

# THE MIND MURDERS



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AN ADVENTURE FOR

**THRILLING  
TALES**

OR ANY PULP D20 CAMPAIGN

# THE MIND MURDERS

A Thrilling Tales Pulp Adventure for 1-3 players of 3rd to 5th level

by Walt Ciechanowski

## INTRODUCTION

*The Mind Murders* is an adventure for one to three player characters of 3-5<sup>th</sup> level. It can be dropped into any city that the Game Master feels comfortable with or is already using in an ongoing campaign. This adventure will only refer to the setting as "the City." There are also two crime Mobs involved. While this adventure references them as the "Duffy Mob" and the "Marciano Mob," the GM can easily substitute any two Mob families from his own campaign.

The premise of *The Mind Murders* is simple. The Marciano Mob has been scoring big wins against its rival, so the Duffy Boss hires a special

hit man to bring them down a peg or two. This particular hit man is actually a mad scientist with a device to hypnotize unassuming people





into carrying out assassinations for him. The PCs will follow clues that will lead them to the true hit man and deal with him once and for all.

Any urban-based character would be a good choice for a PC, but this adventure was written with Ace Reporters, Boxers, Gumshoes, and Men of Mystery in mind.

## BACKGROUND

The Amazing Anthony has been astounding audiences for weeks with his prestidigitation. A master entertainer, the Amazing Anthony understands how to play to his audience and pack the house for each performance. He also had the good business sense to hire the gorgeous Sophia to be his assistant.

Unfortunately for him, the Amazing Anthony has been popular enough to attract the attention of Dr. Hypnos, the hit man hired by the Duffy Mob. Dr. Hypnos has found the perfect cover for his scheme, since mesmerism is part of the Amazing Anthony's act.

Since the Amazing Anthony's routine involves sending Sophia out to pick a volunteer from the audience, it was a perfect opportunity for Dr. Hypnos. He sent flowers to Sophia and invited her for dinner. He then hired an actor to woo her back to the hotel. In short order, Dr. Hypnos had Sophia under his control.

Sophia is now connected to Dr. Hypnos. Once she finds a suitable candidate, she invites him up to the stage to be part of the act. As she directs the victim back to his seat, she whispers the name and number of the hotel she is staying at along with a time to meet her (usually just after the show). If the victim is interested, he arrives at the hotel room only to be waylaid by Dr. Hypnos and brainwashed. The victim is then given a target and the means to dispose of him.

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## OVERVIEW

Chapter summaries are listed below. GMs should not feel locked into the progression, as PC (and NPC) actions may alter the sequence. GMs should pay particular attention to Chapter Four, as some of the events listed may take place as early as Chapter One. Chapter Six may be discarded entirely if the PCs are able to stop Dr. Hypnos in Chapter Five.

**The Prologue** introduces hooks and foreshadowing tips to get the PCs invested in the adventure. It also highlights some complications the PCs may face from the Duffy gang as they investigate.

**Chapter One** describes the two crime scenes that serve as the catalysts for the events that follow.

**Chapter Two** follows the leads generated in Chapter One. The investigations should lead to the Amazing Anthony and the Starlight Theater.

**Chapter Three** details the Amazing Anthony, the Sensuous Sophia, and a curious flirtation. The PCs should be encouraged to investigate Sophia and uncover her motives.

**Chapter Four** details the PCs first (and possibly last) confrontation with Dr. Hypnos. If he isn't stopped, he will make one final attempt to clean up his tracks before fleeing the scene.

**Chapter Five** details Dr. Hypnos' attempt to sever his ties with Sophia. The PCs should have a final opportunity to deal with Dr. Hypnos.

**The Epilogue** offers information on how to tie up the adventure and possible hooks for further adventures. The Alterations section offers tips on how to substitute a PC for the Amazing

Anthony, as well as provide information on adding foreign agents to the adventure.

## PROLOGUE: THE HOOKS & THE CROOKS

### Foreshadowing

If this adventure is part of an ongoing campaign, the GM may wish to incorporate elements of it into previous adventures. Some ideas are listed here.

The premise of the adventure is that the Duffy gang has been losing ground to the Marciano gang. If this adventure is part of an ongoing campaign, GMs may wish to pepper earlier adventures with references to the Duffy gang getting "nicked" by the Marcianos. This will add weight to the hit on the lieutenant. Law Enforcement or Investigative Reporter PCs may have had contact with either gang in the past, adding a sense of continuity to this adventure.

If there is a Boxer PC, he may know some promising fighters who were forced to "take a dive" due to Cicero's interference. An Ace Reporter could have covered a story in which a very promising fighter inexplicably lost a match.

It's also possible that the PCs could have seen the Amazing Anthony's performance prior to this episode. This could be a perfect throwaway scene in an earlier adventure (a PC could even have been an audience participant).

At the GM's discretion, some of the PCs, while reading about the murders in the newspaper and seeing one of the perpetrator's pictures, may remember him being called to the stage. GMs

should use this approach with caution (at the very least only allowing one of the two murderers to be identified in this manner), as it will probably leapfrog the PCs past the opening mystery of Act One. This is a matter of taste; if the PCs don't like investigating mysteries, this approach will get them closer to the action. If the PCs enjoy mysteries, they may feel like they've been given too much information at once.

## **Double Trouble**

This adventure starts with two strange murders occurring on the same evening (see Chapter One), both connected by their targets.

Valentino Cicero, a ranking member of the Marciano Mob in charge of fixing fights, is gunned down during a boxing match. Gino Rigotti, one of Don Marco's chief lieutenants, is gunned down at the entrance of Fiore's Restaurant, a popular eatery in Little Italy.

Player Characters can be hooked through either of the two murders (in fact, if the PCs don't know each other, this is a good way to get them working together by having each working a separate case). Some suggestions are listed; doubtless each GM can create a few more that reflects his individual campaign.

An Ace Reporter or journalist may actually be covering the boxing match, getting a front seat to the murder as it happens! Alternatively, he can be called to the crime scene at Fiore's Restaurant.

A PC in Law Enforcement may be summoned to either scene.

A Man of Mystery may be interested in the ramifications of this full court press against the Marciano Gang.

A Paragon's curiosity would certainly be piqued by the strangeness of the murders.

A Mesmerist should be used with caution, given the nature of this adventure. GMs who wish to replace the Amazing Anthony with a PC Mesmerist should take a look at the "Alterations" section at the end of this adventure.

There are two opportunities for a gumshoe to get involved. First, Dr. Ross Mitchell may hire an investigator to look into the circumstances of his son's death. Second, Don Marco Marciano may hire an investigator to look into the mysterious circumstances surrounding the deaths of two lieutenants.

An interesting option is the boxer PC. The boxer can be an acquaintance of Randy Griggs and wishes to learn more about the circumstances of his death.

## **AND SUDDENLY...THE DOOR BURSTS OPEN!**

It is inevitable that the PCs are going to upset the wrong people at some point. There are various points in the following chapters where the PCs are going to get noticed by Seamus Duffy while they pursue their investigation. Duffy will feel the need to send a message. How intense that message is depends on the circumstances.

GMs may wish to use Nazi (or another foreign government) agents for a "Suddenly...the door bursts open!" moment. See "Alterations" at the end of this adventure for details.



## The Soft Approach

If a PC is a member of Law Enforcement, Seamus Duffy might try the soft approach first. A “bought” superior might reassign the case, or a “bought” colleague may ask to take over. If Duffy thinks it prudent, he may even send a courier to grease the PC’s palms in return for laying off the case. This proposition will definitely be in play if the PC investigates both crime scenes.

Should the PC try to interrogate the courier, use the Mob Enforcer stat block. GMs of a gritty campaign may have a corrupt cop offer the bribe. If the PC reports this to his superior, the corrupt superior protects the perpetrator while devising a way to get the PC kicked off the force (and possibly spur the PC toward a career change as a Man of Mystery or something similar).

An Ace Reporter PC may also find herself offered a bribe. In this case, the bribe is an incentive to “get the story straight.” If the PC has a reputation for honesty and accurate reporting (and this is a gritty campaign), the bribe may instead go to her editor. The reporter may be in for quite a shock when the “edited” version of her story hits the streets.

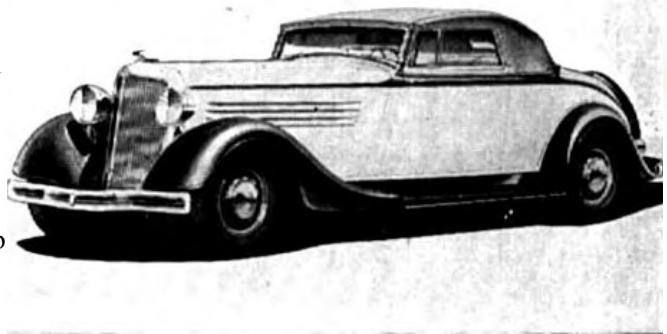
Boxers and Gumshoes may also be the subject of bribes. Pulp Gumshoes seem to always be notoriously short of cash, and a Boxer may be ensured a string of victories in the ring if he plays ball with the right people.

Of course, PCs being what they are, it is inevitable that the soft approach isn’t going to work. When this fails, the mob moves on to . . .

## The Hard Approach

The hard approach will primarily be used in one of three circumstances. The first circumstance is when the mob’s attempt at the soft approach fails and Seamus Duffy feels he’s been insulted. The second circumstance is when the PCs have gotten too deep into the mystery (they’ve visited the Starlight Club and had a conversation with the Sensuous Sophia). In this case, Seamus Duffy is going to up the stakes. Finally, the hard approach may be used if the GM feels the need for one of those “Suddenly...the door bursts open!” moments to shake things up. In this case, Seamus Duffy prematurely decides that the PCs are a nuisance.

If the PCs rebuff the bribe early but have yet to get to the Starlight Club, Duffy may send a group of enforcers to encourage them to reconsider. The offending PC will be ambushed four-to-one at the earliest opportunity and roughed up. While the injured PC is catching his breath, the request to back off will be made again, but there will be no incentives attached this time (save for the luxury of staying alive).



While the PCs interview Sophia, Gordon Luxley will make a phone call. By the time the PCs are finished with their interview, a trap will be waiting for them in the form of a drive-by shooting. This is the classic scene of a sedan pulling around the corner with an enforcer on the running board spraying submachine gun bullets at them. The car will only make one pass before driving away.

PCs who assault Dr. Hypnos in the next chapter may also discover Duffy thugs entering the fray. The GM should be careful to only add enough Duffy enforcers to make the scene interesting, as Gordon Luxley provides a great deal of muscle himself (should the PCs enjoy Marciano protection, however, the GM should feel free to describe a bloody battle in the street as the PCs assault Dr. Hypnos in the hotel room.

### **Protection Money**

PCs in the employ of Don Marco Marciano will find an unexpected benefit: protection from Duffy's thugs. If the soft approach is used, Don Marco's people will not interfere, but the PC can expect to get a courtesy call from Don Marco who hopes that the PC did not accept any Duffy money. If the hard approach is used, an equal number of Marciano enforcers will dissuade any Duffy enforcers from harming the PC.

Enterprising PCs may actually go to Don Marco and ask for his protection. If they do, they will find that Don Marco is in an exceptionally accommodating mood. While he'd never admit it, this new threat from the Duffy gang concerns him. He will support any PCs who wish to uncover this new hit man and take him down.

## **CHAPTER ONE: TWO CRIMES, ONE MOTIVE**

This chapter outlines the crime scenes of the two murders as well as two clients for gumshoe PCs. The GM should use the opening scenes accordingly depending upon his PC mix. The PCs should also be aware of both crimes, either through the media (newspaper or radio reports) or through official channels (police or federal information).

### **Wednesday Night Fight**

Tonight's card was insignificant. Taking place in a local arena in the business district, the matches were set to showcase some up and coming talent. There was to be one surprise, though. Upcoming boxer Randy Griggs was going to upset local favorite Brick Johnson. Valentino Cicero had seen to it.

The earlier fights went off without a hitch. Cicero had not rigged them; he was gauging audience reactions to see whom he'd have to promote later. Finally, his moment had come. Randy



Griggs entered the ring with his manager, Floyd Yates. Amidst the boeing of the crowd, Cicero caught Griggs' eye and nodded an understanding to him.

That's when the inexplicable happened. As Brick Johnson started toward the ring, periodically pausing to accept the adulation of the audience, Griggs demanded that Yates help him out of his gloves. The manager seemed puzzled, but yanked them off anyway. Griggs jumped out of the ring, calmly walked toward Cicero, pulled a pistol out of his robe and emptied five shots into the stunned gangster. Before anyone could react, Griggs used the last bullet on himself.

### **Wednesday Night Dinner**

Gino Rigotti was in charge of the prostitution racket. This made him pretty untouchable given the number of city officials that have benefited from his services. He was enjoying a night on the town with his entourage and some special "friends" he picked up from Lucy's Boardinghouse. They stopped at Fiore's Restaurant in Little Italy for a late dinner. Rigotti barely made it through the door before a college student, Robert Mitchell, emptied five shots into him. It was a suicide hit for Robert, who went down himself seconds later in a hail of gunfire.

### **The Boxing Crime Scene**

The Olympia Arena is a popular attraction in the City's business district. Surrounded by many restaurants, the Olympia Arena is considered a stepping-stone for the major bouts in the City's Main Arena. The fact that some of the bouts are rigged will come as no surprise to a PC law enforcement agent or a Man of Mystery.

If the PCs are police investigators, Randy

Griggs is laying in a pool of his own blood. A revolver lies nearby. It's obvious to anyone with Treat Injury (DC 0) that Griggs shot himself in the head. A Treat Injury (DC 20) or an Investigate (DC 15) will reveal that Griggs' body was slightly disturbed after he shot himself (boxing patrons in the front row slightly kicked him as they tried to flee; Floyd Yates and security guards tried to see if Griggs was still alive).

Valentino Cicero's body is lying over a few displaced folding chairs. Anyone with Treat Injury (DC 0) will venture to guess that the five bullets shot at close range into his chest caused Cicero's death. It is also obvious (Treat Injury at DC 15 or Investigate at DC 10) that Cicero's body was even more manhandled than Griggs' (Cicero collapsed into the stunned associates and patrons around him).

Marty Kowalski, the owner of the arena, and his employees have no idea why Griggs would have thrown away a promising career like this. They certainly did not expect him to carry a gun into the ring. A Gather Information roll at DC 20 will reveal that Cicero fixes fights and that Brick Johnson was very disturbed prior to entering the ring, as if he expected to lose.

Floyd Yates is an aging Englishman who never quite shook his accent. He was a fighter in his home country and is very disappointed in Griggs. He's shocked at what happened. He is hesitant to reveal that Cicero fixed the fight in Griggs' favor, but a Sense Motive check at DC 20 will reveal that Yates isn't quite telling the whole truth, although he is being honest about knowing nothing about the gun or Griggs' plan. Yates has a +7 Bluff if a PC wishes to get this information from him.

If the PCs arrive after the police have investigated, there will be little evidence on the



floor. Cicero's execution was very public and as far as the police are concerned it's an open and shut case. Marty Kowalski, fearing lost ticket sales, will do all he can to accommodate Ace Reporters or Private Investigators. Marty will also be able to tell them that Yates can be found at Floyd's Gym, where Griggs honed his craft.

## **The Restaurant Crime Scene**

Fiore's Restaurant is a trendy Italian restaurant just inside of Little Italy. It is also a favorite destination of University students. Fiore Corelli runs a tight ship and a respectable establishment, paying the Marciano gang just enough protection money to leave him alone. He does not tolerate mob business on his property, and there's an unwritten understanding that any of Marciano's men who visit Fiore's are on their best behavior. Fiore considers this incident insulting as well as a tragedy.

None of the staff know anything. Robert came into the restaurant with two college friends. They were all well dressed and discussing a picture they had just seen. They seemed harmless. One waiter recalls that Rigotti entered the restaurant as Robert was asking him for another drink. As soon as Robert saw him, he hardened his expression and produced a small revolver from his jacket. He calmly stood and began emptying his gun into Gino as his friends and other patrons scattered. Rigotti's boys pulled out their pistols and shot Robert dead.

If the PCs are police investigators, Robert's body is laying back against his table, which had tipped over as Robert fell on it. Robert's body is covered in blood and spaghetti. The wall behind his table is marred by bullet holes. The murder weapon is inches from Robert's hand, with a single bullet remaining. Rigotti's body

is near the entrance. He has five bullet wounds in his chest. His gun is still in his shoulder holster. Rigotti's body is slightly shifted from his boys manhandling him to see if he was still alive. Once they were convinced he was dead, the gangsters fled the scene.

If the PCs are reporters, they may or may not get there before the bodies are moved (GM's call, but it sets a nice scene if the reporters arrive as the sheet covered bodies are being loaded into the wagon). Chalk outlines have been made of the bodies on the floor, but Fiore was assured that he will be allowed to clean his floor before the restaurant opens tomorrow. As far as the police are concerned, they've learned all they can from this crime scene.

If the PCs are gumshoes or Men of Mystery, the chalk outlines are for their benefit. Fiore's doesn't open until 5pm the next day. The outlines and disturbed table will enable them to get a sense of what happened.

## **Hired Help**

Gumshoe PCs may find themselves with a job early the next morning. Dr. Ross Mitchell will pay a visit within minutes of opening hours and hire the investigator to look into the death of his son. He's a pleasant, attractive man in his early 50's, but he is obviously distraught over Robert's death. Dr. Mitchell has no idea why Robert would have done such a thing. He was a great student in school and had made the Dean's List in City University. The Mitchells are a wealthy family and Robert has never wanted for anything. Dr. Mitchell wants the PCs to uncover everything they can about the circumstances behind Robert's fatal behavior. He is willing to pay handsomely (the GM should set an appropriate Wealth bonus).

If the GM wishes for a more exciting client, the Gumshoe PC will be roused from his bed in the wee hours of the morning by pounding on his door. If the Gumshoe answers, two fearsome looking gangsters tell him that Mr. Marciano would like to have a meeting with him. The not-so-subtle hint is that the PC is expected to go with them. Depending on the PC, this could either be an agreeable situation, or a brawl. The gangsters don't want to injure the Gumshoe (after all, Mr. Marciano wishes to hire him), so they'll either subdue him or they'll take their lumps and report back to Don Marco. At that point, Mr. Marciano will make a personal call, being sure to flatter the Gumshoe's tenacity.

The gangsters will escort the PC to a dock where another car is waiting. Once the PC and his escorts exit the car, a gangster will exit the passenger side of the other car and open the back door. The PC will be directed to enter the car for his meeting with Don Marco. Once the PC is inside, the driver will start driving around the city until the business is concluded. The PC will then be dumped off a few blocks from his home. If Don Marco paid a social call, then the meeting will take place at the PC's home or office.

Don Marco is a small, unassuming man with a pleasant demeanor, although there is the hint of underlying menace. He will be cordial unless the PC insults him, at which point the Don will accuse the PC of trying his patience before unceremoniously dumping him off at some random location in the city.

Don Marco believes that Seamus Duffy has hired some new muscle to take down several of Don Marco's associates. Business has not been going well for the Duffys, and they've obviously turned a jealous eye towards the Marciano operation. Don Marco would like to enlist the PC's investigative talents to discover who this enforcer is and how much he's paying people to knock off the Marciano's. He is willing to pay double the usual fee, but he is also willing to bargain (Don Marco is a shrewd businessman; all of his negotiation skills would be at least +10 or better).



## CHAPTER TWO: THE LEADS

The events of Chapter One will certainly generate leads that the PCs will wish to chase down. The purpose of Chapter Two is to flesh out these leads and get enough information into the PC's hands to lead them to the Starlight Club in Chapter Three. GMs should also acquaint themselves with Chapter Four, as Seamus Duffy may start using the "soft approach" at this point.

Some of these leads will be relevant throughout the adventure. The GM should adjust the information accordingly. For example, the meeting with the Duffy Boss presumes that the PCs have only just started their investigation. If they meet him after fingering Dr. Hypnos, the Duffy Boss will have a very different reaction to them (and may even be prepared for them).

### Brick Johnson

Brick Johnson is a popular fighter who works out at Champ's Gym in a reasonably clean neighborhood. He may be found here during opening hours the next day. PCs who visit him will be surprised that Johnson is in a good mood and, while he's sorry about what happened to Griggs, he believes that Cicero got what he deserved.

With little prodding, (he starts as Indifferent, a Diplomacy check at 25 is necessary to get him to Helpful), Johnson will admit that Cicero leaned on him to throw the fight. Cicero first offered a bribe, and when Johnson turned him down, next inquired about the health of Johnson's little sister Betty, who works as a waitress in a greasy spoon. Johnson was ready to take the dive for his sister.

Johnson really has no further information.

### Floyd's Gym

PCs looking to dig up leads on Randy Griggs may visit his gym. Floyd Yates runs an efficient, if not impressive, gym in a depressed section of the City. There are always at least a dozen fighters practicing and sparring. While Yates is upset over what happened, life goes on, and he needs to keep his stable of fighters trained.

If the PCs speak to Floyd, he'll offer the same information that was available in Act One. If the PCs are looking for rumors, a Gather Information check at DC 25 will reveal that Griggs was supposed to have a lucky night (the grapevine indicated that Brick was going to take a fall). A Gather Information check at DC 15 will reveal that Griggs' normal sparring partner is "Dynamite Dan" Fields.

Fields is genuinely upset at what happened. A Sense Motive check at DC 20 reveals that he is hiding something. Any PC who can overcome Field's +2 Bluff will learn that Cicero came in to talk to Floyd Yates the night before the fight. Cicero watched Griggs and Fields spar, telling Griggs that he "felt very good about his chances"





against Brick Johnson. Fields also went to see the Amazing Anthony with Griggs a few nights ago, but he won't think to offer that information unless asked.

Both Yates and Fields know that Griggs lived in a tenement not far from the gym. They will provide the address for investigative PCs. They can be bribed by just about anyone else. If the PCs manage to upset Floyd or any of the fighters, they will find themselves in an impromptu match with unfavorable odds.

### **Griggs' Apartment**

Randy Griggs lived on the third floor of an apartment building. It is little more than a cramped studio, with exercise equipment and discarded laundry taking up most of the space. PCs making a Search Check at DC 15 will notice a half-buried program from the Starlight Theater on the bureau, headlining the Amazing Anthony. PCs making a Search check at DC 25 will reveal a ticket stub underneath a dirty sock on the floor. This is from the Amazing Anthony show at the Starlight Theater.

### **The Friends of Robert Mitchell**

Robert Mitchell's two best friends at the University are Fred Kilbourne and Scott Thomas. Both friends were with him at the play three nights ago and at Fiore's the night before. They are both, like Robert, privileged young men who should be played as All-American boys, sweaters and all. Robert and Fred both hoped to study medicine, while Scott wants to be a chemist.

Both boys are still in a state of shock. Robert was a sensitive man who hated violence and was not particularly fond of guns. Gangsters

were something they saw in the moving pictures and read about in the pulps; they have no idea Fiore's Restaurant was connected to the mob. Robert gave no indication that he was looking for anything other than a good meal and a couple of drinks before they headed back to campus. They certainly had no idea he was packing heat. A Sense Motive check at DC 20 will reveal that Scott is holding something back. If questioned, Scott will reveal that it looked like Robert was about to shoot himself when the gangsters "blew him away."

Fred is Robert's roommate. He'll offer to let any of the PCs examine their room if they think it'll help. A Search check at DC 20 will determine that the room is clean. There is no evidence that Robert planned this murder. A successful Search check will also reveal Robert's whereabouts over the last few days. The top of his bureau includes two ticket stubs. Fred will be able to identify these as tickets to the movie theater and the Starlight Club, where they watched the Amazing Anthony perform magic. Fred will recall how funny it was to watch Robert be hypnotized into thinking he was nine years old. This information will probably lead the PCs to Act Three.

### **A Meeting with Duffy**

Some PCs may wish to cut to the chase and look for Seamus Duffy. A Gather Information check at DC 20 (or Knowledge (Streetwise) at DC 15) will reveal that Mr. Duffy enjoys nightly card games in the backs of various bars he controls. A Gather Information check at DC 25 (or Knowledge (Streetwise) at DC 20) will reveal that his current game will be held at Mike's Place.

Mike's Place is a smoky bar at the edge of the Business District, where the city fades from the

polished to the impoverished. Mike's Place is part of the Irish neighborhood, and outsiders will be treated with suspicion. Mike's boasts a couple of pool tables that are constantly in use. He has a door in the back that is guarded by one of Duffy's goons. Mike is an overweight, jovial man who enjoys swapping stories with patrons. He is somewhat aloof to strangers, especially if they're prodding him or other patrons about Mr. Duffy.

PCs who wish to see Mr. Duffy will have to use a Diplomacy check against an Unfriendly attitude. Failure gets a terse "mind your own business and take your sorry puss elsewhere"). Indifference gets a "Mr. Duffy isn't in a talking mood." Friendly gets a few moments to talk to Duffy as he plays. Helpful gets the PC dealt into Duffy's card game. Threats of violence will be met by three goons for every PC in the bar (minimum of six). Assuming the fight doesn't escalate beyond fisticuffs, Duffy will emerge and urge calm, agreeing to answer a few questions from the "gutsy" PCs. He'll also warn them to leave once he's finished.

If the PCs manage to gain access to the back room, Seamus Duffy will be playing cards with three associates (all armed). He'll ask the PC to talk while he plays, and he hopes the questions are worth interrupting his concentration (a PC who enters with guns blazing will be met with hostility, although Duffy will answer questions if the PC leaves him be. In this event, the PC is a marked man for the remainder of the adventure).

Duffy will initially deny any allegations (he has a +12 Bluff). If his bluff is overcome, Duffy may admit that he "might" have hired some independent muscle to deal with the Marciano Mob, and he's currently quite pleased with the results. If the PCs press for the identity of the hit man, Duffy will say that he doesn't know.

Curiously, a Sense Motive check at DC 20 reveals that Duffy is telling the truth. He doesn't remember whom he hired, only that he's happy he hired him. PCs who manage to put Duffy under hypnosis will also fail to glean this information.

Dr. Hypnos used his machine on Duffy during their meeting to ensure that his privacy is upheld. A Knowledge (Arcane Lore) or Knowledge (Behavioral sciences) check at DC 15 will reveal that Duffy was recently hypnotized. Revealing this information to Duffy will only cause his temper to rise, as he demands they leave.

No matter what the outcome of the PCs entering Mike's Place, Duffy will send a couple of gangsters to shadow them and see what they're up to. PCs who missed their Gather Information or Knowledge checks to discover Duffy's whereabouts will still attract shadows (they got close enough to warrant Duffy's attention). Based upon the type of PC, Duffy may even arrange a meeting himself.

It's possible that the PCs may wish to look Duffy up after being victims of "the hard approach." In this case, Duffy will be on his guard. GMs should remember that Seamus Duffy is a powerful crime boss and should not be taken down easily. PCs who attempt to enter Mike's Place will have a major fight on their hands while Seamus Duffy makes his escape. He won't be easy to find from that point forward and the PCs will have a major enemy on their hands (if they don't already).

## CHAPTER THREE: THE PERFORMANCE

The Amazing Anthony Archer used to be a small-time stage magician. He knew a few tricks and illusions, enough to entertain a crowd, but he was little more than a performance artist. He used his talents to travel the country, packing small venues.

All of that changed in San Francisco, when he pulled an old man out of the way of a speeding automobile. The grateful old man had just seen Archer's performance, and he promised to teach him an ancient art he brought with him from the Far East. In a few months, the Amazing Anthony became an actual Mesmerist.

The Amazing Anthony decided to use his new power to continue to do what he did best, entertain. He incorporated hypnotism into his act, and he catapulted to fame. A cunning showman, the Amazing Anthony hired a beautiful city girl and transformed her into the exotic Sensuous Sophia, teaching her how to fake a Middle European accent. His act has become very popular in the city, and the Amazing Anthony feels he is destined to become world famous.

Unfortunately, he's currently being rooked. Dr. Hypnos has chosen Archer's act as the perfect cover for his scheme. He's even hypnotized Sophia into acting as his agent. For all of the Amazing Anthony's abilities, he is completely blind to Sophia's treachery.



The PCs are likely to take two approaches to dealing with the Amazing Anthony. They will either view his performance (see Public View) or they will try to meet him privately (Private View). Both are outlined below.

### **Public View**

The easiest way to see the Amazing Anthony is to purchase a ticket for the evening performance. The show starts at seven, although the Amazing Anthony doesn't come on stage until eight-thirty.

The Amazing Anthony is a consummate performer. He is dressed in a tuxedo adorned with a cape and a turban. He uses heavy makeup around his eyes that, coupled with his goatee, give him a sinister look.



Sophia is attired in a skimpy, colorful costume that shows off her curves and legs. The Amazing Anthony has an incredible stage presence, entertaining the crowds with feats of illusion. His biggest routine is the hypnotism routine. When he is ready to perform it, he sends “the Sensuous Sophia” out to get an audience participant.

GMs should be prepared for PC volunteers. No doubt they will want to get close to the act and see the Amazing Anthony in action. If the GM allows this, he should also be prepared for the PC to try and discredit the Amazing Anthony by resisting his hypnotism.

If the PC does resist, the Amazing Anthony will play it off as a ruse and use the PC as an assistant for a typical illusion. Privately, the Amazing Anthony will be very upset and will be unfriendly to the PC in the future. If the GM does not wish this extra level of complication (as well as another leap frog), he should simply have Sophia pick an NPC.

The default NPC is Gerald Marino, a bank teller who conveniently handles most of Al Cantalupo’s business. Cantalupo is a lieutenant in charge of the Marciano smuggling operation (liquor if the campaign takes place during Prohibition, otherwise it’s a drug operation).

Regardless of who gets on stage, the Amazing Anthony runs through the bit, hypnotizing the volunteer into first believing it is very cold (he has coats and blankets on stage) and then believing it is very warm (causing the volunteer to start shedding blankets and clothes; the Amazing Anthony will stop the volunteer before he compromises his modesty). Afterwards, the Sensuous Sophia escorts the volunteer back to his seat, whispering in his ear before returning to the stage.

If the volunteer was an NPC, a Spot check (DC 10) will allow a PC to notice that she whispered something that garnered a smile from the NPC.

A Listen check (DC 25) will reveal that she was giving him an invitation to meet her somewhere after the show. If the volunteer was a PC and played along with the hypnosis, Sophia simply says “Midnight, City Hotel, room 410.” If the PC publicly resisted the hypnosis, Sophia will just thank him for his participation.

After this event, the Amazing Anthony will continue his performance and wrap it up around nine-thirty. If the PC resisted the hypnotism, the Amazing Anthony will redo the routine with another NPC (and Sophia would give this NPC the invitation).

### **Private View**

If the PCs choose to meet with the Amazing Anthony privately, they will probably try to catch him before the performance. A Gather Information check (DC 15) reveals that the Amazing Anthony usually arrives at his dressing room a half hour before his curtain call. He doesn’t usually see visitors, so the PCs will either have to present official credentials or bribe a security guard (the Amazing Anthony will meet with journalists, for fear of a negative review otherwise).

The Amazing Anthony has little time for questions regarding the murders. He honestly doesn’t believe he has anything to do with it and his hypnotism is for show anyway (this is a bluff). A Sense Motive check (DC 20) will reveal that the Amazing Anthony seems to be telling the truth about having no role in the murders.

If the PCs challenge him on the hypnotism and win a Bluff check, the Amazing Anthony will break down and tell them the story of how he learned his power. He stresses that his ability to hypnotize people only lasts for a few minutes, so it's impossible for him to program someone to kill later. He'd literally have to be minutes away from a murder scene.

If asked about Sophia, the Amazing Anthony will insist that their relationship is purely professional. He's bluffing, and if he fails a Bluff check the PCs can discover that he does have designs on Sophia, if only she would see it. Still, she is a perfect complement to his act, and he wouldn't want to waste the effort to replace her.

### **Meeting Sophia**

It's possible that the PCs will wish to have a private meeting with Sophia. This can be arranged in her dressing room at the Starlight Theater, although the theater staff keeps an eye out for would-be suitors. Sophia can also be approached while she has a drink and a cigarette at the bar during early acts to calm her nerves.

Sophia is a charming and confident woman who will gladly answer any questions unless they are related to the Amazing Anthony's trade secrets (a Sense Motive check (DC 20) will reveal that she's holding back. In reality she has no idea how most of his tricks work). If the PCs are in law enforcement, Sophia will share her true background.

The Sensuous Sophia is really Deborah Silberstein, an aspiring actress who used to wait tables at a nightclub while waiting for her big break. One night, the Amazing Anthony



performed at the club and was smitten with her. Although Deborah didn't feel the same, she did accept his offer to join him as a full time assistant, hoping this would win her greater exposure. Anthony gave her the stage name of the Sensuous Sophia and taught her how to fake an Italian accent. She's enjoyed her time with the Amazing Anthony, but she is a little bothered by his jealous nature whenever she gets "a little attention."

Sophia won't divulge further information unless the PCs win an Intimidation check. Anthony's latest jealous rage occurred about two weeks ago, when he realized the same person, Fred Martin, sent Sophia a bouquet of flowers three days in a row, pleading with her for a dinner date.

Partly out of spite, Sophia did accept the invitation, but Fred Martin turned out to be a boring conversationalist and not all that interesting. Sophia decided not to see him again, much to the Amazing Anthony's delight.

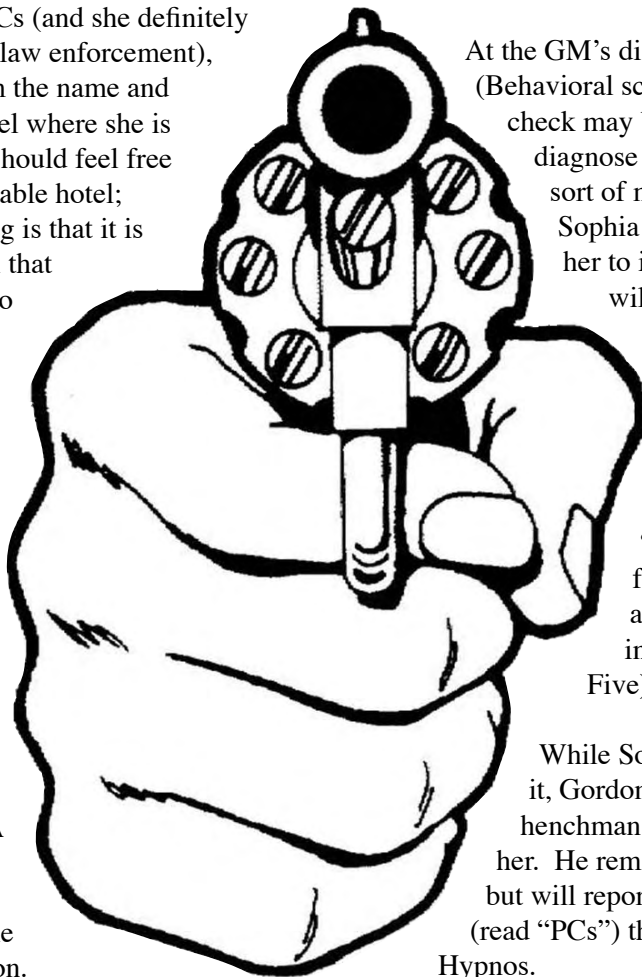
Suspicious PCs may make a Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) check (DC 15) will reveal that, although Sophia says the date went badly, her body language tells the opposite story. Regardless, Fred Martin never called on her again.

If she trusts the PCs (and she definitely will if they are in law enforcement), she will give them the name and address of the hotel where she is staying (the GM should feel free to use any respectable hotel; the important thing is that it is not the City Hotel that she is giving out to potential victims. The City Hotel room is actually registered to a “Stanley Wilde,” another Dr. Hypnos fiction).

PCs who want to look into Fred Martin will have to make a Research check (DC 10). A successful check will reveal that he has no available contact information.

PCs who do the legwork of checking with local florists will discover, with a Gather Information check (DC 15) that a man matching Dr. Hypnos’ description purchased the flowers (the description of the man purchasing the flowers does not match Sophia’s recollection of a much younger Fred Martin).

Sophia has no recollection of whispering the contact information to audience participants. In her mind, all she did was thank them (a Sense Motive check (DC 20) will confirm this). PCs who make a Knowledge (Arcane Lore) check (DC 20) will notice the effects of hypnotism on her.



At the GM’s discretion, a Knowledge (Behavioral sciences) or Treat Injury check may be substituted to diagnose Sophia as suffering some sort of memory loss. Alerting Sophia of this fact will persuade her to implicate Anthony. She will immediately storm off and confront him, leading to a possible break-up of the act (in this case, Dr. Hypnos will take the earliest opportunity to “persuade” her to seek forgiveness and rejoin the act. This dovetails nicely into his plans in Chapter Five).

While Sophia doesn’t realize it, Gordon Luxley, Dr. Hypnos’ henchman, is usually watching her. He remains in the shadows, but will report any strange characters (read “PCs”) that get close to her to Dr. Hypnos.

In this event, Dr. Hypnos will make a call to Seamus Duffy to take care of the problem. Mr. Duffy will send some thugs to dissuade the PCs from further interference (See Chapter Four).



## CHAPTER FOUR: CONFRONTATION

Sooner or later, the PCs are going to want to investigate Room 410 at the City Hotel. If they perform the necessary legwork they will discover that a Stanley Wilde rents it. The hotel staff will describe Dr. Hypnos when describing Stanley Wilde.

The usual routine is as follows. Dr. Hypnos and Gordon Luxley arrive with the Mindbender Machine a few hours before midnight. When the victim knocks on the door, Gordon answers with a pistol. The victim is then led into the hotel room, strapped down, and subjected to the machine.

Dr. Hypnos will alter the victim's memory so that he forgets he ever came to the hotel. He is then given a gun and specific instructions to shoot five bullets into the target and use the last one for suicide.

Dr. Hypnos will then have Gordon drive the victim to a familiar location and order him to count to twenty. When the victim is finished counting, he recalls only the cover story.

### **The Doctor is out**

If the PCs raid the room at any time other than a couple of hours after the performance, they will find it clean and empty. A Search check (DC 10) will reveal that this room is spotless and shows no signs of being lived in.

At the GM's discretion, a bribe to the cleaning staff will gain access to the trash. The contents include empty bottles, food wrappers, newspapers, and a used matchbook from the Second City Hotel. This will provide the PCs

with an opportunity to ambush Dr. Hypnos on his own turf. This would not necessarily disturb the remainder of the adventure; the battle can still occur as if it took place in the City Hotel and Chapter Six would still play out normally.

### **The Doctor is in**

If the PCs raid the room unannounced while it is occupied, they will have to deal with Gordon and Dr. Hypnos. Gordon will get physical, while Dr. Hypnos will try to use his Mindbender Machine to put the intruders to sleep. Gordon is immune to this effect due to a prior command from Dr. Hypnos.

If there are more than one or two PCs, the GM should add an extra henchman or two to keep things exciting. If Dr. Hypnos is able to escape with the Machine intact, he will proceed to clean up his mess as outlined in Chapter Six.

GMs should decide at this point whether they want to end the adventure here or move on to Chapter Five.

If they opt to move on, Dr. Hypnos should be provided an opportunity to exit via the fire escape and get away. The suitcase holding the Mindbender Machine will be conveniently bulletproof. In this case, Gordon Luxley will continue to fight until it is safe to follow.

If Gordon is defeated, another goon with matching stats will be with Dr. Hypnos for the final scene. Dr. Hypnos will immediately plot to have the Amazing Anthony kidnapped and hypnotized for the final part of his plan.

## Stakeout

Instead of barging in, the PCs may wish to observe the hotel room. In this case, the PCs may see Dr. Hypnos and Luxley pull up in a sedan and enter the building (Dr. Hypnos usually lets Luxley carry the device).

Within a half hour, Gordon Marino will approach the hotel. An hour later, Marino exits the building with Luxley and Dr. Hypnos. They will drive him close to his house and let him off. He will count to twenty and then return home.

PCs who approach Gordon will discover that he has no memory of the incident, believing that he came home for a while and decided to take a midnight stroll.

Unless the PCs have a special ability to pry the information from his mind, Gordon will go home, go to bed, and attempt to kill Cantalupo the next day. If the PCs continue to watch Gordon, he will calmly go to work and perform his duties adequately until Cantalupo stops in to make a deposit before lunch.

At that point, Gordon will pull out the “emergency” revolver under his desk and drill Cantalupo full of holes, saving the last bullet for himself.



If the PCs follow Luxley and Dr. Hypnos back to their hotel, they will be attacked by a carload of Duffy enforcers.

Regardless of the outcome, Dr. Hypnos will realize that his plan has been discovered. He will immediately make plans to tie up his loose ends, which will involve silencing the Sensuous Sophia.

## CHAPTER FIVE: LOVER'S QUARREL

Dr. Hypnos' clean-up plan is simple: kidnap the Amazing Anthony and get him to kill Sophia. Dr. Hypnos plans to have this fatal lover's quarrel happen while the Amazing Anthony is performing, ensuring that a roomful of spectators are witnesses to a jealous stage magician gunning down his unfaithful lover. Dr. Hypnos will be there himself, in disguise, to witness the execution.

### Keeping an eye on things

Absent any other leads, the PCs may decide to keep an eye on the Sensuous Sophia and/or the Amazing Anthony in the hopes that Dr. Hypnos will return. Watching Sophia will provide nothing but eye candy, as Dr. Hypnos has decided that he is through with her. He will have no further contacts with Sophia.

Anthony, on the other hand, is a different story. At some convenient point, he will be abducted by gunpoint and brought to the Second City Hotel for his brainwashing. The GM should feel free to set this up based on the timing of the stakeout. Anthony could receive a gift of flowers from "Sophia" with a note that encourages him to meet her for dinner, or he could receive the request at his hotel room. Anthony will keep the engagement, only to get kidnapped along the way.

### Rescuing the Mesmerist

If the PCs are following Anthony, they will probably stage a rescue operation. Dr. Hypnos' modus operandi is the same as before. Gordon leads Anthony in and ties him to a chair while

Dr. Hypnos sets up the Mindbender Machine. The PCs may burst in at any time. As an added bonus, a conditioned Anthony may be given the order to aid Dr. Hypnos against the intruders.

It's also possible that the PCs will confront Anthony at some point between the brainwashing and the trigger (the next performance). The PCs should have an opportunity to help Anthony break free of his brainwashing (see the section on the Mindbender Machine). Due to his own Mesmerist training, Anthony will be able to recall the circumstances of his brainwashing. The PCs may then take the fight to Dr. Hypnos.

### Curtain Call

If the PCs aren't staking out Anthony, or if they are simply staking out the performances, the final confrontation will take place during the Amazing Anthony's act. His routine starts off normally, right up to the point where he asks Sophia to pick a volunteer from the audience. Instead of the usual request, he delivers something along these lines:

*"My dear Sensuous Sophia, now is the moment you've been waiting for. You get to select the man who will warm your bed tonight! What? Don't look at me like that! You dare to feign ignorance? It is I who have been ignorant, pretending that you cared for me all the while you were playing me for a fool! Well, my dear Sophia, it ends tonight!"*

With a flick of his wrist and a flash of exploding powder, the Amazing Anthony conjures a revolver. Unless something is done, he will calmly put five bullets into Sophia before turning the gun on himself.



Dr. Hypnos could not help but see this final performance. He is sitting in the back, lightly disguised, while Gordon Luxley (or another henchman) waits outside in the sedan. If all goes according to plan, he will calmly slip out and meet Gordon at the curb. They will then drive off to the train station.

If someone interferes with his plan, Dr. Hypnos will inadvertently scream and draw attention to himself. He will quickly exit and flag down Gordon. The PCs should have an opportunity to take him down before he gets away. The Mindbender Machine is in the trunk of the car.

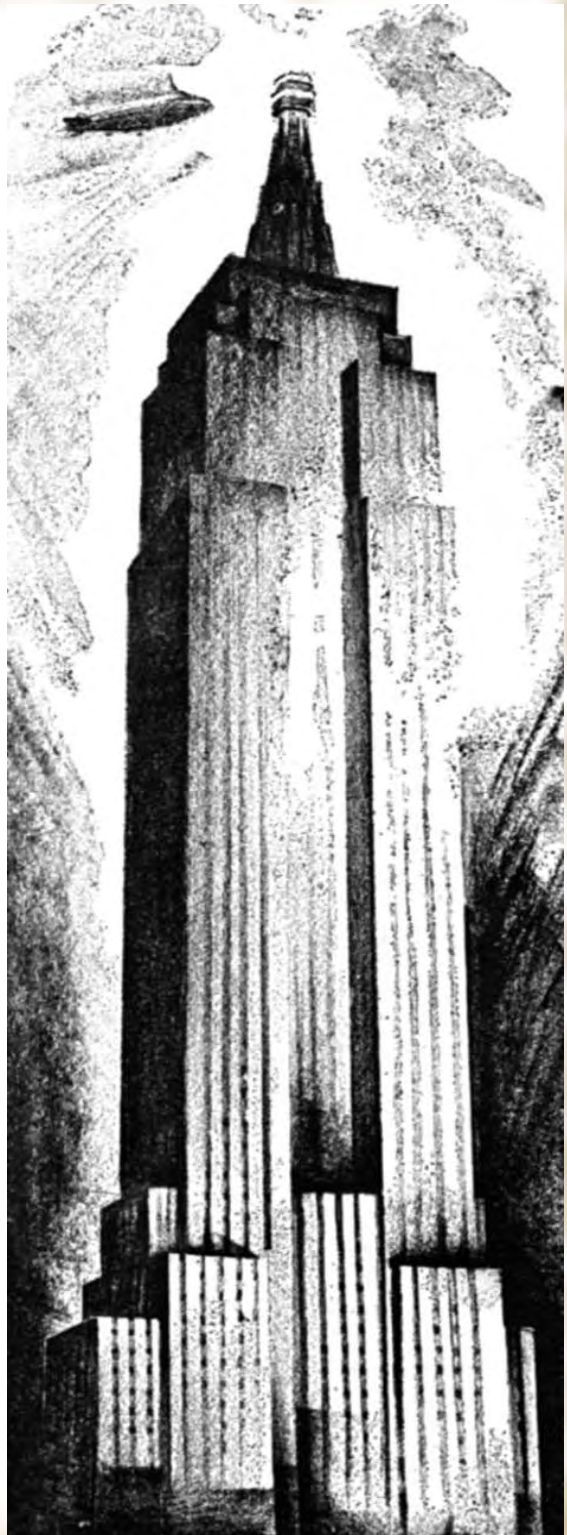
### **Ticket to ride**

If the GM is feeling generous, there will be a final opportunity to catch Dr. Hypnos before he escapes. Either he or Gordon will accidentally drop his train ticket as he makes a getaway. This will give the PCs an opportunity to intercept him at the train station.

### **EPILOGUE:**

If the PCs are successful in capturing Dr. Hypnos and destroying the Mindbender Machine, they will have little trouble arresting him. He is, after all, wanted by the military for stealing secret government property (and those in charge of the Mindbender Project know exactly why the security guard acted erratically).

Dr. Hypnos won't even spend a day in the City Prison before being transferred to a Federal Facility. With his machine gone, Dr. Hypnos will easily mention Duffy's name under interrogation. Armed with this knowledge, the Marciano Mob will be looking for paybacks.



If the PCs manage to save the machine, they will be confronted by federal agents who will confiscate the device in the name of National Security. In Pulp tradition, these “G-Men” should arrive just after the PCs defeat Dr. Hypnos (of course, if one of the PCs is a G-Man, he’ll simply be ordered to bring it in).

If Dr. Hypnos manages to escape, he’ll have a vendetta against the PCs. How difficult will it be to remain safe when anyone, even your closest allies and friends, could possibly turn against you?

## ALTERATIONS TO THE ADVENTURE

### The Amazing PC

If there is a Mesmerist or Stage Magician among the PCs, it may be tempting for the GM to substitute him for the Amazing Anthony. This should only be done if the PC has a regular assistant. The “bait” may be used whenever the PC calls for volunteers (while it fits the theme, it is not strictly necessary for the volunteer to be part of a hypnosis act). It will then be this PC that Dr. Hypnos attempts to kidnap for Chapter Five.

### Nazis

Eddie Lawson was not the only one looking to benefit from the Mindbender Machine. A German (or Italian, or Soviet, or Japanese) spy within the government was also interested and was on the verge of stealing it when Eddie made his move. Now German spies are on alert, looking for telltale signs of the Machine.

At the GM’s option, Nazi agents could be used as a “Suddenly...the door bursts open!” moment, just when the PCs think it’s safe. Unsavory PCs may even cut a deal with the Nazi agents for added support (hopefully to turn the tables on them in the end).

The epilogue may play out very differently if foreign agents rather than federal agents show up to claim the prize.

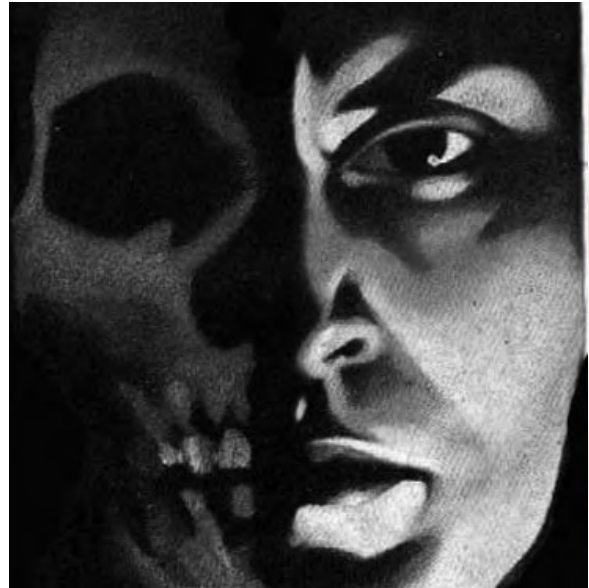


## SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

### DR. HYPNOS

Dr. Hypnos is a fraud. His real name is Dr. Edward “Eddie” Lawson. He was an assistant to Dr. Kyle Morton, the real inventor of the Mindbender Machine. While Dr. Lawson helped research and test the device, most of the inner workings of the machine are as much a mystery to him as anyone else. Between jobs, Dr. Hypnos has been frantically trying to discover how to reverse-engineer the machine.

Eddie Lawson was a short, scrawny kid who was the constant victim of bullies. He never had any real friends, as anyone he got close to would eventually turn on him for the sake of a joke. Eddie retreated into his studies and graduated at the top of his university class. That got him “drafted” into military research during the Great War. He was assigned to Dr. Morton, who was working on ways to get prisoners to reveal information. For the first time in his life, Eddie found the tables turned. He was now the bully questioning helpless captives. Eddie discovered that he reveled in the testing. Unfortunately for Eddie, he got a little carried away during the testing of the latest Mindbender Machine and ranted about the power it could bring. Understandably concerned, Dr. Morton requested that Dr. Lawson be reassigned. That didn’t sit well with Eddie.



While packing his things, Eddie used the Mindbender Machine on a security guard to help him carry the device out of the lab. When Dr. Morton arrived to stop them, the security guard calmly took out his pistol and shot Dr. Morton dead before turning the gun on himself. Eddie slipped away into the night and abandoned his old identity. It took him a few years to get established, but now Dr. Hypnos is a highly sought after assassin.

**Smart 6:** CR 6; Medium-size human; HD 6d6; hp 27; Mas 10; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 13 (+1 Dex, +2 class); BAB +3; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d3-1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +2 melee (1d4 tool) or +4 ranged (2d6); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Himself; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +5; AP 39; Rep +2; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 12.



**Occupation:** Technician (bonus class skills: Craft (Electronic), Craft (Mechanical), Repair).

**Skills:** Bluff +5, Concentration +4, Craft (Electronic) +19, Craft (Mechanical) +13, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +4, Gather Information +5, Investigate +7, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +12, Knowledge (Technology) +12, Repair +15, Research +12, Sense Motive +5.

**Feats:** Builder, Cautious, Confident, Educated, Gearhead, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Studious.

**Talents:** Plan, Savant (Electronic), Trick.

**Possessions:** Dr. Hypnos rarely travels without his pistol (use any period firearm or the Colt M1911 by default). He also carries a number of tools to tweak and maintain the mindbender machine. He also carries a pad of scribbled notes in his attempts to reverse engineer the machine.

## The Mindbender Machine

The Mindbender Machine is basically a suitcase-sized device (and actually is designed to fit inside a large suitcase) that uses an advanced version of the Psionic FX Ability Domination.

Targets must make a Will Save at 25 to resist, and receive no bonuses for resisting orders that go against their nature. Self-

destructive orders will be followed. At the GM's discretion, the target may be allowed a second Will Save if a countering FX Ability is used or the target is barraged by negative reinforcement (such as intense questioning by a PC; an opposing Diplomacy or Intimidate check may "snap them out of it."

The Mindbender Machine is very fragile. GMs should contrive its destruction in the final battle (any stray bullet or accidental bump that knocks it to the floor will do). If any PC attempts to damage it, a successful hit is all that is needed to wreck it beyond repair.

Should the Machine be broken during the fight, Dr. Hypnos will immediately become distracted and distraught. It will take him 1d4 rounds to pull himself together.

Being a Pulp device, virtually all players will accept its destruction as part of the genre. At the GM's discretion, however, the device (or Dr. Hypnos' plans) could be saved or salvaged for use in a further adventure.

# GORDON LUXLEY

Gordon Luxley doesn't need much of a background, for he was never a child (in the Pulp sense). Gordon is the archetypal servant and bodyguard who helps Dr. Hypnos carry out his schemes. He is a large, gruff man who doesn't crack a smile unless it is in anticipation of inflicting pain. He takes pride and joy in his work, and savvy PCs may be able to use this to their advantage. For example, Gordon may be goaded into putting down his pistol in order to engage in fisticuffs with a PC. While this carries its own set of risks, it's preferable to staring down the barrel of a gun.

As archetypal muscle, Gordon can be "cloned" into a number of henchmen if the GM feels the need to bulk up Dr. Hypnos' defenses.

**Strong 3/Tough 3:** CR 6; Medium-size human; HD 3d8+3d10+12; hp 54; Mas 10; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 15 (+1 Dex, +4 class); BAB +5; Grap +8; Atk +10 melee (1d8+3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +8 melee (1d4+3 knife) or +6 ranged (2d6); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Dr. Hypnos; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +3; AP 39; Rep +1; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

**Occupation:** Criminal (bonus class skills: Knowledge (Streetwise), Move Silently).



**Skills:** Hide +3, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (Streetwise) +5, Move Silently +5, Sense Motive +3, Spot +3.

**Feats:** Brawl, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Brawl, Knockout Punch, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Streetfighting.

**Talents:** Damage Reduction 1, Damage Reduction 2, Improved Melee Smash, Melee Smash.

**Possessions:** Gordon generally carries a Colt M1911 pistol and a knife. He may also have rope, chain, and handcuffs on him if he's expecting to trouble.

# THE AMAZING ANTHONY

Before becoming the Amazing Anthony, Anthony “Tony” Archer was a small time stage magician with dreams of simply keeping food on the table. The son of poor immigrants, Archer learned most of his tricks as con games to gain cash. After a stint in the military, Tony Archer turned his trade into a legitimate business, playing as the opening act in small venues.

Tony Archer’s life changed forever as he left a nightclub on a rainy San Francisco evening. He rescued an elderly Asian man from being hit by a speeding car. The old man repaid the entertainer the best way he could; he taught Tony Archer the secret of mesmerism.

The Amazing Anthony was born that night,



and Tony Archer has never looked back. While there are times he feels that he should perhaps do something more heroic with his new ability, he’s found far too many people eager to pay the admission fee to see him perform.

The only frustrating aspect of his new life is his relationship with his assistant, the Sensuous Sophia. He’s tried everything he can to make her love him, but thus far Sophia has rebuffed every advance, treating him as she would a brother. While Tony realizes it would be best for his mental health to relieve her and hire a new assistant, Sophia has become an integral part of his act. He simply can’t part with her.

While Tony won’t force Sophia to be with him, he does get insanely jealous of Sophia’s suitors. Should Tony find out that a PC is courting her, he will be Unfriendly toward that character and any other that seems to be helping him.

**Advanced Class note:** The Amazing Anthony was generated using *Advanced Class: Mesmerist* from Adamant Entertainment. Game Masters without this supplement could substitute F/X abilities from other sources (such as the Command and Dominate F/X abilities from the Core Book), or



jettison the special powers entirely, making the Amazing Anthony simply a great performer.

**Fast 2/Mesmerist 2:** CR 4; Medium-size human; HD 2d8+2d6+4; hp 22; Mas 14; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 17 (+2 Dex, +5 class); BAB +2; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +2 melee (1d3nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +2 melee (1d4 knife or 1d6 cane) or +4 ranged (by pistol type); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Continued fame; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +3; AP 24; Rep +2; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14.

**Occupation:** Creative (bonus class skills: Bluff, Knowledge (Arcane Lore), Perform (Stage Magician)).

**Skills:** Bluff +8, Concentration +4, Diplomacy +6, Escape Artist +6, Knowledge (Arcane Lore) +7, Listen +4, Perform (Stage Magician) +8, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +8, Spot +3.

**Feats:** Creative, Deceptive, Nimble, Simple Weapon Proficiency.

**Talent:** Evasion.

**Class Features:** Hypnotic Ability, Trance.

**Possessions:** The Amazing Anthony rarely carries any weapons, although he does use knives and a large cane as part of his act. Otherwise, he usually only carries items relevant to magic tricks (a deck of cards, handkerchiefs, a small bag of glitter, etc).

# THE SENSUOUS SOPHIA

Deborah Silberstein is an aspiring actress who was waiting tables when the Amazing Anthony “discovered” her and asked her to be a part of his act. A raven-haired Jewish girl, Deborah’s main impediment to acting success was her natural shyness. While Anthony’s intentions were obvious, Deborah accepted his offer to join him in the hopes of winning more exposure. Within a few weeks, the shy, unconfident Debbie Silberte in was replaced by the Sensuous Sophia.

Sophia is a smiling, confident, raven-haired vixen. She’s also learned to use Anthony’s affections to her advantage; a tiny sob story here and there has won her small but increasing shares of the profits. She’s also picked up a few of his “magic tricks.” She really is enjoying her time and exposure with Anthony and wouldn’t mind if it continued for a good long run, but she’s savvy enough to understand that its only a matter of time before his jealousy tears them apart for good.

Sophia will take an interest in any suitably attractive male PCs. Used to being pursued, Sophia will never initiate advances. She will allow the PC to fawn over her a bit before she consents to a date. If a date is arranged, however, there is a chance that the PC will become an unwitting pawn of Dr. Hypnos.

**Charismatic Ordinary 2:** CR 1; Medium-size human; HD 2d6; hp 6; Mas 10; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 13 (+2 Dex, +1 class); BAB +1; Grap +0; Atk +0 melee (1d3-1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +0 melee (1d3-1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +3 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Getting ahead; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1; AP 0; Rep 0; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 15.

**Occupation:** Celebrity (bonus class skill: Perform (Act)).

**Skills:** Bluff +7, Concentration +2, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +3, Gather Information +5, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +3, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Perform (Act) +8, Perform (Dance) +4, Perform (Sing) +4, Sense Motive +2, Spot +2.

**Feats:** Creative, Deceptive, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Trustworthy.

**Possessions:** Sophia generally doesn’t carry anything atypical of what one might find in a woman’s purse of the period. She may be armed with a knife or pistol while under Dr. Hypnos’ influence.

# MOB ENFORCERS

There are several points in the adventure where mob muscle may be called on to dissuade the PCs from continuing the adventure.

A stat block for typical enforcers is outlined below; the GM should feel free to modify this if he needs to adjust the power level. GMs with access to the *Thrilling Tales: Gamemaster's Guide to Pulp Adventure* may wish to substitute the Mook rules by ignoring the hit points stat.

**Tough Ordinary 1:** CR 0; Medium-size human; HD 1d10; hp 5; Mas 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; Defense 11 (+1 class); BAB +0; Grap +0; Atk +0 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +0 melee (1d4 knife) or +0 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Mob Boss; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AP 0; Rep 0; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

**Occupation:** Criminal (bonus class skills: Knowledge (Streetwise), Move Silently).

**Skills:** Intimidate +4, Knowledge (Streetwise) +4, Move Silently +4.

**Feats:** Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency.



**Possessions:** Mob Enforcers typically carry a pistol (use the Colt M1911 as a default) and some type of melee weapon, such as a knife or brass knuckles.

Mob enforcers who mean business will also carry a Tommy Gun (Thompson submachine gun – GMs can either use statistics from another source or simply choose a submachine gun from the core book and add a 50 round drum).