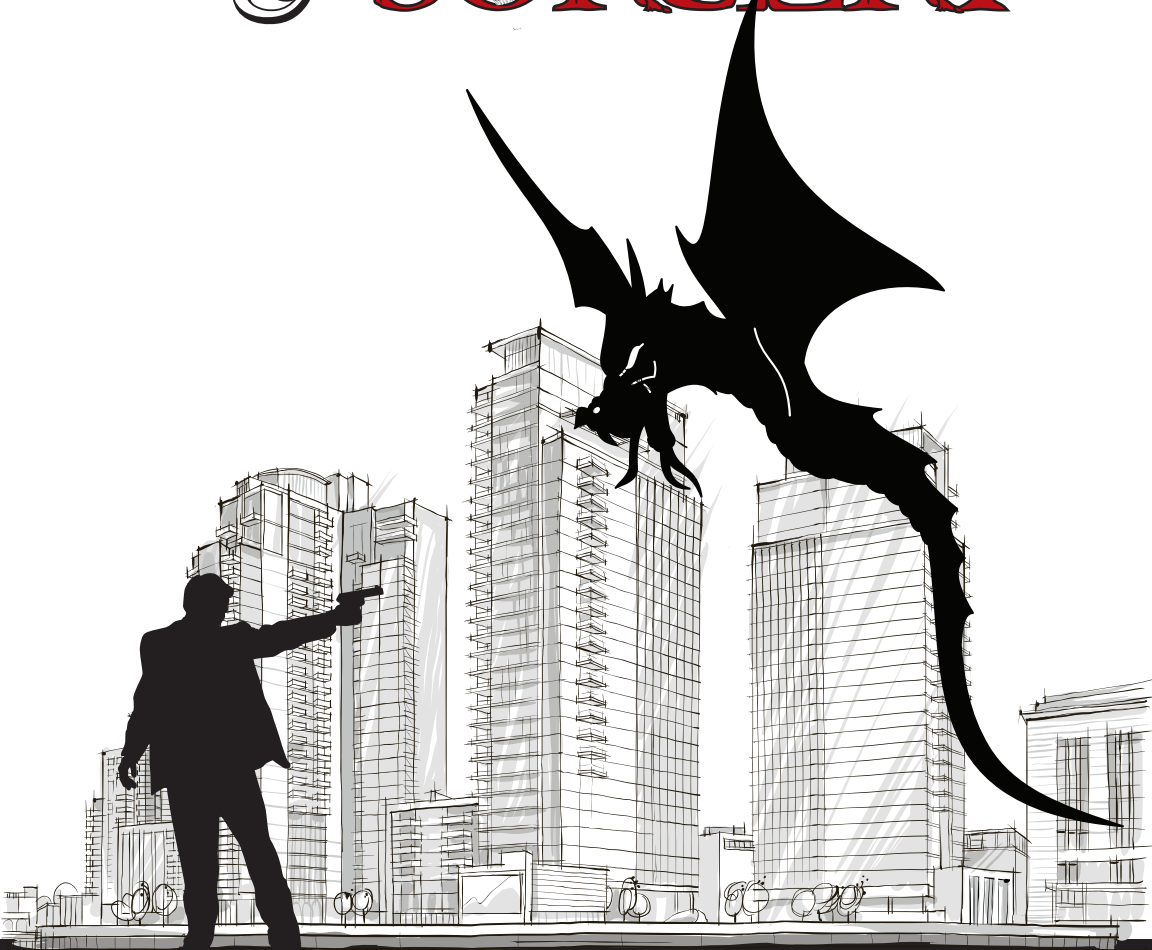


# SKYSCRAPERS & SORCERY



MODERN OCCULT PULP ROLEPLAYING ADVENTURES

  
**OSR**  
WHITE BOX  
COMPATIBLE

BY ANTHONY C. HUNTER  
SLEEPING GRIFFON PRODUCTIONS



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I'd like to dedicate this to my friend, Wyatt Bruce, with whom I rolled dice for many years and who left us all too soon; and to my wife Linda for her infinite patience in listening to me expound upon my ideas.



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What if the world ended and no one really noticed?

What if almost everyone just picked themselves up the next day, dusted themselves off and went back to their routines as if nothing major had happened?

That is what happened here. Sometime in the late part of the 19th century, something exploded in several places around the world at the same time. Scientists say they think it was a number of comets or some other sort of space body hitting the planet. Some people claim that we were being attacked by Martians. Some folks just didn't really notice. The explosions caused lots of death and destruction and affected every continent in the world.

Cities were wiped out, millions of people died in an instant. After a few weeks of having the routine disrupted, most of the survivors started going back to work. After all, the mail had to be delivered, the cows milked and the stores opened.

Things changed that day though. Nightmares became reality. Creatures from myth and legend either became real or crawled out of whatever holes they had been hiding in before the event.

Most people seldom travel more than a few hours away from their homes, so those in the 'safe' areas soon forgot the event, and as time has passed, more and more people have forgotten. We all know there are areas you don't want to travel to, but we've pretty much forgotten why.

Oh, and magic works now. Perhaps it always did, but it seems that there are more people around who make use of it. They still don't advertise the fact very broadly, because ordinary folks either think they are lunatics or charlatans.

Strange things live in the shadows of the world. Other worlds seem to have intruded upon ours and you are one of the few who decided to take notice and take action. Folks have names for people like you, the most polite of which is Adventurer. There is something that makes you want to notice the world and what goes on outside the daily humdrum lives of everyone else, and you have an itch to explore the dark corners and possibly even right some wrongs.

It's been several decades since the Event and you have decided that it is time to scratch the itch of Adventure. Welcome to Skyscrapers & Sorcery, may your adventures be many and fruitful and may your lives be valiant and your death be bravely faced.

## **WHAT IS THE TIME PERIOD FOR THE GAME?**

The setting for Skyscrapers & Sorcery is intentionally left somewhat vague. This is a cinematic setting, where anachronisms abound, portable phones exist, but they are larger, flip-open phones, not small, hand held computers like you see everywhere today and service is often spotty at best, especially, it seems when you are in one of 'those' areas. You know the ones; the sketchy neighborhoods, those times you are in a dark and foggy cemetery or out in the woods, or when your car breaks down on some rural back road.

Pay phones exist in the towns and cities, being more prevalent than they are in our world. Fashion and technology seem to be a strange blend of 1960's through 1990's, with the parts the referee feels most comfortable including or excluding. Offices often have computer terminals on their desks, but fancy color monitors and games have not become the norm as they are in our world.

Although the world is far from a Politically Correct utopia, gender and color seems to be less of an issue than it might be, most likely because deep down, people know that the thing they need to worry about are more than skin deep.

Competence and conformity are rewarded in business. In smaller areas, strangers may be eyed with suspicion just because they are not 'known.'

It is not typically the cinematic wild west however; going on a shooting spree in the middle of the city or town you are in is likely to end up with your adventurer behind bars, shot and cuffed to a hospital bed or in line for the electric chair.

The excuse of "He was a werewolf" or "She was a Vampire" might turn that hospital bed into the psych ward or those bars a padded cell in the local asylum, so exercise caution and be sure to not start a gunfight where there are witnesses around, at the very least.

On the other hand, forensic science is not up to the mythological levels depicted in television crime procedurals, nor are computers available in every department store or found in every household, so facial recognition is most likely a thing of spy novels and science fiction. Of course, that three headed crocodile you shot in the Everglades last month is pretty much the stuff of science fiction (or at least horror fiction) too, so, take that for what it's worth.

This is a game, set in what is effectively the world of B-Movies and Bad Dreams. In other words, have fun, because the Referee sure will. Now then, turn the page and let's start creating your adventurer . . .

## CHOOSE AN ADVENTURING CLASS

Once you've rolled and placed your Attribute Scores, the next step is to determine your Adventuring 'Class.' There are six classes in the base game: Tough, Hunter, Occultist, Faithful, Snoop and Glib. Your Referee may also have additional classes available that they've either created themselves or brought over from another product.

Skyscrapers & Sorcery is designed in such a way that if you wanted to import a character class from another product, it should be easy to do, as long as your Referee is amenable to the idea. The only requirement for choosing a particular Adventuring Class is you must have a minimum score of 9 in the Prime Attribute for the Class.

After choosing your Adventuring Class, be sure to note any experience point bonuses your Adventurer qualifies for. It is based on your Wisdom (possible +5%), your Charisma (possible +5%) and the Prime Attribute for the Adventuring Class you chose (+5% if the Prime Attribute is 13 or higher), for a maximum possible experience point bonus of +15%.

An Adventuring Class does not necessarily reflect the experience and professional training of the individual before they became an Adventurer, it does reflect the focus of their special abilities and the path they will travel on their roads to Adventure, however.



### *Multi-Class Adventurers*

Only available if your Referee agrees to allow multi-class Adventurers. You may choose Two or Three Adventuring Classes for your character to follow.

This has benefits, but costs as well. In order to Multi-Class, the Prime Requisite in each Class must be 13 or higher (and your Adventurer only gains the single +5% experience bonus for having high Prime Attributes).

The experience required to level is the sum of all Adventuring Classes, but your Adventurer gains the better of all available Hit Dice, Base Hit Bonuses and Saving Throws from their Classes. They also get all bonuses for Saving Throws and Action Checks, and all special abilities of the class.

They get the combined (or better) options from weapons training and armor training.

Classes with the same Prime Requisite may be chosen as a multi-class option, but the Prime Requisite must be 15 in this instance.

## CAREERS

As mentioned previously, Adventuring Classes are not necessarily indicative of what the Character did before becoming an Adventurer (or during their non-adventuring hours). Your Adventurer did not simply spring fully formed from the forehead of Zeus or Cthulhu or any other entity (well, except for actually springing forth fully formed from the minds of the player, but I'm talking about in the game, not reality. No, really, that's what I'm trying to do here. Oh, where were we?)

They had lives and, most likely, jobs prior to succumbing to the siren call of the madness known as Adventuring. This background information can come in handy with granting bonuses to Action Checks that may have some bearing on tasks the Adventurer is attempting.

Each Adventurer gets three ranks they may place into any background career they desire (and the referee approves, check before you list your Adventurer as having been a designer of World Destroying Space Stations that look like Small Moons and be sure it's acceptable), and may have up to three careers prior to Adventuring. 1 rank indicates that your Adventurer was a trained professional in the career; 2 ranks indicate expertise and someone with 3 ranks is a noted master in the career. These Career ranks can be added to Action Checks that the player and referee agree have some relation to the task being attempted.

*Example: Mason's Adventurer, the Tough (STR based), Tyrone Masters, was a Musician (2 ranks) and an Electrical Engineer (1 rank) before becoming an adventure. His party finds a strange rifle, that they saw being used to fire what appeared to be lightning bolts. Although Tyrone can easily fire the weapon, being a Tough, he's interested in determining it's power source. Tyrone gets a +1 for Action Checks involving examining weapons, and because of his prior Career as an Electrical Engineer, the referee allows him to add the ranks from that career to the Check as well.*

### **Example Careers** (this is by no means a comprehensive or exhaustive list)

Actor	Engineer	Rancher
Artist	Farmer	Sailor
Athlete (type)	Firefighter	Scholar
Aristocrat	Laborer (type)	Scientist
Burglar	Lawman	Singer
Con Artist	Mechanic	Soldier
Craftsman (type)	Merchant	Spy
Detective	Musician	Telephone Operator
Domestic Servant	Physician	Veterinarian
Drifter	Pilot	Welder
Driver	Priest	Woodworker
Electrician	Rancher	Writer

## ACTION CHECKS

Rather than trying to have an exhaustive list of skills, the Adventurer can pretty much attempt any action they wish to try. Success or failure on an action can either be automatically determined by the referee based upon the situation and the description of what the Adventurer is doing, or, if needed, a roll of the dice can be made. Action Checks should only be made when there is some urgency to the action, whether pressed for time because enemies are approaching, or the ledge your Adventurer is standing on as she tries to pick the lock on a door is crumbling, that type of thing. Assume that any normal action, or any action that make sense based upon the Adventurer's Class and/or prior Career can reasonably be performed, given enough time and the proper resources.

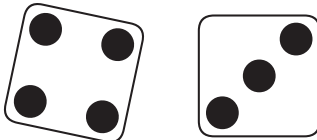
Should a dice roll be called for, it is a simple procedure; Roll two six-sided dice, add them together along with any applicable modifiers, and should the results total 9 or higher, the roll succeeds.

*In our previous example, Tyrone was attempting to determine the power source of the strange lightning rifle the party found. Normally, with a few hours of quiet study, this would be a given for Tyrone.*

*Unfortunately, he has decided that he needs to know the power source as an angry mob of goblins are trying to break open the door and the ground begins to shake as the secret volcano lair of the Goblin Mad-Scientist nears the end of its self-destruct countdown Tyrone started.*

*Mason rolls 2d6, getting a 4 and a 3, for a roll of 7. Fortunately, Tyrone gets a +1 because he is a Tough examining a weapon, and another +1 because he has a career in Electrical Engineering, bringing his total to 9.*

*This allows Tyrone to find the panel on the gun that holds the sliver of Miraculium, a rare mineral that the Referee mentioned in passing earlier that would be needed to open the only other door that will get the party out of the lab without having to face erupting volcanoes and hordes of angry Goblins.*





As with Occultists learning arcane magics, the Faithful must spend 16 hours per power level of the Miracle being learned in training, or twice that if attempting to garner the secrets without the benefit of instruction.

## FIRST LEVEL MIRACLES OF THE FAITHFUL

**Armored In Faith** Range: Self Duration: 1 hour/level  
Provides a -2 [+2] bonus to the Faithfuls Armor Class

**Darkness of the Soul**  
Range: 100 ft. + 10 ft./level Duration: 1 hour + 1 hour/level  
This Miracle causes night-time darkness to fall upon the area with a radius of 20 feet per level of the Faithful.

**Detect Intent** Range: 20 ft. / level Duration: 1 hour / level  
The Faithful is able to detect the base intentions and emotions of a thinking being. This gives general information such as anger, love, confusion, hunger and the like. The caster must consciously focus on a being to learn this information.

**Detect Magic** Range: 60 ft. Duration: 30 minutes / level  
The caster can perceive in places, people, or things the presence of a magical spell or enchantment. Magical items or secretly placed charms may be discovered with this spell. No information is revealed other than the presence of magical energy.

**Healing Touch** Range: Touch Duration: Immediate  
The Faithful is able to heal 1d6+1 points of damage to the target.

**Illuminating Faith**  
Range: 100 ft. + 10 ft./level Duration: 1 hour + 1 hour/level  
A person or object is targeted, which then produces a light about as bright as a torch with a radius of 20 feet.

**Purify Food and Drink** Range: 30 ft. Duration: Instantaneous  
This Miracle causes 5 cubic feet per level of food and water to be made pure, removing spoilage and poisons.

**Putrefy Food and Drink** Range: 30 ft. Duration: Instantaneous  
This Miracle causes 5 cubic feet per level of food and water to be made spoiled and poisoned.

## Skeeters

<b>ARMOR CLASS</b>	6 [13]	<b>SAVING THROW</b>	16	
<b>HIT DICE</b>	1+1		<b>ATTACKS</b>	Sting (1d3 + blood drain)
<b>TOTAL HIT BONUS</b>	+3	<b>SPECIAL</b>		Blood Drain 1d3+1/round
<b>MOVEMENT</b>	3 18 fly			
<b>LEVEL / XP</b>	3/60			

Flying, feathered creatures with a prominent, hollow sharpened proboscis, 'skeeters latch onto their prey after the initial attack and drain blood until the prey is empty or they are full.



## Skeleton

<b>ARMOR CLASS</b>	8 [11]	<b>SAVING THROW</b>	19	
<b>HIT DICE</b>	½ (1d3 hp)		<b>ATTACKS</b>	Strike (1d6-1) or by weapon
<b>TOTAL HIT BONUS</b>	+0	<b>SPECIAL</b>		half damage from piercing weapons
<b>MOVEMENT</b>	12			
<b>LEVEL / XP</b>	1/15			

The animated bones of the dead, imbued with a soulless semblance of life by the actions and spells of some dark and twisted master, who now controls their remains.

## Spiders, Giant

<b>ARMOR CLASS</b>	6 [13]	<b>SAVING THROW</b>	17	
<b>HIT DICE</b>	2+2		<b>ATTACKS</b>	Bite (1d6+1) + Poison
<b>TOTAL HIT BONUS</b>	+2	<b>SPECIAL</b>		see below
<b>MOVEMENT</b>	18			
<b>LEVEL / XP</b>	5/240			

With bodies the size of a large hound, giant spiders are aggressive hunters. Only the greater giant spiders are web builders. Giant spider webs require a saving throw to avoid becoming stuck.

Those who make their saving throw can fight and move (5 feet per round) in the webs. Giant spiders surprise on a 1-5 on a d6, being able to hide well in shadows. A giant spider's bite is very poisonous, typically paralyzing it's victim (saving throw to avoid the effects), but sometimes doing additional damage (referee's preference)



# The Black Mansion Second Floor

