



DZO MODERN:

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(x 20)

THRILLING TALES



ADVANCED CLASS:

MESMERIST

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“Look deeply into my eyes...” Morgan the Mystic focused his gaze upon the woman seated in the stark metal chair of the third precinct’s interrogation room.

Detective Matt Murphy rolled his eyes and fetched a cigarette out of the pack in his jacket pocket. The dame was guilty, and this was an open-and-shut case. She was found standing over the District Attorney’s body, smoking pistol in her well-manicured hand. No motive--there wasn’t any indication that a wealthy socialite like Francine Farmer had any interaction with the DA outside of the occasional society fundraiser. Of course, when you’re caught literally red-handed, there’s not much need for a motive. But still, the Captain thought it necessary to bring in this carnival side-show.

Murphy took a drag on the cigarette as the stage magician, a long-time friend of his Captain, muttered to the girl, waving his hands theatrically in front of her face. She hadn’t said a word since she’d been brought in. First, Murphy thought she was playing dumb...now, though, he was guessing that it was shock--perhaps

the realization of what she had done.

Suddenly, the girl’s eyes closed, and she slumped in the chair, unconscious. Morgan the Mystic drew himself up to his full height, and turned to face the stocky detective.



“It’s just as I suspected, Detective Murphy,” the magician said. “Francine Farmer has already been the subject of an extensive amount of hypnosis. She did kill the District Attorney, but she was used as an unwitting pawn. She no more could control her actions than you could stop your heart from beating. There’s only one man I know of who has that kind of hypnotic power...”

Murphy dropped his cigarette. “You don’t mean--”

“Yes,” replied Morgan. “The insidious Doctor Tsung-chi Sin, the devil of Chinatown.”

The Mesmerist is an archetype of the pulp genre. Examples include the Green Lama, Chandu the

magician and Don Diavolo, the Scarlet Wizard.

The Mesmerist is a trained hypnotist and an expert in the use of his own animal magnetism to sway the will of others. A Mesmerist may work as a private counselor or as a stage magician or assist in solving crimes. Some use their abilities to help solve the problems of others. Others seek only to enhance their own wealth and reputation.

The Mesmerist may follow the practices developed by Dr. Franz Anton Mesmer in the 18th Century, some may see it as the science of etheric magnetism, and others may base their abilities on practices from India, classical Greece, or another occult source. Many Mesmerists see their abilities as the result of greater mind influencing a smaller mind. Most firmly believe that a person of loose character cannot become a powerful hypnotist.

Select this advance class if you want your character to be a master of mystic arts with the ability to sway other characters.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Mesmerist, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Attribute: Intelligence 14+

Skills: Knowledge (arcane lore) 5 ranks, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) 2 ranks

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Mesmerist gains 1d6 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

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

Class Skills: The Mesmerist's class skills are as follows.

Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (arcane lore, behavioral sciences, current events, history, popular culture, theology & philosophy) (Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (act, stand-

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Hypnotic ability, hypnotic trance	+0	+1
2nd	+1	+1	+1	+2	Trick	+1	+2
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat	+1	+2
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Command word	+1	+3
5th	+2	+1	+2	+4	Lengthy Trance, winning smile	+2	+3
6th	+3	+1	+2	+5	Bonus feat	+2	+3
7th	+3	+2	+2	+6	Compulsion	+2	+4
8th	+4	+2	+3	+6	Eschew Focus	+2	+4
9th	+4	+3	+3	+7	Bonus Feat	+3	+4
10th	+5	+3	+4	+7	Past life regression	+3	+5

up) (Cha), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Mesmerist advanced class.

Hypnotic Ability:

A number of times per day equal to the Mesmerist's class level + Intelligence modifier, a Mesmerist can attempt to place a target (a GM character) in a hypnotic state, using any of the abilities listed below.

Hypnotic Trance:

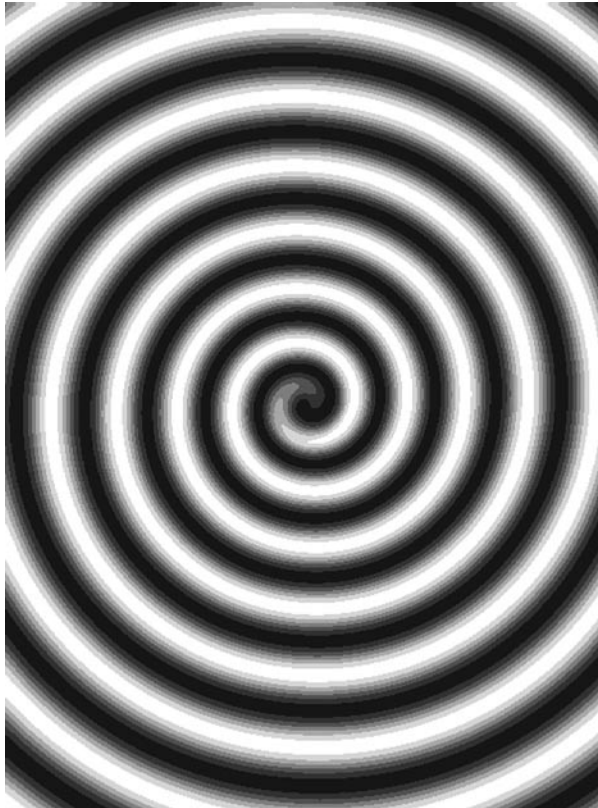
A Mesmerist can place a target in a hypnotic trance. A Mesmerist does this by making a hypnosis check with a bonus equal to his Mesmerist class level + his Intelligence modifier against a DC equal to the target's Wisdom. If the target is resisting the attempt at hypnosis, the target's base Will save modifier is added to the target's Wisdom (Note that the target's Wisdom modifier is not added to the DC). An attempt at hypnosis requires a full-round action, and an object, such as a pocket watch or fob, is required to gain the target's attention in order to place them in a hypnotic state. A Mesmerist and the target must be able to speak the same language. If

a Mesmerist has 5 or more ranks in Concentration, he gains a +2 bonus on hypnosis checks. If a Mesmerist has 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (behavioral sciences), he gains a +2 bonus on hypnosis checks.

On subsequent rounds, once the target is in a hypnotic state, the Mesmerist may either question the target or give them a suggestion. A hypnotic trance lasts for a number of minutes per Mesmerist class level. If the Mesmerist spends an action point, the duration is increased to 10 minutes per level.

Questioning: The Mesmerist may ask a number of questions equal to 1d3 + his Mesmerist class level. Each round, the Mesmerist will learn the answer to one question, to the best of the target's knowledge. The Mesmerist may spend an action point to increase the number of questions. Any action points spent to increase the duration or extent of this, or any other hypnotic ability, would be in addition to any action points spent on the hypnosis check.

Suggestion: The Mesmerist suggests a course of action (limited to a sentence or two) to influence the target's actions. The suggestion must be worded in such a manner as to make the action sound reasonable. Asking the target to stab himself, throw someone dear to them out of a window, or some other harmful act automatically negates the hypnotic state. However, a suggestion that a vat of acid is actually pure water and that a quick dip would be refreshing is another matter. A common suggestion is that the target go to sleep. Stage



magicians often implant the suggestion that the target is another person or an animal, such as a chicken. A target will remain under a hypnotic suggestion for a number of minutes equal to the Mesmerist's class level.

Command word: Beginning at 4th level, a Mesmerist is able provide a target with a command word that will make it easier to put the target into a hypnotic state at any time over the next few days (equal to the Mesmerist's class level). The Mesmerist should strive to provide a command word that the target is unlikely to hear during the normal course of her day. A command word allows a Mesmerist to remotely direct a target by speaking over a telephone or radio. While a command word is in effect, the Mesmerist will still need to make a hypnosis check to activate the target's hypnotic state, but the DC will be halved.

Lengthy trance: At 5th level and above, a Mesmerist's hypnotic trance lasts for 10 minutes per Mesmerist class level. If the Mesmerist spends an action point the duration is increased to hours per level.

Compulsion: A Mesmerist of 7th level or higher can direct a target to carry out longer and more elaborate tasks than under a Hypnotic Suggestion. The commands given to a target still need to be simple and unambiguous (such as "go, take the jewels from the safe, and bring them back to me"). The Mesmerist may need to monitor the target and provide further direction to ensure that tasks are carried out as intended. A Hypnotic Compulsion will last for a number of hours equal to the Mesmerist's class level. The duration may be increased to days per level if the Mesmerist spends an action point.

If the target is directed to take an action that goes against his nature, he may attempt a Will saving throw to come out of the hypnotic state (DC equal to 10 + Mesmerist's class level + Mesmerist's Intelligence modifier).

Eschew Focus: A Mesmerist of 8th level or higher



no longer requires a focus to place a target in a hypnotic state.

Past Life Regression: A 10th level Mesmerist can impel a target to remember experiences from a past life. While in this hypnotic state, a target can employ 1d3+1 skills and one feat used in the past life. The Mesmerist must describe the general historic period that he is attempting to reach (e.g. ancient Rome), but the GM has the final say as to what skills and what feat may come into play through use of this ability. This ability lasts for a number of hours equal to 1d3 + the Mesmerist's class level.

Trick: Beginning at 2d level, the Mesmerist has the ability to temporarily confuse a target (a GM character) through the use of ploy and deception. The target must have an Intelligence score of 3 or higher to be susceptible to a trick, must be within 30 feet of the Mesmerist, and must be able to hear and understand him.

To play a trick on a target, the Mesmerist must use a full-round action and make an Intelligence check (DC 15), adding his Mesmerist level as a bonus. If the Intelligence check succeeds, the target can try to think quickly and ignore the trick.

The target resists the trick by making a Reflex saving throw (DC 10 + Mesmerist's class level +

Mesmerist's Int bonus). If the saving throw fails, the target becomes dazed (unable to act, but can defend normally) for 1 round.

A trick can only be played on a particular target once per encounter. After the first trick in an encounter, whether the attempt succeeds or not, that target becomes wary and immune to such ploys.

Bonus Feats: At 3d, 6th, and 9th level, the Mesmerist gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list (new feats are listed in *Italics*), and the Mesmerist must meet all the prerequisites of the feat in order to select it.

Alertness, *Assessment*, Attentive, Confident, Deceptive, Educated, Focused, Frightful Presence, Iron Will, Low Profile, Renown, *Trance*, Trustworthy.

Winning Smile: Beginning at 5th level, a Mesmerist develops such a force of personal magnetism that he can convince a single target to regard him as a trusted friend. (If the target is currently being threatened or attacked by the Mesmerist or his allies, this ability will not work.)

The target makes a Will saving throw to avoid being persuaded by the Mesmerist's words and actions. The DC is 10 + Mesmerist's class level + Mesmerist's Charisma modifier.

This ability does not enable the Mesmerist to control the target, but the target perceives the Mesmerist's words and actions in the most favorable way. The Mesmerist can try to give the target orders and suggestions, but he must win an opposed Charisma check to convince the target to perform any actions he wouldn't normally undertake. The target never obeys suicidal or obviously harmful orders, and any act by the Mesmerist or her allies that threatens the target breaks the mood and clears the target's head. Otherwise, the target will remain won over for one minute per Mesmerist class level.

After the duration ends, the GM determines the reaction and attitude of the target based on what the Mesmerist compelled the target to do.

NEW FEATS

Assessment

You're quickly able to size up someone's abilities.

Prerequisites: Wis 13+

Benefit: As a half action, you can choose a target within 30 feet of you. Choose three attributes (three ability scores or three skills) and the GM must tell you the target's ability in each relative to the other two. For example, if you choose Bluff, Hide, and Acrobatics, the GM might tell you "the target is best in Acrobatics, then Hide, then Bluff." You don't know the target's ranks or ratings, only a rough estimate of the target relative ability in the assigned attributes.

Trance

You can enter a deep, death-like trance state. (This is not the same as the Mesmerist's own hypnotic trance ability)

Prerequisites: Wis 13+

Benefit: Through breathing and bodily control, you can slip into a trance state nearly indistinguishable from death, for up to a number of hours equal to your Wisdom bonus. It takes a minute of uninterrupted concentration for you to enter the trance. While in the trance you are still aware, but you are immune to suffocation. Poison effects are suspended for the duration of the trance. It requires a Spot check (DC 15+ Wis bonus) to determine that you're not dead.

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