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# THE STEEL LEGION

AN ADVENTURE FOR

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TALES**

OR ANY D20  
PULP CAMPAIGN



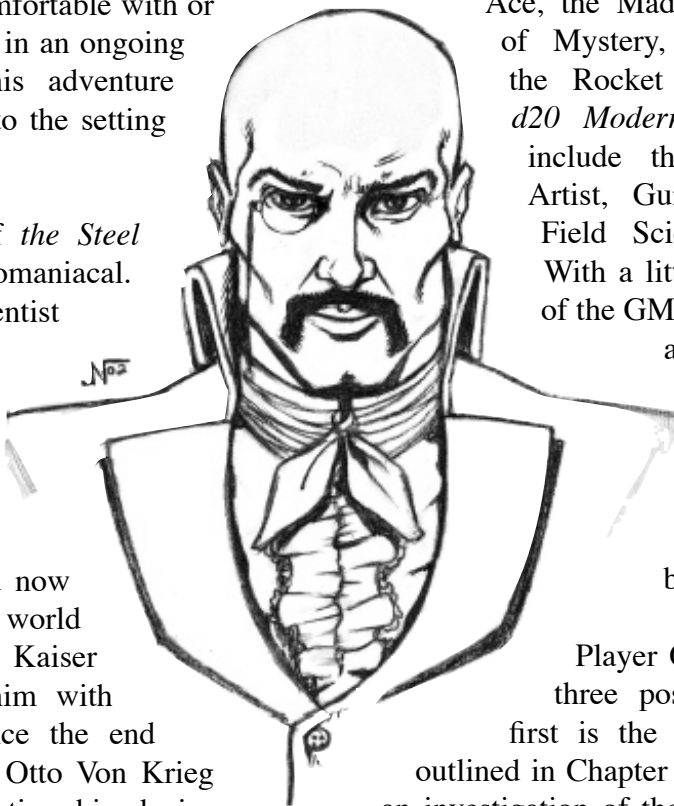
# THE STEEL LEGION

by  
Walt Ciechanowski

## INTRODUCTION

*The Steel Legion* is an adventure for characters of 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<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.”

The premise of *the Steel Legion* is egomaniacal. A German scientist from the Great War is not only upset that he lost, but that Imperial Germany would now dominate the world if only the Kaiser had provided him with resources. Since the end of the war, Dr. Otto Von Krieg has been perfecting his devices, waiting for the day when he can force the world to put the Kaiser back on the throne and return Germany to its former imperial glory. He’s now ready to launch his sinister plan!



*The Steel Legion* is written for larger-than-life pulp heroes. Suitable *Thrilling Tales* advanced classes include the Air Ace, the Mad Scientist, the Man of Mystery, the Paragon, and the Rocket Ranger. Suitable *d20 Modern* advanced classes include the Soldier, Martial Artist, Gunslinger, Daredevil, Field Scientist, and Techie. With a little work on the part of the GM, almost any basic or advanced class can be accommodated (the Ace Reporter is a good fit, although he or she may feel a bit outclassed).

Player Characters will have three possible hooks. The first is the attack on the train outlined in Chapter One. The second is an investigation of the attack (also during Chapter One). The third is the reading of the newspaper article of the attack and a clue that relates to the science fair in Chapter Two. Finally, the PCs may simply be enjoying the science fair when it is attacked in Chapter Two.

## **BACKGROUND**

In the waning months of the Great War, a group of scientists led by Dr. Otto Von Krieg worked on new war machines for the German Empire. America had just entered the war, and the Kaiser's generals were concerned that they didn't have the resources to remain locked in a stalemate along the western front. Dr. Von Krieg had the answer. He designed large robots that could step over the trenches and subjugate the enemy with electro-pulse cannons. The Kaiser was eager to use them.

Unfortunately, Dr. Von Krieg's robots required large amounts of oil and oil was in short supply. The Kaiser's generals claimed that this precious commodity could not be wasted on fanciful notions of giant war machines. The Kaiser granted Dr. Von Krieg one chance to prove to the generals that the investment was worth it. If not, the Kaiser would have no choice but to abandon the project.

Dr. Von Krieg and his scientists worked around the clock to provide a suitable demonstration. Unfortunately, the electro-pulse cannon was still in the early stages of development. Dr. Von Krieg would have to persuade the generals with the robot's armored might and ability to step over trenches. Dr. Von Krieg was certain that this would be enough, but he made one miscalculation: the conscience of Dr. Wilhelm Schmidt.

Dr. Schmidt was a brilliant scientist and inventor, but he was also a pacifist. That pacifism was shaken but held even after he

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lost his wife to a British bomb. He did not want to be a part of creating an invincible war machine, and with every breakthrough Dr. Von Krieg's rants about a "Steel Legion" crushing the armies and cities of the world got louder. Dr. Schmidt simply could not bring himself to allow Dr. Von Krieg's "Steel Legion" to be born. He tried to voice his concerns, but that only drew suspicion. Instead, Dr. Schmidt continued building the prototype while he quietly plotted sabotage.

It was a stormy afternoon when the Kaiser and his generals gathered on a covered stage overlooking a mock battlefield. With a push of a lever, Dr. Von Krieg's steel legionnaire lumbered onto the battlefield. It was a loud, steaming, metal monster, standing twenty feet tall. Dr. Von Krieg proudly drew the Kaiser's attention to the mock trench and how effortlessly the robot would step over it and crush the mock tanks on the other side. The Kaiser's excitement turned to confusion and horror as the steel giant turned and started toward the stage. All of Dr. Von Krieg's attempts to regain control met with failure. The Kaiser and his generals were ushered off the stage as soldiers emptied their rifles into the steel giant with no effect. Not even a machine gun, placed to show off the power of the robot, could slow it down.

Finally, just before it smashed the stage, the Steel Giant fell. Dr. Schmidt merely wanted to make his point, not cause harm, so he ensured that some bolts were loose enough to quickly topple the robot. Even as Dr. Von Krieg screamed sabotage and tried to point the finger at Dr. Schmidt, the project's

fate was sealed. Even before the damaged prototype could be removed from the field, orders were given to reallocate the project's resources. Dr. Von Krieg's visions of a Steel Legion were dead, for now.

Dr. Schmidt, fearing for his life, packed up his things and headed to America. He changed his name to William Smith and secured a position at City University. He knew that he had not seen the last of Dr. Von Krieg and threw his intellect at developing a defense against the still untested Electro-Pulse Cannon, a weapon he feared far more than the "tank on legs." Dr. Smith's daughter, Margaret, watched him helplessly as her father spent every free moment in his laboratory. She practically grew up without him, although she remained devoted to him.

In an ironic twist of fate, Dr. Von Krieg also came to America. He wanted no part in post-Imperial Germany, a country that he considered a twisted mockery of its old self. He purchased some property a couple of hours outside the City and began recreating his old project, this time with money from unsavory sources. It took him over a decade to rebuild his dream, and he is now ready to give the world a demonstration. Dr. Von Krieg also has a daughter, Else, who shares her father's dream of a new German Empire.

As Dr. Sieger, Dr. Von Krieg has turned his property into an airfield. Publicly, he is purchasing, scrap metal and other materials to build aircraft that he hopes to so to both military and civilian customers. In truth, this

has been nothing more than a smokescreen for his true ambitions. Dr. Von Krieg has been careful to import labor from trusted sources said he hasn't tipped his hand over the last decade.

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### **Scenario Edit: Why the Germans?**

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Some *Thrilling Tales* campaigns may be suffering from the “every villain is tied to the Nazis” syndrome. It can't be stressed enough that Dr. Von Krieg is *not* a Nazi; indeed, he wishes to see the Kaiser back on the throne. Still, some GMs may have run a spate of German/Nazi adventures and don't want yet another German threatening the PCs.

It is an easy enough fix to make Dr. Von Krieg from the old Austrian Empire, Ottoman Empire, Russian Empire or even some imaginary Central European kingdom (the “Kingdom of Ruteria” or something similar). Just file the serial numbers and plug in more appropriate-sounding names. The important facts are that Dr. Von Krieg comes from a place that has fallen from grace in his eyes, and he's going to make the world set things right.

## **CHAPTER ONE: TRAIN ROBBERY**

This chapter starts with a leisurely night train ride to the City from some other metropolis. This train includes a very special passenger, **Dr. Jean-Pierre Monet**. Dr. Monet is coming all the way from French Canada, eager to show off his invention at the City Science Fair.

There may be PCs among the passengers. If there are PCs in the game who aren't native to the City, they may be on the train in order to see the Science Fair (an Ace

Reporter may also be coming back from a field assignment). If the GM wishes, they may interact with Dr. Monet. He is a friendly, middle-aged man who enjoys pleasant conversation, particularly in his native French (in Diplomacy terms, he is friendly to English speakers and Helpful to French speakers). Dr. Monet doesn't say much about his invention; only that it will “revolutionize” available power.

Some PCs may decide to have a look at

Monet's invention. It is currently in one of the freight cars, kept inside three marked boxes of varying heights, the smallest of which is about 216 cubic feet. If they wish to try and pry open a box, let them. They won't get far before everything goes black.

### **Stealth Attack!**

No matter what the players are doing, they will be stopped in their tracks. Three of Dr. Von Krieg's Steel Legionnaires attack the train and knock everyone on board unconscious (unless the GM chooses the "advance look" option). The last thing that they remember are the train lights going out.

The GM can have the PC with the highest Constitution score awaken first. He drowsily gets to his feet with a pounding in his head. Glancing around, he notices that everyone in the car is unconscious. Only

now are some of them stirring.

If the PC was in the same car with Dr. Monet, he will notice two things. First, Dr. Monet is gone. Second, there is a large hole in the ceiling of the car, as if a giant weight punched through it. While there is no sign of damage on the floor, there are indentations in other parts of the ceiling. A Craft (mechanical) skill check at DC 10 will reveal that something very large landed on the roof of the train and probably pushed through the ceiling.

If a PC was in the freight car with Dr. Monet's "luggage," he will awaken to find the three boxes gone. There is similar damage to the ceiling, including another gaping hole. This PC will have some explaining to do if the train staff catches him in the freight car with a crowbar nearby.



### **Advance Look**

If the GM desires, he can have the PCs make a Fort Save at DC 30 to avoid being knocked out in the initial blast. While the PCs are still likely to fail, there will be a chance for at least one PC to get a look at the Steel Legionnaires. The robots will continue to fire their Energy Conversion Beams, eventually felling the PC. GMs should use this option with care. While it may seem “fair” at first, it could ruin the overall suspense.

### **Full Stop!**

Call for a Spot check at DC 10 after a few moments. Anyone who succeeds will notice that the train just passed a station without slowing down or stopping. If the PCs don’t act soon, the train will catch up to the one ahead of it and crash into it!

While this may cause a few moments of tension, the solution is simple. Someone simply needs to pull on the emergency brake. Once that happens, the train will screech to a stop not far from the last station. At this point, the conductor and any investigative PCs will want to try to figure out what happened.

First, all passengers and staff are accounted for except for Dr. Monet. If someone checks Dr. Monet’s sleeping car, they will find all of his baggage still stowed away. Whoever took him was not interested in his personal items. Dr. Monet does have a locked briefcase. A Disable Device check at DC 20 will open the lock and reveal a plethora of papers and news articles, mainly about the Science Fair,

other scientists, and Dr. Monet’s own past achievements. Conspicuously absent are any notes on his latest project.

Second, all luggage and freight are accounted for except for Dr. Monet’s three boxes. Train crewmembers will recall how difficult it was to load the heavy boxes; nothing short of a crane could get them out.

### **The Police and the Press**

The police and the press will want to investigate the train robbery, especially the mystery of the missing scientist and cargo. This is a perfect starting point for Investigative PCs. Ace Reporters will receive a hot tip, while police investigators may be assigned to the case.

The police have been alerted by previous train stations and will be pursuing the runaway train. Essentially, this means that the PCs will have to Bluff or sneak past (Move Silently check) the police if they don’t want to be interviewed (whether they succeed is irrelevant to the adventure). Ace Reporters should arrive shortly thereafter. The police won’t allow such PCs access, but prior relationships or suitable bribes will be enough to allow an Ace Reporter to have a look around.

**Inspector Hammond** will lead the investigation in the absence of an appropriate PC. Hammond believes that there is foul play involved, but he will focus on mundane means. He will insist on grilling everyone aboard the train, especially those who were in the same car as Dr. Monet. He’ll also order a patrol car

to follow the tracks to see if Dr. Monet fell out of the train along the way.

### **Scouring the Countryside**

If anyone should investigate the farms surrounding the railroad tracks, he will find a familiar theme (Gather Information at DC 10). Many of the homes with electricity lost power. The inhabitants who were awake in the middle of the night will recall that they thought that the power had gone out just before they fell asleep. Curiously, some inhabitants fell asleep while walking down steps, in hallways, or even while making a midnight snack.

Incidentally, there does seem to be a pattern. All of the homes affected were on one side of the track. They were also along the same route, so it's possible to determine a general direction. Unfortunately, the farms are large and drop off after a while, limiting any efforts to trace the strange power outage to a source.

If the GM wishes, he can have an eyewitness or two from the other side of the tracks notice strange things in the air, such as a flying man. The GM should be careful, however, in providing too much information, as he could spoil the surprise in Chapter Two.

### **Media Censorship**

Due to the strange nature of the attack, Inspector Hammond will request that the media refrain from mentioning the stolen equipment until a thorough investigation is concluded. The Police Commissioner will agree and issue the request. After being assured of prompt notice for they can print the story, as well as new information regarding the theft, the media outlets will comply.

GMs who enjoy a bit of conspiracy may allow initial radio broadcasts of missing equipment, only to have that information purged from subsequent broadcasts. Inquiries will be met with firm dismissals by radio management. Ace Reporters who discover the truth will be upset to find their reports censored. Inspector Hammond is not above thinly veiled threats to rein in any maverick reporters.

## CHAPTER TWO: SCIENCE FAIR

### Alternative Beginning

If the GM wishes to use Chapter One as back-story, then the PCs will need to be apprised of the events of the previous night. This is easy enough to do through the newspapers and radio broadcasts.

Currently, the official story is that the train had engine trouble and a freak windstorm ripped the roofs off some of the train cars. All passengers but one, Dr. Jean-Pierre Monet, are accounted for. The police have asked the media not to mention the stolen equipment, and the media has complied.

The City Science Fair is taking place at the University. Many prominent inventors are present, showing off their latest gadgets and visions of the future. The

GM is encouraged to have fun with this, perhaps showing wildly inaccurate or spot-on predictions about future society (since this is a pre-atomic society, things like suburbs and superhighways would be wildly speculative). The GM could also foreshadow near-future technology. Assuming this scenario is run in the '20s or '30s, things like microwave ovens, instant cameras, and liquid paper would be met with awe. PC scientists may use the science fair as an opportunity to showcase their own inventions. PC Rocket Rangers may show off their jet packs as the "future of personal transportation."

The Science Fair will be abuzz with the distressing news regarding Dr. Monet.

The City has assigned more officers to patrol the fair, and the University has put as many security guards as possible on the floor. Inspector Hammond, if used, will also be here, interviewing any scientists who may have known Dr. Monet. There are also three new NPCs of note at this fair: **Dr. Elise Sieger**, **Dr. William Smith**, and **Margaret Smith**.

Dr. Elise Sieger is Von Krieg's daughter. She is a scientist, like her father. Her mission at the Fair is to identify Dr. Smith, inspect security measures, and relay the information back to her



father. Dr. Sieger will remain on the floor when the giant robots attack. She has no way of shielding herself from the Energy Converter, so she will also be knocked unconscious by the initial blast. The robots are programmed to collect both Dr. Sieger and Dr. Smith. Prior to the attack, Dr. Sieger will work the room, striking up idle conversation with any man whom she finds attractive and interesting. She carries a photograph of Dr. Schmidt and uses her psychological training to identify him as the much older Dr. Smith. Dr. Sieger has attended many science fairs in both the United States and Canada, always in search of Dr. Smith. She will be overjoyed to discover that the search is over.

Dr. Sieger has a booth of her own, which touts improvements on the concept of a helicopter. She has a fully functioning cockpit displayed on the floor, although it is suspended by hydraulics to simulate vertical flight. This prototype is only capable of showing some of the features of the helicopter, which she insists will be completed within the next two years. In truth, this helicopter mockup disguises a radio with which she uses to communicate with her father.

Dr. William Smith usually stays away from science fairs because of his paranoia. He believes that Von Krieg may be looking for him. Ironically, his suspicions are correct and he is about to be discovered at the very first science fair he's decided to attend. He does have the advantage of wearing one of his Inhibitor Collars, but this only means that he will be alive and screaming when a

giant robot scoops him up.

Margaret Smith is Dr. Smith's very attractive and educated daughter. She is currently the research assistant of the handsome, but clueless, Dr. Thomas Bartleby. Margaret has had her designs on Dr. Bartleby since the first day of class, but he was too married to his work to notice her. Dr. Bartleby has designed an automobile that runs entirely on electricity (GM's are encouraged to play this up for laughs. In an effort to get Dr. Bartleby to notice her, the lovely Margaret may shower attention on any PC who shows an interest. This could even become the basis of a bizarre love triangle among Margaret, Dr. Sieger and the PC). Margaret is also wearing one of her father's Inhibitor Collars. Hers is stylized as a charm necklace that includes a picture of her now deceased mother. She considers it her lucky charm.

### **Storm Warning**

There are a few clues at the Fair that may tip off a PC of an imminent attack. The GM should feel free to use any of these as appropriate if the players are looking for anything suspicious. Please note that none of these warnings should give the PCs enough time to actually prevent the attack (unless the GM wishes to the heat from the plot). The GM should pace these events in order to provide maximum dramatic impact.

- First, a local broadcaster is promoting a new type of radio, FM radio. During a demonstration, the radio picks up one

of Dr. Sieger's transmissions. Although the transmission is in coded German, it will certainly attract attention. The code is a variation on a Great War German technique, which may be recognized by any PC with an appropriate background (the PC need not have fought in the Great War; he simply may have learned it as part of his cryptography training) and a Decipher Script check at DC 30. Any PC, who has met Dr. Sieger may identify her voice giving the coded transmission (Listen check at DC 15). If the PC looks for Dr. Sieger, he may spot her operating the cockpit controls (Spot check at DC 20).

- Second, any PC who is with Dr. Sieger may notice a decided change in her temperament when she spots Dr. Smith for the first time (Knowledge (behavioral science) check at DC 15). Dr. Sieger will excuse herself from the company of the PC and discreetly fish the old photograph out of her pocket. Once she is satisfied that Dr. Smith is indeed Dr. Schmidt, Dr. Sieger will make her way back to the helicopter to report.
- Third, any PC who is with Dr. Smith may notice Dr. Sieger's sudden interest (Spot check at DC 15 to notice her and a Sense Motive check to ascertain her motive).

If the PCs manage to detain Dr. Sieger before she can make her report then one of her booth assistants will enter the helicopter and order the attack. If even that proves impossible, then the robots

will attack as part of a failsafe plan.

### **Lights Out!**

Immediately preceding the attack of the Steel Legionnaires, Von Krieg will test his amplified cannon, the Pied Piper. He fires a power dampening burst of energy that not only knocks out all power in the city but also knocks out all the people in the city (Fort Save at DC 35). Only PCs standing next to Dr. Smith or his daughter will have a good chance of resisting this initial blast.

Dr. Smith will turn deathly white. His worst nightmare has now come true. He will start muttering things about the demons of his past catching up with him. He will then excitedly slip into his native German and start panicking about his old enemy finding him and that this enemy must be stopped. Margaret understands little about her father's ranting. She was raised as an American and her father never wished for her to learn of his secret. Only now does she understand. Unfortunately, it's too late.

### **Attack of the Steel Legionnaires**

The attack will begin a few minutes after the initial blast. Two robots will crash through the ceiling of the building housing the Science Fair. Dr. Smith will order his daughter to flee, since the armored giants are only after him. She will resist, and so Dr. Smith will ask any PCs still standing to escort her to safety. They will be safe from the power dampening effect so long as they remain within 5 feet of Margaret.



will be permanent guests of Von Krieg.

Some player groups may feel cheated if they do a good job of attempting to rescue Dr. Smith, only to be prevented from doing so because of the needs of the adventure. If this is the case, allow them to rescue Dr. Smith. He will take them to his country

The GM should play the escape as dramatically as possible. The various science fair exhibits could be used to aid or hinder the escape attempt. The robots will continue to use their electric pulse weapon to knock any standing characters unconscious, but they will not pursue anyone who manages to get off the science fair grounds. The robots will use their other weaponry to clear any obstacles or to deter anyone from escaping.

Assuming that the PCs flee, they will probably not notice (Spot Check at DC 30) Von Krieg's commandos exiting a container carried by one of the robots. These commandos will retrieve Dr. Smith and Dr. Sieger, bringing them both back to the container for extraction. Dr. Smith won't be able to put up much of a fight.

In the unlikely event that some PCs mount an assault on the container, the commandos will attempt to subdue them and bring them back to Von Krieg. Von Krieg is interested in any persons who seem immune to his weapon. Until they can escape, these PCs

house and help them protect themselves from the robot attacks, teach them about the robots' weaknesses, and track the robots back to their lair. Chapter Three will then play as more of an exposition piece, rather than discovery. The Steel Legionnaires will still attack the country house, regardless.

### **Silent Running**

Should the PCs escape into the city, they will find an eerily silent sight. With the exception of the giant robots attacking the fair, the entire city is shut down. All electricity is out. Trolleys and automobiles sit silently on the streets. Drivers, passengers, and pedestrians lay unconscious in vehicles, on sidewalks, and even at street crossings. It's as if the entire city was put to sleep.

It is likely that at least a few city residents made their initial saving throw. The GM may wish to sprinkle a few minor encounters while the PCs run. They could come across a looter who throws a brick through a window to steal some

merchandise. They could come across a would-be car thief who is getting frustrated by the fact that none of vehicles that he is attempting to steal will run. They could pass a street corner prophet who is celebrating the end of the world.

The PCs could also come across travelers who weren't in the city at the time of the initial attack, especially at the outskirts of the city. Being outside the range of the blast, these travelers would simply find it a chore to maneuver their vehicles around all the obstacles in the road. The PCs may even attempt to commandeer one of these vehicles to get out of the city. If the GM wishes to make things even more confusing, a passenger train could arrive at the city station, unloading dozens of travelers onto a platform full of sleeping people.

Margaret will insist that the PCs escort her to her father's country house. She recalls a cryptic comment Dr. Smith has made to her on several occasions. He told her that, should anything ever happen to him, Margaret should open a locked box kept in the attic. He also told her that the key was kept in safe water in the study. While Margaret always assumed that the lockbox kept important papers such as his will, deed, and other assets, she now doubts that assumption.

If the GM wishes to add a little more excitement to the escape, he may insert the third Steel Legionnaire (the one with the Pied Piper) into the mix. This flying Legionnaire would be programmed to take

down any one who wasn't knocked out by the initial blast. Normally, the giant robot would only patrol within a few blocks of the Science Fair, but the GM could have it zero in on the escaping PCs. The Legionnaire would break off this attack as soon as the other Legionnaires have collected the scientists and are returning to base.

### **Aftermath**

This chapter should end with the capture of Dr. Smith and the PCs on their way to the country house. The city is in chaos as a bewildered population starts to wake up. The city government immediately dispatches its police force to keep order, but the question remains of who caused the blackout. Von Krieg is keeping silent for now, leaving the local newspapers to speculate on a connection between the attack on the train and the attack on the Science Fair.

If, for some reason, there are PCs will remain in the city rather than take a trip to the country house, there will be plenty of ways to keep busy helping to maintain order or scoop the big story.

If all of the PCs were knocked unconscious during the fight, then Margaret will remain at the Science Fair. Based on previous circumstances, Margaret will ask awakening PCs to accompany her back to Dr. Smith's country home. She will choose a PC whom she saw fighting the robots or a PC whom she became friendly with prior to the attack. Otherwise, the GM will have to concoct some excuse to get the

PCs to follow Margaret back to the country house. This could be as easy as listening to Margaret plead with a police officer to take her statement as quickly as he can so that she can get back to her father's house.

In any case, the adventure continues in Chapter Three.

### **Radio Warning**

At some appropriate point, the local news media will receive a warning. If one of the PCs is an Ace Reporter and in the newsroom at this time, then he may be the first one to read the news that is coming off the wire. Washington has received an ultimatum; it, along with the League of Nations, must return Germany to its pre-war borders and status. Kaiser Wilhelm II must be allowed to retake the throne, all war debts must be canceled, and war reparations must be made. Until these demands are met, one American city will be chosen at random to suffer the effects of the "Pied Piper." An example has already been made of the City. The message advises all looters, thieves, and organized criminals to camp outside city limits and await their opportunity.

This will obviously start a nation-wide panic. Residents of major cities start packing their things and try to get out of town. State governors put their national guards on alert, and ready to move into any city that suffers the effects of the Pied Piper. Criminals and opportunists make camps outside the cities, awaiting the chance for looting. City police forces are

in disarray, as they are unsure whether or not they should remain in the cities were camped outside the borders themselves.

This event is designed to lend urgency to the PC's actions. The adventure should not last long enough for Von Krieg to carry out his threat. If the GM wishes, however, he can add encounters with panicked citizens or highwaymen as the PCs journey from place to place throughout the rest of the adventure.



## CHAPTER THREE: OUT IN THE COUNTRY

Dr. Smith lives in a large country house not far from the city. The old scientist liked to keep to himself and enjoyed the comforts of country living. While his daughter maintains a room there, she's spent most of the last few months living at school. Most of the property is wooded, and a small lake borders the back of the property. A small boat is docked there.

No map is provided of the house. GMs should feel free to improvise insert after the interior of the country house or use any floor plan from other sources. The only rooms of import in the house are the attic, the study, and the basement.

If the PCs came with Margaret, then she will offer them refreshments before she goes into the attic to retrieve the box. There is a radio in the living room, and the PCs may listen to the chaotic radio reports of what just happened in the city.

### **The Attic**

While the small lockbox is the main reason why anyone would want to go into the attic, there are other items of interest here. There is a footlocker that contains Dr. Smith's old uniform, as well as medals and pictures from the Great War. Some of the pictures show Dr. Smith with Von Krieg, although the PCs will as yet be unable to make that connection.

The lockbox is a small metal box that can't be easily pried open (although a PC may try a Disable Device check at DC 30). It would be much easier to simply find the key and open it.

### **The Study**

The study is a large, comfortable room with high bookshelves lining the walls. Comfortable chairs are set throughout the room and a desk sits in front of the picture window, affording an excellent view of the lake behind the house. There is also a well-used fireplace, seven to one war, indicating that this was one of the most used rooms in the house.

The bookshelves contain many scientific and engineering books and journals. Most of the books on the lower shelves are written in English, while most of the books on the higher shelves are written in German. There are also a few journals written in other languages that Dr. Smith has translated into German (this could be the first hint that Dr. Smith was not born an American). There are only a few books on other topics, including fiction. The general trend is that the older books are German, while the newer books are written in English.

Doubtless, the main reason PCs will want to investigate the study is to figure out what Dr. Smith meant by "safe water." While the GM should encourage the players to debate about its meaning, any PC with a

Decipher Script skill may attempt (DC 25) to decipher its meaning. The answer is “Mark Twain.” Samuel Clemens claimed he got his pen name from his days on a riverboat, where the term was used to measure the depths of the water to assure that it was safe for riverboat travel. If the PCs search the bookshelves, then they will find a copy of Mark Twain’s *Innocents Abroad* written in German. There is a key glued to the inside cover. This key will open the lockbox.

The lockbox contains a journal of Dr. Smith’s studies and observations regarding the Steel Legionnaires (the GM can summarize the events in the Background at the beginning of this adventure. Dr. Smith has also recorded his immigration to

America and the continuance of his work on thwarting Dr. Von Krieg’s efforts, of whom Dr. Smith was aware had also emigrated to America. There is also a letter to Margaret (see the Player Handout, at the end of the adventure).

### **The Basement.**

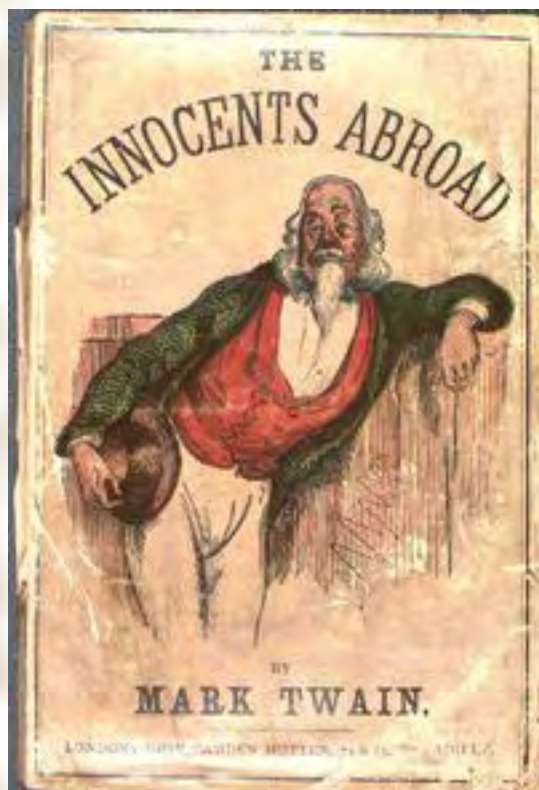
Dr. Smith’s basement was used for storage as well as a mini workshop. There are two custom radio receivers on a workbench that Dr. Smith had planned to use to triangulate the signal. PCs who have read Dr. Smith’s letter to Margaret will realize this with a Knowledge (technology) check at DC 25.

The brown suitcase is hidden (Search check at DC 20) behind an old couch covered in boxes. As promised, the four necklaces are inside, along with the blueprints for making them. Dr. Smith has also left a few notes on how to attack the Steel Legionnaires.

### **Achilles’ Heel**

Some ways of combating the Steel Legionnaires are presented below. The GM should decide which, if any, of these weaknesses apply to the giant robots. If the PCs already have enough firepower at their disposal, then the necklaces themselves should be enough of an edge for the PCs to compete against the giant robots. If not, the GM should assign a weakness that is appropriate to the capabilities of the PCs.

- 1. Jamming the signal:** This classic weakness enables the PCs to wrest control of the robot from Von Krieg. This will involve some tinkering by a



gadgeteering PC. The exact response from the giant robot is left up to GM. Options include allowing the giant robot to continue with its last order, causing the giant robot to freeze up or shut down, or sending the robot into a frenzy in which all targets, including the other robots and Von Krieg, are fair game. Alternatively, since the robots do have antenna, a PC could destroy the antenna and accomplish the same effect.

**2. A chink in the armor:** Another classic weakness is to aim for the weak spot. The robot's joints would be less protected due to the need for flexibility. Since the robot was designed for a frontal assault, the weakest points would probably be in the rear. The backs of the knees would be an ideal location, as well as the aforementioned antenna.

**3. Turnabout is fair play:** An ambitious gadgeteer could analyze the signal and determine a way to broadcast counter signals. While this works best in conjunction with jamming the original signal, sending the robot conflicting signals is also a viable tactic. Again, it is up to the GM to determine how the robot would react by receiving simultaneous contrary orders. If the gadgeteer could obtain control of a robot, the PCs would have a powerful ally to help them fight Von Krieg.

### **Suddenly... The Door Bursts in!**

A Steel Legionnaire arrives as the PCs are in the basement. The PCs may recognize

the slight vibrations as the robot touches down (Listen check at DC 15). This robot also has a transport canister, and a team of commandos bursts forth to storm the country house. The GM should assign a number of commandos that would be challenging for the PCs to deal with, but not insurmountable. The giant robot will emit an electro-pulse beam prior to the storming. Hopefully, the PCs will have their necklaces on at this point. If not, then any PCs standing close to Margaret will be unaffected. Regardless, the basement lights will go out, providing further evidence that the house is under attack.

Dr. Von Krieg, has ordered his team to operate as delicately as possible. He wants Margaret Smith alive. The commandos are also under the impression that Margaret is either alone or that any company she had was rendered unconscious by the initial burst. Consequently, the commandos are not ready to fight. Their plan is to break in and intimidate Margaret into coming with them. Thus, the PCs will have the element of surprise. GMs should play out this assault as dramatically as possible. The giant robot will not engage the PCs, has Von Krieg has ordered it to act solely as transportation. It waits for one of the commandos to give it the signal to pick up the canister and return to base.

The commandos do not wish to fail Dr. Von Krieg, so they won't break off easily. Even if they are forced to retreat, they will regroup outside and prepare for a second assault. It is entirely possible for the PCs to subdue the commandos and force them

to either surrender Von Krieg's location, or even enable the PCs to take control of the transport canister and return to Von Krieg's hideout.

### **Game Master Note**

GMs need to be careful here, as certain PC decisions could negate the entirety of Chapter Four. If the GM does not want to do this, then he must ensure that the PCs aren't able to commandeer the giant robot and use the canister as a stealth tactic. This is easily accomplished by having Von Krieg call back the robot after he felt the mission should have been accomplished, or by giving the commandos a failsafe signal that would send the robot back prematurely. This will still enable the PCs to acquire the information about the location of Von Krieg's base without giving them a free ride. As always, if the players are going to feel cheated out of a cunning plan, it's probably best for the GM to run with it.

## **CHAPTER FOUR:** **AIRFIELD ASSAULT!**

At this point, Dr. Von Krieg is probably aware of someone getting in the way of his plans. He has put his base on high alert. Assuming that the PCs aren't arriving as prisoners, or inside the canister carried by a giant robot, they will have to face Von Krieg's security.

A decade ago, Dr. Von Krieg was careful to purchase a plot of land that was away from any major thoroughfares. While the city and the surrounding towns have expanded a bit, Von Krieg's land still lies out in the country beyond the farms. Anyone approaching his property will be conspicuous.

Dr. Von Krieg's airfield is surrounded by woodlands. The airfield is small, with two hangars. One houses a half-dozen airplanes of appropriate make (depending on the game year). Three of these airplanes are outfitted with machine guns. The second larger hanger is used for research and development. This hanger is further back from the entrance. A scrap metal yard lies next to it. All three (or less, if the PCs have already managed to defeat one or more of them) giant robots are housed in this hanger, along with the Pied Piper, the transport canister, and two more partially constructed giant robots.

## Discovering the Location

Of course, before the PCs can assault the base, they need to know where to find it. There are a variety of ways for the PCs to do so.

1. The PCs could have obtained this information by interrogating captured commandos.
2. The PCs could follow the giant robot from the attack on the country house back to its base. This is a good option is one of the PCs is an Air Ace or a Rocket Ranger.
3. An Ace Reporter or Investigator could hunt through municipal records in towns around the farm houses that lost power in Chapter One and discover that a Dr. Sieger from Germany purchased a plot of land not long after the end of the Great War (Gather Information check at DC 25). He could also discover that, while Dr. Sieger has promised to build a new aircraft, and has purchased scrap metal and airplanes toward that goal, he has not unveiled any new designs (Gather Information check at DC 30).

## Getting There Is Half the Fun

The PCs really only have two ways of assaulting the airfield. The first is by land in the second is by air. The PCs also have another choice to make; namely, whether or not to involve the authorities. The problem with this is that there simply aren't enough necklaces to go around. If Von Krieg sees a military or police assault, then he will use his robots and the Pied Piper to stop them in their tracks. One way or another, the

PCs will have to face him down alone.

If they choose to come by land, Von Krieg will send two cars full of commandos to hunt them down (think Tommy guns and running boards). He may also send out an airplane to keep an eye on their progress and strafe them once they come out of the woods and out into the open airfield.

If they choose to come by air, Von Krieg will send out two or three airplanes to shoot them down.

If the PCs make it to the airfield, Von Krieg will send out two of his giant robots to deal with them. Hopefully, the PCs will be able to use their newfound knowledge to take these robots down.

As the PCs advance across the airfield, they will be engaged by Von Krieg's men. Most of these will be security guards, using the same stats as the commandos. Some will also be regular mechanics and engineers; these use separate statistics, as outlined in the Dramatis Personae section. Most of these forces will seek cover in the hangar doorways or behind parked trucks. The GM should make this scene memorable. This is where the PCs finally have the upper hand, and are able to tear through Von Krieg's forces.

The PCs ultimate goal is to get to the mansion. That is where Dr. Von Krieg is watching the battle. It is also where Dr. Monet and Dr. Smith are being held. Once the PCs break through the airfield, it's time to turn to Chapter Five.

## CHAPTER FIVE: FINAL FLIGHT!

Things are looking pretty grim for Dr. Von Krieg. He will be preparing his escape while the last of his commandos cover him. He will order his guards to bring out the two scientists as a bargaining chip. The guards are to take Dr. Monet and Dr. Smith out on the front porch and put guns to their heads, insisting that the PCs stand down or the two scientists will be killed. If the PCs balk, then Dr. Monet will be shot to show that they mean business.

The PCs will have to get creative in order to save one or both of the scientists. There shouldn't be more than two guards for each scientist. This is an opportunity for the PCs to utilize any special powers or abilities at their disposal. A Mesmerist may wish to use the power of suggestion. A Soldier or Big-Game Hunter might try their sharp shooting skills. A Negotiator may negotiate. A Scientist may have a useful invention. And then there's always the classic "go ahead and shoot them; that just gives me a clear shot at you" reverse psychology move.

### **The Radio Room**

Dr. Von Krieg controls his Steel Legionnaires from a radio room in the attic of the mansion. This is conspicuous by the antenna on the roof. While Dr. Von Krieg is planning his escape, it is possible that his daughter may use this room to command any remaining Steel Legionnaires. Of course, this will apply to any PCs that gain access to this room as well. It's important to note that all of the controls in this

room are written in German, and the Steel Legionnaires can only understand German orders.

### **The Great Escape**

Dr. Von Krieg will use the distraction in order to escape. His escape plan depends upon whether there are any Steel Legionnaires remaining. If so, this will be the legionnaire with the Pied Piper. There were also be a small transport canister behind the house where Dr. Von Krieg will be stashing his notes. He hopes to get away and start again somewhere else. This special canister contains a miniature version of the radio room, enabling Dr. Von Krieg to give orders to this final legionnaire.

If no Steel Legionnaires remain, then Dr. Von Krieg will make his escape in a two-person airplane (the GM should use an appropriate airplane from any d20 resource). He will fly the plane himself, leaving the other seat to hold his notes.

How the PCs pursue Dr. Von Krieg is up to them. Even if he escapes, his plan is ruined for now. Dr. Von Krieg will go into hiding until he can set up shop somewhere else.



### **Femme Fatale**

Dr. Elise Sieger is a wildcard in this chapter. How she reacts is dependent upon her interactions with the PCs during Chapter Two. By default, she is extremely loyal to her father. While she is not a murderer, Elise will shoot at any PCs advancing on the mansion. She will not be happy with the decision to harm the scientists, but she will regretfully allow the scene to play out. She will also be shocked to discover that her father is willing to leave her behind while he escapes.

If she is in love with one of the PCs, she may switch sides in order to help them. In

true pulp fashion, she will probably lose her life doing so. In this case, she should be allowed some dying words of redemption.

### **EPILOGUE**

Once the news of Von Krieg's defeat reaches the media, the good citizens of the world will breathe a collective sigh of relief. The US government will take over the airfield, hoping to salvage what they can from the wreckage. Dr. Smith will offer his services as penance for his role in creating the machines.

The PCs are heroes. The city mayor will wish to give them a parade, unless they are the type that shuns public attention. They will certainly have the respect of the city and its police department.

If Von Krieg escaped, then it is probable that the PCs will meet him again. Only this time, it will be personal. Von Krieg will not be likely to forget those who burned the stream of the New German Empire.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

### Inspector Lee Hammond

Inspector Hammond is a middle-aged hardnosed cop who's seen it all (and he'll tell you so). He's usually impeccably dressed, but this is out of respect for the force, not vanity. He always wears a hat outside and is a habitual cigar smoker. Hammond has a no-nonsense approach. He believes in cold, hard facts, and any alibi that sounds off-the-wall will be met with skepticism or outright ridicule ("Whaddaya mean, a giant robot did this? Are you off your rocker? Cut the crap and tell me the truth!").

In spite of this, Inspector Hammond is a fair and straight cop. He'll accept the truth of anything he sees with his own eyes. Hammond can be a staunch ally when he believes he is on the side of law and justice.

**Dedicated 3/Investigator 5: CR 8;** Medium-size human; HD 8d6+8; hp 42; Mas 13; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; Defense 15 (+5 class); BAB +5; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d6+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +6 melee (1d3+1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +6 with weapon or +5 ranged (by pistol type); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL The Facts; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +10; AP 67; Rep +3; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12.

**Occupation:** Investigator (bonus class skills: Gather Information, Investigate).

**Skills:** Bluff +5, Diplomacy +7, Drive +4, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +11, Investigate +15, Knowledge (behavioral sciences) +8, Knowledge (streetwise) +8, Listen +9, Research +6, Search +14, Sense Motive +11, Spot +6.

**Feats:** Attentive, Brawl, Confident, Iron Will, Meticulous, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Trustworthy.

**Talents:** Empathy, Intuition.

**Class Features:** Contact (mid-level), Contact (low-level), Nonlethal Force, Profile.

**Possessions:** Inspector Hammond usually carries a Colt .45 as his weapon of choice. He is also never without his Cuban cigars. He carries all standard issue police equipment, including handcuffs. Hammond lives in a rowhouse in a working class district of the city.

## Dr. Otto Von Krieg

Dr. Otto Von Krieg looks the part of the mad scientist, with wild eyes and a scalp free of any hair save for a ring above his ears. He usually hangs a monocle on a strap around his neck. He does, however, keep up an immaculate appearance, a testament to his desire for an imperial order. He speaks perfect English, although it is laced in a noticeable German accent.

Von Krieg is cold and calculating when things are going according to plan. He revels in the might of his "Iron Legion," even though it is only three robots strong. He looks forward to the day when the Kaiser will command a true legion of iron giants, imposing a Pax Germanica across the world. Von Krieg would sacrifice anything, including his daughter, for this goal; even if only to preserve his hide to fight another day.

Advanced Class note: Dr. Otto Von Krieg was generated using Advanced Class: Mad Scientist from Adamant Entertainment. Special abilities pertaining to that class are noted with an asterisk (\*). GMs without this supplement can substitute the Advanced Class: Field Scientist from the core book.

**Smart 3/Mad Scientist\* 6: CR 9;** Medium-size human; HD 3d6+6d8; hp 36; Mas 10; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 14 (+2 class, +2 dexterity); BAB +2; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d3-1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +1 melee (1d3-1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +1 with

weapon or +4 ranged (by pistol type); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Dr. William Smith; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4; AP 31; Rep +2; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 10.

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

**Skills:** Concentration +13, Craft (electronic) +16, Craft (mechanical) +20, Demolitions +18, Disable Device +20, Investigate +7, Knowledge (business) +16, Knowledge (tactics) +16, Knowledge (technology) +18, Repair +19, Read/Write English, Research +22, Search +10, Sense Motive +5, Speak English, Spot +5.

**Feats:** Builder, Cautious, Educated, Gearhead, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Studious, Windfall x2.

**Talents:** Savant-Craft (mechanical), Savant-Research.

**Class Features:** Weird Science\*, Scientific Improvisation, Inspiration\*, Build Robot

**Possessions:** Dr. Otto Von Krieg carries scientific tools. When expecting trouble, he carries a pistol.

## Dr. Elise Sieger

Dr. Elise Sieger is a dedicated and devoted daughter. She remembers little of her native Germany, as she left as a young girl. She only has the slight hint of an accent, and Elise is actually more comfortable speaking English than German. She is devastatingly beautiful, with long blonde hair and piercing blue eyes.

While dedicated to her father, Elise could be persuaded to change sides once the full evil of her father is exposed. This dooms her to tragedy, as her father will be unmoved. He would shoot her himself if she turned on him.

Advanced Class note: Dr. Elise Sieger was generated using Advanced Class: Femme Fatale from Adamant Entertainment.

Special abilities pertaining to that class are noted with an asterisk (\*). GMs without this supplement can substitute more levels in Charismatic Hero or Personality.

**Charismatic 4/Femme Fatale 4\*: CR 8;** Medium-size human; HD 4d6+4d8+8; hp 40; Mas 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 14 (+3 class, +1 dexterity); BAB +4; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee (1d4+1 lethal or nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+1 lethal or nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +4 with weapon or +5 ranged (by pistol type); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Dr. Von Krieg; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +9; AP 60; Rep +4; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 18.

**Occupation:** Technician (bonus

class skills: Craft (electronic), Craft (mechanical), Knowledge (technology)).

**Skills:** Bluff +16, Craft (electronic) +10, Craft (mechanical) +10, Diplomacy +16, Gather Information +15, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (technology) +11, Pilot +4, Research +6, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10.

**Feats:** Combat Martial Arts, Confident, Deceptive, Dodge, Educated, Exotic Features\*, Iron Will, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency.

**Talents:** Charm (males), Favor

**Class Features:** Discern Lie, Easy Mark\*, Lollapalooza\*, Tough Cookie\*.

**Possessions:** Dr. Sieger usually carries a variety of scientific tools. She also hides a knife and a small pistol on her person.

## Henchmen

This stat block is for Dr. Von Krieg's security forces and commandos. 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 1/Tough Ordinary 1: CR 1;** Medium-size human; HD 1d8+1d10; hp 14; Mas 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; Defense 14 (+4 class); BAB +0; Grap +0; Atk +0 melee (1d6 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +0 melee (1d4 knife) or +0 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Dr. Von Krieg; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, 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 +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +2, Listen +1, Move Silently +5, Search +1, Sense Motive +1, Spot +2, Survival +2, Tumble +2.

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

**Possessions:** Henchmen typically carry a pistol (use the Colt M1911 as a default) and a knife. Some Henchmen will 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).

## Engineers and Mechanics

This stat block is for Dr. Von Krieg's non-martial underlings, such as airplane mechanics and metalworkers. GMs with the Thrilling Tales: Gamemaster's Guide to Pulp Adventure may wish to substitute the Mook rules by ignoring the hit points stat.

**Dedicated Ordinary 1: CR 0;** Medium-size human; HD 1d6; hp 6; 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 (1d6 heavy tool) or +0 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Von Krieg; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +1; AP 0; Rep 0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 10.

**Occupation:** Technician (bonus class skills: Craft (mechanical), Knowledge (technology), Repair).

**Skills:** Craft (electronic) +2, Craft (mechanical) +4, Disable Device +1, Knowledge (technology) +5, Pilot +1, Repair +6.

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

**Possessions:** Engineers and mechanics generally don't carry weapons. Their default weapon is a tool (such as a large wrench, hammer, crowbar, etc). Von Krieg's henchmen will loan pistols to the technicians if trouble is brewing.

## **Dr. William Smith (Wilhelm Schmidt)**

Dr. William Smith has spent all of his time since the Great War fearing this day. His hair is shock white as a result, thin and balding. He keeps a small pair of glasses perched on his nose, and his eyes show the well-worn wrinkles of sleepless nights. He cares little about his appearance, wearing rumpled clothes that could use a good ironing and a sweater that's seen better days.

Advanced Class note: Dr. William Smith was generated using Advanced Class: Mad Scientist from Adamant Entertainment. Special abilities pertaining to that class are noted with an asterisk (\*). GMs without this supplement can substitute the Advanced Class: Field Scientist from the core book.

**Smart 3/Dedicated 3/Mad Scientist 4\*:** CR 10; Medium-size human; HD 6d6+2d8+6; hp 35; Mas 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16 (+5 class, +1 dexterity); BAB +5; Grap +5; Atk +5 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +5 melee (by weapon) or +6 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Stopping Von Krieg; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +7; AP 82; Rep +3; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 8.

**Occupation:** Technician (bonus class skills: Craft (electronic), Craft (mechanical), Research).

**Skills:** Concentration +5, Craft (chemical) +17, Craft (electronic) +20, Craft

(mechanical) +17, Demolitions +15, Disable Device +18, Knowledge (earth & life sciences) +15, Knowledge (physical sciences) +16, Knowledge (technology) +19, Repair +18, Research +16, Search +9, Sense Motive +4, Spot +7.

**Feats:** Attentive, Builder, Cautious, Educated, Gearhead, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Studious, Windfall.

**Talents:** Savant-Knowledge (technology), Savant-Research, Skill Emphasis (Craft electronic), Skill Emphasis (Disable Device).

**Class Features:** Weird Science\*, Scientific Improvisation, Inspiration\*.

**Possessions:** In addition to his general scientific tools, Dr. Smith wears an Inhibitor necklace.

## Margaret Smith

Margaret Smith is almost a mirror image of Elise Sieger. She, too, is devoted to her father, but her affection for him is returned. She will obey him and do whatever she can for him. Margaret has completely lost her German accent, sounding very much like a typical young American woman. Her German is stilted and unsure. Unlike Elise, Margaret can influence her father when warranted.

Margaret has brown hair and soft green eyes. She desires romance, specifically with Dr. Bartleby. Unfortunately, he shows little interest in her. As a result, Margaret is always available for a bit of romance to fill her longing.

**Smart 5; CR 5;** Medium-size human; HD 5d6; hp 18; Mas 10; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 14 (+2 class, +2 dexterity); BAB +2; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d3-1 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +1 melee (1d3-1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +1 with weapon or +4 ranged (by pistol type); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Dr. William Smith; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4; AP 31; Rep +2; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 13.

**Occupation:** Student (bonus class skills: Knowledge (physical sciences), Knowledge (technology), Research).

**Skills:** Concentration +4, Craft (chemical) +7, Craft (electronic) +7, Craft (mechanical) +7, Craft (pharmaceutical) +7, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +11,

Gather Information +3, Knowledge (earth & life sciences) +11, Knowledge (physical sciences) +17, Knowledge (technology) +17, Listen +3, Repair +11, Read/Write German, Research +17, Speak German, Spot +5.

**Feats:** Builder, Educated, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Studios, Trustworthy.

**Talents:** Savant-Knowledge (physical sciences), Savant-Knowledge (technology), Savant-Research.

**Possessions:** Margaret generally keeps a small notepad and pencil with her. She also has the Inhibitor necklace in the shape of a locket.

## Science Fair Scientist

This is a general stat block for GMs who find themselves in need of character stats for one of the scientists. Dr. Jean-Pierre Monet is the obvious example, but Dr. Thomas Bartleby may also be pulled into events. The Windfall feat represents research grants and funding.

**Smart Ordinary 3/Dedicated Ordinary 3: CR 5;** Medium-size human; HD 6d6+6; hp 24; Mas 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 15 (+4 class, +1 dexterity); BAB +3; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); Full Atk +3 melee (by weapon) or +4 ranged (by weapon); FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; AL Scientific Achievement; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +6; AP 0; Rep 0; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 8.

**Occupation:** Technician (bonus class skills: Craft (electronic), Craft (mechanical), Research).

**Skills:** Concentration +5, Craft (chemical) +12, Craft (electronic) +13, Craft (mechanical) +13, Knowledge (earth & life sciences) +11, Knowledge (physical sciences) +12, Knowledge (technology) +12, Repair +14, Research +13, Search +9, Sense Motive +4, Spot +7.

**Feats:** Attentive, Builder, Educated, Gearhead, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Studious, Windfall.

**Possessions:** Scientists generally carry scientific equipment and tools useful to their area of research.

## Steel Legionnaires (Giant Robots)

The Steel Legionnaires are the creation of Dr. Von Krieg, based on the prototypes, he built during the Great War. Each one stands 20 feet tall and looks like a blocky humanoid in steel riveted armor. They are true robots, taking orders from Dr. Von Krieg in his radio room. Currently, there are only three steel legionnaires (the GM can add more as necessary to increase the challenge).

**Huge Robot: CR 7;** Huge construct; HD 8d10+40; hp 100; Mas —; Init +0; Spd 30 ft. (bipedal), Flight Spd 75 ft.; Defense 6, touch 6, flat-footed 6 (–2 Dex), Hardness 25; BAB +6/+1; Grap +16/+11; Atk +15 melee (2d4+10, claw); Full Atk +14/+9 melee (2d4+10, claw) or +4 ranged; FS 25 ft. by 25 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; SQ construct; AL none; SV Fort +2, Ref 0, Will +2; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 30, Dex 6, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10.

**Skills:** Disable Device +5, Listen +4, Search +6, Spot +6.

**Feats:** None.

**External Components:** Armor (Hardness 25), Audio/visual sensor, manipulator arms.

**Weapons:** Death Ray, Energy Converter (see following page).

| Weapon           | Damage | Critical | Damage Type | Range Inc | Rate of Fire | Magazine | Size |
|------------------|--------|----------|-------------|-----------|--------------|----------|------|
| <b>Death Ray</b> | 8d12   | 20       | Fire        | 150 ft    | 1            | 5        | Huge |

### **Energy Converter:**

The Steel Legionnaires draw electricity from their surroundings in order to keep their engines running. Any electrical source that the iron giants fly over in a 50-yard radius, including human brains, warrant a Fort Save at DC 30. Failure knocks them out. The Steel Legionnaires can also fire a concentrated version (usually referred to as an Electro-Pulse Cannon), which ups the DC to 35 (but limits the scope to a 5-yard radius).

## **PULP DEVICES:**

### **The Pied Piper**

The Pied Piper is a composite of the Steel Legionnaire's Electro-Pulse Cannon and Dr. Monet's Energy Amplifier crystal. It is designed as a large cannon that slips over one arm of the Steel Legionnaire. The effective blast radius is an entire city. If the PCs try to destroy the Piper, it has a 10 Hardness, 80 Hit Points, and a 35 Break DC.

### **Inhibitor Necklace**

This is Dr. Smith's creation. When wearing it, a PC or NPC (and anyone within 5' radius) is completely immune to the effects of the Energy Converter, the Electro-Pulse Cannon, and the Pied Piper. The necklace has a 3 Hardness, 10 Hit Points, and a 10 Break DC.

The Inhibitor Necklace is tuned to the frequency of Dr. Von Krieg's devices. It will not inhibit any other attack. The GM may allow a PC to tinker with it to do so, but it is strongly suggested that any adaptation carry a DC to oppose it. Otherwise, PCs will quickly become impervious to certain attacks.

## PLAYER HANDOUT

*Dearest Margaret,*

*If you are reading this, then I am either dead or my past has caught up to me. I pray that it is the former, but I fear that it is the latter. In this case, Dr. Von Krieg has discovered my existence, and I have failed to stop him. My journal explains my association with him. I am sorry that I could never bring myself to tell you the full truth in person. I feel partially responsible for Dr. Von Krieg's creations, and I was ashamed of the result.*

*Hopefully, the locket I have given you was of some assistance. The locket emits a low range sonic frequency that disrupts the energy conversion fields generated by the robots. In layman's terms, you are shielded from being knocked unconscious. I wear one as well, which means that Dr. Von Krieg is now aware of this defense. You don't have much time.*

*I have four more necklaces in the basement inside a brown suitcase. There are also plans to make more if necessary. I have also enclosed with them my theories on how to stop the giant robots. I only hope that you're not too late.*

*Please take this information to the appropriate authorities and anyone whom you think may be able to help. Dr. Von Krieg is determined to rebuild imperial Germany at any cost. He must be stopped before he causes further harm. Dr. Von Krieg broadcasts a radio signal to control his robots. If you can triangulate that signal, then perhaps the authorities can find and stop him before it's too late. You are my last hope.*

*All my love,*

*Uncle Bill*