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THRILLING TALES



ADVANCED CLASS:
ACE REPORTER

ADVANCED CLASS:

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Penny stared, awed, at the vast fleet of airships hidden within the volcano airbase.

"There's enough firepower here to sink a battleship!" she exclaimed in hushed tones, "Enough to level a small city! I need to take these photos back to the bureau to prove I was right!" She removed the lenscap of her trusty Rolleiflex and lined up the shot. "Pulitzer, here I come!" she whispered for luck.

Unfortunately, the flash of the camera caught the attention of a guard. "Look, up on the parapet! She's back! Get her!"

The Ace Reporter is an archetype of the pulp genre. Examples include Lois Lane, Polly Perkins, Buzz Benson, Katie Blayne, Ed Lowery, "Daffy" Dill, Claude Burke, and Daisy Dare.

An Ace Reporter is similar to an Investigator, minus all that tedious lab work and research.

Instead, the Ace Reporter follows leads, sneaks into where she shouldn't, and relentlessly follows the story to its conclusion. In the end, she'll alert the authorities and get that headline.



The Ace Reporter can join in any pulp adventure-- whether the other heroes want her there or not. Part ally and sometimes adversary, the story comes first. Reporters are smart, charismatic, and-

- most of all - lucky.

It's a tough world out there, and someone has to get the facts!

The public has a right to know, and if it takes a little breaking-and-entering, stowing away, or sabotage, then that's what you'll do. Plus Reporters have contacts and allies in even the most remote of places, and can get help at the most surprising of times.

While the Ace Reporter is an able hero in her own right, she also works well standing beside other heroes. In fact, Ace Reporters are naturals when forming a team, since they know (or can find out) just about everything and everyone. And, for younger players, a Junior Reporter is a dandy sidekick with a special trick or two to help pull their own weight.

Ready to solve the world's mysteries, armed only with a pen, a pistol, and the power of the press? Ace Reporter, get that story!

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become an Ace Reporter, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Ability Score: Charisma 13+

Skills: 6 ranks in Gather Information

Feats: Meticulous

EVERY GOOD HERO HAS HIS REPORTER

While Ace Reporters like Daisy Dare (London Sentinel), Joseph "Daffy" Dill and partner Dinah Mason (New York Chronicle), and even Brenda Starr (The Flash) broke stories and fought crime directly, many reporters were an essential part of a Man of Mystery's team.

Ed Lowery (of the Sentinel) provided information to the Green Hornet, Claude Burke (of the Classic) gave scoops to The Shadow, and reporter Steve Huston aided the Phantom. And while Lois Lane usually fed leads to Superman, she's often be in the thick of things to get the resulting story.

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Ace Reporter gets 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

| Class Level | Base Attack Bonus | Fort Save | Ref Save | Will Save | Special | Defense Bonus | Reputation Bonus |
|-------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|-------------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1st | +1 | +1 | +1 | +2 | Press Pass Expense Account | +1 | +1 |
| 2nd | +2 | +1 | +1 | +3 | Taking Notes | +1 | +2 |
| 3rd | +2 | +2 | +2 | +3 | Well-Travelled, Bonus Feat | +2 | +3 |
| 4th | +3 | +2 | +2 | +4 | Check the Facts | +2 | +4 |
| 5th | +3 | +3 | +3 | +4 | Talent | +3 | +4 |
| 6th | +4 | +3 | +3 | +5 | Bonus Feat | +3 | +5 |
| 7th | +4 | +3 | +3 | +6 | Double-Edged Luck | +4 | +5 |
| 8th | +5 | +4 | +4 | +6 | Talent | +4 | +6 |
| 9th | +5 | +4 | +4 | +7 | Bonus Feat | +5 | +6 |
| 10th | +6 | +5 | +5 | +7 | Live to Tell | +6 | +7 |

Action Points: The Ace Reporter gains a number of action points equal to 5 + one-half his character's level, rounded down, every time she attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Ace Reporter's class skills are as follows:

Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Craft: Writing (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (any) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis)

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

"The freedom of the press is a flaming sword! Use it justly! Hold it high! Guard it well!"

Steve Wilson, heroic newsman, 'Big Town' [1937-1951]

Press Pass: Even a starting Reporter is known by the paper they work for. Your Press Pass immediately identifies you as a Reporter, therefore your Press Pass lets you automatically pass the Recognition Check as a 'Reporter' (and thus incur either the +4 bonus or -4 penalty, depending on their bias towards reporters, for Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate and Perform.) Note that, if you want to use your personal reputation and Name, you must do a Reputation Check as usual-- this only identifies you as 'a member of the Press'.

Expense Account: Upon becoming a Reporter, you are given additional support

FLASH! A GUIDE TO CAMERA STYLING

All Ace Reporters are given a camera by their newspaper, and they're a far cry from the \$1 Kodak "Brownies" of the 1890s.

It might be an expensive black and gold Leica 35mm (1924-), a cheap (\$12) 1936 Argus Model A 35mm, a large boxy 1920s medium-format Graflex, or the 20s-30s Rollei Rolleiflex top-view twin-lens reflex. Folding cameras like the Zeiss Ikon or Voigtlander Bessa RF in the 1930s were popular, and by 1948, instant film was available.

After 1927, electric flashbulbs replaced inflammable flash powder, and by 1934 you could even change your film rolls in daylight. Zoom (and telephoto) lenses were experimental after 1932, and easily bought after 1953.

when working on a story. You may temporarily gain a Wealth Bonus equal to your level as an Ace Reporter for any rental or service needed to advance the article you're working on. You have to be able to contact your editor (by phone, telegram, or in person) to use this.

Note this allows rental (not purchase) of items such as formal wear as well as cash to cover a bribe, bail, travel bill, or hotel stay necessary for your story. The GM serves as your 'editor' in deciding if it's truly an article-related expense. You can only use this ability once per day, and can only use it for a number of times equal to your Ace Reporter level, after which you must file the story with your editor before another Expense Account is drawn up for you.

Taking Notes: Ace Reporters of level 2 or higher know how to report on a fight-- even if they're in it. At the start of any fight where you are not personally under immediate attack, you can declare you are simply staying put and Taking Notes. While you write, the fight will continue-- but anyone who wants to attack you has to make a Will check at a DC of 25 or else find someone else to attack, until all other opponents are eliminated. Mind you, if you're the last of the good side still standing, you'll definitely have to put down that pencil. You, of course, can take no other action than 'take notes' during the fight.

Well-Travelled: Ace Reporters are simply full of wordy experience. By 3rd level and beyond, when choosing a new feat, you can choose to pick up one bonus feat from a different class that you have previously adventured with (so long as you meet the other prerequisites).

Bonus Feat: At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, an Ace Report can choose a Bonus Feat. The 'Well-Traveled' ability allows them to choose any feat available to a different class (as described above), and in addition, the bonus feats available to an Ace Report are (new feats in italics): Alertness, Attentive, Confident, Creative, Deceptive, Dodge, Educated, Low Profile, Meticulous, Reknown, Stealthy, *Stowaway*, Studious, Trustworthy.

Check the Facts: By level 4 and later, Ace Reporters are experts at piecing together the facts of a story-- and are unafraid of interviewing antagonists directly. By Checking the Facts, you can induce opponents into boasting by stating your current theory about what is happening.



The villain must make a Will saving throw at a DC of 10 + Ace Reporter's class level + Ace Reporter's Charisma modifier. If they fail the save, they must either confirm your theory, or state at which point your theory breaks down. They need only state where your theory errs (if at all), and do not have to give you further information, but they must be truthful. And if you're fortunate, the villain may be prone to monologuing at length once they get going. This talent may only be used once per villain in any given adventure.

Talent: Ace Reporters gain a new talent at 5th and 8th level. Reporters have access to the Fast Talk, Charm, and Favor talents, as per the Charismatic hero Talent Tree. They have access to the Empathy and Intuition talents, as per the Dedicated hero Talent Tree. They may also choose their own Talent, Find a Lead.

Find a Lead

Prerequisites: Wis 13+

If you make a successful Search check against a DC of 15, you can figure out where a recently departed person headed to next, based on the trivial evidence you 'just found' at the scene-- a ticket stub, a matchbook cover, or other bit of detritious. This temporary lead only shows their immediate next destination, not necessarily where they ultimately will head or where they are now, so act on it quickly. Note that, unlike an ordinary Search, you aren't specifying the area you are searching, but merely your intent to Find a Lead. You cannot take 10 or take 20 to Find a Lead. If you lose track of the subject, the trail is cold and you cannot Find a Lead further until you again encounter the person.

Double-edged Luck: At level 7 and afterwards, an Ace Reporter can, once per adventure, reroll one failed check, but you must jeopardize your story in the process. Typical downsides include losing your notes, having your film confiscated, leaving the lenscap on for the crucial evidence, or other story-breaking mishaps. The player can suggest the penalty; the GM ultimately decides.

Live to Tell: By level 10, it's nearly impossible to stop an Ace Reporter from getting their story. If you have all the facts but have just been 'killed' in an encounter, all is not lost. Make a Charisma check against a DC of 25. If you succeed, you are presumed to have narrowly escaped death and were rescued by a kindly local, and nursed back to health. You can file your story from your bedside, but you have to skip the next adventure while you recover your health.

NEW FEAT

Stowaway

You are adept at secretly hitching a ride to follow the story. This is useful when the villain is departing in anything larger than a motorcycle-- say, a car, train, airplane, submarine, or dirigible, for example.

Prerequisites: 1 rank of Hide and 1 rank of Escape Artist

Benefit: If you are not currently being watched, make a Hide roll against a DC of 10. If you succeed, you have successfully stowed away somewhere on the villain's vehicle undetected. Failure means your attempt to stow away is noticed by the villain or a henchmen while you were awkwardly trying to hide away, and they have the advantage of Surprise on you. Upon arriving at the destination, make an Escape Artist roll against a DC of 20. Success means you are able to leave the vehicle and get a short distance away undetected. Failure means you are discovered by the villain or a henchmen while disembarking, and they have the advantage of Surprise on you. You may take one ally with you when stowing away, but you must add +5 to the DC for both stowing away, and escaping upon arrival in that case.

