champion cause of native peoples
<i>Nurse</i>	Assist doctors, care for patients, wear white uniforms, take temperature, dispense medications, push people around in wheelchairs

<i>Orderly</i>	Push people around in wheelchairs, look tough for agitated patients
<i>Plastic Surgeon</i>	Look at people for ways to “improve” them, have a project girlfriend/wife, maybe have underworld contacts
<i>Psychiatrist</i>	Ask pointless or infuriating questions, analyze neurosis, prescribe mind-altering drugs, make everything relate to sex
<i>Psychologist</i>	Same as Psychiatrist, but can't prescribe drugs
<i>Surgeon</i>	Cutting, stitching, sweating in operating room

Military

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Flying Ace</i>	Fly planes, dogfight, diving out of the sun to surprise opponents
<i>Foreign Legionnaire</i>	Have past to forget, march out into desert, fight Arabs,
<i>Marine</i>	Red-blooded patriot, drive tanks, one-man army
<i>Military Veteran</i>	Use rifles and bayonets, reminisce about the Great War, nightmares
<i>Sailor</i>	Swab decks, tie knots, “Aye, aye, Captain!”
<i>Soldier</i>	Clean rifle, fire rifle, know about tactics and strategy, sleep whenever you can, stay awake during guard duty
<i>Soldier of Fortune/Mercenary</i>	Overconfident, have contacts with gunrunners, use military training to make a living
<i>Stalwart Lieutenant</i>	Loyal, carries out orders from commander

Nautical

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Deep-Sea Diver</i>	Wear lead shoes, hold breath, explore sunken wrecks, salvage sunken ships, fight off sharks
<i>Sailor</i>	Swab decks, tie knots, raise sails, stow cargo
<i>Ship's Captain</i>	Wear captain's hat, have three-day stubble for beard

Other

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Cowboy</i>	Ridin', ropin', brandin', spittin', and shootin'.
<i>Gambler</i>	Betting, cheating, winning, running very fast.
<i>Hobo</i>	Hop freight train, sing mournful songs, panhandle, do odd jobs, hobo code, drink anything alcoholic
<i>Race Driver</i>	Drive fast, tinker with car engines,
<i>Trusty Grease-Monkey</i>	Work on engines, fix engines with chewing gum and bailing wire, face and hands always smudged with grease

Performing Arts

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Acrobat</i>	Jumping around, doing lots of flippy things, having a gift for finding naturally-occurring uneven bars in urban sprawls
<i>Circus Performer</i>	Walk tightrope, get shot out of cannon, swing from trapeze
<i>Concert Pianist</i>	Virtuoso performance, nimble fingers, impeccable

<i>Escape Artist</i>	evening wear Dislocate shoulder to escape straitjacket, hide key/lockpick in mouth, mystify audiences
<i>Film Crew</i>	Operate camera, rig lights,
<i>Jazz Musician</i>	Play in smoky clubs, improvise music, play in band, be late for a gig
<i>Movie Star</i>	Look glamorous, idolized by millions, sign autograph, memorize lines/blocking, party into the wee small hours, seduce
<i>Musician</i>	Read music, perform, be temperamental/perfectionist, write music, wear hair long
<i>Radio Announcer</i>	Use radio voice, mimic other voices/accents/dialects, "And now, a word from our sponsor!"
<i>Stage Actor/Actress</i>	Learn lines/blocking, chew scenery, hang out at swanky nightspots
<i>Stage Hand</i>	Raise/lower curtains, move scenery, keep track of props, operate trap door, sweep stage
<i>Stage Magician</i>	Sleight of hand, misdirection, the hand is quicker than the eye, sawing people in half without hurting them, make dramatic gestures, wear tuxedo and top hat, pull rabbit out of hat
<i>Stunt Man</i>	Survive a great fall, throw fake punch, escape from crashing vehicle, slide along a bar, look kinda like a movie star

Personal Services

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Aging Friend/Servant/Attendant</i>	Speak confidentially with employer/family friend, worry, give sage advice
<i>Bartender</i>	Mix drinks, listen to other people's problems
<i>Driver</i>	Wear uniform, tinker with car engine,
<i>Native Guide</i>	Know path through desert/wilderness/jungle, carry burdens
<i>Secretary</i>	Take dictation, type, make phone calls, make appointments
<i>Short Order Cook</i>	Wear grease-stained t-shirt, make classic American cuisine, ring bell, "Your order's up!"
<i>Taxi Driver</i>	Know back alleys, drive fast, scare tourists/pedestrians, yell at other drivers

Public Safety

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Fireman</i>	Have a pet Dalmatian named "Sparky", use an axe, slide down poles, wear big boots, climb ladders, pull hoses

Religion

<i>Cliché</i>	<i>What It's Good For</i>
<i>Clergyman (should specify faith/denomination)</i>	Long-winded, preachy, forgive sinners, sermonize
<i>Missionary</i>	Live among "the people", try to "civilize the heathen,"

Social

Cliché

What It's Good For

Bon Vivant/Dilettante/Socialite

Throws around lots of cash, seen it all, drink gallons of champagne, expect to be waited on

- **Guy Hoyle's Article on clichés**

Below is a "Master List" of pulp-oriented clichés I've collected over time. But to *really* get the most out of Risus, it's good to customize your character's cliché. Here is a great article that explains how clichés work, and may give you a good idea for how to put your character together:

A QUICK GUIDE TO THE ANATOMY OF A CLICHÉ

This guide is intended as a supplement to S. John Ross's "Anatomy of a Cliché" from his *Risus Companion*, which is available to members of the International Order of Risus (<http://www222.pair.com/sjohn/risus.htm> for all things Risus!)

Personal History

Sometimes adding a variation on "former" can add a level of depth to an otherwise ho-hum cliché.

- Former Elvis Impersonator
- Defrocked Witch-doctor
- Retired Paperboy

Degree of Dedication

The numbers don't tell the whole story. Is your character committed to his chosen cliché, or does his enthusiasm lag sometimes? Is his talent natural-born, or does it come with great difficulty?

- Part-time Pacifist
- Struggling Brain Surgeon
- Assistant Assassin
- Fanatical Frothing-Mouthed Fundamentalist

Social Class or Financial Means

Though Risus does not have rules for money or buying stuff, you can tell a lot about the financial means of a character by his clichés.

- Generous and Popular Vagrant
- Stingy, Inhospitable Philanthropist
- Penniless Tycoon
- Imprisoned Billionaire Homemaking Guru

Gender

Many clichés imply a gender (like Professional Football Player or Housewife), but gender-based clichés are quite fun to play with.

- Female Donald Trump
- Aging Male Prostitute With A Heart Of Gold
- Cross-Dressing Paladin
- Blacksmith Babe

Demeanor

Attitude is often everything.

- Jolly, Happy Berserker
- Affable, People-Friendly Assassin
- Careful, Timid Demolition Derby Driver

Ham-Handed Reference

These would be references to actors, actresses, fictional characters, and genre conventions.

- William Shatner
- Rhyming Lawyer
- Gomer Pyle
- Martha Stewart
- Red-Shirt (from *Star Trek*)
- Used Chariot Salesman
- A “brick”, “flyer”, “energy blaster”, or other comic book stereotype.

Goals

Your character’s personal goals determine how his skills develop, and distinguish them from characters with similar Cliches

- Eager Young Performer Lookin’ for Nookie
- Dedicated AcTOR In Search Of Eternal Fame
- Bitter Mad Scientist Out To Have His Revenge On Everybody Who Laughed At Him

Self-Image

How does your character see himself? Do others see him the same way?

- Self-Loathing Accountant
- “The Best Pickle Salesman In The Whole Darn Faire!”
- Grieving, Suicidal Lawyer

Subplots and Relationships

Cliches can involve other people and how they interact with the character.

- Handsome Young Swordsman Working His Way Through The Local Girls
- Nervous Ex-Gangster On The Run From The Mob
- Plastic Surgeon to the Stars

Problems

Some see them as problems; others see them as opportunities.

- Enormously Obese Contortionist
- Stuttering Country-Western Singer
- Blind Fighter Pilot

Character Creation Guidelines

Typically, Characters using the Adventure Street Omnibus series of pulp settings will use the standard Risus character creation rules. In other words, players will have 10 dice to allocate among various clichés. There is a limit of 4 dice allocated to anyone cliché. I personally like the idea of an rpg where regular, ol’ fashioned six-sided dice stolen from an old board game can be used to play, so there Funky Dice will not be used. As players create their characters, they might want to add a Hook and a Tale. A Hook is a character flaw, a physical/mental/social disability that the GM could use to his great advantage. A Tale is just what it sounds like: a detailed

background story that breathes life into your character. Hooks and Tales each give a bonus of one (1) die that can be allocated among either clichés or Lucky Shots or Questing Dice, which are explained below.

A player can elect to use one cliché die to buy three Lucky Shots. These “shots” allow the player to add one die to any roll that the character really, really has to make. Questing Dice are similar, with two glaring exceptions: A player can buy five (5) Questing Dice for every one cliché die he spends, and while Lucky shots can be applied to any roll, Questing Dice must be applied to a task related to a specific Quest that the character is engaged in. This will be explained in more detail with the sample Character from *Ripping Air Yarns*.

If a player decides to forgo Lucky Shots and Questing Dice, he may choose to Pump a cliché or Double Pump one. These rules are carefully explained in Advanced Option II of the free Risus Rules set available from <http://www222.pair.com/sjohn/risus.htm> .

Finally, in *Adventure Street Omnibus*, Boxcars and Breakthroughs from the Risus Companion are used. If a player rolls the dice for any given cliché, and they all come up sixes (‘boxcars’), he may roll the dice again adding the second total to the first. If he rolls boxcars again, he continues as above.

DARING ADVENTURE TALES

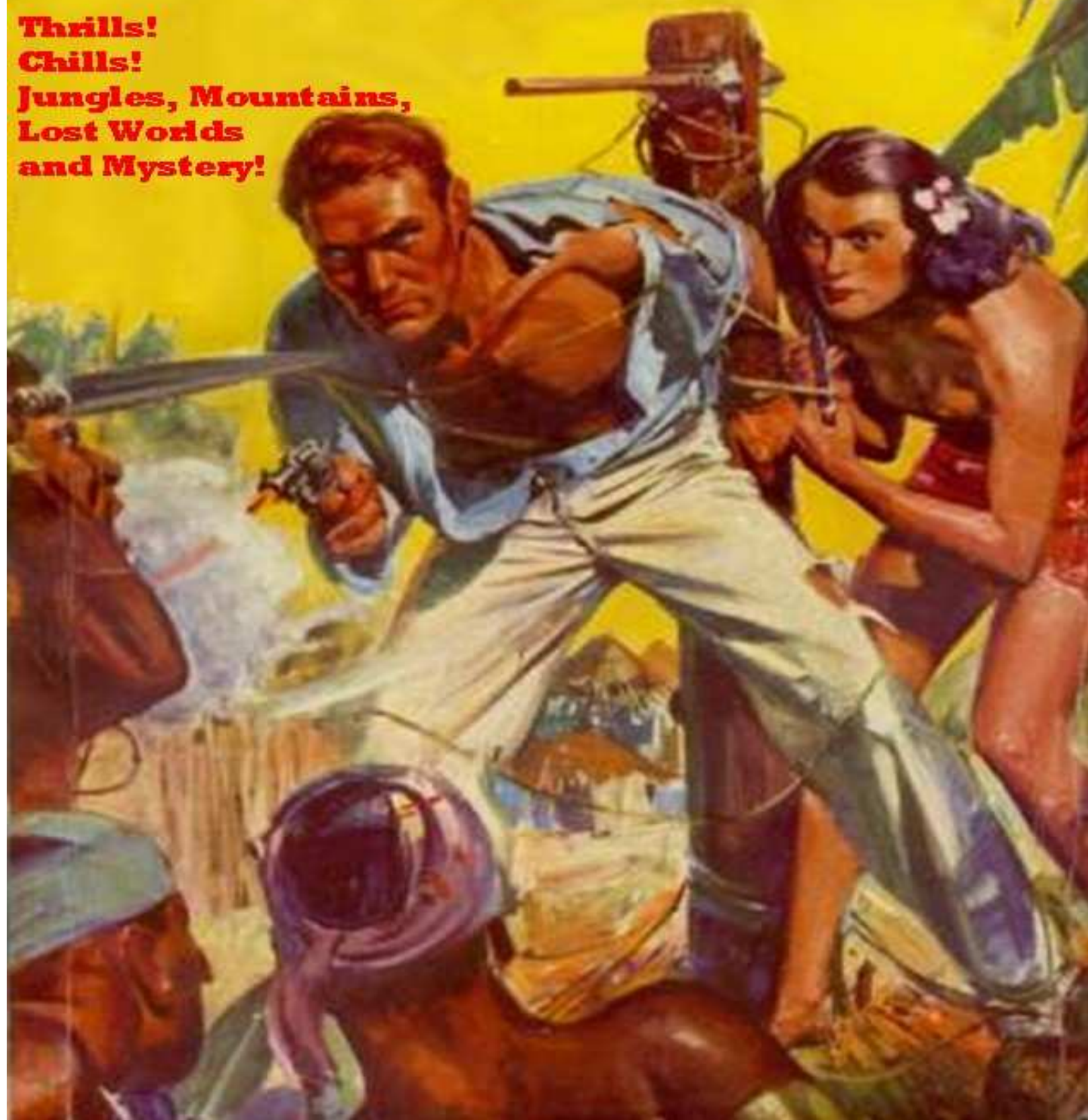
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February

Thrills!

Chills!

**Jungles, Mountains,
Lost Worlds
and Mystery!**



Daring Adventure Tales

"Two-Fisted Globe-Trotting Adventure!"

❖ Pulp Examples

- The Shadow
- Doc Savage
- Secret Agent "X"
- Justice, Inc.

❖ Helpful Clichés

- Big Game Hunter
- Explorer
- All-American Athlete
- Inventor/Gadgeteer
- Gentleman Spy
- Spy
- Ace Reporter
- News Photographer
- Agency Detective
- Costumed Vigilante
- Vigilante
- Private Investigator
- Scientific Detective
- Foreign Legionnaire
- Military Veteran
- Marine
- Sailor
- Ship's Captain
- Escape Artist
- Stage Magician
- Bon Vivant/Dilettante/Socialite

❖ Sample Character

Jackson Dare

Rugged Soldier-For-Hire (4)

Fearless Outdoor Survival Guide (3)

Beer-Swilling, Cigar-Chomping Tall Tale Teller (2)

Lucky Shots [] [] []

❖ House Rules



RIPPING

AIR YARNS

10 CENTS **JUNE**



ANOTHER EXCITING ADVENTURE OF "THE PHOENIX!"
FLYING FICTION **FLYING FACT**
MODEL BUILDING

RIPPING AIR YARNS

Featuring “The Phoenix”

❖ Pulp Examples

- G-8 and his Battle Aces
- Bill Barnes
- Kerry Keen

These pulps deal with air piracy, espionage, sabotage, smuggling, etc.



❖ Helpful Clichés

- Aviator/Aviatrice
- Spy
- Gadgeteer
- Explorer
- Bootlegger (Smuggler)
- Flying Ace
- Foreign Legionnaire
- Marine
- Military Veteran
- Soldier of Fortune/Mercenary
- Trusty Greasemonkey (Mechanic)
- Gambler
- Bon Vivant/Dilettante/Socialite

❖ House Rules

Vehicle rules – Compare cliché of pilot with cliché rating of aircraft. Use whichever dice is higher for rolls.

Creation: Use “Sidekicks and Shieldmates” rules from Risus Companion

❖ Sample Character

John Scipio – “The Phoenix”

Masked Avenger (4)
Daredevil Aviator (3)
Crack Airplane Mechanic (2)
Lucky Shots [] [] []

Personal Aircraft (as per Sidekicks rule in the Risus Companion) – “The Phoenix”

Tri-phantom Fighter-Bomber Made From Salvaged Airplane Parts (3)

Backstory (Tale): As a young man, John Scipio was fascinated by the miracle of flight, in its youth even as he was. At the age of 15, John managed to find a way to France and joined the Lafayette Escadrille, a squadron of American pilots flying for the French government in the Great War.

Although he was not a pilot when he arrived, and served in a variety of subordinate roles in the squadron, he displayed an aptitude for flying and due to losses was soon pressed into flying in the waning days of the war. After the Armistice, he could not satisfy his hankering for flying stunts, so he joined up with a barnstorming tour at air shows.

However, the tours proved to not be a steady income producer, so John started a business as a commercial air courier. One day, John was flying over the U.S.-Canadian Border when he was attacked by air pirates. His plane was forced to crash-land. The pirates raided his cargo while

John lay unconscious and bleeding. They left him for dead, but he survived. Finding an abandoned airfield, he began building a fighter-bomber capable of landing on land, water, or ice. Once it became operational, John dubbed it “the Phoenix” and set off to find the air pirates. When he meets them again, “The Phoenix” will have the upper hand, and the air pirates will be put out of commission – permanently. Until that time, John has adopted the identity of “The Phoenix” after his aircraft. Although he is determined to make the pirates pay, John takes on spies, saboteurs, and smugglers, fighting crime while he searches for his sworn enemies.



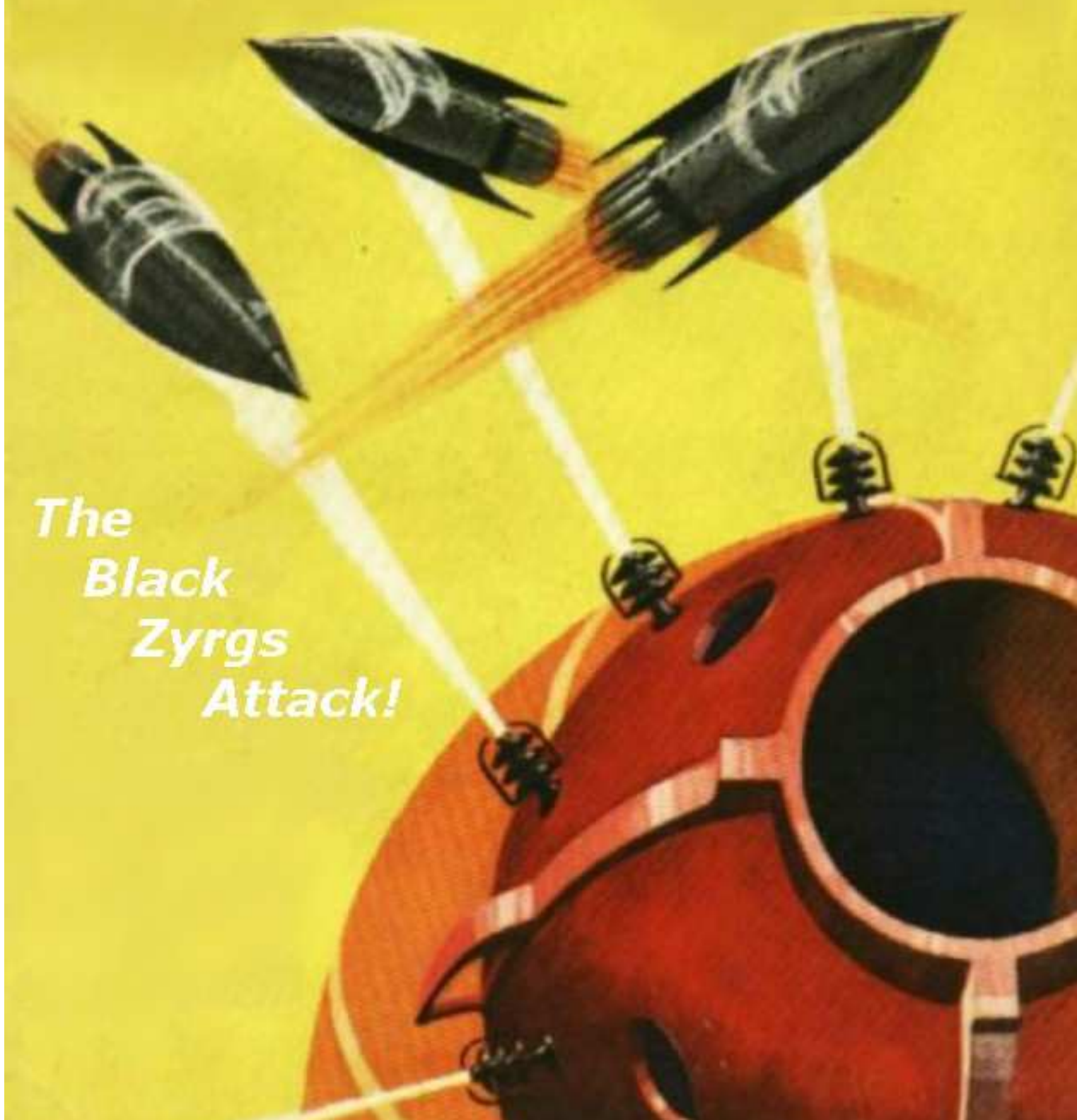
The plane bears no markings other than an illustration of a phoenix rising from the flames.

Stellar Space Stories

15¢

January

*The
Black
Zyrgs
Attack!*



Stellar Space Magazine

Featuring The Space Rangers

❖ Pulp Examples

- Amazing Stories
- Astounding

❖ Helpful Clichés

- Aviator/Aviatrix
- Spy
- Gadgeteer
- Explorer
- Bootlegger (Smuggler)
- Flying Ace
- Foreign Legionnaire
- Marine
- Military Veteran
- Soldier of Fortune/Mercenary
- Trusty Greasmonkey (Mechanic)
- Gambler
- Bon Vivant/Dilettante/Socialite

❖ House Rules

Vehicle rules – Compare cliché of pilot with cliché rating of aircraft. Use whichever dice is higher for rolls.

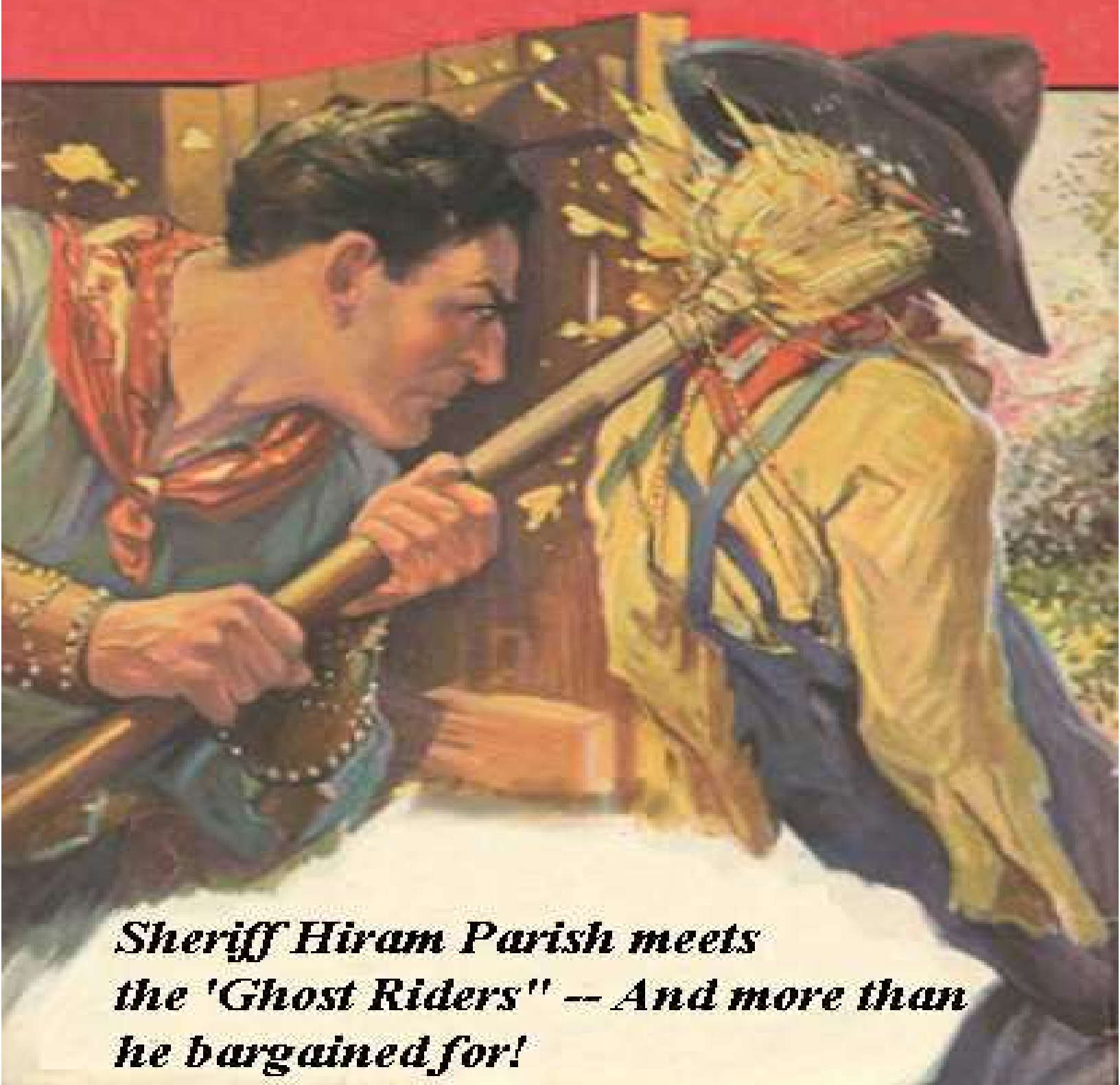
Creation: Use “Sidekicks and Shieldmates” rules from Risus Companion

Sample Character

Strange

Western Stories

10 ¢ May



*Sheriff Hiram Parish meets
the 'Ghost Riders' -- And more than
he bargained for!*

STRANGE WESTERN STORIES

"Weird West" Adventures

❖ Pulp Example

- Deputy Marshall Lee Winters, *written by Lon Williams, appearing in Real Western Stories*

❖ Helpful Clichés

- Western Lawman
- Cowboy
- Gambler
- Bartender (Saloon keeper)
- Native Guide (Indian Scout)
- Clergyman (Preacher)
- Banker
- Bank Robber (Train robber)
- Judge
- Noble Savage (Indian Chief, Indian Brave)



Additional Cliches

- Gunslinger
- Bounty Hunter
- Trick Rider
- Rifleman
- Cavalry Officer
- Cavalry Trooper
- Sod Buster
- Ranch Hand
- Prospector/Miner
- Schoolmarm

❖ House Rules

❖ Locale – Lonesome Gulch, pop. 312

- Sample Character

Sheriff Hiram Parish

Steely-eyed Western Lawman (4)

Cowboy Horseman with an Uncanny Relationship
with His Horse (3)

Rifle Marksman (2)

Rational Skeptic Who Sometimes Fears He May Be
Wrong (1)

Backstory -- Lonesome Gulch is a small town nearby to Forlorn Gap, where Deputy Marshall Lee Winters is the chief lawman. Technically, Winters has jurisdiction over Lonesome Gulch, but tends allow Sheriff Parish free range in enforcing the law in his county.

Buildings:

- Saloon
- Hotel/Stage Office
- Telegraph Office

- Jail/Sheriff's Office
- General Store
- Assayer
- Bank
- Livery Stables
- Newspaper Office
- Schoolhouse
- Church
- Doctor's Office
- Barber

The Supernatural in Strange Western Stories

Native American Medicine – Combination of Luck, Charisma,
Taboo – Violating taboo disqualifies medicine. Could be a Hook.

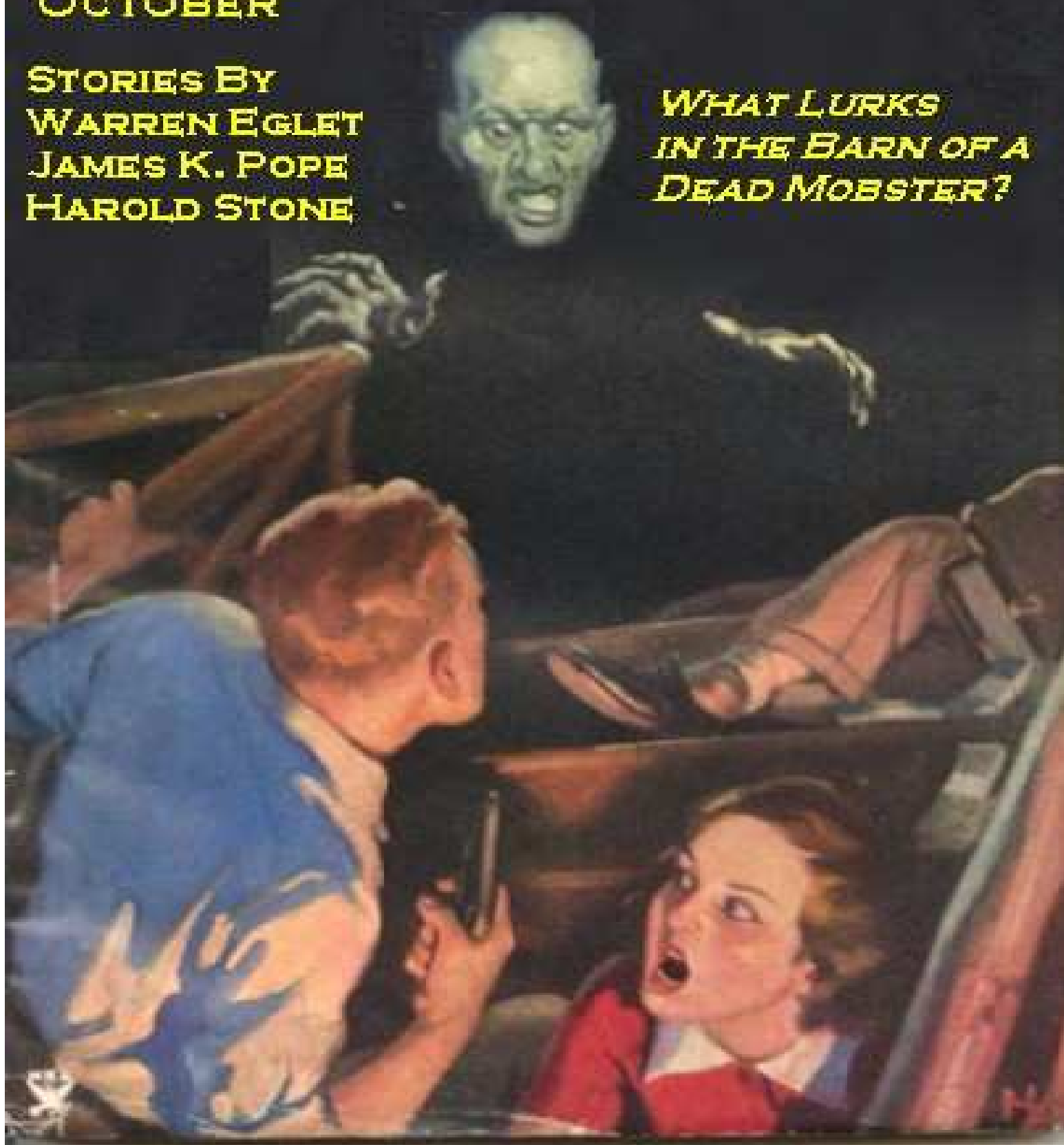
Weird *CRIME REPORT*

10¢

OCTOBER

STORIES BY
WARREN EGLET
JAMES K. POPE
HAROLD STONE

*WHAT LURKS
IN THE BARN OF A
DEAD MOBSTER?*



WEIRD CRIME REPORT

Featuring "The Spook Squad"

❖ Pulp Examples

Horror pulps are just what the name implies: ghost, vampire, werewolf, and monster stories written to give you a good chill and lead you to sleep with the lights on. There were several leading authors known for their work in this area: H. P. Lovecraft,

Some of the magazines that featured horror stories:

Unknown

Weird Tales

"Shudder Pulps," a.k.a. "Weird Menace" stories are a subgenre that uses many of the elements of the Horror story. There is a villain, at first thought to be supernatural in either origin or power that threatens the well-being of the city/country/world. This villain kidnaps a beautiful girl and subjects her to extreme cruel and sadistic torture. Her boyfriend manages to rescue her and defeat the villain, which is usually shown to be an ordinary mortal being, albeit an evil genius. "Weird Menace" was a theme prominently featured in the radio drama *I Love A Mystery*. That radio drama later inspired the Saturday morning cartoon, *Scooby-Doo* (the original series). If you think of the old *Scooby Doo* cartoons ("I'd have gotten away with it if wasn't for you pesky kids!"), then you pretty much have an idea of what "Shudder Pulps" are like.

Some of the magazines that featured "Weird Menace" tales:

Dime Mystery

Horror Stories

Terror Tales

❖ Helpful Clichés

- Ghost Chaser
- Occult Scholar
- Psychic Investigator
- G-Man

❖ House Rules

Character Creation

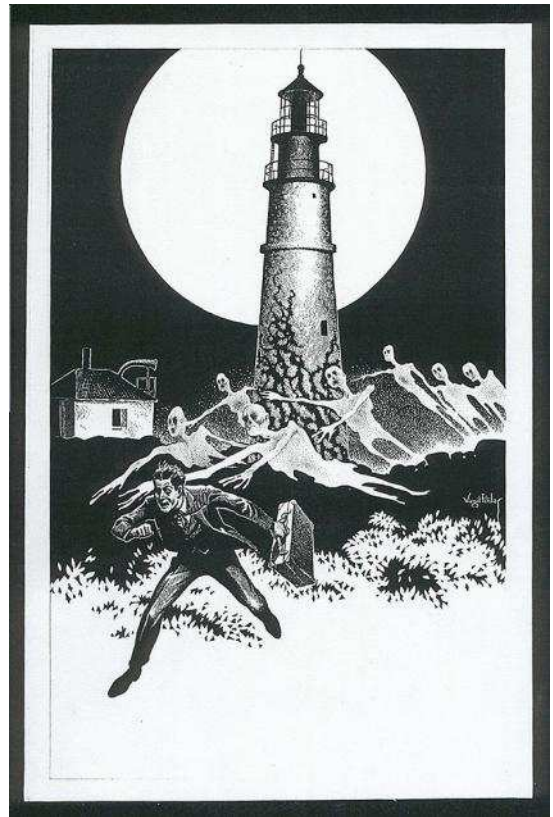
As per standard Risus rules, with the following Advanced Options:

Pumps and Double Pumps, Sidekicks, Lucky Shots, and Boxcars

Background – The Supernatural, Paranormal and Otherwise Unknown Criminal Division was established in 1928 by the personal authority of Director J. Edgar Hoover of the F.B.I.

During the 1920's, there was a rise in crime on a national scale in connection with National Prohibition.

Along with increased activity of bootleggers, the Ku Klux Klan and agents of foreign governments, there were some crimes that had no rational explanation. Hoover authorized the S.P.O.U.C.D. (pronounced "Spooked") to investigate these crimes and to "neutralize or suppress



beings and energies with malevolent intent.” Their field reports go directly to Director Hoover, who after reading them, order them permanently sealed. Agents have a great deal of latitude and possess the highest of security clearances.

In order to maintain cover for the S.P.O.U.C.D., or “Spook Squad,” as it is known within the Bureau, critical information and training is issued nationally to field agents by so-called “horror films.” Many scriptwriters and directors have been recruited for this purpose. Directors James Whale and Tod Browning have been especially helpful.

❖ Sample Character

Special Agent Laurents Gilchrist

Psychically Sensitive G-Man [3]

Erudite Connoseiur of World Literature (2)

Short Tempered Martial Arts Student (2)

❖ The Use of Magic

Resources

Project 1557

<http://www.seedwiki.com/page.cfm?wikiid=2331&doc=Pulp%20Project1557>

PulpGen <http://www.pulpgen.com/pulp/downloads/index.html>

“The Pulp Avengers” by Brian Misiaszek

<http://www.fantasylibrary.com/lounge/pulpavengers.htm>