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THRILLING TALES



ADVANCED CLASS:

PARAGON

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I watched in amazement as Erasmus Quinn finished the last delicate adjustments to the device lying on the laboratory bench in front of him. With hands like a surgeon (which, I was later to learn, is one of the many degrees held by the man), he soldered the last connections into place.

"There." He stood and stretched his back, stiff after the hours of work put into the invention. "This projector should fire a strong enough electromagnetic blast to disable Satan's Robot. We just need to get close enough."

Quinn scooped up the device and hurried for the door. I nearly ran into him as he stopped suddenly, whirling around to face me. "Wait," he said. "Do you know how to fly an autogyro?" I responded that I did not.

*Quinn pondered the issue for a split-second, and then his face lit with a realization. "Never mind, Jack," he said with a broad grin, "I just remembered -- I can."
..and with that, he rushed out the door.*

The Paragon is an archetype of the pulp genre--a two-fisted scientific detective jack-of-all-trades. Examples include Doc Savage, Captain Hazzard and Buckaroo Banzai.

The character embodies the popular view of science and scientists in the days before the Atomic Age led to science becoming a source of anxiety and distrust. The Paragon was the brilliant embodiment of the American ideal: strong, square-dealing, forthright, morally pure, educated, clever and resourceful.

Paragons should be the focus character of a campaign--usually their stories were adventures of a single hero and a team of expert assistants, all of whom were heroes in their own right, albeit shining less brightly than the



central star.

The tales were often globe-trotting, usually beginning in the comfortable surroundings of the United States before taking readers to far-off, exotic lands. Their adventures were action-packed and fast-paced (as was standard for the hero pulps), and science (or at the very least, some sort of invention)

always played a part, whether as the focus of the tale, or as part of the tools used by the Paragon to solve whatever problem was to be faced in that issue.

REQUIREMENTS

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

Base Attack Bonus: +2

Skills: Concentration 6 ranks, Craft (any) 6 ranks, Any one other skill at 6 ranks.

Feats: Educated

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Paragon gains 1d12 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Paragon gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Paragon's class skills are as follows: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft(any)(Int), Decipher Script (Int), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Investigate (Int), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Any) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 9 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Air Ace advanced class.

Jack of All Trades: The Paragon has picked up a smattering of even the most obscure skills. They may use any skill untrained, even those that normally require training and those that are exclusive to classes in which the Paragon has no

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Jack of All Trades, Gadgets, Weird Science	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+1		+1	+1
3rd	+1	+2	+2	+1	Bonus Feat	+2	+1
4th	+2	+3	+3	+1		+2	+2
5th	+2	+3	+3	+2	Improved Jack of All Trades Bonus Feat	+3	+2
6th	+3	+4	+4	+2		+3	+2
7th	+3	+4	+4	+3	Bonus Feat	+4	+3
8th	+4	+5	+5	+3		+4	+3
9th	+5	+5	+5	+4	Bonus Feat	+5	+3
10th	+6	+6	+6	+5	Exemplar	+5	+4

levels. The Paragon cannot, however, gain ranks in a skill unless they are allowed to select it.

Gadgets and Weird Science: At 1st level, The Paragon gets the ability to invent Gadgets, as well as the ability to create Weird Science.

Gadgets are inventions that use feasible, real-world technology available in the 1930s, although the invention can use the technology in novel ways, or in combination (a cane that has a concealed firearm, for example).

Weird Science, however, is the realm of the impossible or bizarre: thought-reading helmets, water-breathing pills, super-sonic zeppelins, atomic ray guns, etc. These are things that were not possible in the 30s, and most likely remain impossible today.

Gadgets and Weird Science are handled differently:

A gadget is defined by five attributes: Speed, Damage, Range, Uses, and Abilities. Not every gadget possesses every attribute—a car, for example, would not be likely to have a Damage rating. Each of the five attributes is discussed below:

Speed: Any gadget that moves under its own power possesses the speed attribute. Select the top speed on the table below, and note the corresponding modifier:

<u>Speed</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
20 MPH	1
60 MPH	5
100 MPH	10
150 MPH	15
200 MPH	20
500 MPH	25
Super-sonic	30
Lightspeed	35

Damage: Any gadget that is a weapon or otherwise causes harm must possess the damage attribute. Pick one of the damage levels listed on the table below, and note the corresponding modifier:

<u>Damage</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
d4, per die	2
d6, per die	3
d8, per die	4
d10, per die	5
d12, per die	6

Range: If a gadget is capable of using its abilities over a distance, it must possess the range attribute. This would include ranged weapons, communications devices, sensors, etc. Pick a value from the table below and note the corresponding modifier:

<u>Range (non-weapon)</u>	<u>Range Increment (weapon)</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
Close (100ft or less)	30ft	5
Short (300 ft or less)	40ft	10
Medium (1500 feet or less)	50ft	15
Long (1 mile or less)	70ft	20
Extreme (100 miles or less)	90ft	25
Remote (1000 miles or less)	110ft	30
Worldwide	150ft	35

Uses: All gadgets possess the uses attribute, which determines how long the gadget may be used before it needs to be reloaded, repaired, or otherwise recharged. Pick a value from the table below and note the corresponding modifier:

<u>Duration (non-weapon)</u>	<u>Uses(weapon)</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
10 minutes	1	2
1 hour	2	4
12 hours	4	8
1 day	6	12
1 week	8	16
1 month	16	20
6 months	32	25
1 year	100	30
Infinite	Infinite	35

A weapon that reaches the limit of its uses must be reloaded. A non-weapon that reaches the end of its duration must undergo maintenance to be used again--this takes 8 hours, spread out as the player wishes.

Abilities: Any gadget which performs the function of any skill or feat must have this attribute. (Armor

falls under this attribute as well, with the Defense Bonus figured as a skill rank) A gadget which gives a rank in a skill (for example, a computing device which gives ranks in Research) has a modifier equal to the desired rank of the skill in question. A gadget which allows the use of a feat has a modifier of 6 per feat. The prerequisites of a feat are ignored for gadgets.

Once you have tallied up the modifiers for the attributes, you are ready to invent the gadget. This requires a skill check (craft (mechanical) or craft (electronic), or whatever applies) at a DC equal to the modifier total. The inventing character can receive a +1 competence bonus for every uninterrupted day spent designing and constructing the gadget--the more time you take, the easier it is.

The invention of a gadget also requires resources: A Wealth check at a DC equal to the modifier total for all of the gadget's attributes. An inventor does not need to make that check himself--a sponsor can fund the project, or multiple PCs can pool resources.

Example: The Green Falcon decides to invent a gadget--a cane that fires a single shotgun shell (as an emergency weapon). The weapon has no speed attribute, does 2d8 damage (modifier of 8), has a range increment of 30 (modifier of 5), a single use (modifier of 2), and is well-concealed (the gamemaster rules that this will be handled by giving the gadget the Disguise skill at 6 ranks--The Green Falcon will roll an opposed roll when people try to Spot the weapon.) The total modifier for the gadget is 21. The Green Falcon can build the device by making a craft (mechanical) check at DC 21, with a +1 competence bonus given for every uninterrupted day spent on the process. The device will require a Wealth check of 21 as well.



Weird Science items are handled as d20 Modern FX abilities. The inventor creates a device that mimics the effects of an Arcane or Divine spell, or a Psionic power. Unlike a gadget, a Weird Science invention is not permanent--it only lasts for a single adventure, unless the inventor chooses to make the device permanent by spending XP (to make a Weird Science device permanent costs a number of XP equal to the level of the device, times the level of the inventor, times 50). Permanent inventions take up one of the available slots...well, permanently, so players taking this option should be aware of that.

A Paragon can have a number of Weird Science inventions available per adventure according to the following chart:

Class Level	Weird Science Invention Level				
	1	2	3	4	5
1st	1				
2nd	2				
3rd	3	1			
4th	4	2			
5th	4	2	1		
6th	5	3	2		
7th	5	3	2	1	
8th	5	4	3	2	
9th	5	5	3	2	1
10th	5	5	4	3	2

The inventor picks an FX ability of the appropriate level, and, for the duration of the adventure (unless they choose to make it permanent), they have a device capable of replicating that device's effects. The inventor can, if they choose, combine multiple FX abilities into a single invention.

Example: Erasmus Quinn, a 3rd level Smart Hero/2nd level Fast Hero/5th level Paragon, needs an electromagnetic projector to disable Satan's Robot. Quinn has the following Weird Science inventions available: 4/2/1. The player decides to use Quinn's 3rd-level invention to replicate the effects of Lightning Bolt (a 3rd level spell). Quinn invents an electromagnetic projector that will deliver a total of 10d6 electrical damage (10 being the "caster level" in this case). To make this device a permanent part of Quinn's arsenal (thereby always filling that 3rd level slot), the player would have to spend (3 x 10 x 50) 1500 XP.

Bonus Feat: At 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th level, the Paragon may take a Bonus Feat. The feat must be taken from the following list. Feats in italics are new feats, and described elsewhere in this document.



Alertness, *Ambidexterity*, Athletic, Builder, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Endurance, Heroic Surge, *Leadership*, Reknown, *Photographic Memory*, *Sidekick*, Studious, Surgery, Toughness, *Trance*, Vehicle Expert, Windfall.

Improved Jack of All Trades: At 5th level, the Paragon's Jack of All Trades ability improves--the Paragon can now gain ranks in any skill, even if they would normally not be allowed to select it. Such skills are now considered cross-class skills for the purposes of spending skill points.

Exemplar: At 10th level, the Paragon's Jack of All Trades ability reaches its pinnacle--the Paragon now treats all skills as if they are class skills.

NEW FEATS

Ambidexterity

You are equally adept with either hand

Prerequisites: Dex 15+

Normal: Without this feat, characters suffer a -4 penalty to attack rolls, ability checks, and skill checks for using their off-hand

Special: This feat includes the abilities of the feat "Two-weapon Fighting."

Leadership

You're a natural leader, good at coordinating and directing the efforts of others.

Prerequisites: Cha 13+

Benefit: If you direct or lead others in combat (taking a free action each round to do so), everyone on your side gets a +1 bonus on all checks (including initiative). However, if you're incapable of taking a free action on any round, your side loses the bonus until you recover. Characters can only be under the direction of one leader at a time, and may choose to change their leader as a free action. Characters under the influence of a leader must be able to hear and understand that leader's directions.

Photographic Memory

You have perfect recall of everything you've experienced.

Prerequisites: Int 16+

Benefit: You can recall everything you've seen, read or experienced perfectly. If you forget some detail your character should remember, you can ask the GM to remind you. You get a +2 bonus on any skill rolls for which rote memorization is useful (at the GM's judgement).

Sidekick

You have an assistant, follower or partner of some ability.

Prerequisites: 6th level (total)

Benefit: You have a single NPC follower who helps you out. Your Sidekick's level is determined by a combination of your total level + your Charisma modifier, modified by your abilities as follows:

Reknown feat: +3

Leadership Feat: +1

Provides room, board, equipment +2

Wealthy (16+ on Wealth): +1

Check your total against the chart at right.

A sidekick must be at least one level below your own, regardless of the results of the table. You create your sidekick as a character, subject to your GM's approval. Sidekicks are loyal, perhaps even willing to sacrifice themselves for you. It takes approximately three adventures to replace a lost sidekick (more or less at the GM's discretion).

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Each time, you acquire an additional sidekick.

Trance

You can enter a deep, death-like trance state

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.

Level +Cha Mod (+ modifiers)	Sidekick level
1	-
2	1st
3	2nd
4-5	3rd
6	4th
7-8	5th
9	6th
10-11	7th
12	8th
13	9th
14-15	10th
16	11th
17-18	12th
19	13th
20	14th
21-22	15th
23	16th
24	17th
25	18th
26+	19th