



CRIMSON EMPEROR

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CHAPTER TWO: THE SCORPION SYNDICATE



A SERIAL ADVENTURE FOR

THRILLING TALES

OR ANY PULP D20 CAMPAIGN

CRIMSON EMPEROR, CHAPTER TWO:

THE SCORPION SYNDICATE

by
Walt Ciechanowski

INTRODUCTION

"The Scorpion Syndicate" is the second adventure in The Crimson Emperor serial.

While it can be enjoyed

on its own, it is

designed to

continue from

the previous

adventure

"Politics of

Terror" and

lead into

"The Valley of

Death." Notes

are given below

on using both

approaches.

Due to its

placement in the

overall serial,

"The Scorpion

Syndicate"

begins with

Chapter Three.

"The Scorpion

Syndicate"

is designed for

characters of 9th-11th

level. There are many

character types that

would fit in this adventure.

Men of Mystery and other vigilantes may have their eye on the French Riviera Café club and the mobs generally. Their eyes and ears on

the streets will lead them to the club in time for the main event.

Gumshoes will be hired by Mr. Norman Simms to track down his daughter.

Nosy reporters are always looking for juicy stories.

She may have sniffed out

the Simms story on

her own, or she may

simply be writing a

piece on the Riviera.

She may have a tip

that something's

going down tonight.

GMs who have read

or run The Mind

Murders will notice

similarities in mob

names, specifically

the Marciano and

Duffy mobs. As

stated in that

product, these mobs

can be substituted

for any two rival mob

families in an ongoing campaign.

Similarly, the adventure takes place in "the

City," leaving the GM free to use his city of

choice.



BACKGROUND

For quite some time, the seedy underworld of the City has been dominated by two rival mobs. At times, the rivalry between the Duffy and Marciano mobs has gotten bloody. An uneasy truce keeps the City from spilling into open war, with smaller mobs carving a niche in the non-strategic areas. This truce is very fragile, and even a perceived breach will send bullets flying until the dust clears and level-headedness returns. PCs with an ear on the street know this only too well.

Without warning, these rivals start working together. The PCs will slowly discover ties between the mob leaders that indicate a syndicate of some sort. This syndicate emanates from Chinatown. The PCs must go to Chinatown in order to discover the power behind this syndicate.

STAND-ALONE ADVENTURE

"The Scorpion Syndicate" stands alone just fine. If the GM does not wish to play this as part of the larger serial, he may make the Scorpion Lady the true power behind the syndicate and allow the local criminal underworld to revert to old boundaries after she is defeated.

SERIAL ADVENTURE

In "Politics of Terror," the PCs may have discovered mysterious strings being pulled in the assassination attempt on Senator Morrison. The hit men had been brainwashed, but why? The mystery continues in "The Scorpion Syndicate," where bitter mob rivals are suddenly working together. As the PCs confront the Scorpion Lady in Chinatown, they will discover that her orders come from a faraway land. When this adventure closes, the PCs will be on their way to Tibet to confront the true enemy.

SECRET SQUADRON MEMBERS:

Set your Decoder to Code X-4:

3-18-18 21-26-17-21-23-22-15-1-

19-15-16-5-21 12-15-18-18

17-7 7-4-19-7-5-20-7-20

19-14-22-16-26-8-14 5-7-4-19

2-7-3-22!



CHAPTER THREE: STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

While the Duffy mob and the Marciano mob have staked out territory in most of the city, there are some areas free of their control. Armand “Le Renard” Bordeaux is an independent mobster who runs a prostitution racket. He controls everything from the streetwalker up to the high-class call girl in his domain. Unfortunately for him, Le Renard has made a critical mistake. He turned down an offer to pay respect (protection money) to the Marciano mob, whose territory straddles his. For the last few months, the Marciano mob has been too busy with the Duffy mob to bother with him. That’s now about to change.

Le Renard spends many evenings at the French Riviera Café, a night club where many of his pricier girls work. Tonight will be a special evening, as Le Renard is about to receive a visit from the Scorpion Syndicate.

PCs can become involved in many ways. The default entry is through Mr. Simms, which is described below. PCs with an ear on the street may learn that something is going to happen at the “Riviera” tonight, also described below. Ace Reporters may already be in the club undercover to get a good story. Seedier PCs may be indulging in prurient interests.

THE MATTER OF MISS SIMMS

This encounter will take place in a Gumshoe’s office (or similar situation – Men of Mystery may have secret ways of being contacted). This particular afternoon a Mr. Norman Simms enters the PC’s office.

Mr. Simms is obviously from out of town. He lacks the local accent and slang in his speech. He is comfortably dressed but not too fancy; he’s definitely a member of the middle class. He looks to be middle-aged.

Mr. Simms has traveled quite a distance and he’ll get to the point. A couple of months ago, Mildred Simms, his daughter, started seeing a fellow by the name of Jackie Keegan. Mr. Simms felt that Jackie was trouble, so he forbade Mildred from seeing him. The discussion did not go well, and Mildred responded by running away with Jackie. Mr. Simms has not heard from his daughter since.

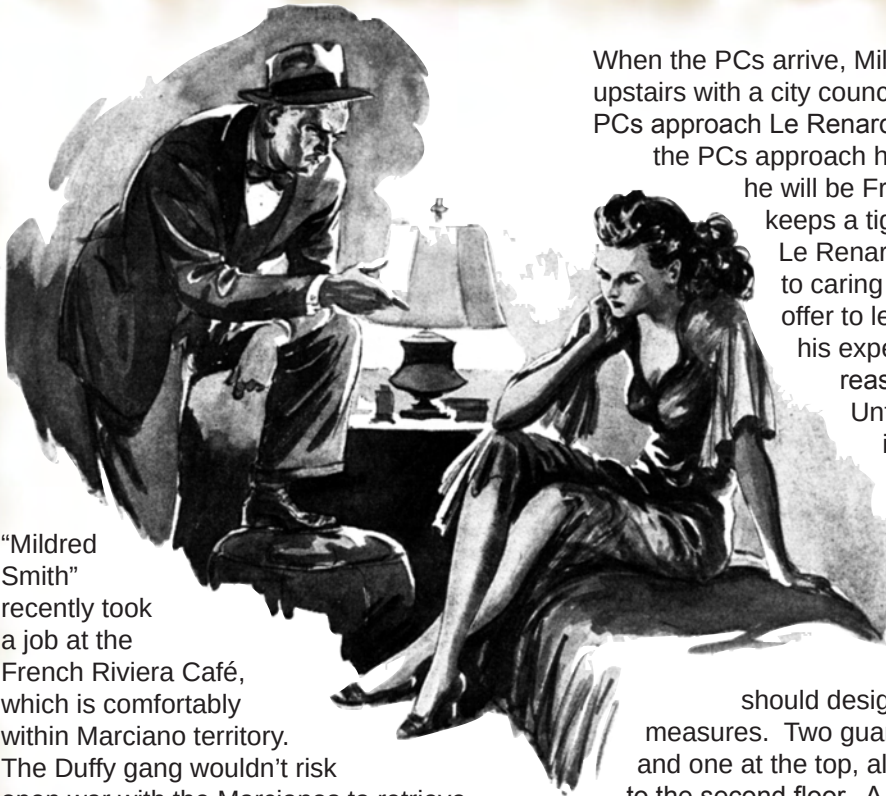
Two weeks ago, a friend of Mr. Simms that resides in the City clipped an obituary of Jackie Fink and sent it to him. Mr. Keegan was the victim of a mob hit, confirming Mr. Simm’s suspicions. He expected to hear from his daughter now that her mobster boyfriend was dead, but to no avail. Mr. Simms has decided to look for Mildred on his own. Since she is an adult, he can expect no help from the police. He is willing to pay handsomely for her return. He gives the gumshoe Mildred’s photograph.

Assuming that the PC takes the job, a day of legwork and a Gather Information check (DC 20) will point to the Riviera as a likely lead. A “Mildred Smith” has recently taken a job there as a prostitute. By the time the PC gets this information, it will be nightfall and the Riviera will be open for business.

DUFFY’S INTEREST

PCs with an ear on the street may learn (Knowledge (streetwise) check (DC 15)) that the Duffy mob has an interest in a runaway gun moll. This gun moll, Mildred Simms, used to be Duffy mobster Jackie Keegan’s girl. PCs who do some legwork (Gather Information check (DC 20)) will learn that Jackie Keegan was personally killed by Mob Boss Seamus Duffy.

PCs who do further legwork will discover (with a Gather Information check (DC 20)) that a



"Mildred Smith" recently took a job at the French Riviera Café, which is comfortably within Marciano territory. The Duffy gang wouldn't risk open war with the Marcianos to retrieve her, but what secrets does she hold?

THE CLUB

The French Riviera Café is a small club that operates independently of Marciano influence. A Gather Information check (DC 10) will reveal that Le Renard has a stable of enforcers that protect his women both on the street and in the bedrooms. The PCs will also learn that Le Renard has consistently turned down Boss Marco Marciano's offers to join his mob and that Don Marco is not happy with this.

GMs can use any typical nightclub layout. There are bouncers at the door. The main room has a bar, a stage, and many tables, including semi-private booths. There are a number of rooms on the second floor for Le Renard's girls use. Le Renard prefers a booth near the stage and is usually accompanied by two beautiful women.

When the PCs arrive, Mildred Simms is upstairs with a city councilman. How the PCs approach Le Renard is up to them. If the PCs approach him diplomatically, he will be Friendly. While he keeps a tight rein on his girls, Le Renard is not insensitive to caring parents. He will offer to let Mildred go for his expenses paid and a reasonable finder's fee. Unfortunately, the club is attacked before the PCs can close the deal.

If the PCs use a brute force or infiltration approach, the GM should design reasonable security measures. Two guards, one at the bottom and one at the top, always man the stairs to the second floor. A couple of men also patrol the main hallway to ensure that there aren't any problems. Most of the doors lock with home deadbolts (DC 25). Should the PCs be captured by the guards and presented to Le Renard, he will be Hostile. He will demand to know why they are here. Before the PCs can get much further, the club will be attacked.

DOUBLE HIT

At a dramatically appropriate point, two sedans will pull up to the club and several mobsters (two enforcers and four muscle, although the GM may modify this as appropriate) come out shooting. They gun down the door bouncers before entering the main room, guns blazing.

If the PCs are in the main club, they will have a chance to hear the shooting outside (Listen check (DC 15) and have three rounds to seek cover or prepare a defense. If the Listen check is missed, the PCs will have a final chance



Le Renard will bark out orders to his men before retreating to a secret rear exit. He has at least as many mobsters as the intruders, but his initially only have pistols. Rocco the bartender will be the first to pull out a Tommy gun and give back what he's getting.

If the PCs haven't discovered Mildred yet, they will have an opportunity to spot her trying to flee (Spot check at DC 20 or DC 10 if they have her photograph). She genuinely fears for her life, and will follow orders from any PC who promises to protect her.

By the end of the battle, most of the mobsters should be dead and the survivors fleeing. Hopefully, the PCs have protected Mildred. Le Renard is either dead or has escaped out the back (if alive, he will return in Chapter Five). Mildred will be willing to go back to her father (if the PCs were hired by him) and is willing to share her story with them.

BODY COUNT

After the battle, the GM should ask for a Knowledge (streetwise) check (DC 15). PCs who make the check will notice something peculiar about the mobsters' bodies. There are Duffy men and Marciano men among them, indicating that this was a joint hit. This is highly unusual, as the two mobs would rather wipe each other out than work together.

to make a Spot check (DC 15) to notice the mobsters enter. In this case, the PCs will have a round to find cover.

The mobsters have orders to shoot up the club and acquire two targets, Mildred Simms and Le Renard. Mildred is wanted dead and Le Renard is wanted dead or alive, so the mobsters can afford to be sloppy. If the Mobsters aren't stopped, they will massacre the patrons and staff.

MILDRED'S STORY

Once Mildred is taken to a safe place, she will offer her story. Two months ago, she met Jackie Keegan. He wined and dined her until she agreed to be his girl, even against her father's wishes. She soon discovered that he was a member of the Duffy mob "running errands" from the City to her home city. When he told her he had to go back to the City, she agreed to come with him. Life was good for a short while.

A month later, things started to change. Jackie was concerned that Seamus Duffy no longer seemed like his old self. He wasn't drinking or playing cards nearly as much, and spent much of his time away from his favorite watering hole. Jackie confronted him about it, but Seamus reassured him that everything was all right. A couple of weeks later, while planning moves against presidential candidate Senator Morrison, Jackie discovered that Seamus was working with Don Marco Marciano. This seemed preposterous, since the Marciano mob was responsible for killing Seamus' brother (and Jackie's good friend). He confronted Seamus once again, and this time Seamus had enough. He gunned Jackie down in cold blood, within earshot of Mildred.

Mildred fled. Too scared and embarrassed to call home, Mildred survived as best she could. She ran deep into Marciano territory and took a position with Le Renard. She knew Seamus Duffy was aware she knew he murdered Jackie, and she thought he'd keep his eyes on the city borders. Le Renard's club seemed like the safest place for her, until tonight. At this point, she breaks down and cries.

DEALING WITH LEGWORK

Players generally don't like loose ends, so it is inevitable that the PCs will wish to track down Seamus Duffy to discover what is going on. While Chapter Four should begin fairly quickly, ambitious PCs may already be on Duffy's tail.

A Gather Information check (DC 15) will tell them that Seamus has recently left town. A Gather Information check at DC 20 will inform them that Seamus has gone to a nearby city to aid in efforts against Sen. Morrison's presidential ambitions. He will be gone at least a week, and he has left the Duffy mob in the capable hands of Mac Sheridan, his right hand man.

Mac is not happy with the recent "cuddling" with the Marcianos, but he does not question Seamus' decision, especially so soon after Jackie Keenan had.

CHAPTER FOUR: TROUBLE AT THE DOCKS

Soon after the hit on the Riviera, the PCs come across some more interesting information. The Marciano mob is expecting a cocaine shipment on Saturday night (how this information gets into the PC's hands is up to the GM, based on the nature and occupations of the PCs). It's common knowledge in the underworld (Knowledge (streetwise) check at DC 10) that Don Marco has traditionally refused to deal in cocaine since losing a beloved cousin, Maria, to a cocaine overdose. The Duffy mob has also shied away from selling the drug, since Don Marco has no qualms about messily eliminating cocaine dealers (ironically, neither mob has any qualms whatsoever about selling heroin).

The PCs need to discover why Don Marco has had such a sudden change in temperament. More importantly, if this shipment isn't stopped, the Marciano mob is about to make a huge profit.

ALTERNATE "DOCKS"

The events in this chapter take place in and around the city docks. While this makes sense for most port cities, there's the possibility that the GM's chosen campaign city is relatively landlocked. Alternatively, the GM may still wish to use a different distribution method even if the campaign takes place in a port city.

In this case, the drugs are being flown in by airplane to a mob-controlled airfield outside the city. Instead of three boats, the Marciano mob intends to pick the drugs up via trucks. The Dragon Man will be on board the airplane.

If the GM wishes, he may substitute a zeppelin for the airplane. The zeppelin will descend far enough to allow a safe drop of the illegal

cargo. Since it's important to the scenario that the PCs see the Dragon Man, he will actually descend with the cargo to personally oversee its handover.

LEGWORK

The PCs can discover when and where the Marcianos are going to pick up the drugs with a Gather Information check (DC 20). Otherwise, they will have to keep an eye on the docks all night and hopefully catch them in the act (Spot check (DC 25)).

The PCs may also wish to confront Don Marco Marciano directly, especially if they've had previous dealings with him. A Knowledge (streetwise) check (DC 15) will reveal his usual hangouts, and he is dining at Antonio's Ristorante, his favorite Italian restaurant, tonight. A Gather Information check (DC 20) will reveal his itinerary for this evening. In addition to the dinner, Don Marco and his wife will be seeing an opera at a local theater (Don Marco wants to be seen in public tonight with a drug deal going down).

Don Marco's attitude is indifferent to any PCs who approach him, including with those with whom he's had history. He will attempt to brush them off, claiming he has a full schedule tonight. Attempts to engage him further will drop his attitude to Unfriendly and ultimately Hostile, especially if they bring up cocaine. If the PCs have warranted an Unfriendly attitude or worse, Don Marco will secretly assign some of his enforcers to deal with them once they leave.

DOCKSIDE ANTICS

Just past midnight, three sedans pull up to the docks. The occupants of each car (mobster muscle and Joey) get into a runabout (GMs can use the Bayliner statistics in the core book for the boat) and approach a large steamship on the horizon. One of the boats includes Joey Corelli, the mob lieutenant in charge of this mission. The PCs will either have to sneak aboard one of the three runabouts or secure their own transportation. [Note: the runabouts are not equipped with radios, so it is possible for the PCs to incapacitate the crew of one runabout and continue piloting it toward the steamship, as long as they move quickly].

If all goes according to plan, the mobsters will guide the boats alongside the steamship and load their cargo. The drugs are divided into three shipments just in case the Coast Guard (or similar authority) tries to stop them. The

Dragon Man is overseeing the transaction. He is accompanied by 4-6 (GM's prerogative) Dragon thugs.

Assuming that the PCs interfere, the Dragon Man and his associates will fight to the death, drinking poison or otherwise committing suicide if they are in danger of being defeated. The Mobsters aren't nearly as devoted, attempting to flee the moment things start going badly. If cornered, Joey Corelli will plead for his freedom, offering some information in exchange.

JOEY'S INFORMATION (OR: HOW DO WE GET TO CHAPTER FIVE?)

Joey Corelli is a big man when he's backed up by muscle and he is a spineless coward without it. He's been to the big house once,



and an experience there has made him deathly afraid of going back. He's willing to spill his guts to ensure his freedom.

Joey has noticed in recent weeks that Don Marco Marciano has been spending his Sunday afternoons in Chinatown; specifically the Crimson Scorpion Restaurant. Joey's also learned that Seamus Duffy's been spending his Sundays there as well, ever since the two mobs got all cozy together. Don Marco doesn't seem like the same man who once declared that the only time he'd ever be in the same room as Seamus is at his casket viewing.

If the PCs happen to kill Joey before he can spill his guts, the GM has two other options. The first is to use another mobster to fill Joey's role. If this still isn't convenient, then the GM can simply have the PCs learn about Don Marco's Sunday routine via a Knowledge (streetwise) check (DC 15). A Gather Information check (DC 10) will also reveal this information if the PCs are hunting for information. After an encounter with the Dragon Man, any routine that sees Don Marco in Chinatown is going to be looked at suspiciously.

In any case, the PCs should be heading to the Crimson Scorpion the next afternoon.



CHAPTER FIVE: THE CRIMSON CONNECTION

This chapter takes the PCs to the City's Chinatown district. GM's are encouraged to play up the ethnic atmosphere of the district, with its large red arch entrance, open markets with exotic (or seemingly exotic) foods, sidewalk vendors, and restaurants (most are tourist restaurants that specialize in chop suey and chow mein, there are few "authentic" Chinese restaurants). GMs who want to add a little extra spice can throw in a dragon dance (a long dragon costume carried on poles) or some cheap fireworks to celebrate the opening of a new business.

THE CRIMSON SCORPION

The Crimson Scorpion Restaurant sits around the corner from the main tourist streets. The restaurant caters to the local Chinese population; a red neon sign identifying the restaurant is written in Cantonese along with a stylized scorpion. Two Dragon thugs guard the entrance to dissuade "foreigners" (typically casual tourists) from entering the establishment. Around one

o'clock, a sedan will drop off Don Marco and a "guest." Don Marco waits until the sedan pulls away and then addresses the thugs. The thugs step aside and let him enter. PCs who make a Listen check (DC 25 unless they are close by) will be shocked to discover that Don Marco spoke Cantonese! (If a PC happens to speak a Chinese dialect, he will note that Don Marco simply used a polite greeting). Don Marco's guest will either be Le Renard (if he survived Chapter Three) or Mac Sheridan. This person will be puzzled by Don Marco's speech, but will enter the restaurant with him anyway.

The two men will be led to a table in the back for lunch. Don Marco is calm and reserved, while his lunch guest looks nervous.

Don Marco orders for them both. As their meals arrive the Scorpion Lady joins them. She is a very attractive Chinese woman in a crimson silk dress and long fingernails. She engages Don Marco in conversation while one of the waiters stands behind the guest to ensure he stays seated (a Spot check will reveal a shoulder holster). They converse in

English for the guest's benefit.

If the PCs managed to prevent the cocaine



shipment, the Scorpion Lady will be very cross. Oddly, Don Marco acts as if he's her loyal henchman, rather than an associate (the GM should amend her reaction based on events in Chapter Four). The Scorpion Lady will then turn her attention to the guest, asking Don Marco why he was brought here. Don Marco explains that he felt it wise to "ensure" his guest's loyalty in future endeavors. The Scorpion Lady isn't so certain, cautioning Don Marco that it's best to keep the inner circle as small as possible. The guest makes a plea on his own behalf, relishing the opportunity to join the Inner Circle. After a little arguing, Don Marco asks if they should consult the Crimson Emperor. The mere mention of the Emperor's name causes the Scorpion Lady to soften, assuring Don Marco that it won't be necessary. The guest will be allowed into the Inner Circle.

DOUBLE TROUBLE

When lunch is complete, they leave the table and pass through the kitchen to the alley out back. Directly across the alley is a door into a warehouse (also guarded by two Dragon thugs patrolling the alley). Inside are several Dragon thugs and a Russian scientist.

The Scorpion Lady introduces the scientist as Dr. Grigory Janovich, a Tsarist who fled his country after the Russian Revolution. Dr. Janovich will be puzzled, as he was not expecting guests and was servicing the machine. However, he reassures the Scorpion Lady that he can perform the operation.

At this point, the guest gets nervous. The

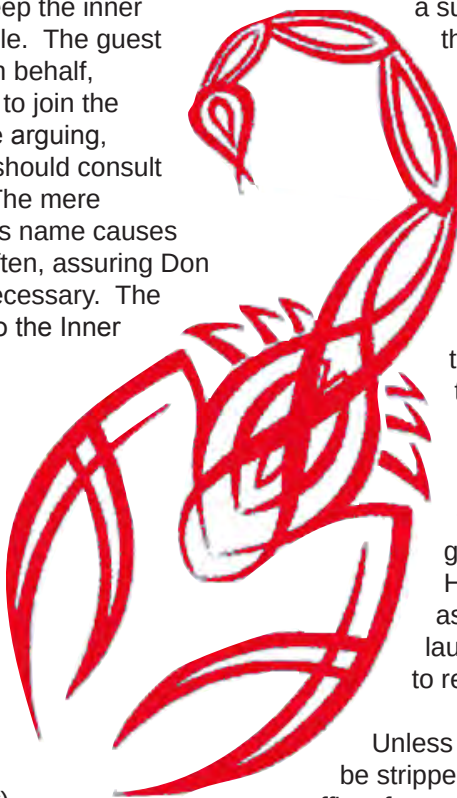
Scorpion Lady tells him that there is nothing to worry about as she leads him to the machine (she is using hypnosis on him). The machine consists of two tables with restraining belts and a large T-shaped machine between them. Dr. Janovich leaves the room and returns with a young Chinese man who is stripped to the waist (this reveals a crimson scorpion tattoo on his left forearm). The doctor praises the Emperor for his foresight in insisting that a subject be ready at all times. Both the young man and the guest are strapped to the table.

Hypnosis or not, the guest is panicking now. He demands to know what is going to happen to him. Dr. Janovich says that it's unfortunate that he could not perfect his machine before the Revolution. Now that the guest is immobilized, the Scorpion Lady explains that the machine will take accurate measurements of his face and hands. It will then surgically alter the Chinese man's features to match. It then dawns on the guest that he is to be replaced. He screams at Don Marco for assistance, but Don Marco only laughs as he rolls up his own sleeve to reveal a crimson scorpion tattoo!

Unless the PCs interfere, the guest will be stripped of his shirt and Dr. Janovich will affix a facemask and gloves to both men. He will then turn on the machine to do its work, a process that will take a few hours.

WAREHOUSE BATTLE

At some point, the PCs will battle the Scorpion Lady, Don Marco, and the thugs. If they don't do so on their own, then they will be encouraged when spotted by a Dragon thug or two. If threatened, the Doctor will set his machine to self-destruct (even with the two patients strapped to it) and commit suicide.



The self-destruct process will take several rounds. If there is a Paragon, Techie, or Mad Scientist in the group, he may attempt to salvage the machine before it completely breaks down, but it will take several months to repair. If anyone examines Dr. Janovich's body, they will discover a crimson scorpion on his left forearm.

Don Marco and the thugs will fight to the death (while the PCs won't find out until later, the original Don Marco is still very much alive and can be recopied). The Scorpion Lady will attempt to flee, but she will commit suicide if cornered (this could be played out as a colorful chase through Chinatown). Before she dies, she will taunt them with, "The Crimson Emperor of the Fu-San Dynasty will rise again!"

If the PCs explore the warehouse, they will find a few rooms devoted to living areas (for Dr. Janovich and the duplicates). There is also a small temple room that smells of incense and contains the statue of a crimson dragon.

As a final note, GMs running this adventure as part of a serial need not worry about who dies. It will have minimal impact on the rest of the serial.

EPILOGUE

If the PCs manage to save the guest, he will be very grateful and will promise to aid the PCs in the future (he'll never get the chance, since the Crimson Emperor will have him killed).

If this adventure is used as a standalone, the mystery of the Crimson Emperor can remain hidden for now. If the GM went with the Scorpion Lady mastermind option, then Dr. Janovich will be the original scientist. Under pressure, he will tell the PCs that the real Seamus Duffy and Marco Marciano are held somewhere in Chinatown. The GM can make rescuing them the final chapter. In this event, it is not necessary to have the Scorpion Lady killed. She can escape for further adventures.

If this adventure is used as part of the serial, then the PCs will want to track down the Crimson Emperor. This is the basis of "The Valley of Death," the next serial in the series.



DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Armand “Le Renard” Bordeaux

Armand Bordeaux is originally from Louisiana, although he plays at being French. He grew up in Storyville and realized the market potential of prostitution. While the federal government shut down Storyville in 1917, Armand remained long enough to learn how to run illicit establishments before striking out on his own in the City. It was during this period that he received his nickname, Le Renard (the Fox).

Armand keeps to himself. He doesn't like to associate with mobsters simply because he doesn't see himself as one. Besides, they have their own prostitution rings; why should they get a piece of his? In addition, the city police tend to leave him alone, since he keeps his hands clean of mob influence. In the past, Armand could count on the rivalry between the Duffys and the Marcianos to give him privacy. Now, he's about to learn a brutal lesson with the Scorpion Syndicate.

Armand is an attractive man of a blended ethnic background. He wears a short black goatee that matches his well-groomed hair. He prefers white suits and speaks in a pretentious French accent. He is very friendly and almost likeable when in his own environment.

Charismatic Ordinary 10: CR 9; Medium-size human; HD 10d6+10; hp 40; Mas 12; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 15 (+3 class, +2 dexterity); BAB +5; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d6 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +5 (by weapon) or +7 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL His Business; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +6; AP 0; Rep +5; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Occupation: Entrepreneur (bonus class skills: Bluff, Knowledge (business)).

Skills: Bluff +19, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +15, Hide +6, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (business) +15, Knowledge (current events) +10, Knowledge (streetwise) +14, Listen +6, Read/Write French, Sense Motive +6, Speak French, Spot +6.

Feats: Brawl, Confident, Creative, Deceptive, Dodge, Educated, Iron Will, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Windfall x2.

Possessions: Armand is usually well dressed. He typically carries a small pistol in his pocket.

Mildred Simms

Mildred is a pretty young woman who fell for the wrong man. Unfortunately, that man was killed and she's now on the run because of what she knows. She isn't happy turning tricks for Le Renard, but she's grateful to have his protection.

Charismatic Ordinary 1/Fast Ordinary 1:

CR 1; Medium-size human; HD 1d8+1d6; hp 26; Mas 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16 (+6 class); BAB +2; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d6 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +2 melee (1d4 knife) or +2 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Chopper Charlie or the Sultan; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; AP 0; Rep 0; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 15.

Occupation: Creative (bonus class skills: Bluff, Disguise, Perform (act)).

Skills: Bluff +10, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +7, Hide +4, Perform (act) +8.

Feats: Deceptive, Dodge, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

Mobster Enforcers

This stat block is for the mobster enforcers and hit men in the adventure. The GM should feel free to modify this if he needs to adjust the power level. GMs with the Thrilling Tales: Gamemaster's Guide to Pulp Adventure may wish to substitute the Mook rules by ignoring the hit points stat.

Fast Ordinary 6: CR 5; Medium-size human; HD 6d8+6; hp 30; Mas 13; Init +7; Spd 30 ft; Defense 19 (+6 class, +3 dexterity); BAB +4; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +5 melee (1d4+1 knife) or +7 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Mob boss; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +4; AP 0; Rep +2; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Occupation: Criminal (bonus class skills: Hide, Move Silently).

Skills: Balance +7, Concentration +3, Disable Device +3, Drive +7, Hide +12, Jump +9, Knowledge (Streetwise) +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +12, Spot +5, Tumble +9.

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Brawl, Burst Fire, Focused, Improved Initiative, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Stealthy.

Possessions: Enforcers typically 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) and a pistol (use the Colt M1911 as a default) as a back-up weapon. Most enforcers carry a knife or garrote as well.

Mobster Muscle

This stat block is for the regular mobster thugs and security guards in the adventure. The GM should feel free to modify this if he needs to adjust the power level. GMs with the Thrilling Tales: Gamemaster's Guide to Pulp Adventure may wish to substitute the Mook rules by ignoring the hit points stat.

Fast Ordinary 2/Tough Ordinary 2: CR 3; Medium-size human; HD 2d8+2d10; hp 26; Mas 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16 (+6 class); BAB +2; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d6 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +2 melee (1d4 knife) or +2 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Chopper Charlie or the Sultan; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; AP 0; Rep 0; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Occupation: Military (bonus class skills: Knowledge (Tactics), Move Silently).

Skills: Climb +2, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (Tactics) +2, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Search +3, Sense Motive +2, Spot +4, Survival +2, Tumble +2.

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Brawl, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Toughness.

Possessions: Thugs typically carry a pistol and a knife. Some thugs will carry a Tommy Gun.

The Dragon Man

The Dragon Man is one of the Crimson Emperor's most trusted henchmen. No one knows his real name. He is a slim, well-muscled Asian man with a baldhead and "Fu Manchu" mustache. He usually goes topless or wears his shirt open to display a large crimson dragon tattoo that coils around his torso.

The Dragon Man only speaks Cantonese, although he understands English. He prefers using ancient weapons or no weapons at all when fighting, but he is smart enough to carry a pistol. When it seems he is losing, the Dragon Man will use a knife to slit his own throat.

Fast 2/Tough 2/Martial Artist 6: CR 10; Medium-size human; HD 8d8+2d10+20; hp 60; Mas 15; Init +6; Spd 35 ft; Defense 21 (+9 class, +2 dexterity); BAB +8; Grap +10/+5; Atk +10/+5 melee (1d4+2 lethal or nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d4+2 lethal or nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +10/+5 (by weapon) or +10/+5 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Crimson Emperor; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +3; AP 90; Rep +1; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Occupation: Athlete (bonus class skills: Balance, Jump, Tumble).

Skills: Balance +15, Climb +10, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +11, Jump +13, Read/Write English, Speak English, Spot +11, Tumble +15.

Feats: Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Combat Martial Arts, Combat Throw, Defensive Martial Arts, Elusive Target, Improved Combat Martial Arts, Improved Combat Throw, Improved Initiative, Personal Weapons Proficiency, Power Attack, Simple Weapon Proficiency.

Talents: Damage Reduction 1, Increased Speed.

Class Features: Flying Kick, Iron Fist, Living Weapon.

Possessions: The Dragon Man usually carries a sword and a knife. He also has a pistol holstered on his belt.

Dragon Thugs

This stat block is for the unnamed Asian martial artists in this adventure. The GM should feel free to modify this if he needs to adjust the power level. GMs with the Thrilling Tales: Gamemaster's Guide to Pulp Adventure may wish to substitute the Mook rules by ignoring the hit points stat.

Strong Ordinary 3/Fast Ordinary 3: CR 5; Medium-size human; HD 3d10+3d8; hp 30; Mas 11; Init +4; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16 (+6 class); BAB +5; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d4+1 lethal or nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +6 melee (1d4+1 knife) or +5 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Boss; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +3; AP 0; Rep +1; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Occupation: Athlete (bonus class skills: Balance, Jump, Tumble).

Skills: Balance +8, Climb +6, Hide +6, Jump +12, Move Silently +7, Read/Write English, Sleight of Hand +4, Speak English, Tumble +9.

Feats: Acrobatic, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Combat Martial Arts, Defensive Martial Arts, Improved Initiative, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Stealthy.

Possessions: Dragon thugs generally carry swords and knives unless gunplay is expected.

Mob Lieutenant

This stat block is for high-ranking mobsters like Mac Sheridan and Joey Corelli. This stat block also uses **Advanced Class: Mobster** from Adamant Entertainment. Relevant special abilities from that work are asterisked (*) and reproduced below.

Fast 6/Mobster 4: CR 9; Medium-size human; HD 6d8+4d10+6; hp 50; Mas 13; Init +7; Spd 35 ft; Defense 21 (+8 class, +3 dexterity); BAB +7/+2; Grap +8/+3; Atk +8/+3 melee (1d8+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4+1 knife) or +10/+4 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Mob boss; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +5; AP 75; Rep +4 (+9); Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Occupation: Criminal (bonus class skills: Hide, Move Silently).

Skills: Balance +7, Concentration +3, Diplomacy +12, Disable Device +3, Drive +7, Hide +10, Intimidate +14, Jump +9, Knowledge (Streetwise) +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +12, Spot +5, Tumble +7.

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Brawl, Burst Fire, Drive-By Shooting, Focused, Improved Brawl, Improved Initiative, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Stealthy.

Talents: Evasion, Uncanny Dodge 1, Increased Speed.

Class Features: Affiliation*, No Stool Pigeon*, Leg-Breaking*, Sweep*.

Possessions: Mob Lieutenants typically carry a pistol.

Affiliation: Mobsters gain the benefit of their Affiliation's reputation when dealing with others who would respect that Affiliation's reputation. If the Mobster leaves a Mob, he will lose this benefit as well as any Contacts gained by this Advanced Class. The Mobster only regains these Class Abilities when he joins a new Mob.

No Stool Pigeon: One of the initial "tests" of

a Mobster is his ability to keep quiet when pressured or arrested by the authorities. The Mobster gains a +4 circumstance bonus to Will saves when being interrogated about his Affiliation. This stacks with the Iron Will feat.

Leg Breaking: The Mobster can acquire information from reluctant sources through actual physical harm. While this method lacks finesse and sophistication, it is brutally effective. The Mobster adds a +2 circumstance bonus to his Intimidation check when using non-lethal force on a subject, or a +4 circumstance bonus if he uses lethal force.

In order to use this "technique," the victim must first be immobilized (e.g. tied to a chair, arms held by accomplices). The Mobster then attacks him (automatically hitting in both cases), dealing normal damage. The Mobster may not pull punches or cause superficial wounds. Once the damage is dealt, the Mobster may apply the Leg Breaking bonus to his Intimidation check.

If the attempt fails, the Mobster may continue trying until the victim relents or is beaten into unconsciousness or death. Once the Mobster has started Leg Breaking, he may not substitute a normal Intimidation roll (he may, however, alternate between using lethal and nonlethal force, so long as he applies the appropriate bonus). The Leg Breaking bonus is not cumulative; the Mobster only gains the benefit or +2 or +4.

Sweep: A Mobster knows how to size up an area and get the lay of the land in a single sweep of his or her eyes. This sweep provides a +4 circumstance bonus on Spot checks and covers an area out to 30 feet away from the Mobster. The Mobster can use this bonus at the start of an encounter.

Anything not concealed can be spotted in a sweep with a successful check (DC 10). The DC for concealed or less obvious threats is equal to their Hide check result.

The Scorpion Lady

The Scorpion Lady is a lethal martial artist in charge of the Crimson Emperor's plans in the City. She is a very attractive Chinese woman with a cold demeanor. She is utterly devoted to the Crimson Emperor and would commit suicide before allowing herself to be captured.

The Scorpion Lady is not a duplicate. She does have a crimson scorpion tattoo, but it is on her left shoulder blade. While the Scorpion Lady prefers unarmed combat, she is smart enough to know to shoot at pistol-wielding opponents.

The Scorpion Lady's stat block also uses Advanced Class: Mesmerist from Adamant Entertainment. Relevant special abilities from that work are asterisked (*) and reproduced below.

Fast 4/Martial Artist 8/Mesmerist 2: CR 14; Medium-size human; HD 12d8+2d6+28; hp 90; Mas 15; Init +7; Spd 30 ft; Defense 23 (+10 class, +3 dexterity); BAB +12/+7/+2; Grap +14/+9/+4; Atk +12/+12/+7/+2 melee (1d10+2 lethal or nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +12/+12/+7/+2 melee (1d10+2 lethal or nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +14/+9/+4 (by weapon) or +15/+10/+5 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Crimson Emperor; SV Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +6; AP 143; Rep +4; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Occupation: White Collar (bonus class skills: Diplomacy, Knowledge (business)).

Skills: Balance +11, Concentration +7, Diplomacy +10, Escape Artist +9, Gather Information +6, Hide +9, Intimidate +10, Jump +7, Knowledge (arcane lore) +5, Knowledge (behavioral science) +2, Knowledge (business) +5, Knowledge (streetwise) +5, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Read/Write English, Sense Motive +6, Speak English, Spot +6, Tumble +10.

Feats: Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Combat Martial Arts, Combat Reflexes, Combat Throw, Defensive Martial Arts, Elusive Target, Improved Combat Martial Arts, Improved Combat Throw, Improved Initiative, Personal Weapons Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency.

Talents: Evasion, Uncanny Dodge 1.

Class Features: Flurry of Blows, Flying Kick, Hypnotic Ability, Hypnotic Trance, Iron Fist, Living Weapon, Trick.

Possessions: The Scorpion Lady usually carries a poisoned (scorpion venom) dagger and an appropriate pistol.

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.

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.

Marco Marciano

Don't let the name fool you. This is the duplicate of mob boss Don Marco Marciano. He looks exactly like him, short black hair, deep-set eyes, and olive complexion; but beneath the skin he is one of the Crimson Emperor's trusted henchmen. He is trained to mimic Don Marco's speech and mannerisms, and he continually receives information from the real Marco Marciano to play his role.

Tough Ordinary 4/Charismatic Ordinary 4:
CR 7; Medium-size human; HD $4d10+4d6+24$; hp 60; Mas 16; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 15 (+4 class, +1 dexterity); BAB +5; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d4+1 lethal or nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +6 melee (1d4+1 knife) or +6 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Crimson Emperor; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +4; AP 0; Rep +1; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Occupation: Adventurer (bonus class skills: Bluff, Intimidate).

Skills: Bluff +13, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +12, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (streetwise) +8, Move Silently +7, Read/Write English, Sense Motive +5, Speak English.

Feats: Combat Martial Arts, Confident, Deceptive, Defensive Martial Arts, Improved Combat Martial Arts, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Toughness x1, Trustworthy.

Possessions: Don Marco usually carries a pistol, but he will carry a Tommy gun if he feels he needs it.

“Dr. Grigory Janovich”

Dr. Grigory Janovich is an older Russian scientist who laments the loss of Tsarist Russia and loathes the Communist Soviet Union. He has joined the Crimson Emperor in the hopes of overthrowing the Revolutionary government and bringing Russia into a new Tsarist golden age.

Dr. Janovich is a tall, stocky man with a balding head and a full beard. He wears a monocle.

The Dr. Janovich in this adventure is actually a duplicate that has been trained to operate and service Dr. Janovich's machine. As such, he is more of a glorified technician than an actual scientist.

Dedicated Ordinary 6: CR 5; Medium-size human; HD 6d6; hp 30; Mas 10; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 15 (+3 class, +2 dexterity); BAB +4; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d8+1 lethal or nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+1 lethal or nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +5 with weapon or +6 ranged (by pistol type); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Crimson Emperor; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +5; AP 39; Rep +2; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 9.

Occupation: Technician (bonus class skills: Craft (electrical), Craft (mechanical), Repair).

Skills: Craft (electronic) +10, Craft (mechanical) +12, Knowledge (technology) +10, Listen +7, Repair +10, Read/Write English, Read/Write Russian, Speak English, Speak Russian, Spot +11.

Feats: Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Blind-Fight, Combat Martial Arts, Deceptive, Defensive Martial Arts, Improved Combat Martial Arts, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency.

Possessions: “Dr. Janovich” carries tools and a pistol in his lab coat.

The Mirror Machine: Dr. Janovich's creation is a large machine that rests between two tables. Given a few hours, the machine can copy the facial and hand features of one person onto another. This ability requires certain nervous stimulation, and the duplicate must redo the process once a week. Dr. Janovich has also developed a solution that, when exposed to a duplicated face, will cause the face to revert to its original shape (a plot device used later in this Serial).