



DZO MODERN:

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THRILLING TALES



ADVANCED CLASS:

MAN OF MYSTERY

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Vincenzo DiNapoli, better known as “Vinnie the Hook” stood back and watched as his boys went to work on the poor schlub who had decided to testify against the Boss in his upcoming trial. Rocko and Tony were good boys, eager to please and skilled at their work. Their work was hurting people.

They were standing at the back of a blind alley, hidden from the street, where they could beat the Grocery Store owner without interruption. Vincenzo watched with little interest--he was there to make sure the message was delivered, nothing more. Suddenly, he felt the hairs on the back of his neck stand up.

“Let the Grocer go, Vinnie.” A voice drifted out of the fog that obscured the other end of the darkened alleyway. Vinnie’s heart nearly stopped. He knew that voice.

Rocko and Tony let the Grocer drop to the ground as they drew their guns, searching for the source of the voice. Vinnie tried to warn them--to tell them to drop their guns, but his voice caught in his throat as a figure emerged from the fog. A dark green trenchcoat whirled around the figure like a vampire’s cape, and cold grey eyes glittered from beneath the brim of a matching fedora and a domino mask. “Good,” the voice continued, “I was hoping that you’d resist.”

Twin chromed 45’s leapt suddenly into view and began to bark a death-chant in the confines of the alley. The Green Falcon had come to work.

The Man of Mystery is an archetype of the pulp genre. Examples include The Shadow, The Spider, The Phantom, Captain Satan, and a legion of similarly ominously-named imitators.

The Man of Mystery is similar in most respects to an Investigator--however the Man of Mystery comes with added doses of strangeness, violence and fear.

Strangeness comes in the subject matter--the mystery men of the pulps didn’t solve run-of-the-mill crimes, or even puzzling murder mysteries. They were faced with hidden criminal empires run by hooded madmen, zombies created by evil scientists, occult ritual murders, and more. Not the beat of the average Private Eye.

Men of Mystery were often more violent than their gumshoe cousins--operating as masked vigilantes outside of the law allowed for higher criminal body-counts, which the readers of the pulp magazines relished.

Lastly, the Man of Mystery was cloaked in fear. In every case, the character’s main form of attack involved striking fear into the hearts of criminals before bringing them to justice. The Man of Mystery was not content to stop or even kill criminals--they would first make sure that the criminals knew the same kind of fear that they had inflicted upon their own victims. It was fear as karmic justice.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Man of Mystery, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +3

Skills: Intimidate 6 ranks, Investigate 6 ranks, Sense Motive 6 ranks

CLASS INFORMATION

Hit Die: The Man of Mystery gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: The Man of Mystery 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 Man of Mystery's class skills are as follows: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (current events, streetwise) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int Modifier

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Man of Mystery advanced class.

Improved Investigation: The Man of Mystery is trained to notice things that mundane investigators might miss. A Man of Mystery that comes within 10 feet of a clue to a crime or other mystery is allowed to make an Investigation skill check, even if the character is not actively searching for clues at the time.

Contact: A Man of Mystery gathers many associates and informants throughout his career. Each time the Man of Mystery gains a contact, the GM should develop a supporting character to represent that contact. The player can suggest the type of contact his or her character wants to gain, but the contact must be an ordinary character, not a heroic character.

Contacts include informants, black marketeers, police employees, reporters, street people, taxi drivers and others who can provide limited aid and information pertaining to the Man of Mystery's

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+1	+1	Improved Investigation, Contact, Man Without Fear	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+2	+2	Weapons Focus Esoteric Knowledge	+1	+1
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+2	Frightful Presence, Contact	+1	+1
4th	+3	+1	+2	+2	Action Boost, Bonus Feat	+2	+2
5th	+3	+1	+3	+3	Discern Lie, Contact	+2	+2
6th	+4	+2	+3	+3	Uncanny Investigation	+3	+2
7th	+5	+2	+4	+4	Bonus Feat, Contact	+3	+3
8th	+6	+2	+4	+4	Like A Shadow	+4	+3
9th	+6	+3	+4	+4	Terrifying Presence, Contact	+4	+3
10th	+7	+3	+5	+5	Inner Sanctum	+5	+4

cases.

A contact will not accompany a Man of Mystery on missions or risk his or her life. A contact can, however, provide information or render a service (make a specific skill check on your behalf).

The contact can be called upon once per adventure, and will automatically agree to assist the Man of Mystery.

The Man of Mystery gains contacts at 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level. If the GM agrees, two contact slots can be traded in for an Ally, who is a heroic character who can be run as a secondary character to the Man of Mystery.

Man Without Fear: A Man of Mystery gains a +4 morale bonus on Will saves to resist fear effects and on level checks to oppose Intimidate checks

Weapons Focus: At 2nd level, the Man of Mystery gains the Weapon Focus class feature, providing the benefit of the feat with the same name. The Man of Mystery must choose a specific personal weapon, and adds +1 to all attack rolls made with that weapon.

Esoteric Knowledge: Since a Man of Mystery's cases often involve the strange and unusual, the characters often possess a vast amount of esoteric knowledge.

After reaching 2nd level, a Man of Mystery can make a special esoteric knowledge check with a bonus equal to his level + his Intelligence modifier to see if he knows anything relevant about clues, people, places or things. The check will not solve a crime, but might provide leads for the Man of Mystery to follow. The DC of the check is determined by the GM, based on the relative obscurity of the information (usually within a range of 15 to 30).

Frightful Presence: At 3rd level, a Man of Mystery gains the Frightful Presence class feature, providing the benefit of the feat with the same name.

Action Boost: This ability, gained at 4th level, allows a Man of Mystery to spend 2 action points in a round. You can spend 1 action point, see the result of the roll, and then decide to spend a second action point, as long as you do so before the GM reveals the result of your action.

Bonus Feat: At 4th and 7th level, the Man of Mystery gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Man of Mystery must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Advanced Two-Weapon Fighting, Combat Reflexes, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Educated, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Knockout Punch, Streetfighting, Surface Vehicle Operation, Two Weapon Fighting, Vehicle Dodge.

Discern Lie: At 5th level, a Man of Mystery develops the ability to read whether another character is telling the truth. When a successful Sense Motive check (opposed by the higher of either the subject's Bluff check result or DC 10) is made, the Man of Mystery can tell whether the subject is deliberately and knowingly speaking a lie. This ability does not reveal the truth, uncover unintentional inaccuracies, or reveal omissions of information.

Uncanny Investigation: At 6th level, a Man of Mystery adds a +4 bonus to any Investigate skill check. (Including rolls to spot clues made under Improved Investigation)

Like A Shadow: At 8th level, a Man of Mystery leaves almost no trace behind when using the following skills: Balance, Climb, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Hide, Move Silently, and Sleight of Hand. Characters trying to discover the Man of Mystery through use of Investigate, Listen, Search, or Spot take a -4 penalty.

Terrifying Presence: At 9th level, opponents of the Man of Mystery making Will Save checks against his Frightful Presence suffer an additional +5 to the DC.



Inner Sanctum: At 10th level, a Man of Mystery gains an Inner Sanctum—a secret headquarters that is secure (-8 to opponent's attempts to find it via Investigate or other skills, as well as -8 to attempts to break in via Disable Device, etc.), provides a crime lab facility that offers an additional +4 to Investigate checks, a research facility that offers a +4 bonus on Esoteric Knowledge checks, and allows for secure communication with all Contacts. The Inner Sanctum may also possess other features, at the discretion of the GM.

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